

THE DIVISION OF CHEMICAL LITERATURE: 1948-1973, AND BEYOND

Professionalism cannot exist without a body of knowledge that can be taught and applied with universal confidence. The knowledge, furthermore, and most importantly, must not be static; it must be evolving, growing additively, and expanding unpredictably. Knowledge which is static needs only a finite number of books to embrace what needs to be learned and applied. But, knowledge which is evolving, growing, and expanding requires a viable structure of technical journals, periodic technical meetings, and a continuing tradition of responsible authorities.

The American Chemical Society is nonpareil as a viable structure of technical journals and technical meetings and by means of which it has nurtured an outstanding and continuing tradition of responsible authorities.

Although the American Chemical Society was formed in 1876, its first national meeting occurred in Newport, Rhode Island, in 1890. It was not until the 1893 meeting in Chicago that the program divided the papers into subject areas, and not until 1908 (June 30, in New Haven) that a division, the Division of Industrial Chemists and Chemical Engineers, was first formed. Shortly thereafter, at the 39th ACS National Meeting in Baltimore, Dec. 29, 1908-Jan. 1, 1909, four other divisions were formed: Agricultural and Food Chemistry, Fertilizer Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, and Physical and Inorganic Chemistry. Also in 1908, the ACS added the *Journal of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry* to its already existing *Journal of the American Chemical Society* and *Chemical Abstracts*, all three journals being sent to ACS members for the dues of \$10.00 per year.

My purpose is not to delineate the historical developments of ACS journals and divisions. It is rather to direct attention to the importance of ACS meetings to our evolving professional needs. Indeed, there is a synergistic relationship between ACS national meetings and the journal and divisional structures. That the ACS is a viable structure is due in large part to this synergistic relationship.

A prime example of this synergistic relationship is the Division of Chemical Literature, which was formed in 1948, becoming the 19th ACS Division (there are now 27).

There were literature chemists, however, long before the formation of the Division of Chemical Literature. Literature chemists have been plying unique skills for as long as chemistry has existed as a discipline of science. In the beginning and up until modern times, to be sure, there was a semantic problem in that chemists who plied these unique skills thought of themselves as chemists rather than literature chemists. Even to this day, how many of us characterize Berzelius' introduction of chemical symbols in 1813, Kekule's concepts of valence in 1858 and of the unsaturated benzene ring in 1865, Dumas' concept of homology in 1851, and Mendeleev's periodic table in 1869 as the accomplishments of literature chemists? How many

of us think of Beilstein, Gmelin, Noyes, Friend, Mellor, and others as literature chemists?

Thus, literature chemists were but a number, an unknown number, of individuals until the Division of Chemical Literature was formed. Yet over the years, an occasional paper was presented in one of the ACS divisions that I would categorize as being within the area of interest to literature chemists. During the 1940's, through the impetus of a small group of literature chemists, notably Julian Smith, Jim Perry, Norman Hill, Jay Crane, Austin Patterson, and others, a Chemical Literature Group was formed within the Division of Chemical Education. It was this group that programmed sessions at the national meetings and provided the momentum that finally resulted in its being granted divisional status.

With the advent of the Division of Chemical Literature in 1948, a community of chemists with shared interests and objectives was created, and literature chemists, for the first time, had a forum for the presentation of papers that advanced the art and science of their discipline of chemistry. These papers soon constituted an important and growing body of literature, and some of the authors made contributions of such a nature that they began to be recognized as responsible authorities.

These papers, however, were without a suitable medium for publication until this Journal was introduced by the ACS in 1961.

Members of the Division of Chemical Literature can be proud of the division's first 25 years. They established a division that has defined a discipline of chemistry. Programs of the division have contained papers that pretty much represent the full spectrum of what literature chemists do. Being a thriving division for 25 years, a body of leaders and experts have evolved. And by the introduction of this Journal and its steady growth over the past 13 years, we now have a body of literature that represents the best in the evolving art and science of chemical documentation.

The important factor that needs to be recognized in the above recounting is that it all was made possible by the parent structure, the American Chemical Society.

Probably I should end on this high note. But shouldn't we also think of the future? We did in the 1940's as we dreamed of our own division. We did in the 1950's as we dreamed of our own journal. I would hope that our thinking now can be directed towards high quality programs for the division that feeds outstanding papers to this journal. I don't think there is anything more important that we could strive for. The potential consequences are great: an evolving, growing, and expanding body of knowledge; a broadening membership base for the division; and a continuing tradition of responsible authorities. These add up to the achievement of professionalism.

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