



ANALYTICAL CHEMISTRY

Walter J. Murphy, Editor

The Responsibility of the Author

AN interesting study would be to determine the number of new authors each year whose names appear on the contents pages of AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY journals.

We have never made such a study, but we suspect the figures would be very high. The size of the profession has grown tremendously in the past decade or two and it is self-evident that the amount of research conducted continues to grow by leaps and bounds.

The growth, of course, means that in any given year we are dealing with a crop of new authors who may not be familiar with the manuscript reviewing system used by ACS editors.

A very comprehensive discussion of the system was published as an editorial in the May 1946 issue of the ANALYTICAL EDITION of INDUSTRIAL AND ENGINEERING CHEMISTRY. Space limitations prevent us from reprinting these comments in full, but one in particular needs to be repeated at frequent intervals.

No attempt is ever made to coerce any author into altering his manuscript against his wishes. Any compromise he makes as a result of reviewer suggestions is his own acknowledgment of sound criticism. Any revised draft he submits is assumed to be one that he, himself, approves, not one he has prepared to please the critics. If an author disagrees with reviewer criticisms, he is expected to inform the editors the reason or reasons for such disagreement, but he is under no obligation to make changes suggested by reviewers.

With the comments of both author and reviewers before him, it then becomes the duty of the editor and his associates to decide whether to accept or reject a manuscript—a responsibility not taken lightly. However, it is important for each author not to overlook the brief statement on the contents page of every ACS journal, which reads: "The AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY assumes no responsibility for the statements and opinions advanced by contributors to its publications."

Obviously, the primary purpose of the reviewing system is maintenance of high standards for ANALYTICAL CHEMISTRY. In most instances published manuscripts are improved as a result of the comments of reviewers. However, what appears in

print is the responsibility of the author, and he cannot delegate this responsibility to others.

Trade-Mark Identification

TRADE-MARKS constitute valuable property and, as such, should be respected by authors when references are made to them in scientific and technical articles, and in news items.

If a trade-mark passes into the language as a generic term through the failure of the owner to protect it, it no longer is a valid trade-mark. This has happened not infrequently in the past, and it is understandable why owners of trade-marks seek the cooperation of editors in their efforts to prevent such losses.

The trade-mark laws prohibit the use of similar marks as trade-marks—that is, as a mark affixed by a person to his goods in order to identify and distinguish them from the goods of others. There is, however, no provision of law which prohibits the public from using trade-marks in a generic sense. The owner of a trade-mark must rely upon his advertising and upon the cooperation of publishers and editors, in order to avoid the loss of his trade-mark in this manner.

The editors of AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY publications wish to cooperate and have done so down through the years by capitalizing the first letter of a trade-mark. Just recently an informal poll of editors attending a meeting of the Society of Business Magazine Editors showed that the overwhelming majority of editors in that national organization followed this method of identifying trade-marks.

It is almost unnecessary for the editors of ACS publications to point out that Society journals contain a large proportion of papers reporting original research and, therefore, are referred to more frequently than other magazines serving the chemical field. Failure to identify a trade-mark in an ACS journal may compound this failure many times over.

ACS editors are conscientious in their efforts to identify trade-marks properly. Even so they need the help of authors and ask that authors make a serious effort to identify trade-marks in manuscripts submitted for publication. The editors also ask careful cooperation in the preparation of abstracts of papers for inclusion in the "Abstracts of Papers," issued by the ACS News Service prior to each national meeting.