

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

American Electrochemical Society—Spring Meeting, Boston, Mass., April 8 to 10, 1920.

American Chemical Society—Fifty-ninth Meeting, Hotel Statler, St. Louis, Mo., April 10 to 17, 1920.

American Drug Manufacturers' Association—Annual Meeting, Hotel Biltmore, New York, N. Y., April 12 to 15, 1920.

Technical Association of the Pulp and Paper Industry—Spring Meeting, Hotel Waldorf and Hotel Astor, New York, N. Y., April 12 to 16, 1920.

National Fertilizer Association—27th Annual Convention, White Sulphur Springs, W. Va., week of June 21, 1920.

American Institute of Chemical Engineers—Semi-Annual Meeting, Montreal, June 21 and 22; Ottawa, June 23; Shawinigan, June 24 and 25; La Tuque, June 26, 1920.

WASHINGTON LETTER

By J. B. McDONNELL, Union Trust Building, Washington, D. C.

The Senate Finance Committee has favorably reported to the Senate the Longworth dye bill and the measure providing for the protection of chemical and laboratory glassware and scientific instruments.

The Senate Military Affairs Committee has finished its work on the army reorganization measure, and in the bill it reported to the Senate provided for a separate Chemical Warfare Service of the Army. Although there is some opposition to the establishment of the Chemical Warfare Service as a separate department of the Army among members of the House military committee, which still is at work on its draft of the Army reorganization bill, supporters of the Chemical Warfare Service are confident that they will succeed in establishing it as a separate department.

Thus briefly might be summarized events of importance to the chemical world which have taken place in Washington recently. Each step has been won against determined opposition from one quarter or another. Victory for the chemical industry has been the result each time so far, and indications are that victory will continue to perch upon the banners of the industry. Chemistry and the chemical industry have come into their own in Washington and both executive and legislative branches of the Government admit their importance to the nation.

It is planned to call the dye bill up on the floor of the Senate as soon as possible. With Republican and Democratic members of the Finance Committee endorsing the completed measure, little opposition is expected and it will be passed with little delay once it is called up on the floor. If present plans do not miscarry, the end of February will see the bill finished and signed by the President.

As finally drawn up by the committee the bill differs in many respects from the form in which it was passed by the House. The original licensing system was eliminated entirely. After considerable discussion on various substitutes proposed for this section the committee rewrote the entire section. The bill provides that no dyestuffs shall be admitted to import which are obtainable in this country on satisfactory terms as regards quality, price, and delivery.

The life of the law is fixed at three years. The bill defines what is meant by reasonable terms as to price, quality, and delivery. Much is left to the discretion of the United States Tariff Commission, which is charged with administering it. This was done purposely so as to permit of an elasticity in enforcing the provisions and to permit such changes in its rules and regulations governing importation of dyestuffs and coal-tar chemicals as the Commission might find necessary from time to time to meet changed conditions or unexpected contingencies which might arise.

The bill differs from the so-called Choate substitute, in that it does not provide that the Commission shall prepare any lists of what are and what are not importable dyestuffs, leaving it to the discretion of the Commission itself to frame such rules and regulations as it deems best to carry out the provision that no dyes obtainable in this country on reasonable terms as to price, quality, and delivery shall be imported.

It provides also against excessive imports. The committee decided that a reasonable price shall be that which in the judgment of the Tariff Commission is the lowest which will insure the maintenance of the dye industry in this country. Briefly the bill gives large authority to the Commission to decide practically all questions as they arise, setting forth general principles for the guidance of the administering body.

The bill was amended but slightly by the full committee, the work of the sub-committee meeting with general approval. Probably the most important change made was the reduction of the tariff rates in the bill as it passed the House to the same rates which now are in effect; these were enacted in 1916 in the so-called Hill bill. At hearings before both House and Senate committees strong emphasis was laid upon the importance of protecting the industry with a strong "secondary defense."

The House accepted the rates as did the Senate dyes sub-committee. The change in the full committee, it is understood, was made as a bid for Democratic support of the measure. Reduction of the duties in the bill to those now in effect enabled the committee to obtain a unanimous favorable report.

An effort to increase the rates probably will be made on the Senate floor. After passage by the Senate the bill will go back to the House for agreement on the Senate amendments. Representative Longworth, author of the original bill, already has been consulted by Senate members and has expressed approval of the bill and little difficulty is expected in the conference committee which will be appointed by the two bodies to iron out the differences.

The President already has put himself squarely on record as in favor of protection of the American dye industry and is expected promptly to sign the measure when it reaches him.

Section 38 of the army reorganization bill reported by the Senate Military Affairs Committee provides for the Chemical Warfare Service.

The permanent personnel of the Chemical Warfare Service shall hereafter consist of one Chief of Chemical Warfare, with the rank of brigadier-general, and one hundred and twenty-five officers, in grades from second lieutenant to colonel, inclusive, and one thousand two hundred enlisted men, in their appropriate grades, all of whom shall be detailed or assigned from the permanent personnel under the provisions of this Act. The reserve personnel of the Chemical Warfare Service shall consist of all reserve officers and reservists assigned thereto as provided for in this Act.

The Chief of the Service would be selected by the President for a period of four years, unless sooner removed, under the bill. Senator Wadsworth, chairman of the Military Affairs Committee, is confident that the measure will go through the Senate with the Chemical Service a separate department and not as advocated by Chief of Staff March, a subordinate branch of the Ordnance Department.

Beyond question the war with Germany has strongly stamped upon the minds of members of Congress the vital importance to the national safety and welfare of chemistry in practically all its branches and they are not willing to permit a branch of the war-making machine of the country, which is certainly destined to play so important a part in whatever wars come in the future, to be made simply a branch of another department of the War Department.

Following conclusion of its consideration of the dyestuffs bill the Senate Finance Committee immediately took up the sub-committee report on the bill providing for the protection of the chemical glassware, porcelain ware, scientific and surgical instruments. This bill introduced in the House by Representative Bacharach was passed by that body several months ago and has been before the Senate committee since that time. Action on this and other tariff bills which had been passed by the House was delayed, however, pending the disposition of the dye bill which was properly deemed the most important of the tariff measures.

Favorable report on the Bacharach glassware bill has now been ordered by the Finance Committee and it will be taken up on the Senate floor in the near future. Passage of this measure also is assured, there having developed no real opposition to it. The committee reported the bill without amendment.

The Federal Trade Commission has been active during the last month and has cited several chemical and dyestuff concerns on charges of commercial bribery. Practically all of these firms are located in New York City. The list of the firms cited does not include the names of the largest companies, but is confined for the most part to the dealers in dyestuffs. Hearings on several of the cases have been held before the Commission but as yet there have been no orders issued in the cases. Hearings before the Commission are not made public, only the result being given. Orders to cease and desist practices now indulged in by these firms are expected to be issued within a comparatively short time.

Representatives of the firm of Kuttroff and Pickhardt, dye