

TOWARD A UNITED NATIONS OF COSMETIC CHEMISTS *

By S. J. STRIANSE, President

IN THE year 1945, the American cosmetic chemists took a great step forward when they formed the Society of Cosmetic Chemists. The twelve alert and far-sighted founders of this Society had one common objective, and that was to increase the professional stature of the cosmetic chemist through technical advances and dissemination of the scientific information so fundamental to the growth of this industry.

In the twelve years that have passed since that historic conception in 1945, the cosmetic chemists, through this Society, have made tremendous strides. Let us review very briefly some of these accomplishments :

1. The Society has been built into an organisation of more than 600 members, taking in chemists from almost all of the major companies in the industry.

2. We have published regularly a journal whose material is abstracted in scientific publications, kept in important technical libraries, reprinted widely, and referred to in all serious work.

3. We have held meetings and seminars at which major papers have been presented, not only by chemists but by dermatologists, physicists, and other scientists.

4. We have sponsored special awards and medals through which outstanding workers have been honoured. Three years ago a Briton, William Poucher, received the U.S. Society's most distinguished honour, the Medal Award.

5. We have, in short, gained recognition for the cosmetic chemist as a man of science, who takes his place in the world of science.

6. Shortly after the Society in the U.S., the British Society of Cosmetic Chemists came into being. Its membership (some 300 in all) comes not only from the United Kingdom but from the far reaches of the Commonwealth. It, too, publishes a journal, which all of you and many others read. The *Journal of the Society of Cosmetic Chemists* is the only scientific publication published by two independent societies, with consecutive pagination, in two different countries—a most distinguished venture in international relations in itself.

These are all real accomplishments. I am sure we all agree that the cosmetic chemist has gone far along the road of co-operation and progress.

* Presented on November 12th and 20th, 1957, respectively, in Chicago and New York.

During the course of the past year, this growth of the Society continued, but manifested itself in a new and broader direction. Early in the year we (U.S.) honoured two British scientists for their work in gas chromatography by presenting to them the Society's Special Award. This was another step into the international scope of fundamental science. Then in July and August came the outstanding event of the year 1957. The first international meetings of cosmetic chemists were held in Paris, Geneva and London. It was during the meeting in Paris that the proposal was made by the French towards the formation of an International Federation of Societies of Cosmetic Chemists.

It is this International Federation and all its implications that is the real subject of my discussion. What we do in this area will undoubtedly have far-reaching effects on the future world status of our Society and of cosmetic chemists. Therefore, it is indeed important that we all give this proposal considerable thought.

To put this entire question into proper focus, let us go back to July 29th, 1957, in Paris where a meeting was called by the Société Française de Cosmétologie for the purpose of considering the formation of an International Federation of Societies of Cosmetology. Now get the name, Societies of Cosmetology! You know as well as I that cosmetology has an unscientific connotation in this country. Actually it encompasses beauty treatment and the practices of the beautician. The Continental European will tell you that cosmetology means the science of cosmetic chemistry; nevertheless, we should be opposed to being identified as cosmetologists. We will have more to say about this later.

The following countries were represented at this meeting: France, Great Britain, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Czechoslovakia and the United States. Mr. M. G. deNavarre and I represented the U.S., while Mr. J. Pickthall and Mr. F. Riley represented the British Society of Cosmetic Chemists.

The early proceedings of this meeting revealed that some of the foreign societies had mixed memberships, including hairdressers and beauticians in with their chemists. Dr. Rovesti, of the Italian Society of Cosmetology, said they had beauticians among their members, and claimed that his society must remain faithful to their beautician members. The Belgians claimed similar mixed membership, and one felt that some of the French and Swiss had a similar problem.

Please note that the Swiss members present at this meeting did not represent the group we are now sponsoring as the Society of Cosmetic Chemists of Switzerland. This very problem was further manifested by a proposal that CIDESCO, a society of chemists, beauticians, estheticiennes and other people engaged in the practice of beauty treatment as distinct

from the scientific aspects of cosmetics, be admitted to the federation as a full-fledged member group.

In expressing the U.S. point of view to this proposal, I insisted that I could see no common ground for the estheticienne and the cosmetic chemist. The American Society of Cosmetic Chemists would not be interested in a federation that included hairdressers and beauticians. This is an important point, and I feel that one of the prerequisites of such an organisation should be that the membership of the autonomous national societies include only chemists and other scientists who, by training and/or experience, meet the high membership prerequisites as are stipulated in our constitution and by-laws.

Mr. J. Pickthall, speaking for the British Society of Cosmetic Chemists, and some of the German delegates had a similar point of view, and so expressed themselves. The French finally agreed that societies devoted to beauty culture be not admitted or associated with the proposed international federation.

After this basic principle had been established, the French proceeded to lay the groundwork for the formation of the federation by describing nine points which constituted the purpose of this organisation.

Actually these nine propositions are broad statements that do not necessarily concur with our philosophy of operation, but for the record I feel they must be mentioned.

They were submitted as follows :

1. To develop research work in the fields of physics, chemistry, physical chemistry, biology and medicine, which work shall be directed towards the elaboration and the utilisation of beauty and hygiene products.
2. To ensure close co-operation among the national groups, to co-ordinate and assist their efforts to attain this common scientific goal.
3. To study all problems and questions which are subjects of their common concern.
4. To create and publish literature with an international character and to give it appropriate publicity.
5. To maintain on the international level close relations of mutual aid and of solidarity among researchers and technicians in the different scientific disciplines which border on, or affect, cosmetology, and to defend their material and moral interests.
6. Co-operation between cosmetic scientists of various countries and the safeguarding of marks and brands.

Note : Point 6 was struck from the record when the British and Americans both expressed the opinion that the federation should not concern itself with marks and brands.

7. To the greatest extent possible, to harmonise and standardise techniques as well as the use of raw materials.
8. To protect by all necessary means the quality of beauty products and their scientific character.
9. In a general way, to carry on all activities authorised by law, and coming directly or indirectly within the framework of the above paragraphs.

Now I am certain that after having heard the rationale for the existence of this federation as proposed by the French, you can all find some faults with a good number of the ideas expressed.

Will this federation further the aims of the British and American Societies on an international level ?

Will the professional status of the British and American cosmetic chemist increase as a result of this move, or will he be adversely affected ?

These are the basic questions which come to mind and which I think should be considered before any official action is undertaken.

Let us look at our present position on the world scene to-day.

Actually the British and we are the strongest and most scientifically advanced societies of cosmetic chemists in the world. Cosmetic chemists the world over have been looking to us for guidance in this direction. We have helped establish similar functioning societies in Denmark, Switzerland and Germany ; though newly formed, they are enthusiastic and energetic about modelling their operations along the same lines as the British and U.S. Societies.

Perhaps this approach of guiding the cosmetic chemists of the world to pattern their societies after ours is our rightful and most fruitful role in this international picture. On the other hand, to-day, when all scientists are thinking more and more in international terms, it appears that an international federation could serve as the medium through which the efforts of research workers, scholars, technologists and professional people of all countries associated with various scientific disciplines could make vital contributions to the future achievements of cosmetic chemists.

With this in mind I would like to suggest the following thoughts that may lead to a plan of action for this international grouping :

1. The name of the group should read as follows : (a) International Federation of Societies of Cosmetic Chemists, or (b) International Federation of Societies of Cosmetic Scientists.
2. The central office of this federation shall not be in Paris as suggested by the French but shall be in such city as may be designated by the General Assembly from year to year.
3. The Federation shall be composed of national groups entitled Societies of Cosmetic Chemists and not Societies of Cosmetology.

4. Membership of these national societies shall include only scientifically trained people who, by education and/or experience, qualify as cosmetic chemists or scientists.
5. The prevailing language of the federation shall be English and not French as now suggested.
6. A constitution shall be drawn up by a committee on international affairs which I have already appointed. In this direction all members are urged to make suggestions. This committee is headed up by M. G. deNavarre, supported by R. A. Kramer, J. H. Baker and myself.

In order further to crystallise our thinking, the possible functions of this federation might be the following :

1. To co-ordinate, by correspondence, interchange of information, and in other ways, the work and efforts of the autonomous national societies.
2. To encourage and to sponsor, by research grants, subsidies, and in other ways, fundamental research work by universities and by independent workers in any and all fields that may add to the knowledge of cosmetic science.
3. To cement relationships by reporting on activities in the various autonomous national societies.
4. To publish and publicise literature of an international scope, including bulletins, abstracts and reviews. To help research workers obtain from foreign lands information, literature, patents, and other aids as may be requested and as may be possible.
5. To exchange information on any standardised procedures that may be adopted with regard to analyses of raw materials or finished products, efficiency of products, etc., and to participate in any effort to adopt such procedures internationally.
6. To publicise within the national societies and in the technical and other press of the various countries the activities of the Societies in foreign lands.
7. To hold seminars and meetings on an international scale ; to invite speakers from foreign lands whenever feasible ; to give publicity to meetings well in advance so that foreign visitors may attend.
8. To sponsor awards of an international character for outstanding achievements in research, publication, or other types, on behalf of the cosmetic sciences.
9. To protect the professional standards of cosmetic chemists, except as may be restricted by the framework of the autonomous national societies, the laws of the lands in which they are located, and the interests of institutions or companies with which the members are or have been affiliated.

I know as well as you that these lofty ideals cannot be attained overnight. They will not come as easily as they have come from my lips, nor will they be accomplished without the magic ingredient, money. The British Society and we must find a way to use the influence of our prestige on an international scale to foster among our co-workers in other lands the principles which have been successful for us.

Certainly it would not seem right blindly to shut our eyes to the opportunity which now presents itself. On the other hand, the mechanism offered may not be the best one from the British and U.S. points of view. The whole concept gives the cosmetic chemist much food for thought.

I urge you to consider the opportunity, to think out in your own terms how an international cosmetic chemists group will benefit you. Moreover, I urge you to let the members of the committee know how you feel so they may be guided by the best thinking of the membership.