

S. W. P.—The Best Paint Made

THAT is a strong, broad statement, but is a fact. It can be backed up both by argument and by experience.

Experience is the best proof and the representative who wants to do his best in the sale of S. W. P. must have some personal experience in the actual use of the goods and learn all he can from the experience of others.

Argument to be forceful must come from knowledge. Know the goods and you can talk and sell them. Don't depend upon generalities or salesmanship alone. Know and talk the detail facts.

Prepared paint is more in demand and is becoming more and more appreciated every day. The painter and the consumer are taking a more active interest in prepared paint. There are three probable reasons for this—the continued good results obtained from good paints, the persistent advertising of the manufacturers, and the agitation brought about by the enactment of paint legislation in various States. The formula of paint has been brought into the limelight and given unusual and undue prominence, so that

now, in addition to talking results, the paint man must talk formula. If he thoroughly understands what he is talking about there is no reason why he should not talk it; the danger lies in his having hold of a half truth only and being unable to properly present his subject.

It is the object of these next few pages to give a clear statement of what a prepared paint formula really means and some of the most important considerations that we have had to meet in making and marketing S. W. P.

What is stated here is based upon over thirty years' experience in striving conscientiously to make The Sherwin-Williams Paint always as good as it could be made. It expresses what we have learned by seeking improvement, not by waiting to have it thrust upon us by experimenting and searching year after year to make better paint by never being satisfied.

If we had started out thirty years ago simply to make paint that would be "good enough" we would not know anywhere near as much about paint-making as we do today. The founders of this business had an unusually strong belief in the business value of good quality. They believed that the best paint would sell best. They further believed that to make the

best paint they would have to keep experimenting and investigating to be sure they were not overlooking anything that could improve the quality. It was their aim not only to make the best paint, but to make it first—to be leaders in paint knowledge and paint quality.

That spirit has been kept alive through all the years of our growth and success, and we have never allowed any consideration of profit, quick sales, or any other thing to change our ideas or swerve us from that fundamental policy. Time and time again, as our experiments and our knowledge showed us how, we changed our formula to improve the goods. We still stand ready to make any change that we are convinced will unmistakably improve them, but our knowledge of the paint business and our belief in the best quality are too well grounded for us to make a change for any other reason.

As the formula of The Sherwin-Williams Paint stands today, it represents the best paint value on the market, and not only that but also the best we know how to produce. It is better today than at any time in the past and whatever is used in its composition is put in solely for the sake of improving the paint.

To cover in detail the years of experiment and changes that have led up to the present formula would take much more time than the average consumer would care to devote, and it would be a technical recital interesting only to the expert paint maker. But there are certain points in the development of our business that we wish to bring out.

We have always believed that the consumer should be more interested in what a paint does and has done than in what it is made of. If the results prove the quality and value, what difference from the consumer's point of view do the exact ingredients and proportions make? If you are surely getting your money's worth, the exact formula is of mighty little importance. But while we have believed this should be the consumer's attitude, we have known it hasn't been generally. There has been an inherited faith that certain paint materials are the only legitimate ones and that anything else is adulteration.

For many years the principal material so idolized has been white lead. Before the days of prepared paint it was the only legitimate painting material known. Mixed by hand with linseed oil and the necessary color, turpentine and drier, it was all that the

painter and consumer had to use. It was not satisfactory, yet the habit of using it was so strong that it made the introduction of any improvement extremely difficult.

When prepared paints were first put on the market they were considered inferior substitutes for white lead, as indeed many of them were. The very early paints were in no sense legitimate painting material, and about all the good they ever did was to embody an idea, which in the hands of thoughtful and honest men was capable of splendid development. But the development of this idea was slow. Good prepared paint as we know it today was not possible thirty or even twenty years ago, because the value of the various materials and their uses was not known then. The knowledge of paint-making has been a gradual growth; yet it was not long after the first attempts at it that the real competition between prepared paints and hand mixed lead and oil started, and that many consumers began to find out the advantages of good prepared paint over lead and oil. As the knowledge of paint-making advanced and the formulas were improved, the use of prepared paints increased. But through it all and in spite of it all, there were many who clung from habit and preju-

dice to white lead and refused to recognize any other pigments mixed with it as anything but adulterants.

Later on zinc white began to loom up in the minds of the consumers as a legitimate material to mix with white lead. This came about through the persistently good results obtained with paints containing zinc white, and through the advertising of the makers of zinc white and those paint makers who were using it largely in their products. The education of the public so far as zinc white is concerned seems now almost complete, and the use of that material in prepared paints is accepted by the majority of consumers as a necessary ingredient, without which the best paint cannot be made.

But white lead and zinc white are not the only legitimate white pigments. They are simply the two most largely used in the manufacture of all good paints, and most talked about and advertised. From the beginning of our own manufacture of prepared paint we have recognized the importance of certain inert materials intelligently used in the making of good paint. To recognize their legitimate use and to set our laboratories and testing rooms to the task of finding which inert material was best and just how it should be used was one

The Progress of Zinc White.

The "Inert Materials."

*The Purity
Idea in
Paint.*

thing to advertise what we were doing was quite another thing. All of these inert materials, if they were known at all to the public, had bad names. They were called "adulterants," "cheapeners," and "make-weights," as indeed they might be called with good reason where used in excessive quantities in house paints. They were not popular, as white lead was and as zinc white had grown to be. But to the technical and honest paint manufacturer they were just as useful in good paint, though used in much smaller percentages.

With us the question as to what we should do about advertising the use of a small percentage of inert material was a very serious one. We recognized first of all that the use of the material would not be readily understood by the general public, being rather more technical than it was then practical to exploit in advertising. Besides this there had grown up a false idea of paint "purity." The word "purity" had been used to conjure with. First, it was applied to strictly pure or "straight" carbonate of lead; later, it was used by many paint makers as the easiest way to create an impression in favor of their goods; and so good, bad and indifferent paints were soon advertised as "pure." Gradually, with

the increased favor shown by the public for zinc white, the impression was given in much of the advertising that "pure" paint was composed of lead and zinc alone. The constant harping on that idea finally brought the consumer to consider the addition of anything else, in any proportion, as an out-and-out adulteration.

This was of course an unreasonable attitude. Paint purity didn't and couldn't mean anything. Paint is a mixture or combination, and its quality depends quite as much upon the percentage of the ingredients used as upon the ingredients themselves. The right idea in trying to fix paint value is to talk quality, not purity.

It can be readily understood that the undue importance given "purity" made it all the more difficult for us, in the days when we were young and far from powerful, to come out and fight the prejudices and beliefs of consumers.

We have been from the start strictly honest in the manufacture of The Sherwin-Williams Paint, and we desired to be just as honest in our advertising. We frequently considered taking the bull by the horns and, in spite of prejudice and all, coming out strong with our talking points for the use of a small percentage of inert material

*Our Ad-
vertising Po-
and Clay
for S. W.*

in combination with the lead and zinc. But each time discretion seemed "the better part of valor." It looked as though we would only be borrowing trouble, and so we continued to go after business and advertise more on the basis of what The Sherwin-Williams Paint could give in results, rather than what it was made of. In other words, we gave the consumer the best paint we knew how to make, better than he had ever had before, but did not tell him what it contained. Our guarantee on each package was and still is a guarantee that The Sherwin-Williams Paint, "when properly used, will not crack, flake or chalk off and will cover more surface, work better, wear longer and permanently look better than other paints, including pure white lead and oil"—not a guarantee as to what it is made of. This has been and should always be what the consumer is interested in.

We did claim, as we had a perfect right to do, that it was a lead and zinc paint, but we were careful not to be guilty of claiming that it contained only lead and zinc. It was, as it is today, a lead and zinc paint in distinction from those paints containing a large proportion of other materials. The proportion of inert material used in S. W. P. is so small (less than ten

per cent) that the basic character of the pigments is very little changed by it.

This was the situation when a "pure" paint law was put into effect, with the best of intentions, in the State of North Dakota early in 1906. The law provided that any paint containing other ingredients than lead, zinc, linseed oil, turpentine and pure colors should be labeled to show the amount and kind of other ingredients used. Paints containing no other ingredients should go unlabeled. In effect, this law branded any paint bearing a formula label as impure, the legislature having taken upon itself to decide what materials make the best paint and what materials are adulterants.

Such a law, of course, put our old proposition up to us in a new way. There were two modes of settling it—either label our paint and start the campaign of education we had been putting off so long, or go back on our principle of making the best paint we know how, drop the use of inert material, and conform to the legalized "pure" paint of the North Dakota legislature.

We chose the former. It meant harder work and a stronger fight, but we believe it was the wisest choice for us in the long run.

We know we have a better paint than any that can be made by adhering solely to lead and zinc as specified in the law. We know it has paid us always to produce the best paint we can. We care more for the future reputation of our goods than for any immediate advantage we can obtain by conforming to prejudice.

It would be easy for us to make a paint of lead and zinc—and a fairly good paint, too—that would cost us less and on which we could make more money than The Sherwin-Williams Paint. But though a fairly good paint we would always know it was not the best we could make—and with our ideas about business it would be hard to put whole hearted enthusiasm into the sale of such a paint.

Some of the lesser manufacturers might easily do as they have—change their formulas to avoid the label—because they have never been in the habit of counting quality as the first essential of the paint business. Some of the paints that can be put up and sold as "pure" in the eyes of the North Dakota law are so poor in quality that they will soon bring only disaster to handler and user, discredit upon themselves and upon the law. Others, of course, are fairly good paints, but not

one of them is equal to The Sherwin-Williams Paint.

We firmly believe that the splendid reputation of The Sherwin-Williams Paint for good painting results counts for more in our favor than any appeal we could make to prejudice. We know many who say, "I don't care what S. W. P. is made of, I know it gives better results than any other paint on the market." They seem to understand that we are honest and conscientious enough to take care of the "what-it's-made-of" in a thoroughly satisfactory manner.

At the same time there are many who wish to be and have to be reasoned with, who want to know why we use inert material and what it does to the lead and zinc and oil.

In the first place, we want to remove from the minds of all any ideas they may have that the inert material is used as an adulterant, to cheapen the cost of the paint or to allow us a larger profit. If such were our intention, we would certainly use more than 10 per cent. Its use by us is analogous to the use of alloys in the composition of metals; as copper and silver are used to harden the gold of gold coin, and as tin is used with lead to form type metal. Gold and silver cannot be used practically in the arts

unless alloyed with copper." Carbon is an important factor in the composition of steel. The percentage of carbon used makes a great difference in the kind and quality of steel produced. Copper in gold is an improvement in the gold up to a certain point, beyond that point it simply cheapens the commercial value.

In the Sherwin-Williams paint the lead and zinc, in proper proportion, form the basis of the pigment. To these is added a small percentage of silicate of magnesium as an alloy, to improve the oil-absorbing qualities of the combination without in any way detracting from the other essential qualities of the pigment.

*Linseed Oil
as Affected
by Lead,
Zinc and
Silicate of
Magnesium.*

Linseed oil is really the most important ingredient in paint, although it hasn't been the most advertised or talked about. It is the life of the paint. The kind and quality of the oil is of more consequence than anything else.

The pigment performs two offices—to thicken or absorb the oil and to cover up or color the surface being painted. If everything else were equal, the pigment that would absorb the most oil and at the same time properly cover up the surface would make the best paint.

But no single pigment will do this. Lead alone won't, because it takes

too much lead to a gallon of oil to get the proper painting consistency and also because lead is the most chemically active of all pigments when combined with oil, forming a lead soap that produces a soft, chalky surface.

Zinc alone won't do it, because while the zinc absorbs more oil it doesn't cover up quite as well and also because the painted surface produced with it is too hard, easily cracking and scaling, and is unsatisfactory to paint over.

A proper combination of lead and zinc balances most of the faults of the two. The resultant painted surface is not so soft as to be chalky nor so hard as to crack and to leave a poor surface for repainting.

Silicate of magnesium is an inert pigment that has absolutely no chemical action either upon the oil or upon other pigments with which it may be combined. It has very little covering-up power. Its chief value is in the fact that a very little of it in a gallon of oil will give you a good painting consistency. It has large oil-absorbing power.

A small percentage, therefore, of silicate of magnesium mixed into the lead and zinc makes it possible to put in much more oil without in any way displacing any of the benefits derived

100 lb. of
oil will
cover
100 sq. ft.

from the lead and zinc. The resultant paint is richer in oil, the life and real strength of the paint. The value of the oil has been increased, extended, or multiplied, and the covering-up power, appearance and working qualities of the pigment in no way diminished, while its spreading power has been increased.

There is a further advantage in the use of silicate of magnesium that would not be obtained by any other inert material. It combines with oil in what may be termed a true paint way. Mixed with oil it looks and acts like a good paint mixture. A painter letting it flow off the end of a spatula would say, "That's good stuff." For the purposes of an alloy it is unsurpassed.

But like copper in gold or in silver, an overdose of any inert material cheapens the paint. It becomes an adulterant instead of an alloy when used in larger proportions than we use it.

Unfortunately all paint advertising has been putting the cart before the horse by placing so much stress upon the pigment portion of paint. The emphasis has been misplaced. It should have been put on the oil. Linseed oil is really the foundation of paint and everything depends upon its quality and character and the way its true

value is preserved in the final paint mixture. All other ingredients that go into good paint must be figured out on the basis of how they affect the oil. Turpentine, drier, pigment and color are put into good paint in such a way as to detract as little as possible from the natural life of the oil film.

The history of good paint-making has therefore been an effort to get as much oil value as possible into a gallon of paint. From what we have already said here, it can be seen that the question of the use of lead, zinc and inert material has been and is simply a question of establishing and increasing the oil value of paint.

In our own laboratories and testing rooms we have spared no money or trouble in our effort to improve the oil-life of S. W. P. without injury to the other important considerations. These other considerations are the capacity or covering-up power of the paint; the working and drying qualities; the condition of the surface for repainting when it becomes necessary to renew or change the color; and the tone and color—the good appearance of the finished job. All of these are essential to good paint. They must always be taken into account when figuring on the life or durability of the

*Linseed Oil
the Real
Strength of
Paint.*

paint. But after they have been provided for, the more life and durability that can be added, the better the paint will satisfy the consumer who seeks true economy in his painting.

Pure linseed oil, if used alone as a paint, would give the greatest durability, but as it is transparent, it would not cover up or color the surface to which it is applied; being liquid, it would, of course, soak into the wood. To give it color and opacity and to thicken it so as to keep part of it on the surface when applied as paint, it must be mixed with pigment.

What Paint Needs Besides Oil-Life.

The Nine Items that Give Quality to S. W. P.

At the very start, therefore, the manufacture of paint is a compromise by which you sacrifice some of the durability of the oil in order to get rid of its transparency and give it a color that will remain on the surface.

If what was said further back about the effect of lead, zinc and silicate of magnesium upon the oil be brought to mind now, the points we were making then will perhaps be a little clearer and the true value of silicate of magnesium more readily appreciated.

But pigments or coloring matter are not the only ingredients in paint that affect the oil and that have to be given close consideration in good paint-making. In The Sherwin-Williams Paint

we consider there are nine big items that are responsible for its quality and the oil-life it gives. They are:

- (1) Pure old-aged linseed oil of our own manufacture,
- (2) The right proportion of lead and zinc,
- (3) A little silicate of magnesium,
- (4) An exceptionally good quality of drier,
- (5) Pure spirits of turpentine,
- (6) Thorough grinding and mixing,
- (7) Conscientious and accurate supervision by skilled men,
- (8) Honesty of purpose,
- (9) Brains.

Each of these nine items has a direct bearing upon the quality of S. W. P. Let us look back at them more or less in detail.

Of items two and three we have already said enough; of item one we have said very little. It is too important, by far, to be left until the end and should always have the first place in the consideration of paint values. We hope the day will soon come when consumers in thinking about paint, will think about linseed oil first.

Early in our manufacture of prepared paints we began to look toward linseed oil itself for some of the improvement we were seeking in the oil-life of paint. Commercially pure linseed oil, the best we could buy, we soon found could be made much better

Linseed Oil of Our Own

by proper aging and refining methods. We did all that could be done in this respect for many years and finally commenced the manufacture of our own oil. By all odds this was the most distinct advance we had ever made in the interest of good paint. Since our own mills were started the improvement in our oil has been very marked. It has been a surprise even to ourselves. We have found it is just as possible to work for better quality from the start in the manufacture of linseed oil as it is in paint or varnish. In the selection of the seed, the re-cleaning after it reaches the mill, in the process of extracting the oil, the filtering and aging—all the way through there are fine opportunities to improve the quality of the finished product. One of the little things that shows the possibilities is the fact that Sherwin-Williams linseed oil cake, exported as a by-product for cattle food, is sold at a premium on account of its cleanliness and because the last drop of oil has not been taken out of it.

The oil in S. W. P. is practically free from the mucilaginous and other foreign substances that still remain in the best pure linseed oil of commerce and that help to destroy the life of the paint.

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Another important improvement that we made in the oil-life of The Sherwin-Williams Paint was in the kind and quality of the drier we used. A drier is necessary in all good paint to hasten the oxidation of the oil, the natural oxidation by the air being too slow for practical purposes. Unfortunately most driers are harmful to the oil—"burning the life out of it," as the painter says.

By working out an entirely new drier made on a linseed oil base without the use of resin or gum of any kind, we were able to greatly increase the oil-life of S. W. P. We consider that the drier used in S. W. P. in no way injures the life of the oil—it has any effect besides that coming from its drying properties it is beneficial. When spread on glass and allowed to dry, this drier forms as elastic and durable a coating as linseed oil itself.

Pure spirits of turpentine can be purchased in the open market, but there are many substitutes of inferior quality, and we have always found it necessary to safeguard our interests by strict chemical analysis in our laboratories. The turpentine in S. W. P. is only a small part of the total liquid and is used to aid the drying of the oil and to keep the paint from "running."

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*Efficient
Grinding
and Mixing*

when in the proper consistency for use. It must be pure to reduce as much as possible its effect upon the life of the oil.

The thorough and efficient grinding and mixing of paint is a very important consideration—one that is given far too little thought by most users of paint, especially by those who use hand-mixed lead and oil. The final result after the ingredients have been chosen depends largely upon the method of combining them and the thoroughness of the grinding and mixing process. In lead and oil the work is done by a stick or paddle in the hands of a painter. In prepared paints it is done by machinery. In S. W. P. this machinery is of our own design and manufacture, giving the finest grinding and most thorough mixing. If, as was explained before, the value of the pigments depends upon the way they combine with the oil, it can be easily understood that the more finely the pigment particles are divided by grinding and the more thoroughly they are mixed with the oil, the better they can do their work. Uniform grinding, by which the paint mass is of equal density, and thorough mixing, by which the pigment becomes thoroughly impregnated with the oil, are important factors in the quality of S. W. P.

To get the best work out of the machines and to properly and accurately combine the various ingredients, it is necessary to have skilled men. Materials, machinery and men are the three factors in good paint-making, and the men are by no means the least important. The men who make S. W. P. have had lifelong training in their work and have learned to give full consideration to all details, such as accuracy, cleanliness and uniformity. They have been "brought up" on the idea that quality is the most essential feature of our business and that the paint they are sealing up in the cans holds all the reputation of the Company.

The last two items in our list of the things S. W. P. is made of are "Honesty of Purpose" and "Brains." The brains give us the knowledge of what will make the best and most economical paint; the honesty of purpose holds us to it. We have high ideals—high aims. Business with us is something more than an opportunity to make money. The reputation for high quality goods is quite as important to us, and we are jealous of the position we hold. To be successful we must be the best and most reliable concern of the kind, as well as the largest. And

In Conclusion.

if we couldn't be the largest we would prefer to be the best.

In all respects we can see no present way of making a better paint than The Sherwin-Williams Paint. But we are still studying, and we shall never overlook an opportunity to improve; but as was said in the beginning, we shall for no consideration take a step backward.

With the present agitation of the paint question, brought about by the enactment of paint laws, we desire to make our position perfectly clear, but we feel that nothing we can say in print is so good an argument for the consumer to be guided by as the reputation of our goods and the splendid results they are giving all consumers.

We believe merit wins, and will always win. The success of S. W. P. in the past has been due to its merits and we will strive for all time to maintain its supremacy in the paint field. We are not content with being the largest paint company in the world, but we are content with being the best. We are not content with being the largest paint company in the world, but we are content with being the best. We are not content with being the largest paint company in the world, but we are content with being the best.

The Right Use of

S. W. P.

THE Sherwin-Williams representatives and agents should study to be proficient in the right use of paint, for the use of paint is as important to the consumer as the paint itself. Every job of painting has four parts to it, the paint, the surface and the method of application and the condition to which the finished surface is subjected. We furnish the paint only, with such general directions for its application as it is wise and possible to give. For the specific use of each lot sold the dealer and the consumer are responsible.

The most successful house paint dealer is the one who thoroughly understands the use of paint under various conditions, and sells S. W. P. and recommends its use accordingly. He must have backbone enough to refuse to sell it where he knows the conditions are unfavorable or that unreasonable results are expected. The majority of dealers handling paint either lack the knowledge or are too keen on making a sale to safeguard themselves against improper use of the goods. That is where the educational