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MAR. 27, 1954



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FILTER TIPS, biting more and more deeply into "regulars," are creating a...

Field for Fibers

Cellulose-acetate and cotton—cigarette filter ingredients—are cashing in on trend to filter-tip smokes.

As the controversy rages over the effect of smoking on health (BW—Dec. 5'53,p58), textile fiber producers smile sympathetically at their cigarette-manufacturing brothers. But smile they do, for the talk is booming filter tips—and filters mean textile fibers.

So far, two fibers have been used in cigarette filters: cellulose-acetate and cotton. In terms of total consumption of both fibers, the new market is still a baby. But it's growing at a healthy clip. While total cigarette consumption dropped in 1953, consumption of filter tips—and of the fibers that go into them—more than doubled over 1952. Filter tips' share of the cigarette market went up from 1.6% in 1952 to 3.4% in 1953.

• **Long Run**—It's a sure bet that this growth will continue throughout 1954. Filter-tip producers are selling all they can make—and they say that lack of machinery is the only thing holding them back from making more. This month, R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., second biggest tobacco company, announced that it's jumping on the filter-tip cigarette bandwagon. This leaves American Tobacco Co., the biggest, as the only one of the majors without a filter-tip smoke—and American is known to be experimenting with filters. Small wonder that fiber producers are eying this market with a hungry look.

• **Ingredients**—What kinds of filters do

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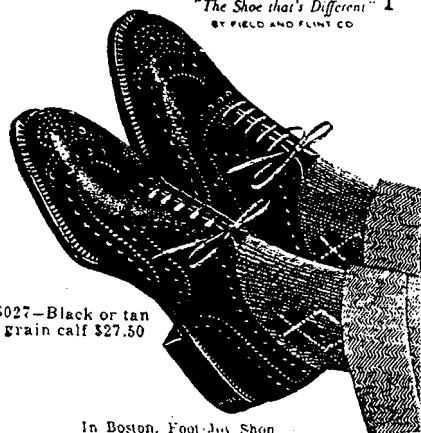
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the cigarettes use? Brown & Williamson's Viceroy (the leader among filter cigarettes) and Liggett & Myers' L&M use an acetate filter made by Tennessee Eastman. TE—Which jumped into the filter game early and is now the leading producer—makes a tow of fibers, a long rope-like affair consisting of 20,000 acetate filaments, each about half the diameter of an average human hair. The 20,000 fibers is what gives Viceroy its advertising slogan of 20,000 filtering surfaces.

P. Lorillard Co.'s Kent uses a blend of acetate, cotton, and a mineral fiber, a kind of asbestos, called crocidolite. Benson & Hedges' Parliament uses cotton alone. Only the inner circle knows yet what the Reynolds filter is going to be: at midweek the company was still keeping it a closely guarded secret.

In all, a little more than 3-million lb. of acetate fiber went into filter cigarettes in 1953—about 1% of total acetate production for the year. About 335,000 lb. of cotton were used in filters.

• Guesswork—Of course, a lot of questions remain to be answered about filters. The arguments (in private and in the advertising) over which is the best fiber or blend of fibers are long and loud. Cigarette makers are handicapped by the fact that they still don't know what they want to take out of the smoke. Filters take out tars and nicotine, but which—if either—is harmful? Another controversial item is whether you get better filters with fibers laid parallel, as in Viceroy's and L&M, or in random directions, as in Parliaments and Kents.



Strike Victim

More than 36,000 bbl. of whiskey spent a day on the Philadelphia docks this week, as longshoremen staged a "holiday" in sympathy with the International Longshoremen's Assn. strike in New York.