

Our next issue

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Geigy has likewise made an important name for itself in the field of medicine. Among its most noteworthy developments since it set up the Pharmaceutical Division in 1947, are Butazolidin, a highly effective anti-arthritic agent, Medomin, a tranquilizer and is a presently marketing Preludin, an anti-obesity product.

Geigy inevitably entered the industrial chemicals field, in 1948, and set up a separate division for its operations. The aforementioned optical bleaches were the product of this division which also makes auxiliary products for the soap, cosmetic and textile industries.

Thus, in this four-fold manner does Geigy contribute greatly to better living for people everywhere. Geigy looks forward to similar achievements during its next 200 years.

* * *

The world-wide chemical complex, the highlights of whose accomplishments are briefly described above, had a humble beginning in 1758, in the venerable town of Basle, where a young merchant, Johann Rudolph Geigy opened a trading house to deal in colouring materials such as indigo, blue and yellow dyewoods and quinine bark; sudorific herbs, purgatives, and other medicinal substances; coffee, pepper, nutmeg and other spices.

Shortly afterward, young Geigy joined forces with an apothecary and started a line of pharmaceuticals. The market for dyestuffs was growing apace, while the demand for medicinals was comparatively meagre, so the firm concentrated on dyestuffs and other materials more in demand.

In 1830, Carl Geigy, the founder's grandson, decided to shift from being strictly a trader in raw materials to an actual producer of dyeing powders, so he built a mill in Basle, where imported dyewoods were pulverized and sold to the textile trade.

By 1856, the company had grown successfully, and Geigy converted from this primitive operation to a steam plant for improved and expanded production. By this time Johann Rudolph Geigy, a fourth generation descendant of the founder, was the firm's head. In that same momentous year, William H. Perkins, young English scientist, revolutionized the dyestuff industry when he synthesized the first coal tar dye, Mauveine. Three years later, Geigy's scientists, prodded by the head of the company who envisioned a great future for dyestuffs, synthesized their first dye.

Geigy financed a former associate, J. J. Muller, in the building of a factory to produce the so-called aniline dyes. This factory was so successful, Geigy brought it outright.

In the 1880's, Geigy set up its own research division to develop new dyes. In 1888, Geigy engaged Traugott Sandmeyer to head its scientific research division. He produced a long line of new dyestuffs which firmly established the Geigy firm as one of the most important in the highly specialized field in Europe.

As the firm expanded production, Geigy sought new markets and built new plants in Russia, France and Germany. Sales offices were established in such far-apart places as India and New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Toronto.

In 1901, the firm became a stock company, and in 1914 it adopted the name of J. R. Geigy SA, by which the parent company is still known. The first Geigy company in the U.S. was formed in 1903. Up to World War I, the company merely imported and sold dyestuffs produced by the parent company in Switzerland. During World War I, and afterwards, when supplies were cut from Switzerland, Geigy acquired production facilities in the United States, and eventually founded new subsidiary companies in England and started operations in Italy.

Following World War I, Geigy became associated with the Cincinnati Chemical Works, in Ohio, which has been expanded to Tom's River, New Jersey and is known as Tom's River Cincinnati Chemical Corporation.

Thanks to its work with DDT insecticides the company became established as a major factor in the production of pesticides. Its plant in McIntosh, Alabama, is one of the largest American producers of DDT, and other agricultural chemical specialties. The Pharmaceutical Division was formed in 1947, to reach the medical profession with new drugs coming out of Geigy laboratories.

In 1948, Geigy acquired the Alrose Chemical Company, and created the Industrial Chemical Division. This division has a plant in Cranston, R.I., where they make auxiliary products for the soap, cosmetic and textile industries. Geigy's most recent expansion has been in the Textile Pigment Printing field and is presently manufacturing these popular products in the Cranston, R.I. plant.

Up until the summer of 1956, the headquarters of the American Geigy Company had always been in New York City. Then the company moved to a specially built complex of ultra-modern buildings at Ardsley, New York, 20 miles north of Grand Central. One of the most interesting features of this new plant is the magnificent laboratory conducted by the Dyestuffs Division.

Geigy also maintains a warehouse and mixing plant at Bayonne, N.J.

Today, the Geigy organization includes more than forty separate companies, all operating as subsidiaries of the parent company, J. R. Geigy S.A., Basle, Switzerland. Geigy offices, plants and subsidiaries are located in every major country of the world. The U.S. company, Geigy Chemical Corporation, with its four divisions, has branch offices and laboratories in Charlotte, N.C., Chattanooga, Tenn., Chicago, Ill., Los Angeles, Calif., Newton Upper Falls, Mass., Philadelphia, Pa. and Portland, Ore. There's also a Canadian branch office in New Toronto, Ont., Canada.

Geigy looks forward to a future in which it will continue to make even greater contributions towards a better world.

OUR NEXT ISSUE

Our next issue will be published on Friday, 26th February 1960. We take this opportunity of thanking the following subscribers for their kind and helpful donations over and above their subscription: G. E. Suter, E. von Bergen, P. Schnetz, H. Kunz, A. E. Wehrli, Armand — Roger Tissot, W. Goldmann, G. Keller, W. Weber, M.A. Mauch-Modica, Mrs. Th. (Johannesburg), J. B. Brutsch.

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