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Report of Regional Editor: 11th International Macromolecular Symposium—Polymers and Light

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The 11th International Macromolecular Symposium on Polymers and Light was held under the chairmanship of Doctor R. Darms (Ciba-Geigy AG, Basle) in Interlaken, Switzerland on September 15–17, 1993. The symposium was organized by the New Swiss Chemical Society and the Polymer Group of Switzerland. The Organizing Committee consisted of the famous swiss experts in the area of Physics and Chemistry of Polymers. They were Professor H. J. Kausch (Federal Polytechnic School of Lausanne), Professor J. Meissner and Professor U. W. Suter (High Technical School of Zurich), Professor P. Muller (Geneva University), Professor M. Neuenschwander (Bern University), and Doctor H. J. Schultze (EMS-Chemie, Domat/Ems).

The symposium aimed at giving the participants insight into Science and Technology of a field, that had gained increasing significance over the last few years and that would continue to challenge chemists, physicists and engineers at universities and in industry.

About 60 scientists from 8 countries made contribution in the symposium. The opening fundamental lecture of Professor M. S. Wrighton (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, USA) was tendentiously entitled "Polymers and Light: Challenge and Perspectives." The speaker reviewed problems, which concerned with polymer-light interactions. Doctor C. G. Wilson (IBM Almaden Research Center, San Jose) considered advances in organic photo-imaging systems. The final fundamental lecture aroused the major interest. It was the lecture of Professor D. Haarer (the University of Bayreuth, Germany) on Linear and Nonlinear Light-Chromophore Interactions.

The participants expressed different opinions about the exhibition, which was held in Hotel "Victoria Jungfrau" on the occasion of Conference. Hildegard Tolkmitt (Dusseldorf, Germany) presented his collection entitled "Intuitive Polymers—Light and Colour in Sculpture.

Problems of polymerization and polymer degradation were considered on the second day of the symposium. The lecture of Dr. N. Buhler (Ciba-Geigy AG,

Fribourg, Switzerland) dealt with new materials by photopolymerization, while Professor Ch. Decker (National High School of Chemistry in Mulhouse, France) gave the lecture on Photoinitiated Curing of Multifunctional Polymers.

There were wide discussed the lecture of Doctor W. Kranig (BASF Lacke und Farben AG, Munster-Hiltrup, Germany) on Radiation Curing in Coatings), and the lecture of Dr. M. Sebald (Siemens AG, Erlangen, Germany) on Photolithography at the Limits of Optical Resolution.

Two reviews should be especially mentioned. These are the lectures of well-known experts on photodegradation and photostabilization of polymers, who are Doctor H. Zweifel (Ciba-Geigy AG, Basle, Switzerland) and Doctor R. Wolf (SANDOZ AG, Huningue, France). The speakers described last achievements of the Research Centres of aforesaid Companies in fields of study of photodegradation and photostabilization of polymers of different nature. The mechanism of effect of photostabilizers under polymer-light interaction were considered in details.

The enliven discussion was inspired by the lecture of Professor H. van den Bergh (Federal Polytechnic School of Lausanne, Switzerland) on Phototherapy and Photo-detection of Cancer as well as by the lecture of Doctor St. Fodor (Affymax, Palo Alto, CA, USA) on Photodegradation as Technical Opportunity. Dr. Fodor described several methods of modification of polymeric materials through application of photodegradation. The lecture of Professor J. H. Wendorff (Phylipps-University, Marburg, Germany) concerned with the study of polymers for optical components. Doctor M. Dettenmaier (Max Plank Institute for Polymer Research, Mainz, Germany) considered the effect of structure on the scattering losses of polymer optical fibre materials.

Two lectures, which were presented in the Optics Session, were of great interest and inspired the wide discussion. They were the lecture of Professor P. Gunter (High Technical School of Zurich) on Nonlinear Optics in Organic Materials, and the lecture of Doctor G. R. Mohlmann (AKZO Electronics Products b.v., Arnhem, the Netherlands) on NLO—Polymers and their Application in Devices.

The final session was specified as more applications. It consisted of two lectures. The first was the lecture of Professor U. P. Wild (High Technical School of Zurich) on Spectral Hole-Burning: Information Storage and Processing, and the second was the lecture of Doctor H. Kiess (Paul Scherrer Institute, Zurich, Switzerland) on Polymers for Solar Energy.

We should emphasize the high level of the symposium and wide opportunities for practical application of the results, which were reported in plenary lectures. The free discussions made possible to clarify the most essential points of these lectures. However, we think, that the narrow circle of participants is the disadvantage of this symposium. The number of pre-ordered lectures was limited, and, for example, nobody from former USSR did not receive an invitation to contribute in the symposium. Probably, it may be explained by the fact, that former Soviet scientists make application for participation, but then do not come, mostly for financial reasons.

Unfortunately, the Proceedings of the Symposium were not published by the Organizing Committee, although such proceedings would be very useful for wide circle of readers, who make a research in the area of Physics and Chemistry of Polymers.