PERSONAL

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The president of Hazleton Laboratories believes strongly in greater use of the biological sciences to evaluate chemical safety

Lloyd W. Hazleton

Born Feb. 4, 1911, at Chelan Falls, Wash.; University of Washington, Seattle, B.S. in Pharmacy, 1933; M.S., 1937; Ph.D. in Pharmacology, 1939. Georgetown University Medical School, Instructor in Pharmacology, 1939–40. George Washington University, Ass't Prof. Pharmacology, 1940–45; Assoc. Prof. 1945–46. Founder of Hazleton Laboratories, Falls Church, Va., in 1946, and chief executive to date; president since the company's incorporation in 1953.

VISITORS to the office of Lloyd W. Hazleton are likely to find him in an open-collar sport shirt, working with an air of relaxation that is thoroughly deceptive. For the president of Hazleton Laboratories is widely known as a very busy man, and he enjoys a professional reputation of the sort that simply does not come with "taking it easy."

There has been little time for taking it easy since Hazleton established his unique organization just over a decade ago. Business has been good, and growing pains have been perennial; in addition, Hazleton has been increasingly in demand as a lecturer, and through his broadening circle of business and professional contacts in this country and abroad has become a seasoned globe-trotter.

Possibly more than any other man, Lloyd Hazleton is a zealous missionary in behalf of greater application of the biological sciences in evaluating the safety of chemicals for all purposes. It is Hazleton's belief that safety studies should be designed not merely to cover one facet of the chemical's behavior—e.g., LD50—but to provide knowledge of the entire biological response to exposure. What the chemical and food processing industries need is not just "toxicity tests," Hazleton insists, but broad studies—groups of specific studies—designed to determine how chemicals can be safely used in growing crops and in processing foods. One of the chemical industry's biggest problems, he feels, is its limited knowledge of biological effects—a field of knowledge that is of great importance since every product of the industry must at some time come into contact with biological —often human—systems.

It was largely to supply information of this type that Hazleton set up his own company. As associate professor of pharmacology at George Washington University's pharmacy school in Washington, D. C., he had been providing a certain amount of it to industry on a consulting basis, but his progress seemed to him rather limited in view of the vastness of the field. Having developed an over-riding interest in his pharmacological investigations, and having become dissatisfied with some of the less attractive features of the academic process, he severed his university connections in 1946 to devote his full energies to applied biology.

From the beginning he has held to his conviction that the use of the biological sciences in evaluating the safety of chemicals is indispensable if progress is to be maintained or accelerated. But "biological sciences" is a broad term, and Hazleton uses it in its broadest sense. No single discipline, he feels, is adequate to handle all phases of a complex biological study, and the talents of many must be integrated if results are to be meaningful. In keeping with this concept, he has staffed his growing technical organization with experts whose training and experience embrace every major field of biological study.

It has been a long while since Hazleton himself has been able to spend any time at the laboratory bench. The "integrating" function is in itself a full-time job, to which is added a growing burden of general management responsibility and the task of keeping abreast of trends and anticipating the needs of various industries. Nevertheless, he keeps in close touch with all of the laboratories' research and testing programs, and contributes heavily in terms of ideas.

Research Methodology Difficult in This Field

Much of Hazleton's thinking is concerned with methodology, seeking answers to such questions as how to test conclusively for given effects, or how to define an environment in which a given chemical can be used with safety. It is an area in which boundaries are anything but clear-cut, and answers are seldom transferable from one problem to another. Progress is being made, however, and a fair share of the credit belongs to Hazleton and his associates.

Hazleton has developed a major interest in questions related to the use of food additives, and is especially concerned with the international aspects of such questions. He travels extensively in connection with this interest, and has attended a number of international congresses abroad within recent years.

He is frequently a participant, also, in conferences in this country sponsored by the Food and Drug Administration, although strangely enough he is not often involved in other government hearings. Part of the reason is company policy; Hazleton frowns on serving as an "expert witness" on any question that has not been the subject of an active investigation within his own organization. Besides, says Hazleton, if a good biological study has been conducted in the first place, there is little need for hearings or trials on most questions related to the use of chemicals.

Hazleton's business and professional activities center about his office in the company's "headquarters" building—a twice-converted farmhouse that was originally built as a country school over 70 years ago. The rural setting of the operation, with a cluster of laboratory buildings surrounded by an experimental farm of nearly a hundred acres, adds to the impression of informality that characterizes the Hazleton approach. But while informality is the keynote, industriousness is no less in evidence.

On the wall of Hazleton's office—formerly the farmhouse dining room —hangs a small, framed motto: "Anyone who enjoys work can certainly have a good time in this institution." His associates will tell you that no one there has a better time than Lloyd Hazleton.