
Editorial

Industrial Research

ARTHUR D. LITTLE in a recent bulletin discusses "Research on Review," calling attention to a recent survey by the National Research Council of industrial research in this country to determine what effect business changes which have occurred since 1929 would have upon the volume and type of industrial research. Returns from 350 companies representing all of the large industrial concerns show that one-half of these concerns had increased during the year 1931 the amount invested in research over that of 1929, while an additional one-fifth had maintained their research on the same level. However, some interesting changes have taken place in the major emphasis of these research programs. In 1929 the major emphasis was placed upon the development of new products, whereas the recent survey shows three-eighths were making such development their chief effort and an equal number were largely concerned with improving the quality of the present products or services. In conclusion the Research Council stated that the executives in a large majority of these companies included in the survey had reached the conclusion that organized research has become a major tool of business management.

There is absolutely nothing new in the idea of research as a method of solution of new problems. In one guise or another men have undertaken research since the beginning of time. It is only, however, in the last 50 years that exact science has produced organized research.

The dictionary definition of Research, is "diligent inquiry" and in my opinion this is a clear definition of what we mean by Research, but this may be organized and planned or it may be hit or miss.

Regardless of what the survey of the Research Council shows regarding *Organized Research*, the actual facts are that during this period there is a very great increase in Research in most industries. Although in some cases the Research organization may have been

reduced, still the economic competition has brought about increases in research. Probably, however, not in as good or well planned a way, and in many cases without the use of exact science, and perhaps in a much more expensive way, still it is being done because of necessity. During times like these Research work—"diligent inquiry"—into problems cannot be curtailed.

Perhaps, however, this "diligent inquiry" should be directed along different channels, such as, economies in operation, improvement in product and service rather than along the lines of the preparation of new products, as was the tendency during the period of five or six years ago.

A real survey of the industry at the present moment will show a great increase in Research activity under whatever name it may be called, and the wise executive will see that such efforts are properly organized and planned so as to be effective and that proper records are kept so that full profit may be had for the efforts put into this work.

The chief danger is in the disorganization of organized research, and the waste in unorganized research, in the effort of untrained men to do what must be done.

A Life of Service

Members of the American Oil Chemists' Society mourn the passing of Irwin G. Priest, for many years an earnest worker in the field of colorimetry, Chief of the Color Division of the United States Bureau of Standards and an Honorary Member of the Society.

The story of Mr. Priest's life presents an outstanding example of single-minded devotion to the pursuit of truth in scientific research. He gave himself wholeheartedly to research on the true nature of light and color and the results he achieved earned him international prominence among physicists and color chemists.

His work on devising methods for accurate color readings of oils has been of inestimable benefit to oil chemists and their employers over

the past twenty years and particularly, his analysis and standardization of the Lovibond color glasses has been of the greatest practical value.

Apart from his work, however, those who knew him well, admired and loved him for his character, which typified the scientist and student at their best. Industrious, kindly, amiable, tolerant, speaking ill of no one, defrauding no co-worker or rival of due credit for achievement, sincere in his friendships; truly Irwin Priest was a gentleman and a scholar and in his passing we see an outstanding example of that pitiful proverb: "Death loves a shining mark."

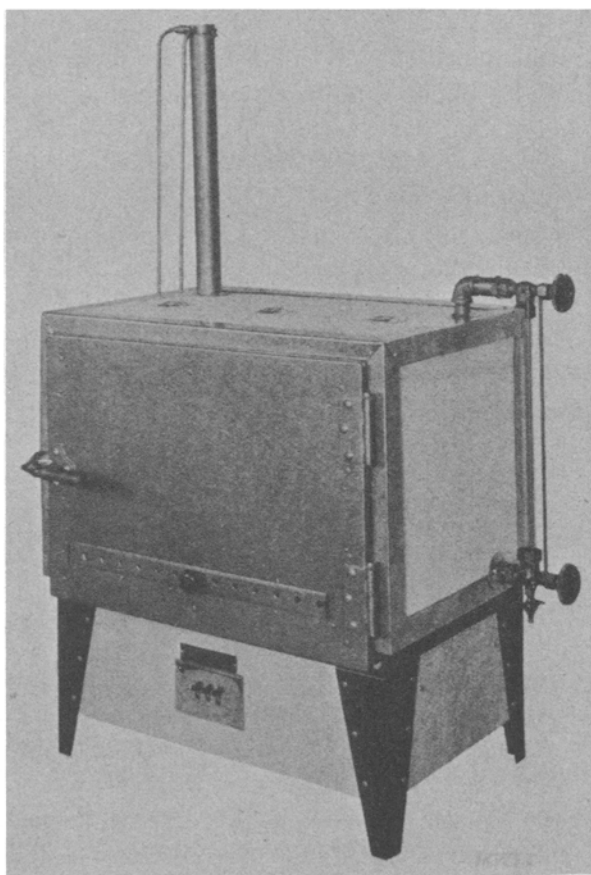


Figure A

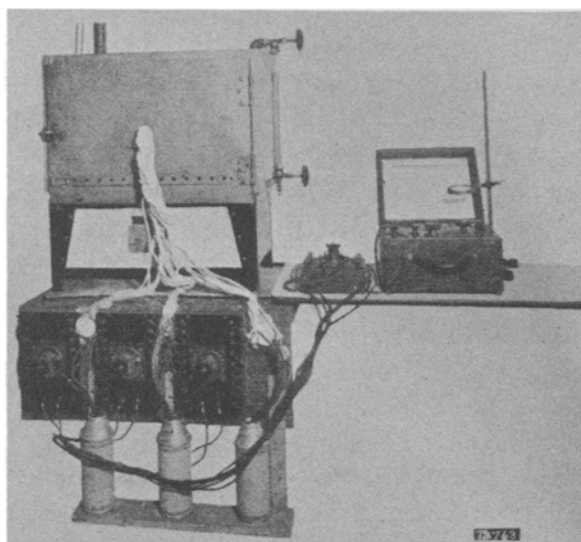


Figure B

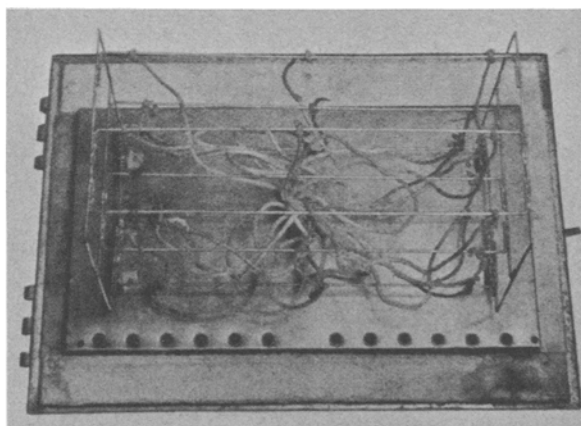


Figure C