

The history of Nestlé

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NESTLÉ CENTENARY

Official Ceremony in Lausanne

The Nestlé Centenary Celebrations took place on 1st July 1966. The Chairman of the Board of Directors of Nestlé Alimentana S.A., the former Federal Councillor Dr. Max Petitpierre, addressed the meeting. He welcomed the guests, in particular the President of the Swiss Confederation, not only in his capacity as *Président de la Confédération*, but also as head of the Department of Economic Affairs. Mr. Petitpierre expressed gratitude for the way the President had dealt with the difficulties of fighting the excess economic boom and inflation. A welcome was also extended to Federal Councillor Chaudet who was present as a friend and neighbour rather than as head of the Military Department.

Other guests welcomed were the Presidents of the Federal Chambers, of the Federal Tribunal and of the two Cantons in which the Company has registered offices. The distinguished gathering included representatives of civil, military ecclesiastical authorities, the Federal Administration, Universities, trade unions, allied companies, the press, descendants of the founder and past and present members of the staff.

Finally, Mr. Petitpierre extended a specially warm welcome to the ladies present, mentioning the fact that it was on *their* judgment that the firm's success or failure depended.

The President began by describing the early days of the Company, from the time Henry Nestlé first began to mix good Swiss milk with whole-wheat biscuits to the day forty years later, when his small firm amalgamated with that of the American Page Brothers' who specialised in condensed milk.

The expansion of the firm continued over the years, first by amalgamation with Swiss companies and later with foreign enterprises. The success of Nestlé's was established by the variety of products and a policy of moving with the times. This meant rising to every challenge which could only be accomplished by ever increasing scientific research. Today, said the Chairman, the Company had factories established in thirty-six countries in all of the five continents. Thanks to initiative and courage, Nestlé products were on sale nearly everywhere in the world.

The speaker next referred to the difficulties under which a worldwide company traded, the economic changes, the need to cater both for highly developed countries and for developing nations where people still strove to stave off hunger. In these underdeveloped countries, much could be done by a large firm to bring about changes in their economies, thanks to scientific and technical know-how. It was a policy of Nestlé's to accept full social and economic responsibilities for producing and distributing goods and services, whilst remaining free from official controls.

Lastly, the Chairman expressed the hope that the second century of Nestlé would see a peaceful world brought about by the full use of the prodigious amount of accumulated scientific and technical knowledge, and that the whole world would benefit from the results.

The address given by the Federal President dealt with the nation's economy and the part Nestlé have played in it. He touched on the dangers of labour shortage and rising wages and applauded the firm's policy to encourage production in other lands, and not least at the risk of investments, in developing countries. He congratulated the Company in Switzerland and abroad for their efforts

in contributing handsomely towards national economy. He recalled the pioneers of the firm and how continuation of effort and ingenuity had enhanced the prestige of the whole country and set an example to all.

THE HISTORY OF NESTLÉ

by Jean Heer

In 1966, the word Nestlé is a household word in many lands the world over. It is a word synonymous with that of child nutrition. It is on this important recognition of Nestlé products that Jean Heer has based his book commemorating the firm's centenary. The author is a well-known Swiss journalist, broadcaster, lawyer by profession and since 1960 in the services of the Nestlé Company. He is also member of the Commission of the Swiss Abroad and its Vice-Chairman.

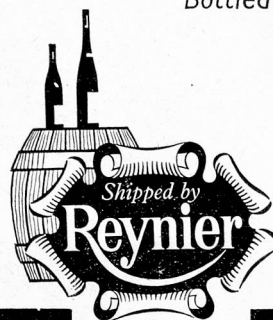
In order to write a book that must not only record the true events in the history on an undertaking dedicated to feeding the world's children, but must also attract and maintain the readers' interests throughout, Jean Heer has avoided the usual repetition of economic events within the great firm. Drawing on his journalistic experience, he has related the rise of Nestlé with the economic and social history of Europe and the world as its background. Whilst mentioning the great names of monarchs and politicians, he gives full prominence to the history of the ordinary man in the street, the ordinary man facing the effects of industrial revolution — banker, baker, merchant and tailor, each meeting in his own way the rapidly advancing modern times. This is the history of nations not so much on the march, but going at a regular gallop. In all that turmoil, Nestlé strived to keep in step with the movement and growth of population and its increasing need for time-saving and durable goods.

Jean Heer's book is a fascinating tale, all the more so as it is, as C. F. Landry called it, "a book unlike other books".

E.B.

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