

**LOUISIANA PLANT PRODUCES  
CHEMICALS BASIC TO OUR  
NATION'S ECONOMY . . .**

**OLIN MATHIESON  
LAKE CHARLES  
PLANT . . . .**

Olin Mathieson Chemical Corporation produces chemicals at Lake Charles, La., that are basic to the nation's economy and which find their way into a wide range of industries.

The Lake Charles plant was constructed in 1934 to produce soda ash and caustic soda, two important chemicals of the alkali group.

In the intervening years the plant has added facilities for making ammonia, nitric acid, sodium nitrate and hydrazine. Situated on the west shore of the Calcasieu River, it now comprises 68 principal buildings and employs approximately 750 people.

Lake Charles was selected as an industrial chemicals plant site by Olin Mathieson after an exhaustive search for a suitable location to supplement its other chemical operations at Saltville, Va., and Niagara Falls, N. Y.

The Lake Charles area has an almost inexhaustible supply of salt of high quality, ample calcium carbonate in the form of oyster shell deposits in the nearby lakes, and an abundant supply of natural gas for fuel. An additional factor is the excellent transportation facilities offered by the area,

both by water and overland, for moving the plant's products to industrial markets throughout the South.

Early in World War II, the Corporation was requested by the United States Government to construct a plant for the production of synthetic ammonia for military uses, and again Lake Charles was selected as the site. This plant now owned by Olin Mathieson is producing ammonia for use in the manufacture of nitrogen fertilizers and numerous industrial chemicals. Since the War, it has added facilities for converting part of its ammonia output into nitric acid and sodium nitrate.

In July, 1953, another new installation—the first of its kind in the country—was completed for the manufacture of hydrazine, which is made from ammonia, caustic soda and chlorine. Hydrazine is used as a rocket fuel and in the manufacture of other chemical products.

The manufacture of soda ash as carried out by Olin Mathieson at Lake Charles involves the chemical reaction of carbon dioxide with purified ammoniated salt brine. The carbon dioxide is produced by burning oyster shells in large rotary kilns fired by natural gas. Brine is obtained by pumping water into the nearby West Hackberry dome to