

COURTESY GIVAUDAN-DELAUNAY INC.

FOR PERFUME SPECIALTIES

BY J. R. ELLIOTT PERFUME - FLAVOR CONSULTANT

In recent years, American management has been increasingly inclined to oppose the use of specialty bases in perfume compositions. This seems to originate from a strong desire to be completely independent in the purchase of fragrance materials.

Such a desire is understandable, since an increasing number of management personnel are technical men whose training teaches them to think in terms of fundamental raw materials. They are apt to look upon a perfume as merely a mixture of chemicals, rather than as an artistic production. Consequently, anything that disturbs this kind of thinking is instinctively resented by them. Specialty bases do exactly that, since they are primarily highly developed artistic bodies—a far cry from simple chemical mixtures.

A perfume is an artistic creation. Definitely, it is not the indifferent chemical mixture pictured by the chemist. It is "liquid showmanship," and it succeeds or fails according to the degree and intensity that this showmanship is built into it.

From the perfumer's viewpoint, the use of a specialty base is amply justified if it can add the subtle dramatic touch that will make his product sell. Its chemical composition is not significant to him, but its flair of showmanship most certainly is. The perfumer knows that people buy his fragrances for their artistry, not their chemical content.

Let us digress for a moment to consider what con-

stitutes a true specialty base. Any perfumer worthy of the name has innumerable, simple rose, lilac, jasmin, and other compositions which he constantly uses as adjuvant bases in his day-to-day work. Most of these he has improvised along the way when they were necessary and the time was available for research. They are not spectacular but they are useful, like faithful workhorses.

However, the simple fact is that a single perfumer, no matter how great his skill and reputation, cannot physically encompass the entire field of bases. This is where the true specialty bases come into play.

A true specialty is not simply a hasty improvisation put on the market to catch a passing dollar. It is the outcome of the concerted artistic and scientific effort of a coordinated group of research perfumers and chemists. A good specialty base represents the expenditure of considerable time and effort—a major project.

The final result of such research is a brilliant, showy, novel fragrance effect, reflecting a versatility and artistry far beyond the capabilities of an individual perfumer. This kind of work is so superior that, although it can be imitated, it can never be copied. To make matters more complex, most specialty bases owe their novelty to "captive" chemicals known only to the maker, which renders their copying with any degree of accuracy a practical impossibility.

Outstanding showmanship in perfumery, as in

music, is not easy to attain. But when it is reached, the sales results speak for themselves. The purpose of the specialty base is to help build this showmanship. It functions like the conductor of an orchestra, by fusing the various fragrance "instruments" and invigorating the whole picture with its personality.

One of the arguments most frequently brought against the use of specialties is their cost. True, they are not cheap, because of their research cost, but the answer to this argument is simple: If they give the touch that makes the perfume sell, they are the cheapest investment for success that can be made. Their use by an individual perfumer represents only a fraction of the research cost spent by their maker to develop them. And, certainly, their cost in a successful fragrance is trivial compared to the advertising and sales expenses needed to put over a major fragrance promotion.

Rather than extol the virtues of specialty bases, let us simply look at their record of performance. Consider the French-made perfumes. The French perfumer is given a free hand in his creative work. He uses synthetic aromatics, essential oils, and specialties with one objective in view, to produce an impressive fragrance. He selects specialties for the particular and inimitable artistry they can confer on his product. Their chemistry has no interest whatsoever for him. He wants only fragrance results. And one need only look at the pre-eminence of many French perfumes for confirmation of his judgment as to the effectiveness of a specialty base in creating attractiveness.

Our perfume business is like a clock pendulum. It swings from one extreme to another. The antispecialty swing has nearly reached its end. What will make it swing in the other direction cannot be predicted at

this moment. The stage for the return is being set by two factors. The first is the shift in the public's fragrance taste. The second is the recent appearance on the market of a considerable number of new aromatic chemicals, and the knowledge that many more are available for use, within certain firms, strictly as "captive" materials.

Several firms at this very moment are doing research on specialties for future consideration. When the time comes, these and a host of others will appear on the market. This time, however, I think that sales managements will attempt to price specialties for more use. At least, those people with whom I have talked are aware that a realistic price must be set if volume business is to be developed.

All of this points towards a renaissance of ideas in American perfumery, and the excellent prospect that an era of sound specialty bases will return.

Finally, I should like to make a few comments, and some constructive suggestions.

The average American perfume executive has come to be so charmed by the magic of advertising that he has almost lost sight of the fact that, once a fragrance is sold, it must have enough intrinsic artistic appeal to insure repeat sales.

Advertising unquestionably stimulates initial sales. But a fragrance must have some attractiveness within itself or the repeat sales just won't develop. It isn't hard to find fragrances that started out with a promotional "bang" but quickly faded into obscurity, simply because there was little in the bottle to back the advertising campaign promises.

The public's taste is rapidly improving, furthermore. People are becoming discerning and discriminatory; they want something for their money. Yet

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- 2,922,747—Am. Chicle—Oral Deodorant.
 2,922,749—Miles Labs.—Enzymes.
 2,922,785—H. Levin—3-Benzal Dihydropyridines.
 2,922,787—E. A. Ferguson, Jr.—Orotic Acids.
 2,922,788—Parke, Davis—Phenylpiperazines.
 2,922,789—Am. Home Products—N-Propylamides.
 2,922,790-3—Olin Mathieson—Pyridine Derivatives.
 2,922,797—Merck—9 α -Halo Allopregnanes.
 2,922,817—Am. Cyanamid—Deoxyanhydrotetracyclines.
 2,923,661—Irwin, Neisler & Co.—Trichloroethylidenimine.
 2,923,662—White Labs.—Appetite Depressant Resin.
 2,923,664—Johnson & Johnson—Hemostatic Products.
 2,923,704—Hoffmann-La Roche—Cycloamylose Sulfates.
 2,923,709—G. D. Searle—Epoxy Methyl Estratetraenes.
 2,923,710—Ciba—Bis-1, 1-Dipyridyl Olefins.
 2,923,711—Abbott Labs.—Benzhydrylidine Tropene.
 2,923,712—Ciba — Isopentyloxy-Phenyl Pyridyl Phenyl Thiourea.
 2,923,713—Hoffmann-La Roche—Benzyl and Methoxy benzyl Hydrazides of Isonicotinic Acid.
 2,923,714—Hoffmann-La Roche—Picolinoyl Benzyl Hydrazine.
 2,923,720 } —Upjohn—Alkyl Pregnenes.
 2,923,722 }
 2,923,723—Upjohn—Alkyl Cortisone.
 2,924,596—Syntex—Allopregnenes.
 2,924,603—Smith, Kline & French Labs.—Aralkylbenzomorphans.
 2,924,611—G. D. Searle—Oxygenated Pregnadiene Di-
 one.

PERFUME SPECIALTIES

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these facts have not filtered down to the average executive.

Gentlemen, try diverting a bit from your advertising budget to the product itself. Give your perfumer/supplier the financial "freedom" to do a brilliant job. Relax your prejudices and let him liberally use someone else's specialties if he thinks they have merit.

Foreign perfumers are not much better than local talent. But they are more aware of the need of showmanship in fragrance work.

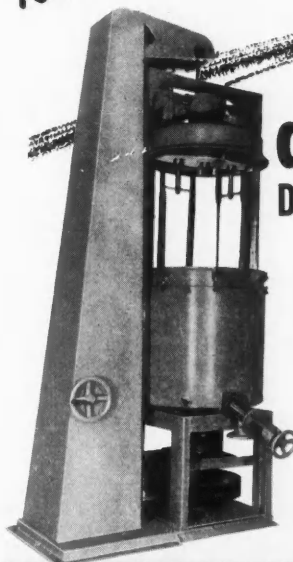
CONTROLLED-FLOW APPLICATOR

(Continued from page 347)

has a bead on the inside which fits around the rim of the applicator, providing a double seal with the valve shut-off. The inside of the cap does not touch the pad.

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