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Stroud engineers' merger

BY CITY PRESS REPORTER

MR. H. VICTOR COZENS, chairman of fast-growing Cozens & Sutcliffe Holdings, has every reason to be pleased with one of the biggest new companies in the group. Redler Industries, of Stroud, is growing.

Just over a year ago Redler Industries was merged into Cozens & Sutcliffe Holdings by a share exchange. Redler, which has more than trebled in size since the war, was almost of comparable size to its new parent company.

It makes mechanical handling plant for all kinds of granular materials in every industry. Mr. Cozens said last August that its activities would fit in well with those of Cozens & Sutcliffe, the construction engineering and contracting firm.

Redler's order book was in a far better position than six months before. It was producing as much as possible and its prospects for the future were excellent.

Redler is now planning further extensions of its factory, which lies on both sides of a trout stream on the fringes of Stroud. It is taking part in the continuous drive throughout the world's industry towards automatic handling.

CHINA

It is making machinery for export to Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Japan, Holland, Hungary, South Africa, Kenya and Uganda. A recent order came from Argentina.

A new Russian tyre factory will take 102 conveyors. The order came through Simon Handling Engineers. The Redler equipment, 9,000 feet in length, will handle carbon black, zinc oxide and associated powdered materials used in rubber manufacture.

At home Redler is taking part in efforts to make solid fuel popular again.

The character of the Redler Company is illustrated by a recent story.

Communist China wanted some pneumatic grain-handling equipment. M. D. Ewart & Company asked for a quotation for GrainVayors and Redler posted this the same day. Ewart conducted negotiations of offer and counter-offer with China. All these negotiations were by cable.

Redler got a telephoned order on February 23 for eight diesel-engined GrainVayors with spares. Five of these were to be shipped on March 22 and the balance by April 16. At the time the company had only one machine completed and had no diesel engines in stock.

Despite this, five GrainVayors and their spares were despatched on March 16 and the remaining three on March 29, well ahead of schedule. The order was thus completed in less than five weeks. Including spares sent later, it was worth a total of £26,000.

Jobs vary as to the type and the quantities of materials handled, the distances over which they have to be carried, whether they have to be weighed or mixed. A typical selection of the materials which these conveyors handle can be found in any shelf full of samples. On one such shelf are rye flour, fine coal, flue dust, autolised yeast, burnt spent oxide, ground gafsa phosphate and many other items.

Each material has its own peculiarities when handled. It creates friction with itself and with metal, has the ability to flow or not to flow. It is to a degree abrasive and corrosive. It is the job of the specialist to relate the characteristics of the various materials to the handling requirements. The design teams who solve these problems play a great part in Redler Industries.

It has competitors in every one of its fields but there is probably not one single group that competes with it over the whole field of its activity. This company leads by ingenuity and this is its biggest inheritance from the man who started the business.

DOMESDAY

Arnold Redler claimed that his family may have been in the flour milling business since the Domesday Book. His father and grandfather owned flour mills in the West Country before he did. He acquired the Severn flour mill at Sharpness and was successful in that business.

The belief is that in the first world war, Redler could not find the men to handle the flour in his mill. He therefore devised bins into which the grain and flour could be released and then automatically measured and moved on conveyors. One theory is that he discovered, almost by accident, the basic principles of his elevators and conveyors.

An ordinary conveyor belt would not take grain up a sharp incline but by pulling the grain on a chain with flights, a substantial depth of grain could be taken up sharp inclines. Indeed, when enclosed in a duct, the flights on which the grain was carried, which apparently let 90 per cent. of the grain fall through them, would, in fact, carry it all.

The result is that the conveyors have for many purposes great advantages over both normal trough-type conveyor belts and the type of elevator which carries material in buckets.

NO MOVEMENT

By the Redler system, bulk materials are induced to flow like liquid. Whether they are being conveyed horizontally, on an incline or vertically, there is no noticeable movement between the particles in the load. They can often be used in confined spaces where other systems cannot be used.

Mr. Redler made his first conveyors at his flour mill. Then in 1924 he exhibited his system at Wembley. It was acknowledged to be an entirely new approach and that year he started Redler Conveyors. For the next ten years, the business was developed.

Then, in the spring of 1934, Redler sold his flour mill and bought a site ten miles away at Stroud, originally a cloth factory, solely to make conveyors. He turned to moving such materials as coal, cement and heavy chemicals.

Two years later, Redler formed Conveyors (Ready Built), a company to make the same type of conveyor but lighter. These were designed to meet the needs of the grain-handling and flour-milling industries.

Redler was a remarkable man. He did not start this business until he was 50. He suffered from almost complete deafness, which seemed to give him freedom for his imagination. His successors in the business admit they are still making use and developing ideas which he thought of 30 years ago.

Since the second world war the business has made great progress. The two companies which he formed, Redler Conveyors and Conveyors (Ready Built) were merged in 1953. In the ten years from 1949-1959 the trade profits of Redler Industries nearly trebled.

In the works at Stroud is a model which would delight any boy. About 3 feet high, it works exactly as a full-scale conveyor system in a factory, moving, splitting, carrying up and down the sand-like material through transparent trunking. The flow can be varied. In a multitude of ways the safety devices for jamming or over-filling are shown.

It demonstrates how a single Redler machine can convey up and can therefore take the place of two or even three machines of other types. Sometimes their advantage may lie in fire prevention.

Because the conveyors are totally enclosed, they do not create any dust internally and there is no movement between the particles of the materials being moved. Agitation of coal or many chemicals would cause them to break up but this does not occur in the Redler conveyors. The machines are self-feeding, and they cannot be choked. Once their casing is full no more material can enter.

The factory at Stroud is used for producing most of the parts used in making conveyors and elevators. Fordings and castings are bought.

Many of the devices and ideas were patented by Arnold Redler himself, long before he found a use for them. He would design systems entirely in his imagination, not knowing exactly how the finished system could be made if anyone were to order. The result is that Redler has created an outstanding position for itself in this field.