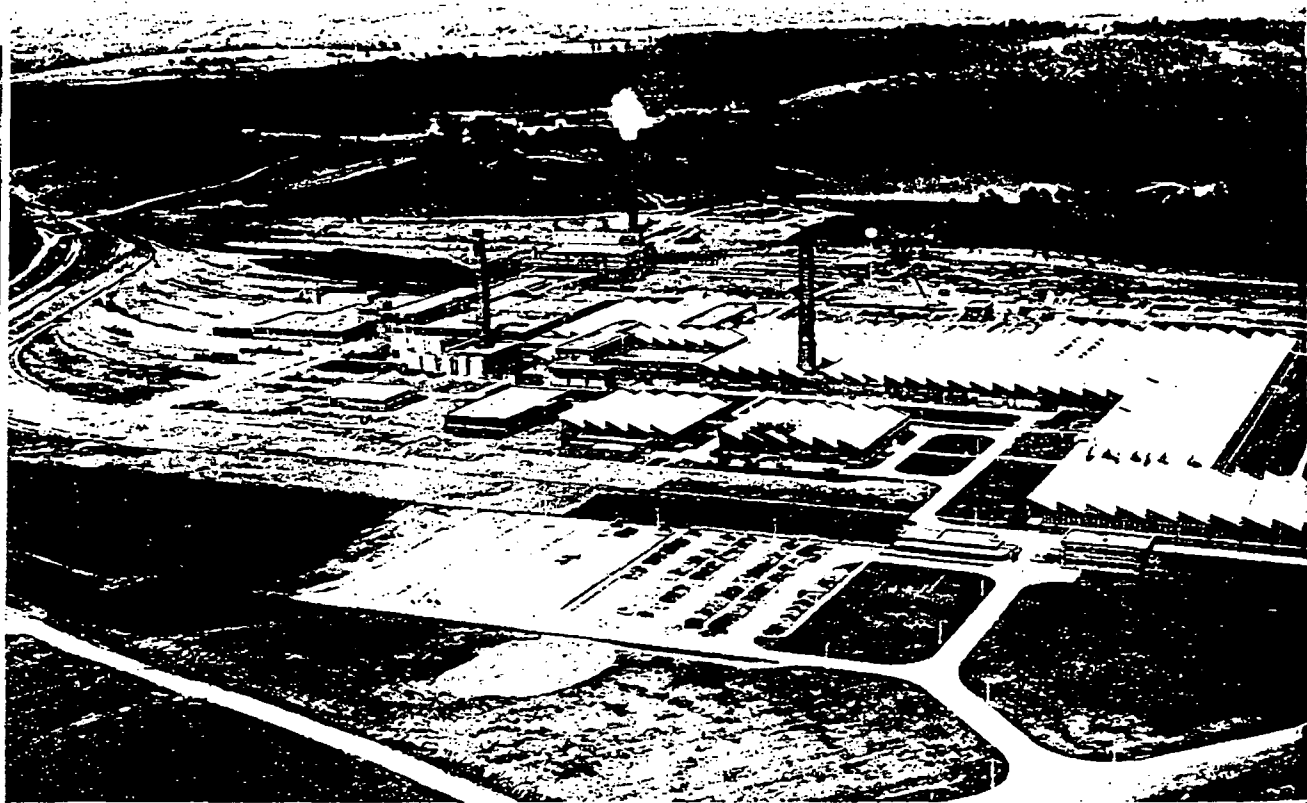




The Lowland, Tennessee, plant of American Enka Corporation makes an impressive aerial view. Beginning operation in 1948, it is equipped with the most modern machinery. The power plant is seen in the background. The other stacks handle process waste gas.

IN AMERICAN ENKA CORPORATION'S LOWLAND PLANT

PERHAPS ever since the Chinese started using silk, about 2640 B.C., scientific and curious people have been intrigued with the prospect of making "artificial silk." It is recorded that in 1664 an English naturalist and research scientist suggested that a way might be found to make an artificial composition resembling the substance spun by silkworms. A Frenchman, de Chardonnet, in 1878 began an extensive study of the life and habits of silkworms. After many failures, he chemically "digested" mulberry leaves to produce nitrocellulose. He forced a syruplike solution through tiny holes in the end of a nozzle and patented his process in 1884. His "artificial silk" was a sensation at the Paris World Exposition in 1889.

Various other discoveries and developments came along rather rapidly. In 1911 at Marcus Hook, Pa., Courtaulds and Company started the first viscose plant in the United States. In 1924 the term "artificial silk" was discarded in favor of "rayon." In a comparatively short time rayon has advanced from a laboratory curiosity to a vast industry employing