



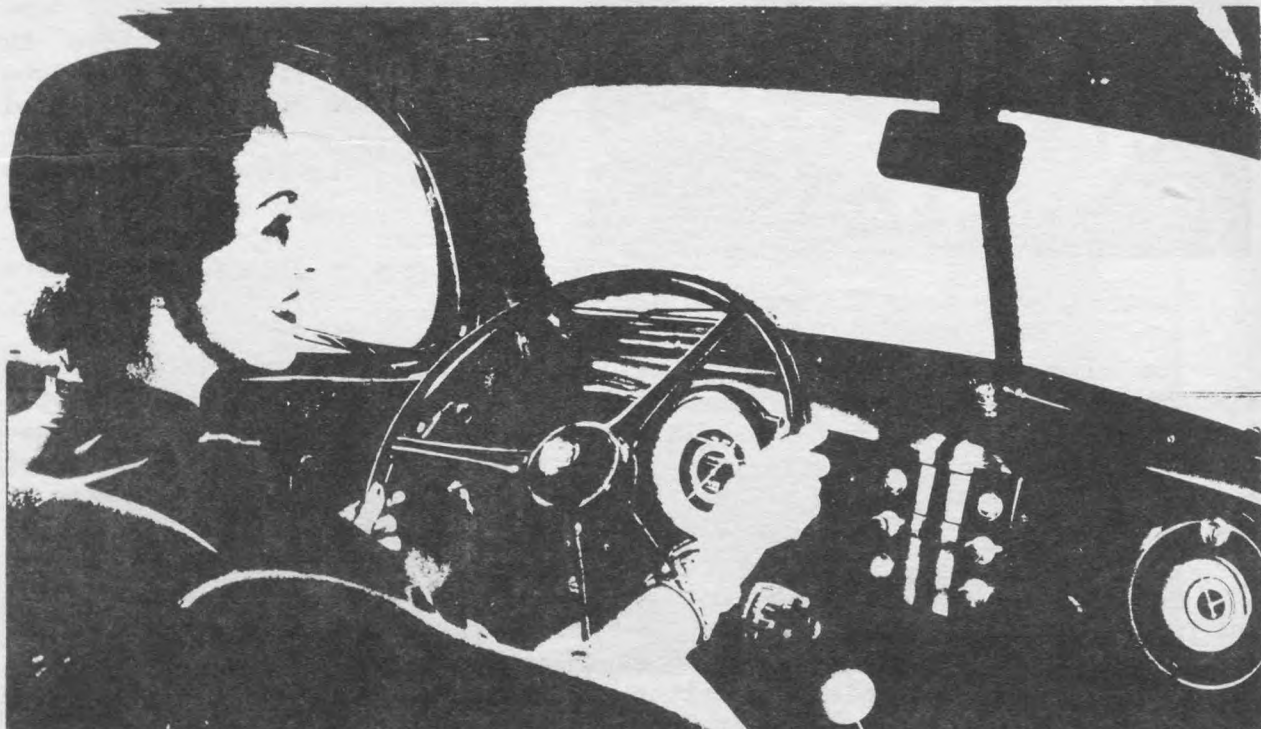
Chemists Experiment Constantly

In Germany, too, the search for newer and better plastics was continuing. In 1890, Dr. Adolph Spitteler, a Hamburg teacher, tried to make a white writingboard as a substitute for the blackboard. He was experimenting with various chemicals with poor results, when one day, he mixed ordinary sour milk with formaldehyde, a colorless gas. The result was a hard shiny substance that resembled the cow's horn, rather than its milk. This material, known as casein plastic, is made into buckles, buttons and novelties.

About this time a new adventurer entered the field, Dr. Leo Baekeland, a Belgian chemist. He had just perfected and sold to the Eastman Kodak Company his patent for Velox photographic printing paper and was looking for new fields of endeavor. He decided that if he could find a substitute for expensive shellac used in varnishes and in-

ulating materials he would have answered a problem that had been facing chemists for years. Dr. Baekeland's first work was to check the attempts of his colleagues to find out where they had failed.

He proceeded slowly and carefully, observing the reactions between various materials he was using. As he watched the changes taking place in the test tubes and retorts he saw a promise of an entirely new material--something far beyond a substitute for natural resins.



Fittings, steering wheel and shatterproof glass, all made with plastics.