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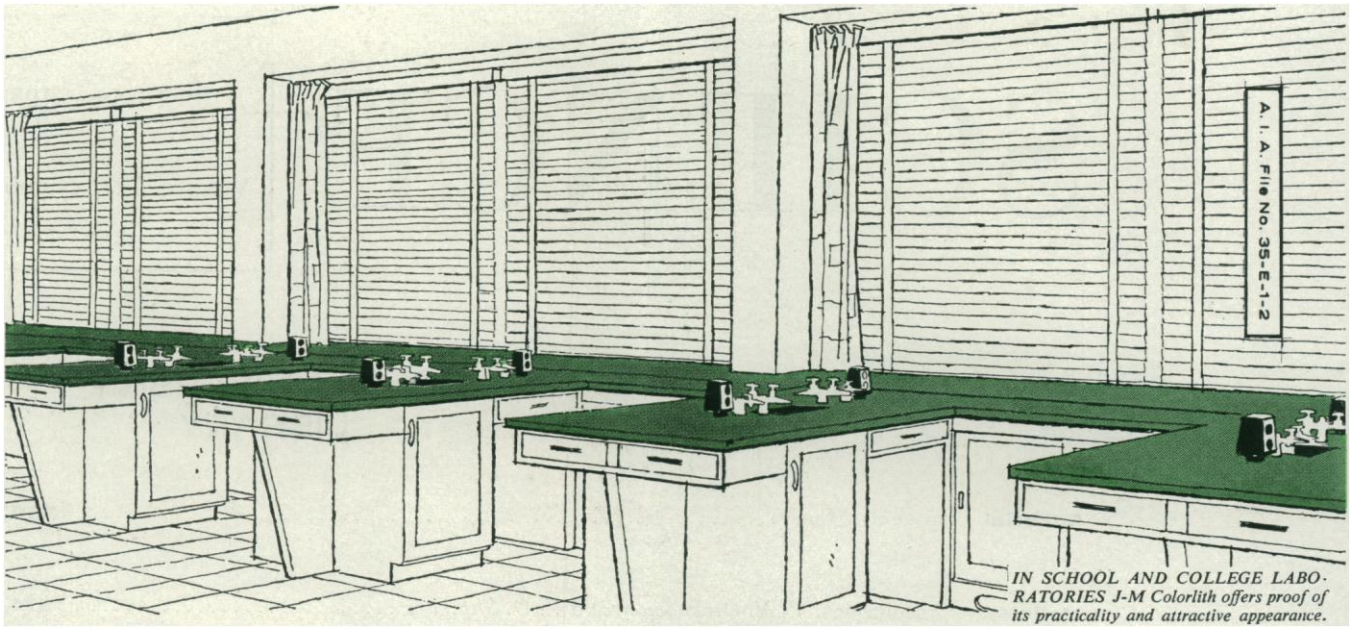

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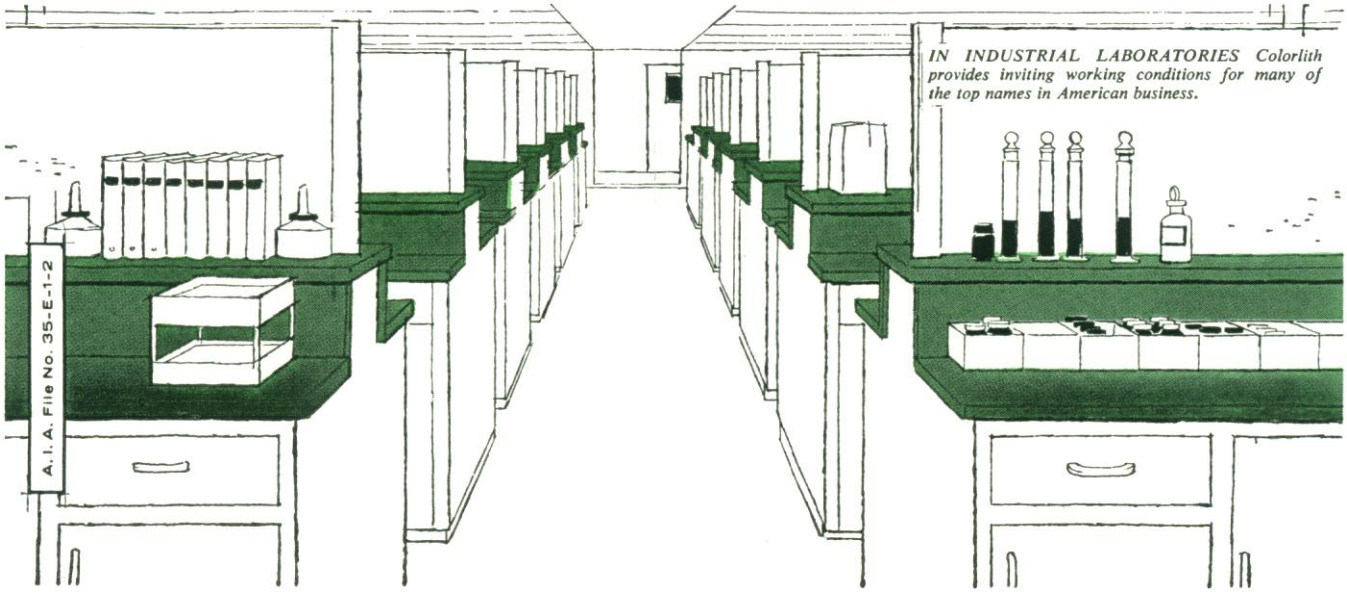

IN INDUSTRIAL LABORATORIES Colorlith provides inviting working conditions for many of the top names in American business.

Letters

Ammi majus

In the article "Effects of 8-methoxypsoralen and ultraviolet light in human skin" [*Science* **127**, 878 (1958)], the author, S. W. Becker, Jr., clearly demonstrated the mechanism of 8-methoxypsoralen action. However, I would like to point out that extracts of *Ammi majus* (Linné) have not been "used by the Egyptians . . . for centuries." In fact, the first extracts were made at Cairo University in 1954 [see I. R. Fahmy, A. A. Rahman, R. E. Hakim, *Proc. Pharm. Soc. Egypt Sci. Ed.* **38**, 67 (1956)].

Only the cremocarps (tiny fruits) of *Ammi majus* have been dispensed, by the nomadic Berberian tribe of Beni-Shoeïb, dwelling in the North African desert, who furnished them powdered in order to disguise the origin of the drug, which was called in Berberian "Atrillal" or the "bird's foot," due to the shape of the umbel that carries the cremocarps.

As reported by Ibn El Bitar (13th century), the secret was finally disclosed, and El Sherif (sixth century) was the first physician to administer these powdered cremocarps for leucoderma in a rather rational way. Dawood El Antaki (17th century), El Rashidi (19th century), and Maimonides all wrote extensively on this drug and its administration, but nowhere is there any mention of "extract" of the plant or its cremocarps.

RAOUF E. HAKIM
M. D. Anderson Hospital, Houston, Texas

Raouf Hakim's statements are correct. My choice of the term *extract* was a poor one; I meant crude preparations of the *Ammi majus plant*. The first true extracts were those prepared at Cairo University in 1954.

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Whiting Clinic, Whiting, Indiana

Science Education

Science [**127**, 852 (1958)] reported the very important recommendations of the 1958 Parliament of Science. All scientists will recognize that several widely diverse aspects of our total educational problem were well discussed and helpfully reported by these meetings sponsored by the AAAS.

May one reader note, however, the existence of evidence in support of the view that those recommendations nevertheless essentially fail to come to grips with one problem which some observers now consider the central and most urgent of all our educational problems? I refer to the hardest of all tasks—getting more and