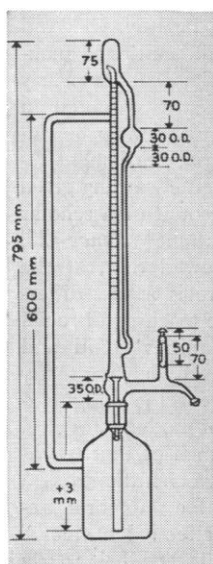
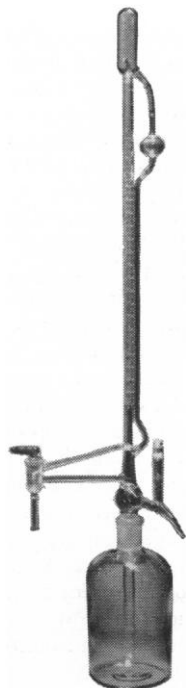


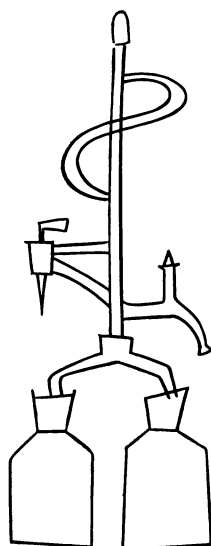
## Modestly

complex in components and assembly is this Automatic Burette, with reservoir. That's why you'll find it listed in the Custom Made section of our catalog (page 199, of LG-1, to be specific).



## Masterful

is this custom adaptation, the type of job at which our skilled lampworkers excel. Adding to or taking from, or otherwise changing special pieces is the sort of thing these glassworkers do every day.



## Magnifique!

That's the reaction of people of sensitivity to items like this. What such a masterpiece is for is often the closely guarded secret of the man who asked us to make it. If you find yourself in such a spot, dispatch a sketch and leave the rest to us.

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## 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-Shoeib, 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.

S. W. BECKER, JR.

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

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