

Atomic Energy Lifts Veil on Food Secrets

AEC Report Gives Data on Nature Mysteries

By JOSEPH L. MYLER
United Press Staff Correspondent
WASHINGTON, Nov. 19—Atomic energy is providing science with clues, "potentially of immeasurable economic significance," to the age-old mystery of how nature manufactures food.

This was disclosed today in a 201-page report by the Atomic Energy Commission on the use of radiosotopes in scientific, industrial, medical and agricultural research.

In the one research field of photosynthesis—the process by which green plants convert sunlight and carbon dioxide from the air into food—science has made important strides toward a better world, the AEC reported.

This research, the commission said, is "potentially of immeasurable economic significance" because photosynthesis accounts one way or another "for production of all good."

Improve Food Supply

So the commission added, "it is not unreasonable to think that the world's food supply may be improved."

The commission's report on use of "hot" atoms in research came out by coincidence shortly after the Russians had published weird claims that they have been using atomic explosives to move mountains.

Whereas the Russians boast that they are using atomic energy to change the face of the Soviet earth, the U. S. commission announced it more modestly to observe the behavior of matter in such tiny amounts as one-quintillionth of a gram.

Since Aug. 2, 1946, the U. S. atomic project has been supplying scientists with radiosotopes, produced for the most part in its chain reacting piles, for use as tools to unlock the fundamental mysteries of nature.

7000 Shipments Made

Since the isotope distribution project started, more than 7000 shipments have been made to 300 research institutions in 41 of the United States and to 150 institutions in 21 foreign countries.

More than 1850 scientific publications have been issued on the results of studies with what the AEC calls the most important research tool since invention of the microscope.

What science wants to find out in its study of photosynthesis is the step-by-step process by which green plants make food.

Already it has learned that plants can manufacture more than five different chemical compounds in five seconds. In 90 seconds they can produce at least 18 compounds, including different kinds of sugar.

Close Study Conducted

But that is just one category of research with radioactively tagged atoms. Because radiation instruments can detect as small an amount as 10,000 atoms, weighing less than one million millionths of a gram, scientists estimate the building up and breaking down of the tiniest building blocks of life.

For example, they have observed just that in a particular amino acid—one constituent of animal proteins—in the liver of a guinea pig.

They have found out that cobalt, required in infinitesimal amounts by cattle, is an indispensable part of the life-sustaining and health-giving B-12 vitamin complex.

Cathedral Offers Variety Show

Each Season of Year Represented in Acts

A variety show, "The Seasons Sing," will be given at Cathedral High School today and Sunday at 8 p.m.

Each season of the year will be represented in the four acts. Main fare of the revue will consist of old and new popular songs, performed by 32 songsters from Cathedral and from St. Agnes', St. Mary's and St. John's academies.

Dances for the show were created by Miss Sharon Cahill of Jordan College of Music. The revue is directed by Brother Etienne Cooper, assisted by Brother John Hanon.

National Book Week this week received special attention at Lawrence Central High School.

Mrs. Jane Brown Wagoner, author was to speak at 2 p.m. today in the library during a National Book Week Tea. Entertainment was scheduled by a clarinet trio and by a girls' quartet, composed of Donna McCoy, Mary Denny, Paula Zimmerman and Evelyn Young.

Other activities this week at Lawrence Central consisted of a play, "Murder in the Library," with Dick Beard and Kaye Arens in leading roles; two technicolor films; special talks on fiction in English classes, and exhibits of posters and book jackets.

The library at Technical High School presented a display of books and posters, a special book list and a display of manikins representing fictitious book characters.

Civic Theater Calls Tryouts for New Play

Tryouts for "The Fatal Weakness," the Civic Theater's new production will be held at 2 p.m. Sunday in the Civic Theater workshop, 1847 N. Alabama St. Jack L. Hatfield, director, will conduct the tryouts for the play which will be given Feb. 10 through 18.

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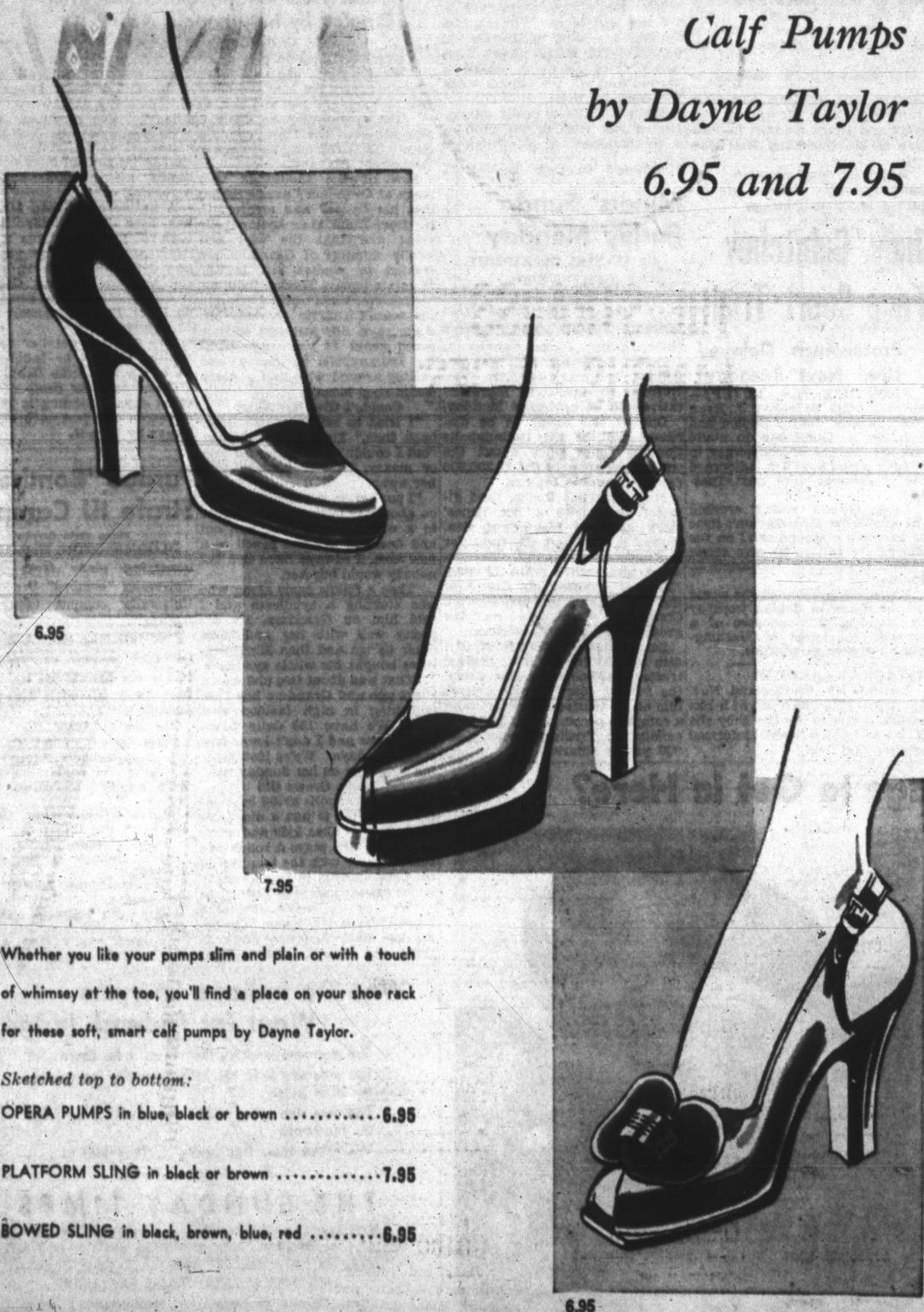


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