

AGRICULTURE

# Better Farming Is Possible

➤ AMERICA'S abundant farm production can be boosted still further by placing the new crops and new techniques that research has unearthed into the hands of the farmers.

Agricultural research has developed many improved crops and more efficient methods that are still not widely used, said Robert M. Salter, chief of the Bureau of Plant Industry, Soils, and Agricultural Engineering, in his annual report.

One of the best ways to get this knowledge out to the farmers, he found, is the establishment of pilot farms in farming districts. The farmers can then see for themselves how practical or profitable the innovations are.

Improved use of the soil through modern

methods of soil classification is one of the technical achievements which has not been applied on anything like the scale that it should, he pointed out. Soil classification permits the farmer to predict accurately whether a crop grown experimentally elsewhere would grow successfully on his fields.

To the pool of past technical achievements, government scientists are constantly adding new knowledge. He cited, for one example, the discovery after a 50-year search of a sugar beet that produces single seeds. With the present seed clusters, it is necessary to wait until the plants begin coming up and then thin out the excess plants by hand. Now that a single-germ seed type has been developed, scientists are working on a commercial variety which will combine

with it the other desirable qualities.

Other new developments of promise: cultivation of an imported plant called red squill from which a rat poison can be made that is harmless to other animals; use of 2,4-D as a spray on apples to prevent them from dropping; the importation of about 10,000 different plants to be tested for their usefulness in this country; and dozens of other investigations of farm activities ranging from food crop raising to farm electrification and farm machinery.

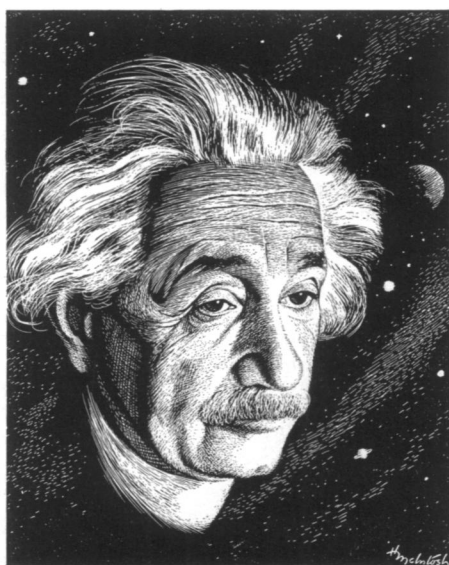
Science News Letter, December 31, 1949

## ● RADIO

Saturday, January 7, 3:15 p.m., EST

"Adventures in Science" with Watson Davis, director of Science Service, over Columbia Broadcasting System.

Dr. Dean Burk, National Institutes of Health, Public Health Service, Bethesda, Md., will talk about "Future Energy from Photosynthesis".



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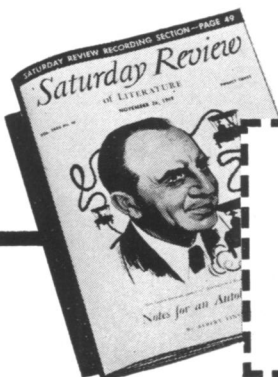
➤ This is one of the great documents of our time—Dr. Einstein's own story of his intellectual development. This is not autobiography in the usual sense, but rather an account of *how* he thinks and *what* he thinks, and a tracing of the steps by which he formulated his theory of relativity. Dr. Einstein gives some interesting facts about his boyhood and student years, and describes in some detail the scientific theories that were in vogue when he began his work. But essentially this is the story of the awesome mental processes which pointed the way ultimately to the atomic age.

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