

# • New Machines and Gadgets •

For addresses where you can get more information on the new things described here, send a three-cent stamp to SCIENCE NEWS LETTER, 1719 N St., Washington 6, D. C., and ask for Gadget Bulletin 643. To receive this Gadget Bulletin without special request each week, remit \$1.50 for one year's subscription.

⚙️ **ALL-NYLON SHOE laces** have a white inner core enclosed in a black or brown cover. Worn laces expose the white core, warning the wearer that a new lace is needed. Extremely strong, the long-lasting cords make good laces for leg braces.

Science News Letter, October 11, 1952

⚙️ **PLASTIC RUG** impressed with a rope-mat design protects floors against scuffing. The rugs have a "cushiony" feeling underfoot that makes them useful especially in basements and kitchens as fatigue mats. Available in nine colors, the rug measures 2 by 3 feet.

Science News Letter, October 11, 1952

⚙️ **LAMPSHADES WITH** real heather, grass or leaves pressed between sheets of a tough vinyl plastic produce a striking effect in the home. The imprisoned material retains its delicate fibrous structure and can be seen even when the lamp is not on. Dust and grime are quickly wiped from the shades with a damp sponge or cloth.

Science News Letter, October 11, 1952

⚙️ **ILLUMINATED TELEPHONE cover**, shown in the photograph, lights up the instant the receiver is taken off the hook, shedding light on the phone's dial. Operating on regular 110-volt power, the case also has a switch that can turn the dial light on



when the receiver is not lifted, allowing the device to be used as a soft-glowing night light.

Science News Letter, October 11, 1952

⚙️ **HOUSEHOLD FIRE extinguisher** weighs 2½ pounds and squirts a vaporizing liquid in a 25-foot stream by compressed air controlled by a push-button switch. The extinguisher's air pressure can be recharged

at a filling station. Having a stainless-steel shell and a red plastic head, the extinguisher works against ordinary small fires in wood shavings, waste baskets, wiring and household appliances.

Science News Letter, October 11, 1952

⚙️ **FLASH-LAMP LACQUER** allows photographers to convert regular flash bulbs into infrared lamps for inconspicuous use with infrared film in dark theaters or during basketball games. The lacquer dries around the bulb, forming a plastic-like coating that filters out most of the visible light.

Science News Letter, October 11, 1952

⚙️ **ELECTRIC MIXER attachment kit** will convert an electric food mixer into a light power tool that can polish silverware, sand woods, drill holes and stir paints. The kit comes complete with a metal tool box and an instruction manual.

Science News Letter, October 11, 1952

⚙️ **HAND LAMP** especially good for outdoor use at night clamps on a special 7½-volt battery. A high-low switch makes the lamp's brilliance either 21 or 3 candlepower. The light unit itself consists of an adjustable 6-inch chrome plated head and reflector that also can be obtained as a sealed-beam unit.

Science News Letter, October 11, 1952

# • Nature Ramblings •

➤ **RIGHT NOW**, in October, is really the best time to go shopping for your Christmas tree. Not that you will find the street-corner stands stocked with little firs and pines at this time of year.

Christmas trees of that kind will come along, as usual, during the last rushed week or two before Christmas Eve, and will undoubtedly be in bad condition and overpriced—also as usual. And once set up, they will dry and die before the Yule season is ended; they will litter the floor with shed needles, and will be fire hazards and nuisances generally.

This unsatisfactory performance is all you can expect from the conventional Christmas tree. It is really only half a tree anyway; its roots, necessary for maintenance of anything like normal condition, have been amputated and left in the ground. It is a dying tree, and such treatments as setting its base in a can of water or spraying its foliage with preservative formulas only postpone its end a little while.

If you want a normal living Christmas

## Shop Early!



tree, now is the time to get it. Nursery stock is still being dug and shipped for fall planting, except in the northernmost areas of this country.

It should not be difficult to find a suitable small evergreen and have it planted in a tub, where it will have a chance to recover from transplantation shock and be in good condition by the time the holiday season arrives.

Your tree need not be moved into the house immediately. It can be left outdoors, on the porch or in the yard, with no more attention than an occasional moderate watering. It will not need much water, even, for growth is now at a standstill and replacement of the relatively small amounts transpired through the foliage is all that is called for.

After it has been moved into the living-room for its brief season of glory, with lights for flowers and lollipops and toys for fruits your tubbed tree will not need to be flung out, to lie like a reproachful corpse until it is carted away by the trash collector or chopped up to burn in the fireplace. It can be put outdoors again—perhaps into a previously prepared pit among the shrubbery—and left to live through the winter and awaken and grow again in spring, as a normal young tree should.

It can survive to do its Christmas duty year after year, becoming as much a part of the family as the dog or cat.

Science News Letter, October 11, 1952