

# • New Machines and Gadgets •

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⚙️ **REMINDER TIMER** for light sleepers, laboratory technicians, photographers, cooks and parking meter worriers clips on to a pocket. The size of a wristwatch, the timer sounds off with a buzz when a specified time arrives. It can be preset for five minutes up to four hours.

Science News Letter, March 30, 1957

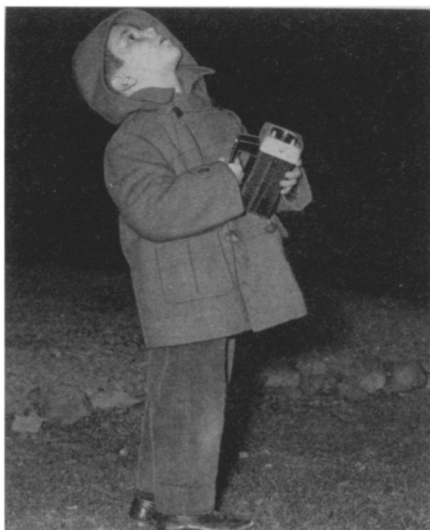
⚙️ **GLASSWARE JOINTS** for laboratory use are described as more economical than ground joints, corks or rubber bungs. Un-ground, the British-made joints of glass are flexible and interchangeable. Fit is achieved by the compression of flexible rings between the cone and the socket.

Science News Letter, March 30, 1957

⚙️ **PLUG LOCK** is designed to protect children from using electrical appliances. The device is locked over the tines of any ordinary male electric plug, and in this way, prevents the use of the entire electrical appliance by either tots or unauthorized persons.

Science News Letter, March 30, 1957

⚙️ **EMERGENCY LANTERN** for motorists, outdoorsmen and indoorsmen is housed in an aluminum case. The lantern, shown in the photograph, has an aluminized reflector, unbreakable lens and carrying-handle.



The push-button switch is designed so that it cannot be turned on accidentally. Made to fit in the glove compartment of a car, the lantern's one-piece seamless casing is corrosion resistant and virtually indestructible.

Science News Letter, March 30, 1957

⚙️ **GAS INCINERATOR** is designed to look like other home appliances. The gas-

fired trash remover has a safety shutoff device, automatic timing for the burning cycle, and a loading door that is operated by a foot pedal. Smoke and odors are drawn into the unit's chamber for re-burning before being sent up the flue.

Science News Letter, March 30, 1957

⚙️ **DENTAL TOOLS** for factories, shops and laboratories can be used for manipulating, manual sensing, guiding, lubricating and selecting. Unit-forged of stainless steel, the tools have multiform needle ends and nonskid handles.

Science News Letter, March 30, 1957

⚙️ **FIREPLACE TONGS** use the scissor principle to make it easier to lift heavy logs. The 26-inch-long tongs have flat handles and two points on each blade to help keep the log from twisting. The tongs are available in a brass, black or cadmium finish.

Science News Letter, March 30, 1957

⚙️ **HIDDEN PLUMBING** combines a reverse-trap bowl and concealed tank that can be installed in any six-inch wall. Described as the first such unit for residential use, it is designed to operate quietly and requires no special drain pipe. The closet is available as a complete package.

Science News Letter, March 30, 1957



## Nature Ramblings



By HORACE LOFTIN

➤ THERE is no question about it: the armadillo looks like a creature from another world. A science-fiction writer might have created such an unlikely creature to describe the fauna of a lost planet.

This odd mammal with its coat of mail, undersized triangular head, rabbit ears, armored tail and sharp claws may "look like" he does not belong, but consider this: he is quite a successful animal. Not only is he holding his own in the animal world, but he is extending his range.

For a long time scientists thought that our single American species, the nine-banded armadillo, was only a casual visitor into southern Texas from Mexico. Later it became evident that this animal had taken up residence in Texas. Still, he was thought of as "exotic," and textbooks appearing in

### The Improbable Armadillo



the 1930's stated that his range was limited in the United States to southern Texas.

In spite of statements in textbooks, the nine-banded armadillo would not stay put, and the newer books — trying to keep up with the armadillo's progress—tell another story. Today this creature is commonplace in much of Louisiana. Armadillo populations are beginning in Alabama and Mississippi and perhaps other contiguous states should be added to this list.

Florida can boast the presence of a considerable number of armadillos in scattered areas of the state, but these apparently are the descendants of animals that escaped from captivity. Their distribution is too discontinuous for them to represent migrants from along the Texas-Louisiana-Alabama route. Perhaps some day there may be a family reunion when armadillos wandering in from the west meet their relatives who are already established in Florida.

One last note on these improbable animals: father armadillo is never surprised when mother armadillo presents him with quadruplets. She always has quadruplets!

This occurs because the single fertilized egg of the armadillo invariably divides to produce two pairs of identical twins. And since they are all identical twins, of course all four young of a litter are of the same sex.

Science News Letter, March 30, 1957