

# • New Machines and Gadgets •

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⊗ **SHAVING CORD ROLLER** keeps as much as five feet of extra cord out of the way when not in use. Built into a wall-plug roller, the shaving attachment is designed to eliminate coiling, folding and storing of the shaver's cord.

Science News Letter, September 21, 1957

⊗ **SHUTTER PANELS** made of kiln-dried California woods can be used in windows, cupboard fronts or to decorate a playroom. Made in 12 standard sizes, the panels are oversized for tailored trimming. The panels have light stops at top and bottom of the lock rails.

Science News Letter, September 21, 1957

⊗ **DUPLICATE BRIDGE** designed for learning and improving the game requires two decks of cards and two tables. Every person plays with and against every other person and the same hands are played at each table. The set includes duplicate boards, 14 board cards, a master score sheet, individual tallies and instructions.

Science News Letter, September 21, 1957

⊗ **SCOOP GAME**, shown in the photograph, can be played indoors or outdoors. Somewhat like the equipment used by jai-alai players, the scoop is made of polyethylene. So is the perforated two-ounce



plastic ball. According to the manufacturer, the ball can be flung as far as 75 feet. About 14 inches in length, the scoop is light enough for a child.

Science News Letter, September 21, 1957

⊗ **LADDER LEG** is an equalizer and safety leg that is said to reduce accident hazards. The leg can be used on any uneven surface including stairs and has a ten-inch adjustment. Made of aluminum and

steel, the adjuster will carry more than 600 pounds per square inch and can be operated automatically.

Science News Letter, September 21, 1957

⊗ **SOLDERING KIT** features a compact blow-torch designed for the home handyman. The kit contains two butane fuel cartridges, a soldering tip and all-purpose core solder. It can be used in brazing, peeling paint or in making plumbing repairs. Each fuel cartridge burns for 30 minutes.

Science News Letter, September 21, 1957

⊗ **OFFICE PEN** dispenses glue and dispenses with glue pots. The pen-like gluer applies a dot where needed in the office or home for securing clippings, photos or copy. The glue pen can be refilled and the glue is described as not soiling hands, paper or furniture.

Science News Letter, September 21, 1957

⊗ **TOOL-TABLE-CABINET** brings tools to the job. Made of heavy gauge steel, the mobile tool shed measures 35 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches high by 28 inches wide by 18 inches deep and weighs 110 pounds. It has drawers, shelves, a worktable top, electrical outlets and a wrap-around back guard to prevent items from falling.

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## Nature Ramblings



By HORACE LOFTIN

► **THIS YEAR'S** broods of the migratory grasshoppers or locusts have ended their first and last summer.

They have done their share in ravaging gardens and grassland. Now they are busy laying eggs in the protective earth, from which a new and hungry generation will appear next spring.

The mating of one male and one female results in the production of about 200 fertile eggs a year. Only two out of the 200 eggs laid per female must survive and reproduce in order to maintain a normal level of population, and in the natural order of events most of the eggs and young die before reaching maturity. U. S. Department of Agriculture scientists estimate that some 20% of the eggs are destroyed by predators before hatching, 60% of the young are killed shortly after hatching, and about five percent of the juveniles and adults succumb to parasites and disease. Weather, predators, disease and food supply are the big limiting factors.

### Next Year's Locusts



What happens when circumstances favor the survival of greater numbers of these young? Then come the years of great destructive migrations, when the sky may be blackened with countless masses of destructive grasshoppers. The results of such a migration have never been stated better than in the Bible (Joel 2:3):

"The land is as the Garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness, yea, and nothing shall escape them."

In the 1870's, the Great Plains were swept by tremendous hordes of grasshoppers. Fields attacked by these insects looked "as barren as if they had been burned over. Only holes in the ground showed where plants had been." One swarm was said to be half a mile in height, 100 miles wide and 300 miles long, containing an estimated 124 billion locusts.

Locust ravages are still terrible over much of Asia and Africa. However, modern methods of control have largely subdued their effects in the United States. Grasshoppers still cause annual damage running into the millions of dollars here, but the days of vast blackened skies should be about over.

The term "locust" is generally used to mean grasshoppers that migrate in swarms. Though they may be of various species, all true locusts are grasshoppers. The well-known seventeen-year "locust" and its relatives that sing from the treetops on summer nights are not locusts at all. They are cicadas and have habits completely different from those of the grasshoppers.

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