

# • New Machines and Gadgets •

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☛ **SUN-TAN BOX** can be used in mid-winter on rooftops or in backyards. Metalized polyester film on the sides and 27-square-foot floor of the portable box reflects and concentrates the sun's rays and creates a pool of warmth. The open-top box can be rolled into a bundle, weighing about 10 pounds, for storage or transportation.

Science News Letter, November 8, 1958

☛ **GLASS GEIGER COUNTER** is non-photosensitive and permits high beta radiation transmission. Halogen-quenched, it has a transparent, non-metallic conductive cathode surface. The counter has 200-volt minimum plateaus with less than three percent plateau slope and can operate up to 280 degrees centigrade with no change in operating characteristics.

Science News Letter, November 8, 1958

☛ **WRIST RADIO** uses no battery and no ordinary electrical outlet. By connecting a wire to metal or to any ground such as a telephone finger-stop or a radiator, the user can tune in to local stations. It comes with an earphone.

Science News Letter, November 8, 1958

☛ **DEPTH GAUGE**, shown in the photograph, for skin divers gives accurate readings down to 200 feet. Contained in a black



plastic case, it has a luminous dial under a curved, pressure-resistant lens of the same plastic material. It is watertight and worn like a wrist watch.

Science News Letter, November 8, 1958

☛ **TWO-PIECE SLEEPER** for children six months to six years keeps them warm even if they throw their blankets off during the night. Made of soft, lightweight blend of acetate, nylon and acrilan fibers, the sleeper

is designed to provide warmth without the weight or danger of loose blankets. The trousers have an elasticized waist and plastic fabric covered foot pads to give protection against slipping on bare floors.

Science News Letter, November 8, 1958

☛ **LENS CLEANER** has a lubricating action which prevents the grinding of dirt into the lens. It does not contain an alcoholic solvent. It is applied with a drop-applicator bottle that holds enough fluid for more than 1,000 cleanings.

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☛ **HYDROELECTRIC DAM AND GENERATOR KIT** enables children to build their own dams. The reservoir is molded from plastic and the use of clear plastic in the generator unit permits observation of working parts. Six volts A.C. are generated—sufficient to light a lamp, ring a bell or operate a small D.C. motor.

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☛ **PROFESSIONAL SLIDE RULE** is shirt-pocket size and has 23 scales. Overlaid with celluloid, it has a sealed-in silica lubricant. The trigonometric scales are color-coded for use in conjunction with the C, D and CI scales, also of the same color.

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## Nature Ramblings



By HORACE LOFTIN

► MAKE a guess: what is the greatest killer of human beings among the poisonous animals of America?

Rattlers? Black widow spiders? Gila monsters?

None of these rank with the bees and wasps as killers. Probably the familiar bumble bees and honey bees kill more persons each year than all the poisonous reptiles combined.

These insects do not possess the deadly poisons of the reptiles or the black widow. Their lethal effects are on those people who are strongly allergic to the chemical substances injected when the bee stings a victim. Some people barely feel the sting of a bee. Others react immediately, with great swelling and much pain. If stung enough times, highly sensitive persons may and do die from the allergic reaction.

An insect does not have to be a killer to

### Dangerous Animals



be remembered by his victim. Recently a naturalist was removing the weekly collection of fallen leaves from his garden. In raking the yard, he disturbed a nest of ants. Then, when he picked up the leaves, the ants climbed over his hand. They seemed to bite together as if on a signal. In a flash, his whole hand burned; within a few minutes his wrist was swollen nearly twice normal size.

The real trouble began about two hours later. Then he got a dull pain in his abdomen, which continued to grow in intensity. By nighttime, he took to his bed with acute stomach cramps, chills and fever. It was a wonderfully simulated attack of appendicitis!

He was still feeling the effects two days later.

He should not have been surprised at his reaction to the ants. While bees, mosquitoes and other such biting insects do not trouble him much, he always had festering wheals with ant bites. In this case, the number of the bites was just too much for his system.

In nature, the well-known dangerous creatures are often readily recognized as such and are treated with caution. Thus they cause relatively little trouble. But the less obviously dangerous beings are often ignored, leading to their relatively greater harm to man.

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