

# • New Machines and Gadgets •

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⚙️ **TOY TRAIN STREAMER** to be strung across roof or marquee has Santa Claus at controls of candy-striped locomotive. Engine is of weather-resistant plastic, 56 inches long by 39 inches high. Two passenger cars, a box car and a caboose, in proportionate sizes, complete the train. The entire plastic unit weighs about 60 pounds and spans from 25 to 35 feet, depending on spacing.

Science News Letter, December 13, 1958

⚙️ **CONSOLE TYPEWRITER TABLE** can be converted into a desk or end table. Out of sight when not in use, the built-in typewriter is rolled forward and locked into typing position in one motion. The table is constructed of walnut, mahogany or blonde oak.

Science News Letter, December 13, 1958

⚙️ **ICE BUCKET LINERS** of polyethylene provide easy-to-clean surfaces and help bucket keep ice cubes up to 24 hours. They cannot break under impact or when subjected to freezing temperatures and are said to be superior to coated metal in that they will not rust or oxidize.

Science News Letter, December 13, 1958

⚙️ **DRINK POURER SET** consists of hand-painted pouring heads with lifelike features made to resemble a pirate, a Tyrolean, a



clown and a sailor. The heads, two of which are shown in the photograph, are of odorless, tasteless, acid-proof plastic and fit all size bottles. By squeezing the head a jiggerful of liquid is dispensed without spilling or dripping.

Science News Letter, December 13, 1958

⚙️ **MAGNETIC TV THEATER** enables the children to produce their own shows. It comes equipped with 16 magnetic characters, two backdrops, 12 scenery pieces, and

three complete scripts—*The Three Bears*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *Little Red Riding Hood*.

Science News Letter, December 13, 1958

⚙️ **PORTABLE PLAYHOUSE** for the youngsters slips over any standard card table. Made of washable cotton and stenciled with decorations, it has a real tinkling door bell and a wooden tent pole to make a realistic peak in the roof. Simply constructed, the playhouse is easily dismantled and folds compactly for storage.

Science News Letter, December 13, 1958

⚙️ **FIVE-ANGLE FLASHLIGHT** has a case of impact-resistant butyrate plastic, designed with flat sides that offer a choice of stationary bases from which the light can be beamed at five different angles. The light is available in yellow, red, blue or ivory cases, uses ordinary flashlight batteries, and shoots a beam up to 1,000 feet.

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⚙️ **TALCUM POWDER CONTAINER**, topped with brush head of long, soft nylon filaments, makes mother's baby-powdering chores easier. The talcum shakes out through the perforated cap, which is part of the brush. The cap is removable, may be washed and will dry quickly.

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## Nature Ramblings



By HORACE LOFTIN

➤ 'Twas TWO nights before Christmas when Mr. America went down to the store to pick out his Christmas tree. He stalked around the pile of trees, spotted a big, full-foliaged fir, pointed to it and said "I'll take that one!"

When he got it home, Mrs. America told him to put it in the basement, where the furnace was sending out its warmth. On Christmas Eve, Mr. and Mrs. brought the tree to its place by the family fireside.

Alas, the tree was not the same bright green, full-foliaged tree that Mr. America had bought. It had a brownish look about it, and needles rained onto Mrs. America's rug at the least touch. Holes in the foliage revealed the naked branches.

This story would have had a happier ending if it had started like this:

'Twas a week or earlier before Christmas when Mr. America went down to the store to pick out his Christmas tree. He knew trees that stay a long time in the store are

### Christmas Tree Care



likely to be in poor condition. He meant to care for this one himself.

After selecting a tree for its shape and size, he ran his hand over the foliage. It felt moist; if it had felt dry, he would have passed the tree by. As a final test, he lifted the tree and brought the butt down sharply against the floor. Few needles fell, and he was quite certain then that the tree was in good condition.

When he got it home, Mrs. America told him to put the tree outside in a shady spot,

preferably on the north side of the house. This he did, after sawing about one inch off the butt. He set the tree in a bucket of water, too. From time to time Mrs. America checked the water level, keeping it full. In the first day or two, the tree may use a quart of water.

On Christmas Eve, Mr. and Mrs. brought it to its place across the room from the family fireside, if anything a handsomer tree than when they bought it!

There is more to this story, for the Christmas tree needs care when it is in use. A second inch should be sawed from the butt and the tree set up in the house in a container of water. Wet earth can be used, but water is best. The tree should be kept away from fireplaces, radiators and television sets (since TV sets generate heat). It is advisable to inspect the tree lights, making sure there are no frayed wires.

If you follow these suggestions, you should have the finest tree under which you ever put a present.

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