

# New Machines and Gadgets

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⚙️ **TOY SATELLITE** is a star-sprinkled blue plastic sphere that pilots itself electronically for the amusement of young and old space-agers. Two flashlight batteries power a "brain" that keeps the toy rolling around all obstacles in its path. The satellite also emits an audible beep.

Science News Letter, May 2, 1959

⚙️ **PLASTIC COLORED DOTS**, one-quarter inch diameter, are self-adhesive and come in 12 colors, 136 to a card. A slight finger pressure makes them stick to metal, paper, plastic, glass, wood or other clean, dry surface. They can be used to mark maps, charts and floor plans; to flag inventory cards; and as a color code for knobs and buttons.

Science News Letter, May 2, 1959

⚙️ **MATTRESS VIBRATOR** bolts to bed slat and can be plugged into normal house circuit. It produces gentle oscillations, and can also be installed on sofas, chairs and baby cribs. It weighs four pounds, has a non-exposed 115-volt, 60-cycle motor, and is equipped with a base and ten feet of cord.

Science News Letter, May 2, 1959

⚙️ **PLASTIC GAVELS** for committee, lodge or board meetings are ivory colored, strong and impact resistant. Made in sizes



for men or women, the gavel, shown in the photograph, can also be supplied with silver or bronze bands for engraving dates or messages.

Science News Letter, May 2, 1959

⚙️ **ICE CUBE RETAINER** for drinking glass consists of a plastic strainer that fits into the glass and a looped handle that fits over the lip of the glass. The retainer keeps

ice away from teeth and lips when drinking and provides deeper immersion of ice in the drink.

Science News Letter, May 2, 1959

⚙️ **SLING SHOT** of transparent plastic is hollow and holds 500 BB's. A release button in the fork feeds pellets from the bottom of the handle into the leather pouch of the gum rubber pull.

Science News Letter, May 2, 1959

⚙️ **PROJECTION STAND** for film projectors is 48 inches high and has two platforms with insulated formica tops. The top platform can be raised or lowered. Able to support 300 pounds, the tubular steel stand also has a reel holder for spare film. Safety locks prevent the platforms from collapsing and an anti-tripping device guards against accidentally upsetting the stand.

Science News Letter, May 2, 1959

⚙️ **WEATHER INSTRUMENT** for home, farm, office window, garage or boat indicates temperature, rainfall, wind speed and wind direction. Constructed mainly of plastic, it can be easily mounted. Precipitation is recorded in a graduated tube. Wind speed indicator pivots along a scale to show velocity in miles per hour.

Science News Letter, May 2, 1959



## Nature Ramblings



By HORACE LOFTIN

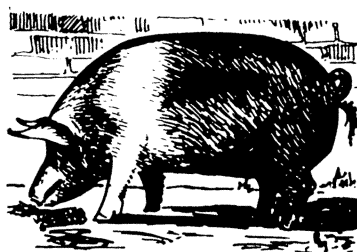
► THE FINE set of teeth of the alligator performs its function wonderfully well.

They are sharp, stout, peg-like, just right for grabbing and holding on to the prey until it is ready to be gulped down, whole or in pieces. But as in all the vertebrate animals with teeth, exclusive of the mammals, its teeth are essentially all alike.

The mammals, on the other hand, are characterized by having teeth of several kinds in each individual. For example, man has incisors in front for biting, rather degenerate canines for stabbing and holding, and premolars and molars for chewing and grinding. There are exceptions to this generality, of course, but they are few.

Each mammalian group or species has, as a rule again, its own particular kind of dentition; its incisors, canines, premolars and molars are so modified, or lacking, as to fit its particular feeding habits. Man is an omnivorous mammal, and his teeth re-

### The Teeth of the Matter



flect this by being quite generalized—no one kind of tooth outstrips the other in size or importance. Another familiar mammal, the hog, with "similar" omnivorous habits carries a set of teeth remarkably like our own.

The rodents are gnawing animals. As might be expected, the front incisors are extremely well developed and specialized. Canines, which would be virtually useless

to rodents, are completely absent. Premolars and molars are present for grinding. The incisors of rodents grow continuously throughout life, being worn down (and kept sharp) by the opposing incisors on the opposite jaw as well as by hard usage.

The carnivorous or meat-eating mammals usually have reduced incisors, but highly developed canines. These teeth are useful in killing and holding the prey. Canines reached their peak with the great saber-toothed tiger, whose upper canines projected far beneath its lower jaw. The premolars and molars of carnivores are generally adapted to shearing or cutting instead of grinding.

In illustration of the way tooth differences reflect food habits, there is the bear. The omnivorous black bear has premolars and molars well-adapted for grinding. But his seal-eating cousin, the polar bear, has premolars sharp for cutting and the molars are all but absent.

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