

# • New Machines and Gadgets •

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**MINIATURE RADIO** picks up both standard and shortwave signals yet is just 6 inches wide, 3½ inches high and less than 2 inches deep. The transistorized radio has a private earphone and a jack for an external speaker (not furnished). A companion model receives standard broadcasts and marine shortwave.

Science News Letter, April 9, 1960

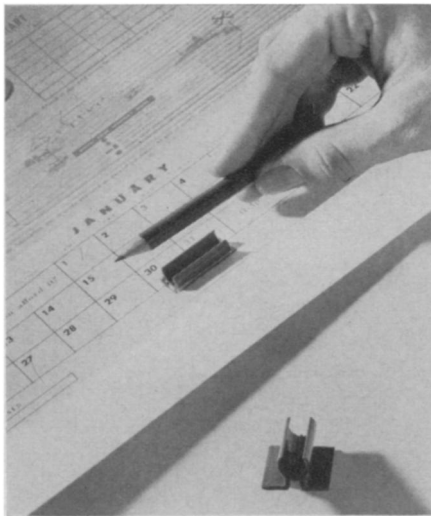
**PLASTIC FILLER** is designed for quick, low-cost repairs on dents, holes and rusted out areas of automobile bodies. Primarily for professional shop use, the putty-like compound turns hard with the addition of a setting agent. Then it can be sanded, drilled, tooled, picked and painted.

Science News Letter, April 9, 1960

**PUNCH-CARD "KEY"** system watches the door of key clubs and other exclusive organizations. Members in good standing get cards that, when inserted in a slot at the club entrance, open the door. Non-members are automatically barred.

Science News Letter, April 9, 1960

**VISOR PAL CALENDAR** is a special-purpose calendar, seen in the photograph, that wraps around a car's sun visor and provides a quick means of keeping records on servicing expenditures and dates. A



bright plastic clip, with resilient cradling arms for holding a pencil or pen ready for use, is locked snugly to the calendar by means of a slot.

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**ALUMINUM SOLDER** repairs cooking utensils, aluminum or galvanized gutters or walls, cracked automobile grilles and many other hard-to-fix items. The fluxless

solder is manufactured in stick form for easy use.

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**POCKET RECEIVER**, a transistorized, high-powered radio, permits a central desk to page or instruct employees carrying the device. Weighing just over ten ounces, the receiver may be slipped into a pocket or clipped on a belt. It will operate 12½ hours on a rechargeable battery or up to 125 hours on mercury cells. For distant communications, a trouser-leg antenna is available.

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**SELF-POWERED SHAVER** can store enough energy in its rechargeable battery for up to three weeks of electric shaving. Then the charging device may be recharged by plugging it into AC voltage from 90 to 250 volts. The shaver also features roller combs that adjust to various beards and skins.

Science News Letter, April 9, 1960

**VINYL TUBING**, for laboratories, handles a wide variety of chemicals. Its smooth interior minimizes the accumulation of minute particles which might contaminate chemical solutions. The tubing is clear, soft and flexible.

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## Nature Ramblings



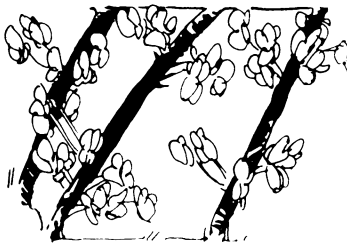
IN EARLY SPRING, the abundant pink flowers of the redbud light up dry, rich woods over the greater part of eastern United States.

The redbud is a small tree, sometimes in forest growth reaching a height of 40 to 50 feet but, when isolated, seldom attaining so great a height and developing a low, wide, flat-topped or rounded head.

Blooming at the same time of the year as the flowering dogwood, the redbud inhabits the banks of ravines and rich bottomlands from Florida to Texas and north to New York, Wisconsin and Iowa. Although its scientific name, *Cercis canadensis*, would seem to indicate that it is a native of Canada, it is rarely found that far north.

All through the Ohio River country, and south of it, the redbud is as abundant as the wild cherry is in the north. No other tree produces a flower of anything like its color and, when in bloom, few indeed exceed its conspicuousness on the landscape.

### The Blushing Redbud



The flowers appear in March and April, before its leaves, and have cup-like, deep purple calyxes and rose-colored corollas. The stamens and pistils are enclosed and hidden by the lower petals. By midsummer the pistil has developed into a flat legume of much the same color as the petals of the flower, but later turns brown. It remains on the tree until fall or early winter.

The redbud's trunk, clothed in a grayish

or reddish brown scaly bark, is of hard, heavy, close-grained wood that has little commercial value.

It is indeed fortunate that this dainty tree brings forth its blossoms before its leaves. For it would defeat its own beauty if it waited for the leaves to grow before flowering. The flowers, though numerous, are not large and would be wholly hidden under the heart-shaped, dark green leaves that later cover the tree.

Less fortunate is the name by which the redbud is often called—Judas tree—which was the ancient name of the oriental species. Legend has it that the redbud was the tree from which Judas Iscariot hanged himself and that the blossoms have ever since blushed with shame.

Be it from shame or blushing innocence, the flowering loveliness of the redbud brightens the countryside of even the cloudiest spring day.

Science News Letter, April 9, 1960