

# • New Ideas and Gadgets •

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⊗ **STEREO TAPE SPLICERS** designed especially for four-track stereo recordings protects program material while keeping tape edges entirely free of adhesive. Provided with three long-life blades housed in a replaceable cutter cartridge, it can be operated for miter-cut or trim by a selection knob. Holding fingers keep the tape in position during splicing.

• Science News Letter, 82:280 October 27, 1962

⊗ **CHEMISTRY GLASSWARE KIT** for first-year students in organic chemistry is a 15-component, ground jointed glassware set. Its semimacro size conserves chemicals and saves space. Using standard laboratory clamps, the parts can be assembled for refluxing, fractionation, separation and distillation. Compactly packaged, the kit permits drawer or shelfless storage.

• Science News Letter, 82:280 October 27, 1962

⊗ **LARGE STERILE BAGS** for hospitals are inexpensive and large enough to hold bedpans or an assortment of items for autoclaving. Provided with three-and-one-half-inch expansion gussets on each side, the 11-x-18-inch disposable bags simplify the wrapping of miscellaneous items for sterilization.

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⊗ **BABY BOTTLE WARMER**, shown in the photograph, heats milk under hot tap



water faster than by other methods. Made of anodized aluminum and plastic, it fits all standard glass and plastic baby bottles. The warmer is fitted to the regular bottle and tilted up, allowing the milk to flow into the warmer. When the milk is hot the warmer is turned upside down and the milk returns to the baby's feeding bottle.

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⊗ **CLOCK BELL TIMER** is a 60-minute timer available in four colors. Housed in a sturdy tip-proof case, the mechanism can be set for any time interval up to one hour and signals with a clear bell tone when the pre-set time has elapsed. The timer is useful in the kitchen, office, or wherever time is of importance.

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⊗ **CARRYING HANDLE** with strap makes books and heavy or clumsy packages easier to carry. The unit consists of an unbreakable plastic handle and a strap made of tough, pliable cotton webbing one inch in width provided with an adjustable buckle. In use the strap is passed through holes on each end of the handle, wound around the package and fastened securely with the buckle. Handles are available in four colors.

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⊗ **WOODEN LEG SETS** for creating chairs, tables and bookcases are made of smoothly sanded hardwoods, in natural (ready-to-stain) finish. The set, consisting of four wood legs with mar-proof gliders attached and four dual-purpose base plates with mounting screws, can be installed either straight or flared. Complete instructions are included with the colonial styled legs that come in 12-, 16-, 20- and 28-inch lengths.

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# • Doctors are Reading •

## Way to Outwit Allergy

➤ **DESENSITIZATION** of persons dangerously allergic to penicillin, insect bites and other histamine-releasing substances is predicted in the Journal of the American Medical Association, 182:172, 1962.

Drs. Walter B. Shelley and William A. Caro of the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine reported on a cell study with rabbits in which allergic reactions to egg albumin were brought about and observed.

Two types of cells, the basophils in the blood and the mast cells in the skin, release histamine, which appears to be the basis for the first signs of allergy, they reported. If they can temporarily deplete this "mastocyte-basophil" (MB) system, they believe the allergic reaction can be prevented. The possible role of histamine-releasing drugs should be studied in this connection, they said.

## Clinic-itis

Patients who attend clinics week after week are in danger of psychological illness through dependence on the hospital contacts, a JAMA editorial pointed out (p. 186). Doctors should help these patients mature through an understanding of the psychological background of their symptoms such as insomnia and bowel trouble. Too often the habitual patient in the clinic substitutes his visits for a former job, and after a few months he loses the incentive for managing his own life.

## Air Pollution Studies

A study on the relationship of air pollution to health in New York disclosed an increase in clinic visits for upper respiratory

infections and cardiac illnesses during a period of high air pollution. The present investigation failed to reveal any effects of air pollution on the number of asthma clinic visits at any of four hospitals studied.

Drs. Leonard Greenburg and Carl L. Erhardt, with Franklyn Field and Joseph I. Reed, all of New York, reported the study in JAMA (p. 161).

## 20 Cold Viruses Isolated

A person can have at least 20 colds a season without ever having exactly the same infection.

Twenty different cold viruses were recognized in a study of 403 cases of children and adults. The multiplicity of the cold virus complicates the development of a protective vaccine and emphasizes why colds recur frequently.

Scientists said that recovering the viruses in tissue cultures from common cold cases constitutes "a breakthrough" in determining the cause of the common cold in adults and mild colds and lower respiratory tract infections in children. The 20 different viruses were isolated from 35 cases, 14 per cent from adults and six per cent from children.

The 20 cold viruses, coryzaviruses, are similar to the Echo 28 virus, the first common cold virus isolated.

The study was reported by Drs. Joseph Stokes, Children's Hospital, Philadelphia, and Maurice R. Hilleman, a director of the Merck Institute for Therapeutic Research, West Point, Pa., and five other scientists in the Annals of Internal Medicine, Oct., 1962.

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