

# • New Ideas and Gadgets •

For sources of more information on new things described, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to SCIENCE NEWS LETTER, 1719 N St., N.W., Washington 6, D. C., and ask for Gadget Bulletin 1169. To receive this Gadget Bulletin without special request each week, remit \$1.50 for one year's subscription.

⚙️ **ADJUSTABLE DOOR STOP** keeps doors from hitting furniture, appliances and ankles. Usable even when there is no baseboard, the door stop is installed on the pin of the door hinge at the top or bottom. The stop can be adjusted to halt the swing of the door at any desired angle. Suitable for home or office it comes either in brass or nickel plated finish.

• Science News Letter, 82:312 November 10, 1962

⚙️ **WOODEN SLAT CAR SEAT** gives driving comfort, coolness and a firm back support. Made of maple slats 24 inches wide, glued and stapled together, it is held in place with seat cover pins providing a seat firm but flexible enough to contour to the back and to the seat. It comes in two sizes for regular and compact cars.

• Science News Letter, 82:312 November 10, 1962

⚙️ **EAR CHART** is full-color illustration of the anatomy of the human ear useful for science teachers and high school and college students. Notebook size, it also includes a cross section of the cochlea and of the spiral organ of corti. All parts of the ear are labeled in detail.

• Science News Letter, 82:312 November 10, 1962

⚙️ **UNDERWATER FLASHLIGHT** that will keep an upright position in the water has a tough water-tight plastic housing re-



sistant to salt water and common acids. Equally serviceable on land, the powerful flashlight, shown in the photograph, is equipped with a carrying handle and has a press button switch that activates the floodlight or red safety blinker. Operating on a six-volt dry cell, it casts a light for a quarter of a mile and is useful to hikers, fishermen and hunters.

• Science News Letter, 82:312 November 10, 1962

⚙️ **PORTABLE DRINKING FOUNTAIN** makes fresh drinking water readily available to children playing outdoors and avoids constant running into the house. Usable in any location within reach of the garden hose, the fountain can be quickly installed without any tools and moved from place to place. The water is drained away by a flexible eight-foot tube preventing accumulation around its base.

• Science News Letter, 82:312 November 10, 1962

⚙️ **BATTERY CHECKER** shows the water level of the battery immediately without removing the caps. The checker, consisting of a threaded cap with a float that passes through its center, screws onto the battery replacing the regular battery cap. In use, the float is pushed down and the water level is shown by an indicator on the part of the rod that protrudes above the cap.

• Science News Letter, 82:312 November 10, 1962

⚙️ **ALUMINUM STORAGE HOUSE** with colorful baked-on enamel finish is maintenance-free. Easily erected from six sections, sizes range from 4 by 4 by 6 feet, 2 inches to 8 by 8 by 6 feet, 2 inches. The storeroom is provided with a full piano-hinged door, a safety lock, plywood floor and provision for mounting pegboard on the wall. By combining two of the standard units, a playhouse or garden house can be created.

• Science News Letter, 82:312 November 10, 1962

# • Doctors are Reading •

## Safe to Double Heart Rate

➤ **WHEN A HEALTHY** person exercises, his number of heart beats per minute can go up to 180 instead of the normal rate of 70 to 80. But 240 beats allow no rest to the heart and are not safe.

Dr. George E. Burch, Tulane University School of Medicine, New Orleans, reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 182:339, 1962, that heart difficulties following an excessively rapid heart beat are due to these reduced rest periods of the heart.

## Legal Obligation

Physicians were advised to treat former patients in an emergency situation as a matter of public relations, although legal obligation does not continue beyond the completion of an illness that first brought the patient for treatment, in the *JAMA*, Questions and Answers Section (p. 508).

## Fungus Disease Increases

The fungus disease, histoplasmosis, long known to be prevalent in some parts of the Ohio and Mississippi River valleys, was found frequently in tests of elementary school children in Frederick County, Md., Dr. Henry V. Chase of Frederick, and Charlotte C. Campbell of Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, Washington, D. C., reported in *JAMA* (p. 335).

The fungus, *Histoplasma capsulatum*, enters the body through

the upper respiratory tract and causes fever, abdominal cramps and other symptoms. It affects the lungs, spleen and liver and can prove fatal. Of 1,924 children tested, 35 per cent had positive reactions. The organism thrives in soils contaminated with bird droppings in urban as well as in rural areas.

## Thalidomide Aftermath

More than 20,000 family doctors in the British National Health Service have been asked to report any suspicion that a new or established drug has adversely affected a patient as an aftermath to the thalidomide tragedy. In the *Foreign Mail* section of the *JAMA* (p. 502), Dr. G. I. Watson of the epidemic observation unit of the College of General Practitioners predicted that there would be much less drug-taking in the future by women of child-bearing age as a result of the large number of deformed babies born to women who took thalidomide.

## New Nursery Infection

A new threat to newborn babies in hospital nurseries was reported in the *American Journal of Diseases of Children*, 104:355, 1962. Over a four-month period, five infants were found to suffer from severe infection due to *Proteus mirabilis*, a species of bacteria that comes from putrefying substances and water. Only one of the babies fully recovered. Three died and one survived only to have grand mal seizures and psychomotor retardation, Dr. Arnold H. Becker of Bristol, Conn., said.

• Science News Letter, 82:312 November 10, 1962