

• 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 1170. To receive this Gadget Bulletin without special request each week, remit \$1.50 for one year's subscription.

⚙️ **EMERGENCY SIGNAL KIT** to request help in case of car trouble contains signs for gas, first aid, a tow or mechanic. Measuring 10 by 13 inches and visible both day and night, the signs permit the flash call for help to be made from within the safety of the car. They can also be used to warn approaching vehicles of danger ahead by placing them in the highway.

• Science News Letter, 82:328 November 17, 1962

⚙️ **KEYBOARD MARKER** enables anyone to play the piano or organ in any key and transpose music without difficulty. Plastic key markers, easily put on and taken off, are pressed onto the keys, red for sharps and blue for flats, by following a guide that is included in the set. Black or white dots show the base note.

• Science News Letter, 82:328 November 17, 1962

⚙️ **PLASTIC MOON GLOBE** for schools and libraries is a relief globe of the moon's principal features. Sixteen inches in diameter and mounted on a stand, the unit is 25 inches in height and weighs five pounds. Included as a part of the kit are a handbook about the moon and a 25- by 30-inch wall chart.

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⚙️ **LITTLE GARDEN GREENHOUSE** for young and old, shown in the photograph,



is a compact hothouse that fits on a shelf, window ledge or table top. Provided with a transparent plastic cover with ventilation control, it is heated by electrical elements enclosed in the bottom tray. The cover is high enough to permit seedlings to reach the transplant stage. The greenhouse comes with a supply of seeds, trays and an instruction booklet.

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⚙️ **ELECTRIC POWER PLANT** that can be held in the hand is powerful enough to light a three-room house. Ideal as an emergency unit or for use on farms and resorts or by sportsmen and campers, the 12-pound motor will operate eight hours on a gallon of outboard fuel. It will operate power tools, radio or television set, and power a bilge pump.

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⚙️ **AUTOMATIC LAMPLIGHTER** turns on street and other types of outdoor lighting at nightfall and off at daybreak. The small, lightweight unit can be mounted on utility poles or on the lighting fixtures themselves without any structural reinforcement. The unit, consisting of a photoelectric cell housed in impact and weather resistant plastic, can be adjusted within a range of 1.0 to 10 foot candles.

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⚙️ **CANVAS ENCLOSED LUGGAGE RACK** that fits on the top of a car folds flat when not in use. Made of heavy water- and dust-resistant canvas on a steel frame, it has a solid panel braced bottom. Its zipper opening can be locked with a padlock. When set up the carrier retains its shape even though empty. The rack is available in 12- and 17½ cubic-foot sizes.

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• Doctors are Reading •

Helmet Designs for Sports

➤ **TO PROTECT** the head and neck in athletic competition, individual design of the helmet for each sport is necessary.

Helmets for use in one sport may not be satisfactory for another. Recent use of facial protective devices attached to a helmet, for example, caused severe injuries of the neck and spinal cord. Dr. E. S. Gurdjian of the Wayne State University College of Medicine, with H. R. Lissner and L. M. Patrick of the University's department of engineering mechanics, reported a study in the Journal of the American Medical Association, 182:509, 1962, in which the thickness of padding in helmets was computed from the weight and velocity of the injuring object.

Hormones Relieve Spasms

Hormone treatment relieved the frequency of seizures in 52 per cent of 21 children suffering from a type of epilepsy associated with physical and mental retardation, researchers reported in JAMA (p. 523).

Previously administered anti-convulsive drugs had no effect, Drs. J. Gordon Millichap and Reginald G. Bickford of the Mayo Clinic and Mayo Foundation, Rochester, Minn., said. They said that the response to corticotropin (ACTH) and cortisone was better in the younger children, mainly under one year of age. However, no improvement in intelligence was seen.

Gallbladder Disease

Indians in the Southwest have more than three times as much gallbladder disease than the general population, Drs. Maurice L. Sievers and James R. Marquis of the U.S. Public Health Service

Indian Hospital, Phoenix, Ariz., reported in JAMA (p. 570). The cause may be related to the prevalence of obesity, intestinal infections and diabetes among the Indians.

Electric Shock for Heart

The era of drugs as a treatment for abnormal heart beat may be drawing to a close because of a promising new method involving electric shock, the leading editorial in JAMA (p. 566) said.

A brief electrical shock of 3,000 to 7,000 volts across the chest stopped abnormal heart actions in 27 of 29 patients, Drs. Bernard Lown and Jose Neuman, and Raghavan Amarasingham of Harvard's School of Public Health and the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, Boston, reported (p. 548). They developed an instrument consisting of two components, one to discharge a direct current shock, and the other to synchronize release of the charge at a predetermined point of the heart cycle.

Getting Rid of Bifocals?

Grandpa will soon be getting rid of his bifocals and trifocals, the Questions and Answers section of JAMA (p. 598) indicated. Experimental models of a new omnifocal lens have proved their usefulness and feasibility of production, and arrangements are in progress for commercial production.

The Smoking Habit

Lobeline injections to stop the smoking habit may be dangerous as well as useless, the Questions and Answers section of JAMA (p. 598) said. If the patient smokes, he may get a double dose of active drug, leading to collapse.

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