

• New Ideas and Gadgets •

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⊗ **EXPERIMENTAL ELECTROMAGNET** for school physical science laboratories is ruggedly built. Complete with magnet and yoke assembly, battery holder and leads, clips and eyebolts, the unit needs only one standard 1.5-volt flashlight battery to operate. The electromagnet will lift up to 100 pounds. A complete set of instructions for demonstrating the principles of electromagnetism are included.

• Science News Letter, 85:320 May 16, 1964

⊗ **MOLECULAR STILL** has no moving parts, eliminates localized heating and has no need for temperature-regulating devices. The material to be distilled is allowed to drop slowly over a center finger which is heated by refluxing vapors, the temperature being determined by the type of liquid in the boiling flask. The apparatus is useful for degassing viscous liquids and distilling high molecular weight esters, hydrocarbons, oils and silicones.

• Science News Letter, 85:320 May 16, 1964

⊗ **PRECISION TWEEZERS** have a lens attachment that magnifies three times, making removal of thorns, burrs and tiny slivers easier and quicker. The tweezers are useful also to stamp collectors, hobbyists. Made of chromed steel, the tweezers are 2¼ inches long.

• Science News Letter, 85:320 May 16, 1964



⊗ **DRAIN CLEANER**, shown in photograph, keeps drains odorless, free-flowing and clean. One end of the unit, which consists of a rubber hose about 2½ feet long, attaches to the faucet and the other fits over the drain. To use, the device is attached to the faucet, pressed over the drain and the water turned on full force. The rapidly rushing water clears the drain.

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⊗ **ANCHOR LOCK** that makes anchor handling in small boats easier and more convenient is usable with any type rope and anchor. The corrosion-resistant lock, fitting most boats, swings to and locks in convenient positions over the edge, preventing the anchor from marring the craft. The lock, 15 inches long and 9 inches high, is clamped on the boat or removed with a single turn screw.

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⊗ **MACHINERY-HOLDING DEVICE** consists of step blocks 1/8 and 1/16 inch in thickness and components for holding down the blocks when in use. Suitable for application with dies, fixtures and machine operations such as drilling, milling and boring, the device is adjustable to different heights, eliminating the time wasted searching for scrap blocks or shims for leveling machinery.

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⊗ **ALUMINA ABRASIVE SPRAY** is designed for metallographers, petrologists and materials investigators for the preparation of critical surfaces. Contained in an aerosol can, the alumina sprayed directly on the polishing cloth is uniformly dispersed with minimum loss. Fine polished surfaces are assured each time in less time.

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• Doctors Are Reading •

'Golf Course Dermatitis'

➤ A RARE CASE of "golf-course dermatitis" due to a chemical commonly used in a spray on the greens was reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 188:415, 1964.

Thiram is the name of the chemical which, under a variety of trade names, has been dusted and sprayed over farmlands and lawns as well as golf courses since the 1930s.

Although thiram does not commonly cause allergy, Dr. Walter B. Shelley of the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, who reported the case, said an appreciable number of farmers and gardeners today must suffer from hypersensitivity to it or its related compounds.

The thiram-sensitive person also must avoid rubber products containing it. These include art-gum erasers, bunion pads, eyelash curlers, mattresses, stethoscopes, ear tips, condoms, pessaries, gloves, goggles, dress shields, shoes, adhesives, dentures, bathing caps, garters, toys and aprons and other elasticized garments.

Temporary flushing, swelling and burning of the face and neck have been reported in connection with thiram products and alcohol drinking. This is because the drug disulfiram, whose trade name is Antabuse, contains thiram. It is used as a treatment for alcoholics, and therefore other thiram-containing products such as soap and ointment or powder, when used by some persons drinking wine or liquor, can cause allergy.

One woman who drank a cocktail only on Sunday night, experienced scarlet red flushing of her face after bathing on that night with soap containing thiram, which she used regularly without ill effect through the week.

Exercise After Thirty

After age 30, more frequent medical evaluation of the individual's capacity for exercise is imperative, it was reported in *JAMA*, 188:433, 1964.

A joint committee of the AMA and the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation has strongly endorsed exercise as an important part of overall physical fitness, but lists 11 suggestions, including age factors.

"Advanced age, in itself, is not a contraindication to exercise," the statement says, "but is actually an indication for it." Anyone who is organically sound will probably benefit from "reasonable" exercise. But he should check with his physician to determine what is reasonable in his case.

Ulcer-Freezing Question

The technique of ulcer freezing was questioned by a team of Minneapolis, Minn., General Hospital surgeons who found that symptoms came back in a progressively large number of patients studied from six weeks to nine months after the "freeze."

Drs. Claude R. Hitchcock, James E. Bitter and R. Duncan Sutherland concluded in *JAMA*, 188:409, 1964, that although relief occurred, it was for "disappointingly" short periods. The psychological effect may be better than the physical, they indicated.

An accompanying editorial, *JAMA*, 188:461, 1964, said that although the Minnesota study is not an ideal one because it lacks rigid controls and random patients needed for definitive answers to the freezing question, it has served a useful purpose.

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