

# • New Ideas and Gadgets •

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⊗ **TIMED EXTENSION CORD** automatically turns light off at a pre-selected time within periods of from one minute to four hours. Capable of controlling up to three electrical devices at one time, it can be used to turn off Christmas trees, sun lamps, television, heating pads, store windows or other units at a desired time. It operates on 125-volt household current and has a six-foot cord.

• Science News Letter, 86:288 October 31, 1964

⊗ **DARKROOM PEN** is especially designed for doctors, nurses, policemen, photographers and others who have occasion to write in the dark. The lower part of the pen is encased in transparent plastic through which a soft red light suitable for dark-room use shines. The upper part which houses the battery is made of satin-finished metal. The pen cover, also of metal, has a convenient pocket clip.

• Science News Letter, 86:288 October 31, 1964

⊗ **BAIT BUCKET** with a perforated liner helps keep minnows in good condition permitting them to be bathed in a constant flow of fresh, cool water. In use, covered securely, the liner is lowered into the lake or stream and tied to the fishing craft. Made of impact-resistant smooth plastic, the bucket does not damage the scales of the fish.

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⊗ **SNOW THROWER**, shown in photograph, that can also be used as a power



scoop or shovel is lightweight and compact and can be hung on the wall when not in use. Useful for cleaning snow from steps, porches, walks or driveways, it can also be used for digging under snowbound cars. Capable of throwing up to one ton of snow a minute as far as 15 feet, it adjusts to seven throwing positions and is powered by a two-cycle engine that can function in any position.

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⊗ **QUICK BATTERY CHARGER** eliminates the need to lift the hood of the car or touch the battery itself when the battery dies. By simply plugging one end of the cord of the charger into a standard electrical outlet and the other into the cigarette lighter of the car, the battery is quickly recharged. Usable on all cars having 12-volt batteries, it is shock and short proof. The unit comes in a luggage type case.

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⊗ **ELECTRIC WASTEBASKET** shreds important papers not meant to be read again, as they are discarded. Automatic and requiring no buttons, the wastebasket starts when paper sheets are fed into it and stops when the paper is completely shredded. The size of an ordinary wastebasket, the rectangular unit fits under the desk and plugs into any 110-volt outlet. It also serves as a regular wastebasket.

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⊗ **DOG LEASH** that includes a spring control device makes walking the dog easier. The spring included just below the leather hand strap absorbs the strain of the dog's pulls and lunges, protecting the person's arm and also the animal from sudden choking. Encased in plastic, the spring is unbreakable and will not overextend. The steel twist chain of the 48-inch leash will not rust.

• Science News Letter, 86:288 October 31, 1964

# • Doctors Are Reading •

## Elderly Ulcer Patients Survive Early Surgery

➤ **PERSONS OVER 60** years of age who have peptic ulcers should not put off surgery until massive bleeding requires emergency treatment, two Boston surgeons warned in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, 271:803, 1964.

The death rate reported in a study of partial removal of the stomach (subtotal gastrectomy) when massive bleeding occurred was 21%, but when patients chose to have such an operation in earlier stages, only 0.4% died. The study was made at Peter Bent Brigham Hospital over a ten-year period.

Forty percent of the bleeding patients were more than 65 years old, and the majority of those dying after surgery for massive bleeding were more than 60.

Follow-up information on these elderly people revealed that they lived at least five years after choosing to have early surgery, Drs. John R. Brooks and Angelo J. Eraklis reported.

## Hereditary Drug Resistance

The first case of drug resistance in a family has been reported from California in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, 271:809, 1964.

Seven family members of Irish-English extraction in three generations showed extraordinary resistance to coumarin anticoagulant drugs, Dr. Robert A. O'Reilly of the Santa Clara County

Hospital, San Jose, Calif., and a team at Children's Hospital, San Francisco, found.

The family was warned to avoid taking vitamin K and medications containing barbiturates because of the peculiarities of their clotting factors. Drs. Paul M. Aggeler and M. Silvija Hoag, with Lois S. Leong and Mona L. Kropatkin, reported the study.

## Undertake Botulism Poisoning Study

The large number of cases of food poisoning and deaths from botulism in 1963 (46 cases and 14 deaths) has stimulated renewed interest in research on this subject by at least six U.S. Government agencies.

These cases represent the highest total for any one year since 1939 and the eighth highest since 1899, Public Health Reports, Oct. 1964, said. Commercially canned food accounted for five cases with two deaths. In addition, 19 cases caused by commercially smoked products resulted in seven deaths. Home-processed foods were responsible for 22 cases, including five deaths.

The Food and Drug Administration is undertaking increased inspections of can sealing and has warned the public to avoid use of food in bulging or leaking cans. Dr. G. G. Slocum, chief, division of microbiology, Food and Drug Administration, with Dr. W. M. Decker and B. J. Osheroff of the Public Health Service, reported the study of the status of botulism in the United States.

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