

• New Ideas and Gadgets •

Ask for Gadget Bulletin 1278 for sources of new things described. Send a self-addressed envelope to SCIENCE SERVICE, 1719 N St., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036. To receive this Gadget Bulletin without special request each week, remit \$1.50 for one year's subscription.

⊗ **FORCED AIR GAS FURNACE** is useful for remodeled homes, apartments, schools or offices, as a single heat source or for supplemental heat. Eighty-four inches high, it can be placed in a corner of a room or can be recessed in a single stud space in the wall, and does not require long duct work. The automatic unit includes a blower with safety switch and a permanent cleanable filter.

• Science News Letter, 86:384 December 12, 1964

⊗ **MICROSCOPE ACCESSORY KIT** includes balsam, thionine, alcohol, 11 slides, cover glass, eye dropper, brush and tweezers. Designed for use by both teacher and pupils, the kit comes with complete instructions including directions for making permanent slides and mounts.

• Science News Letter, 86:384 December 12, 1964

⊗ **COMBINED SHELF AND POLE BRACKETS** help increase closet storage space. Easy to install, a set of four brackets will support a shelf and one or two poles, depending upon the space available. The brackets made of white baked enamel on steel, are $4\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{3}{4} \times 1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in size. Installation screws are included with each set of brackets.

• Science News Letter, 86:384 December 12, 1964

⊗ **EGG PIERCER**, shown in photograph, prevents eggs from cracking or bursting



while being boiled, eliminating misshapen hard- or soft-boiled eggs. Before cooking, the larger end of the egg, which contains the air pocket, is pressed down into the piercer. A steel needle punches a tiny hole through the shell. This allows the air confined in the shell to escape as the egg is cooked and thus prevents the shell from breaking.

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⊗ **POP-UP SAFETY MARKERS** for highways are collapsible. Easily compressed and locked into a closed position, the marker consists of a steel coil spring covered with a replaceable heavy gauge reflective orange-colored nylon sleeve. A spring action opens the cone to its full size and the weight of its base plate helps it withstand high winds and tipping. Three sizes, 15, 22 and 28 inches high are available.

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⊗ **MOTORIZED HOME WORKSHOP** that comes complete with seven power tools, allows a child to make a wide variety of colorful objects. The kit includes plastic "lumber" in different colors, balsa wood, paints, adhesive, brush and illustrated instruction book. The power tools which operate on three "D" size batteries (not included) shape, drill, bore, sand and saw.

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⊗ **DECORATOR FOOTWARMER** designed for use in offices, banks, hotels, classrooms or wherever feet are exposed to dampness or cold, automatically provides a constant temperature increase of ten degrees at floor level. It is safe to use, having no exposed wires. Available in a choice of tan or gray, it is constructed of durable tempered masonite and measures $20 \times 24 \times 5/6$ inches.

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• Doctors Are Reading •

Needed to Add Vitamins to Dry Milk

➤ **THE ADDITION** of important vitamins A and D to nonfat dry milk will require a new act of Congress to replace the 1944 Act of standards of identity for this product which makes no provision for vitamins.

Dr. Philip L. White, secretary of the Council on Foods and Nutrition of the American Medical Association, calls attention to the legal obstacles to fortification of dry milk in a column in *Today's Health*, 42:16, 1964.

The hands of the Food and Drug Administration are tied because Congress failed to provide for vitamins in its Act. This is one of the few Congressional enactments on standards, usually handled by FDA, a situation brought about by the Dairy Industry, which in the early 1940's objected to the FDA's use of the term dried or powdered skim milk, and called on Congress for legislation.

A considerable amount of nonfat dry milk is distributed in relief and school lunch programs, as well as in the overseas Food for Peace Program, and Dr. White calls attention to the need for including these vitamins.

Air Pollutants Blamed for Asthma

Asthma outbreaks in New Orleans have been traced to two air pollutants so far in a continuing study reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 190:811, 1964.

A poor combustion product containing silica from the smoke of an abandoned city dump burning underground was the first pollu-

tant linked to asthma outbreaks. The other pollutant implicated was from a public grain elevator. Positive skin tests showing allergy to both pollutants were found in more than 80% of outbreak victims.

Asthma outbreaks in New Orleans are seen most often in October and November but also occur during June and July. The Division of Air Pollution of the U.S. Public Health Service has a contract with Tulane University to study the cause. Dr. Hans Weill, Morton M. Ziskind and Vincent J. Derbes, all of Tulane, are working with Richard C. Dickerson of the Public Health Service on the study.

Younger Women Should Avoid Drugs

Women in the childbearing age group should avoid self-medication, and physicians should be wary of prescribing drugs for this group, Dr. Virginia Apgar of the National Foundation, New York, said in *JAMA*, 190:840, 1964.

The greatest danger of bringing about malformations in the unborn baby is in the first three months of pregnancy, Dr. Apgar said in a report prepared at the request of the AMA Council on Drugs.

This includes the period before a woman may be aware that she is pregnant. Answers to the question on why 80% of mothers who took thalidomide had normal infants, while the other 20% had babies with serious abnormalities are a long way off, however, she said.

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