

• New Ideas and Gadgets •

Ask for Gadget Bulletin 1292 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.

⊗ **FIRE ALARM** provides fire safety in the home. Only $5\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{3}{4} \times 1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in size, it is hung near the ceiling flat against the wall, inconspicuous and out of the way. The battery-operated unit requires no wiring or plugging in and is thermostatically controlled, giving off a loud continuous siren alarm when the surrounding temperature rises to 135 degrees or above.

• Science News Letter, 87:191 March 20, 1965

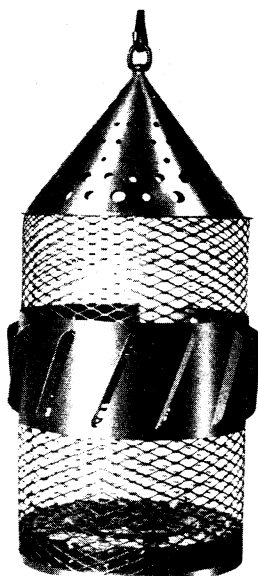
⊗ **TRANSPARENT GEOMETRIC SHAPES** help make mathematical concepts easier to understand. Useful to teachers and students at all levels of mathematical study, the set contains 19 geometric shapes, all transparent and proportionate in size, with the largest $4\frac{1}{16}$ inches tall. Made of strong plastic, the models are outlined in red for quick recognition.

• Science News Letter, 87:191 March 20, 1965

⊗ **REFLECTOR LAMP** for exhibits, store display windows or homes gives more light at less cost. The lamp consists of an aluminum reflector bonded to the outside of a flood bulb and comes in three wattage sizes, 75, 100 and 150. Designed with a conventional base for standard outlets, the unit is also available with tinted reflectors or bulbs to provide soft color effects.

• Science News Letter, 87:191 March 20, 1965

⊗ **AUTOMATIC FISH SCALER**, shown in photograph, is a cylindrical metal mesh



cage-like device that scales the fish as they are dragged along in it behind the boat. Designed with a perforated metal nose cone and a circle of diagonal fins around its center, the scaler rotates as the water passes through it. The scales are removed as the fish are shuffled against the wire mesh and the water passing through washes them away. The unit also serves as a holder for the catch.

• Science News Letter, 87:191 March 20, 1965

⊗ **STEREO CHEMISTRY MODELS** are low cost teaching aids for the study of organic chemistry at all grade levels including college. Models of the molecular structure of organic chemicals are constructed by joining aluminum tubing with plastic parts. Parts including carbon-carbon double bond, trivalent nitrogen, divalent oxygen, tetrahedral carbon, number labels and plastic balls in various sizes are available in packages of 100.

• Science News Letter, 87:191 March 20, 1965

⊗ **TAPE RECORDER PADS** for replacement of worn pads, help avoid tape squeal and irregular tape motion. The felt pads, made with pressure-sensitive adhesive on one side, require no glue or cement and are easy to apply. Included in each package of 44 pre-cut pads is material that can be cut to fit odd makes and models. The pads come in two thicknesses.

• Science News Letter, 87:191 March 20, 1965

⊗ **NEW GRASS SHEARS** that reduce the labor of lawn trimming fit the hand naturally and snugly and are low in friction. Their plastic handles, which are simply squeezed together with an up and down grip, are set up high to protect the knuckles from being bruised or scraped during use, and the blade tips are rounded to help prevent accidents. The lightweight shears cut both fine and tough grasses with equal ease.

• Science News Letter, 87:191 March 20, 1965

• Doctors Are Reading •

Alcohol Affects Brain Cells

➤ **BRAIN CELLS** in the alcoholic become so altered that alcohol becomes a necessity for cell function, Dr. Marvin A. Block, vice president of the National Council on Alcoholism, reported in *Today's Health*, March, 1965.

Therefore, an alcoholic can never go back to normal drinking, Dr. Block explained.

"Once the alcoholic addiction, with physiological dependence, is established," he said, "reintroduction of alcohol into the person's cells will immediately start the craving again."

The heavy drinker may eventually need alcohol for his brain cells just as a diabetic needs insulin injections for the sugar-using cells of his body.

Loss of control, Dr. Block said, stems from the fact that alcohol is an anesthetizing, addicting drug like narcotics. When alcohol, narcotics or other addictive drugs, upon which the cells have become dependent, are suddenly withdrawn the cells may undergo something comparable to a convulsion.

Just why the alcoholic loses control and the social drinker can stop drinking any time he decides to do so is not exactly understood.

Search for Multiple Sclerosis Cure

A basic step toward the understanding of multiple sclerosis has been taken by a Los Angeles physician.

This step consists of a study of myelin, the sheathlike structure

that surrounds the nerve fiber, to find out why myelin is normally stable in health but unstable in disease.

Dr. John S. O'Brien, chief of the division of chemical pathology, University of Southern California, told *SCIENCE SERVICE* that "the most important prediction to be drawn is that myelin may be rendered unstable in disease if its lipid composition is altered so that higher proportions of lipids containing polyunsaturated fatty acids and lower proportions of lipids containing very long-chain fatty acids are present."

Dr. O'Brien reported in detail his "partial understanding, at the molecular level," of the stability of myelin membrane in *Science*, 147:1019, 1965.

Hair Loss May Be Molt

➤ **A CLUTTERED COMB** does not necessarily indicate baldness. The loose locks may be one's quota of daily molt.

Widely associated with birds and animals, molting in modern man exists as a relic of the process still prevalent in other mammals, reported Dr. Arthur Rook of Cambridge in the *British Medical Journal*, March 6, 1965.

Dr. Rook estimated that a person's average daily molt ranges from 20 to 75 hairs, basing his estimate on 100,000 hair follicles to the scalp. Furthermore, Dr. Rook stated that hair follows a recurrent cycle. At any given moment, 85% to 95% of the scalp follicles are growing, 4% to 14% are in regression, and 1% or less are resting.

• Science News Letter, 87:191 March 20, 1965