

• New Ideas and Gadgets •

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⚙️ **GLASS FILTER FUNNEL** for vacuum filtration through membrane filters, is especially useful for bacteriological and contamination analysis, chemical laboratory filtration and medical research. The unit allows the filtering operation to be observed as it proceeds, helping to prevent membranes from being sucked dry by the vacuum. The unit is fully autoclavable.

• Science News Letter, 88:319 November 13, 1965

⚙️ **RECHARGEABLE BATTERY** is a completely self-contained power supply for use in photoflash equipment, toys, flashlights, cordless clocks, portable radios, alarm systems or wherever the standard "D" cell is used. Built in the same overall dimensions of the "D" cell, the battery can be recharged to full power overnight in any 110-volt outlet.

• Science News Letter, 88:319 November 13, 1965

⚙️ **FIXED PROPORTION CALIPER** for artists, designers, architects, decorators and furniture manufacturers has a fixed ratio that assures ideal proportions in design. The versatile instrument, made with short and long arms that move simultaneously as the instrument is manipulated, is also suitable for use in trade, technical and art schools.

• Science News Letter, 88:319 November 13, 1965

⚙️ **PRESSING DOME** for the housewife or seamstress, shown in photograph, makes



pressing curved seams, shoulders, puffed sleeves and collars easier and quicker. Especially useful for children's clothes, dresses, uniforms and men's suits, the ball-shaped pad saves time and simplifies ironing seams that are difficult to press on a flat surface. Made of solid wood, it has a padded top and a removable cover.

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⚙️ **GRATER AND BOWL** combination, convenient for housewives, catches the food in the bowl as it is grated. The grater, which covers the top of the bowl, is divided into three separate sections for grating, stringing and shredding. Safe to wash in a dishwasher, the unit is made of high-impact styrene. It has an easy-to-grip handle and non-slip base.

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⚙️ **PUTT RETURNER** for practicing putting inside or outside the home is a simple device that can be used on any flat surface. The rectangular unit, made of finished solid hardwood mounted on non-slip rubberized felt pads, is designed with a half circle having the diameter of a regulation cup. A removable elastic band is stretched across the front of the half circle to provide a quick automatic putt return.

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⚙️ **UNDERGROUND LAWN SPRINKLER** for the do-it-yourselfer is especially suitable for cut-up and odd-shaped lawn areas. The sprinklers come in a variety of sizes and head patterns, including squares, strips and circles, and can be adjusted by a simple turn of a screw after installation, thus permitting precise watering of areas of different shapes and sizes in home gardens or public parks.

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• Doctors Are Reading •

Silver Shortage May Affect X-Ray Cost

➤ **THE ABOLISHMENT** of silver coins will not be enough to offset a shortage of silver chemicals used in X-ray film and other photographic materials.

There are substitutes for conventional X-ray procedures, but they all demand greater radiation exposure of the patient or give a poor image, or both, a Texas radiologist reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* 194:514, 1965.

A threat of rationing X-ray film was sounded by Dr. Robert A. Wilson of the Martin X-ray and Radium Clinic, Southwestern Medical School of the University of Texas, Dallas.

"If a satisfactory substitute for silver is not found," Dr. Wilson said, "then conservation may become increasingly important in future years."

In 1964, Free World consumption of silver was about 550 million troy ounces. New production was about 215 million troy ounces, most of the difference coming from United States silver stocks. Even if the U.S. had produced no silver coins in 1964, Free World consumption would have exceeded silver production by 133 million troy ounces, Dr. Wilson pointed out.

Deaths From Chicken Pox Reported

Two young boys, one aged three and one-half and the other, eight years, died in the same village outbreak of chicken pox.

The attending physicians in Dundee, Scotland, reported the unusual deaths in the *British Medical Journal*, Oct. 23, 1965.

The younger boy died as a result of hemorrhage complications,

and the older child died from encephalitis, or inflammation of the brain. Two other children with hemorrhagic chicken pox recovered after hospitalization.

Cause of the encephalitis death is uncertain but could be due to activation by the chicken pox virus of another virus dormant in the child, or to an allergic response of the central nervous system to the virus.

Drs. A. W. Blair, W. M. Jamieson and G. H. Smith, all of King's Cross Hospital and the Department of Pathology, Maryfield Hospital, Dundee, reported the cases.

Dark Skin Turns Light on Frogs

Dark human skin might eventually be lightened using information from studies of certain compounds that turn dark frog skin a lighter color. For camouflage purposes of hiding and feeding in nature, a frog's skin can turn dark or light to a certain degree by expansion or contraction of dark pigment areas in the skin.

When portions of a frog's skin are experimentally treated with a chemical hormone called MSH, the pigmented melanocytes expand and the skin is darkened, report Joseph McGuire and Halvor Moller, Yale-New Haven Medical Center, New Haven, Conn. Human skin can become darkened when this hormone is administered, the scientists stated in *Nature*, 208:493, 1965.

When the frog's pre-darkened skin is subjected to lightening compounds called melatonin, norepinephrine and acetylcholine, the melanocytes contract and the skin lightens. When melatonin is added to human skin, there is no response, they said.

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