

## INVENTION

**Improve Partition for Rear Seat Separation**

► K. T. KELLER, chairman of the Board of the Chrysler Corporation, has been granted a patent by the U. S. Patent Office.

His invention is an improved partition between the back and front seats of an automobile, so that the rear seat "may be converted to and from a limousine style compartment."

The glass partition in Mr. Keller's invention is frameless and is molded in a curve from top to bottom. Lack of a frame affords an unobstructed view for the rear seat passengers and also eliminates the strain generally applied to the edge portions of the partition.

Mr. Keller's patent number is 2,632,668 and it is assigned to the Chrysler Corporation, Highland Park, Mich.

Science News Letter, April 18, 1953

**East Meets West**

► EASTERNERS, SPENDING their first spring season in southern California, Arizona or New Mexico, are very apt to exclaim over finding violets and buttercups, anemones and shooting-stars among the chaparral.

Even some of the other flowers which they don't recognize so easily, like some of the western pentstemons and mimuli, have the same delicacy of texture to their leaves, the same dainty tints to their flowers, that mark the spring offerings of the humid woods of the East and somehow seem out of place in the western brushlands.

The secret is that for a few weeks in spring the desert is not quite a desert, and the humid woods are not as humid as they seem: East and West have met each other halfway. What little rain the desert gets is most likely to fall in late winter and early spring, and the seeds and bulbs and rootstocks of the desert's spring flowers take quick advantage of this moisture and expand their leaves and open their flowers in the mild warmth of the April sun.

At the same time, the eastern woodlands are being swept by spring winds and are getting nearly the full benefit of the warm sunshine, with as yet very little development of the leafy canopy that will later block off a large part of the light and slow the winds to weak breezes.

This means that evaporation rates are much higher in April than they will be from mid-May onwards; for a little while, the woodlands approach the condition of the chaparral as the chaparral approaches the condition of the woodlands.

Somewhat similar, though with a difference, is the later coming of spring to the higher altitudes, where the last of the snows do not thaw until June or, at the greater elevations, even early July. Here the same delicate spring flowers appear, to strangers' eyes, seemingly incongruous as they crowd amid the rocks or carpet a meadow on the bank of a glacier-fed stream.

**Sells Several Stories as Result of Training**

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Blossom-time is short on the mountainsides, so you are apt to find a grand jumble of spring, summer and autumn flowers, all hurrying through their cycle of bloom and seed production.

There will be harebell and phlox for the spring, Indian paintbrush and evening primrose for the summer, and fringed gentian and wild aster for the autumn, all going at once.

Science News Letter, April 18, 1953

## PSYCHOLOGY

**Recording Emotions Helps Budding Writer**

► THEATER-GOERS AT the State University of Iowa can register an electronic raspberry by pushbutton if they do not like the play they are seeing.

However, the system for evaluating student-written plays has one drawback: it is too simple. The audience sometimes forgets to register its emotions.

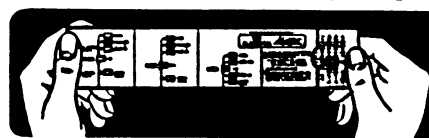
Dr. E. C. Mabie, the University theater's director, said a more complicated system should solve the problem. He and his associates have improved the response on existing equipment by seating the audience around tables.

When a play is to be tested, each member of the audience is given a "teeter-totter switch" that registers "like" in one position and "dislike" in another. The switches are connected to instruments that pen the viewer's reactions on a chart. At the same time, a tape recorder captures the scene in sound so that researchers can study audience reaction to definite sections.

The scientists also are using the emotion-recording system to probe the psychological make-up of audiences. Their findings seem to show that:

1. Men and women, on the whole, like about the same things.
2. Men like scenes dominated by men, and women prefer scenes dominated by women.
3. Both sexes like comic situations and prefer them to serious scenes.
4. Women like love scenes better than men do.
5. "Family situations" also appeal more strongly to women than to men.

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