

• New Machines and Gadgets •

For sources of more information on new things described, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to SCIENCE SERVICE, 1719 N St., N.W., Washington 6, D. C., and ask for Gadget Bulletin 848. To receive this Gadget Bulletin without special request each week, remit \$1.50 for one year's subscription.

☛ **PHONE HOLDER** that keeps receiver to your ear and leaves the hands free is available in models designed to match colored telephones. Molded of a butyrate plastic the shoulder holder device weighs one ounce and has a foam cushion on its underside. No bolts or screws are necessary.

Science News Letter, September 15, 1956

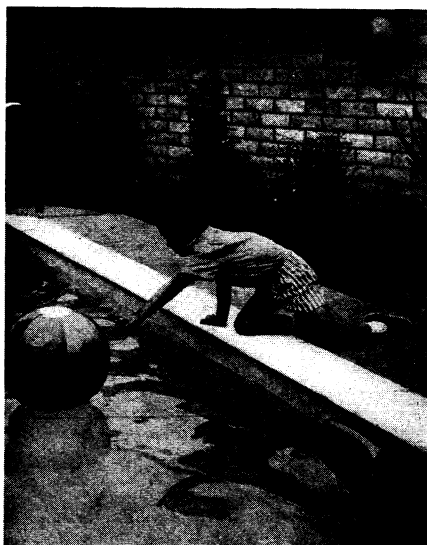
☛ **FURNITURE SUPPORTS** of plastic are described as protecting tufted carpeting against indentations. Tapered teeth push aside the pile of a tufted carpet without crushing the fibers. Weight is distributed over an area two inches in diameter. The supports are available in three colors.

Science News Letter, September 15, 1956

☛ **TRANSISTORIZED KIT** for making a portable radio contains six transistors, a crystal diode and a 40-page manual. Designed for hobbyists and others familiar with radio equipment, the kit can also be used to make amplifiers, oscillators, broadcast receivers and various other devices.

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☛ **POOL ALARM**, shown in the photograph, warns parents if children, pets or toys fall into an unguarded swimming pool. A sensing unit installed just above normal water height is set to go off if a body enters the water by breaking the surface ten-



sion. Surface disturbance or turbulence will not trip it. Operating off two pen-light batteries, the alarm requires no electrical connections. It can be turned off when pool is guarded.

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☛ **BEER TAP** prevents loss of beer or danger of being showered. For home or

outdoor use, the tap is described as fast, easy and safe to use. Made of a bronze body, a brass valve, a powerful spring, koroseal bottom washer and a sleeve, the tap can be worked without tools.

Science News Letter, September 15, 1956

☛ **SOLID ELECTROLYTE BATTERY** has an almost unlimited "shelf life." For low current applications, it weighs less than an ounce and is made primarily of silver, silver iodide and vanadium pentoxide. Rated at 95 volts, the battery is one-third of an inch in diameter, one inch long, and consists of 200 paper-thin cells.

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☛ **DOUBLE - SPIRAL CORKSCREW** makes it easy to pull the cork from a bottle, even when the stopper is dry. The Swiss-invented corkscrew is twisted until halted by a stop-plate. Turning is then continued as the cork is pulled gently.

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☛ **STEEL GARAGE** is a build-it-yourself model. Fire-resistant, warp-proof and weathertight, the garage is available in one, one and one-half and two-car sizes. Assembled with hand tools, the garages come equipped with an all-steel sectional overhead type door.

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Nature Ramblings



"The goldenrod is yellow,
The leaves are turning brown.
The trees in apple orchard,
With fruit are bending down."

➤ SOME of the surest signs of fall's approach are described in this verse, which many youngsters have learned in school.

The goldenrod's bright sprays have greeted blue skies for many weeks in most parts of the United States. They will continue to mirror back the sun's own color until after the first frosts have signaled the sun's retreat for another season.

Although about 100 kinds of goldenrod are known, few species grow in other countries. For this reason, many people advance the goldenrod's claim to honor as the American national flower. Indeed, three states, Alabama, Kentucky and Nebraska, adopted it as their state flower.

Goldenrod is a member of the largest of

National Flowers



all plant families, the Compositae. Many familiar weeds, such as ragweed, daisy and dandelion, as well as such cultivated plants as the dahlia, chrysanthemum, zinnia, marigold, aster and lettuce, also belong to this family, a very highly developed and widely adapted one.

Symbolically, selecting goldenrod as a national flower would be a good choice, for as a member of the Compositae family, it is actually a whole society of flowers, quite small ones crowded together. This one federated bloom typifies very neatly the old unofficial motto, "E Pluribus Unum."

The Compositae are among plants what bees, ants and termites are among insects—societies rather than individuals.

Principal contender for the National flower against the goldenrod, and as stoutly supported by its advocates, is the columbine, the state flower of Colorado.

This lovely flower also has its unique symbolism: Its common name is an appeal to the dove of peace, whereas its botanical name, *Aquilegia*, is supposed to be an eagle reference, perhaps inspired by the resemblance of its flower to the talon of our national emblem.

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