

• New Machines and Gadgets •

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⚙️ **WORLD MAP** in plastic is designed for schools, offices and the home. Molded of a rigid vinyl plastic sheet in three-dimensional representation, the map is in 10 colors and has almost 3,000 place names. Self-framed, the map measures 61 inches by 42 inches and weighs two pounds.

Science News Letter, December 22, 1956

⚙️ **TOY BANJO** can be equipped with a chord player. The young musician presses a button on the player marked with the number of the chord he wants and strums the banjo strings. The banjo and chord player are molded of a styrene plastic and the drum head is made of genuine animal skin. The instrument can also be played without the chord player.

Science News Letter, December 22, 1956

⚙️ **ELECTRONIC MOUSETRAP** is described as a plastic device that electrocutes up to five mice without resetting. A plastic dome-shaped cage with a floor coated with a zinc film, it is plugged into an outlet. The mouse completes the electrical circuit himself and commits bloodless suicide. Since only the interior of the cage conducts electricity it is said to be safe for children and pets.

Science News Letter, December 22, 1956

⚙️ **CHILD'S SAFETY STRAP** is a leather harness that slips over the shoulders and around the waist, as shown in the photo-



graph. Called Safetyke, it can be used with a strap not only for car travel, but for securing toddlers in high chair or carriage and while strolling. The harness attaches to the strap with a snap-on, snap-off catch that can be operated in a second.

Science News Letter, December 22, 1956

⚙️ **PANTS HANGER** serves as a nighttime belt. Attached to the wall or a closet door, two metal bars are put through the belt loops. Pants are hung up in the standing position. They can be easily removed in the morning by pulling.

Science News Letter, December 22, 1956

⚙️ **HOSE HOLDER** for milady's stockings can be used to hang them tidily by the toes. Molded of a polyethylene plastic to prevent runs, snagging or tearing, the holder is five inches in diameter. It is a flat disc with eight slots for four pairs of hose. A chain attached to the center of the holder makes it easy to hang anywhere.

Science News Letter, December 22, 1956

⚙️ **HOT SHAVING CREAM** results from putting a screw attachment onto a tube of shaving cream. The attachment is held under a hot water faucet for from 10 to 30 seconds while the water runs through a small hole. Hot cream can then be squeezed from the tube.

Science News Letter, December 22, 1956

⚙️ **POCKET SHOE SHINE** is packaged in an aluminum container-applicator and operates in a manner similar to the conventional lipstick. A twist of the base feeds the polish to a foam rubber applicator. The shoe-shine stick can be carried in a pocket, travel kit or purse.

Science News Letter, December 22, 1956



Nature Ramblings



By HORACE LOFTIN

➤ **REINDEER** were once found only in the Arctic areas of Europe and Asia, and were not present in the Western Hemisphere.

In 1891-1902, however, 1,280 domestic reindeer were brought from Siberia to the Alaskan tundras in an attempt to improve the economic condition of the Eskimos.

The newcomers prospered at first, increasing to an estimated 500,000 head in the 1930's. However, by 1950, they were down to some 25,000 animals.

Part of the reason for the sudden marked decrease in Alaskan reindeer following their first great increases lies with the Eskimos, for whom they were imported. The Eskimos, a hunting people, have not taken to the pastoral life needed for raising reindeer in domesticity. The herds that remain in Alaska are mostly in a semi-wild condition.

Without the care that comes with domes-

Reindeer From America



tication, the reindeer found themselves in keen competition with their wild brothers, the barren ground caribou, for the limited food supply of the tundra.

With the first bursting increase of the reindeer after their importation, the tundra was greatly overgrazed, making it hard to find food for either wild or domestic animal. Over the long haul, the wild caribou seem to be winning out.

The reindeer actually is a strain of the

caribou, but domesticity over hundreds of years by the northernmost people of Europe and Asia has changed them in many respects from their wild progenitors.

Besides their gentler nature, physically the reindeer are usually shorter-legged, smaller and darker than the caribou. The wild caribou's facial profile is generally straight or convex, giving them a "Roman nose"; the reindeer has a concave or "dished-in" profile.

Caribou, including the domestic reindeer, are the only deer in which females as well as males bear antlers.

Reindeer are the horses of the Lapps and of many of the brown-skinned people in the north of Asia, in regions where even the hardiest of northern ponies could never live.

They can stand cold that no horse could endure, and they can gather up a living from tough-branched shrubs and from short, dry mosses under the snow.

Science News Letter, December 22, 1956