

• New Machines and Gadgets •

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☛ **TOOTHPASTE DISPENSER**, usable for other materials that come in flexible tubes, is a plastic box with a hinged cover and a threaded hole in one end. When the cap of the toothpaste tube is removed, the tube outlet is screwed into the hole; pressure on the tube ejects the paste through the opening.

Science News Letter, July 31, 1948

☛ **NIGHT-GLOWING push bar** for doorbells is composed of a luminescent pigment molded into a plastic bar where rain or fingers can not remove it. The bar, set in a solid brass body variously finished, absorbs light during the day and gives it off for hours after dark.

Science News Letter, July 31, 1948

☛ **TELEPHONE AID** for busy offices is a small cabinet that sits on a desk in which both ends of the ordinary telephone handset rest at all times. When the telephone rings, it remains untouched, but a switch on the cabinet is thrown and conversation is carried on in ordinary tones while the user sits in his usual position.

Science News Letter, July 31, 1948

☛ **SUN-GLASS LENSES** that permit the wearer to look straight at the sun without



discomfort or at ground-level objects without obscured vision, are coated with a nickel-chromium-iron alloy applied by an evaporation process. The coating, which varies from very light at the bottom to heavier at the top, makes mirrors of the

lenses, as shown in the picture, when viewed from the front.

Science News Letter, July 31, 1948

☛ **FREQUENCY COUNTER** for radio waves is a device which provides a simple means of measuring frequencies from zero to 1.6 megacycles, with accuracies claimed to be one part in 10 million or greater. The basic units of the instrument are two electronic counters, a crystal oscillator and an electronic switch.

Science News Letter, July 31, 1948

☛ **FLASHLIGHT CASE**, which glows in the dark, is easily found by the sleeper suddenly awakened during the night. The flashlight itself is similar to familiar types, but its ivory-colored case has a phosphorescent material baked onto the solid drawn-brass housing.

Science News Letter, July 31, 1948

☛ **FLUORESCENT PICTURES**, on the walls of at least one night club and one suburban home, are invisible as pictures in ordinary light but show brightly when flooded with invisible ultraviolet radiation, much of which they convert to visible light to illuminate the room.

Science News Letter, July 31, 1948

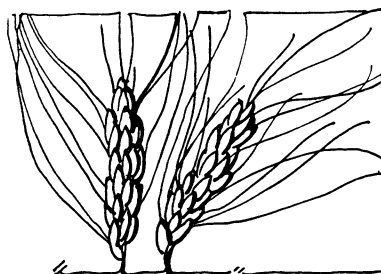
• Nature Ramblings by Frank Thone •

➤ ACCORDING to the fifth chapter of the Book of Genesis, Cain slew his younger brother Abel because Abel's sacrifice of a lamb had proved acceptable whereas his own had been rejected. That would make this primal murder a purely personal matter between the two men, and over a religious jealousy at that.

Back of the rather curt Biblical account, however, there is a deeper symbolism. If the quarrel between the brothers did not actually start with a dispute over their respective land-use rights it would be strange, for Cain was a tiller of the soil and Abel was a shepherd. And between followers of those two ways of life there has always been tension and bickering, and sometimes bloody war.

We have seen it in our own country, when farmers began to buy and fence off rangelands in the West, to the fierce resentment of stockmen who had long pastured their animals on free grass. There was

Cain and Abel



much snarling and some shooting before the matter was settled. This quarrel left one curious monument in a word: "sodbuster" became the plainsman's term of contempt for a farmer, and by transfer became also the old Regular Army man's epithet for any civilian.

Back through the ages this contest between the settled farmer and the nomadic

herdsman seems to have gone on in all lands. The farmer pushed his cultivation as far as the land would reward him; the herdsman found fenced fields and irrigation ditches very much in his way. Earliest overthrows of ancient civilizations in Mesopotamia seem to have been, at base, great raids by upland, stockraising nomads against lowland husbandmen who practiced intensive agriculture and thereby amassed coveted wealth. Then the raiders settled on the conquered acres, becoming farmers themselves—and eventually victims of the next incursion of still-nomadic warrior-herdsmen.

Eventually in some lands a balance was reached, with the better fields tilled and the stonier uplands used for grazing. That is the picture we get of Palestine in later Bible times: sheep and cattle were prized, but so were grain-fields, vineyards and olive groves. Parables of the shepherd and of the sower and reaper were alike "understood of the people."

Science News Letter, July 31, 1948