

• New Machines and Gadgets •

If you want more information on the new things described here, send a three-cent stamp to SCIENCE NEWS LETTER, 1719 N St., Washington 6, D. C. and ask for Gadget Bulletin 426. To receive this Gadget Bulletin without special request each week, remit \$1.50 for one year's subscription.

⚙️ **SHOE protector**, now patented, is a flexible cover shaped to fit over the front of the shoe with an elastic strap to pass around the heel. An arched metal spring fits over the toe.

Science News Letter, August 7, 1948

⚙️ **OIL INDICATOR FLASHES** an amber or a red light on the automobile dashboard when the oil is one quart or two quarts, respectively, below normal. The lights are electrically connected to an indicator plug which replaces the old crankcase plug. The weight of the oil, transmitted to a diaphragm, activates an electrical resistor, allowing current to flow to the lights.

Science News Letter, August 7, 1948

⚙️ **SPONGE RUBBER** of a new non-inflammable, low-cost type can be delivered through a hose, where it sponges at the nozzle, or cast in sheets as paper is made. It can be applied and vulcanized directly to upholstery materials and the backs of carpet to provide resiliency as well as flame resistance.

Science News Letter, August 7, 1948

⚙️ **OXYGEN TENT** canopy of clear transparent plastic, shown in the picture, is satisfactory from the doctor's and the hos-



pital's standpoint; important also, it lessens the dread that often comes to patients with other tents. The canopy can be discarded after one use or it can be sterilized with alcohol for reuse.

Science News Letter, August 7, 1948

⚙️ **ALL-PLASTIC TRUMPET** which has

high tonal quality is intended for the student field rather than to compete with standard makes of brass instruments. This low-cost trumpet is precision built, light in weight and has feather-touch valve action.

Science News Letter, August 7, 1948

⚙️ **DRY-SHAVE RAZOR**, which may be carried around in a vest pocket and needs no shaving cream or electric motor, has a tiny T-shaped razor blade which is flipped back and forth in a slot as the razor is rolled back and forth across the face.

Science News Letter, August 7, 1948

⚙️ **HIGH-FREQUENCY ANTENNA**, for automobile communications systems, is whip-like in appearance and is designed for mounting on the roof of the car. A special feature is a locking device, a single clamp which by pressure and biting into the metal roof from above and below provides a rigid mount.

Science News Letter, August 7, 1948

⚙️ **BODY PROTECTOR** for baseball umpires is made of a rubber-like plastic over which is a cloth covering. Weighing only three pounds, it is about one-fourth the weight of older protectors. When deflated, it can be rolled into a small package.

Science News Letter, August 7, 1948

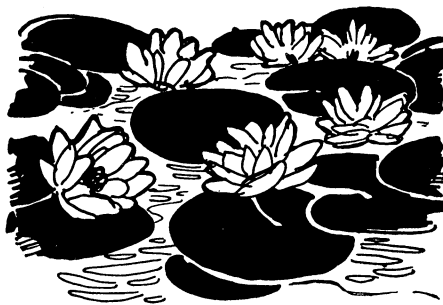
• Nature Ramblings by Frank Thone •

► **SERENE**, cool, immaculate, the waterlily floats beneath the summer sun, with big, flat drops of water shining on its round, flat leaves. The waterlily has been the delight of poets of all ages and peoples. Of philosophers, too, who like to reflect how all that superb beauty has been extracted from the black mud of the bottom, where the rootstocks of the plant have their hold.

There are only a few kinds of waterlily in America. The white one is the most familiar, as well as the most beautiful. And it has the advantage over the European white waterlily in that it is very fragrant. Then we have a smaller yellow species, vulgarly called cow-lily or spatterdock, in the eastern states; but in the Rocky Mountains, where the white one does not grow, a second yellow species reaches a much larger size.

Real home of the waterlilies, however, is in the tropics. There they develop all sizes and colors, including delicate pinks, glowing reds and gorgeous blues. Many of the choicest tropical waterlilies have been intro-

Flower of the Nymphs



duced into cultivation in the temperate zones; fortunately it is possible to grow them to maturity and get blossoms in a single season. All you need to do is plant the seed after the water has warmed up sufficiently in the spring. You can even start tropical waterlilies by tossing the seed into a shallow farm pond that isn't too

much churned up by wading cattle.

One waterlily species, the *Victoria regia* of tropical South America, claims the distinction of having the largest of all known leaves. These natural rafts, with their up-turned rims, have sufficient power of flotation to carry the weight of at least a child, if a framework of light lath is set down first to prevent the burden from being concentrated in one spot and thus breaking through the leaf tissue. The flowers of this giant-leaved waterlily, however, are relatively small and inconspicuous.

Botanical names sometimes sound harsh to the layman, but there can be no quarrel with the Latin name of the principal waterlily genus. There is some disagreement among botanists on this score, but both of the names that are in use are beautiful. One school calls it *Castalia*, which is the name of a fountain where the Muses of Greek mythology used to come. Other botanists, following the lead of the great Linnaeus, call it *Nymphaea*, which needs no explanation.

Science News Letter, August 7, 1948