

New Machines and Gadgets

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SELF-ADHESIVE FLANNEL will protect fine furniture tops from scrapes and scratches. Just cut the flannel to the required size and press it to the bottom of lamp bases, flower vases and bric-a-brac. It sticks and protects. The flannel comes in a 288-square inch sheet.

Science News Letter, May 7, 1960

SOLAR MOTOR KIT provides finished parts for a motor that runs on sunlight or artificial light. Designed for science-minded young people, the finished unit demonstrates solar-electric conversion. Powered by a three-cell silicon solar battery, the precision ball-bearing motor spins a propeller on its shaft.

Science News Letter, May 7, 1960

FLEXIBLE MAGNET can be cut and sewn into pot holders and shower curtains to make them adhere to metal surfaces. The non-rusting magnet can also be stapled to a note pad to make it hold to a metal bulletin board or glued in dresser drawers to control bobby pins. Comes in rubbery strips up to 12 inches long.

Science News Letter, May 7, 1960

S-SHAPED TEST TUBE RACKS, shown in the photograph, hold eight test tubes safely. Each rack is a bent, one-piece, anodized-aluminum unit that has no joints



or welded edges to pull apart. The racks resist corrosives and may be used in ovens or autoclaves.

Science News Letter, May 7, 1960

ESPRESSO COFFEE MILL grinds fresh coffee beans to a fine powder for espresso coffee, the dark brew served in Europe. An import from West Germany, the mill is

electric, has a metal body with baked white enamel finish and clear plastic top. Besides espresso, it produces regular coffee grinds too.

Science News Letter, May 7, 1960

GOLF TUTOR analyzes your swing. Belt a practice ball off the tutor and your club face hits three indicator pins. If the pins fall to the right, you pushed the ball. To the left, you pulled the shot. Pins falling straight along an orange line in the center tell you your follow-through was good. The gadget is aluminum and weighs 12 pounds.

Science News Letter, May 7, 1960

THROW-AWAY FRY PAN. After the fishing and the frying, who wants to wash greasy pans? It is unnecessary with a new holder that turns disposable aluminum pie plates into frying skillets. The holders have metal handles that stay cool.

Science News Letter, May 7, 1960

PLASTIC AUTO VISOR cuts down on summer sun's glare but does not cut out the view. Made of transparent gray plastic, the visor requires no installation. It features a magnet that grips onto metal window molding and it can be moved about to follow the sun.

Science News Letter, May 7, 1960



Nature Ramblings



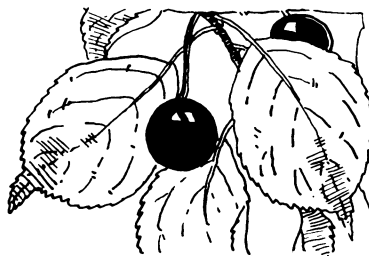
By HORACE LOFTIN

THE SPRING sun shone down brightly. Almost overnight, it seemed, the cherry trees changed from nakedness to a party dress of delicate blossoms and bright green leaves. Winged insects appeared with equal suddenness, carrying loads of pollen from flower to flower. Within only a few days, most of these flowers lost their showy petals, leaving tiny green globes in their stead on the branches—one for each blossom.

These little globes are the new fruits, each containing a seed within its protective covering. As the fruit matures into a tasty, red food for birds and animals, the seed within it will ready itself for germination. Later in the season, some hungry creature may eat the fruit, but the seed will be dropped to the ground. From it will spring a new plant.

True fruits, in the technical sense of the word, are derived from the ovary which surrounds and protects the unfertilized egg in the flower. After the egg is fertilized by

Fruits of Spring



a pollen grain, the ovary material comes to form the typical covering for the species.

In the cherry, the ovary develops into three layers: the outer skin, the fleshy interior, and the hard pit or stone covering the seed. Such a fruit is called a drupe or stone fruit. Another kind of "fleshy" fruit is the berry, like the drupe except that no stone is formed. Tomatoes, bananas and grapes are all berries.

There are many "dry" fruits, each with its special name. For example, a legume is

a dry fruit that splits along two definite seams, such as the string bean or garden pea. Capsules are dry fruits that split along three or more definite seams. Poppies, lilies, cotton and okra are examples.

Dry fruits that lack definite seams for the escape of seeds include nuts and cereals. In nuts, part of the ovary forms the hard shell and part the outer husk. The seed is the "meat" of the nut. Achenes, including such fruits as the sunflower seed, are made on the general plan of nuts, with a softer covering. Samaras are the winged fruits of such trees as the maple, elm and ash. Cereals have the ovary wall and seed coat fused together.

Perhaps our most favorite fruits are not true fruits at all. In the apple, for instance, it is the unwanted core that comprises the true fruit. The luscious flesh we prize so highly is actually derived from the non-ovarian material of the base of the flower. Watermelons and cantaloupes are also false fruits.

Science News Letter, May 7, 1960