

• New Ideas and Gadgets •

For sources of more information on new things described, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to SCIENCE NEWS LETTER, 1719 N St., N.W., Washington 6, D. C., and ask for Gadget Bulletin 1195. To receive this Gadget Bulletin without special request each week, remit \$1.50 for one year's subscription.

• **HOODED LIGHT FIXTURE** made of polypropylene plastic has heat distortion resistance up to 275 degrees Fahrenheit. Decorative holes at the top of the translucent fixture permit heat to escape and help prevent distortion. Usable with bulbs up to 75 watts, the light can be installed without special tools or wiring into standard ceiling sockets or on a drop cord.

• Science News Letter, 83:304 May 11, 1963

• **PORTABLE EXHIBIT KIT**, useful for schools, organizations and conferences, is packaged in a 25-by-25-by-4-inch carrying case. The kit contains 12 lightweight two-foot-square panels, plastic cogs to hold the panels together, dimensional letters and other graphic materials. Simple but sturdy, the panels can be locked together in minutes in a variety of arrangements up to eight feet high and ten feet wide.

• Science News Letter, 83:304 May 11, 1963

• **RETRACTABLE WATERCOLOR MARKER** insures against accidental marks on clothes or person when not in use. A felt tip for painting or writing on paper gives effects similar to traditional water color paints. The fast-drying colors do not bleed through the paper and no extra water is required unless a wash effect is desired. The removable cap for retracting the tip also seals the tip to prevent drying.

• Science News Letter, 83:304 May 11, 1963



• **ALUMINUM CRASH GUARDS**, shown in photograph, help prevent persons and animals from accidentally walking through window walls and glass doors. Made of gold-tinted aluminum disks, the guards are backed with a special adhesive that holds them firmly in place to create spots that distinguish the glass from air. They can be removed and reused and will not soil the

glass. Sold in sets of two, they are available in three sizes, 1½, 2¼ and 3¼ inches.

• Science News Letter, 83:304 May 11, 1963

• **CRIB TO CRADLE CONVERTER** allows crib to rock gently, soothing the restless baby back to sleep. Consisting of a simple coiled spring device, the converters are easily applied to the four legs of the crib by removing the wheels and inserting the attachment into the caster holes.

• Science News Letter, 83:304 May 11, 1963

• **SHRINKABLE TUBING** packaged in a plastic kit is designed for laboratories, prototypes or experimental use. Included in the kit are five types of polyolefin plastic tubing of various colors in six-inch lengths and a complete selection of markers and caps in assorted sizes. Complete instructions for use of the tubing as a cable-jacketing material are included.

• Science News Letter, 83:304 May 11, 1963

• **TEXTURED STEEL WALL TILES** are produced by a new process that gives a non-repetitive three-dimensional pattern to stainless steel finishes. Highly decorative, the textured wall tiles can be alternated with smooth stainless steel tiles for effect. Easy to maintain, the textured tiles eliminate problems of scratches, fingerprints or smudges.

• Science News Letter, 83:304 May 11, 1963

• Doctors Are Reading •

Advanced Breast Cancer Treatment Questioned

► ONCE BREAST cancer has spread beyond the reach of local treatment the patient eventually dies, but removal of the adrenal glands sometimes prolongs life.

A simple new technique that may be used to determine which patients will benefit most from this operation is reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 184:123, 1963.

Before the age of 65 it is difficult to tell how much estrogen, or female hormone, is being produced. Since breast cancer is usually stimulated by this hormone, it is important to find out.

By using corticotropin, a hormone secreted by the pituitary gland that affects the growth of the adrenal cortex, four Harvard Medical School physicians have been able to determine the relative ability of the adrenal glands to produce estrogen.

Drs. Hector Castellanos, John Fairgrieve, Patricia J. O'Morchoe and Francis D. Moore reported that if adrenal glands were producing estrogen in significant amounts, the corticotropin caused the patient's urethra to be affected with a hornlike substance, or become cornified.

They do not claim yet that they can apply the test to select those patients in whom adrenal removal would be most successful, but they suggest that it be used widely in patients who are undergoing this operation. Thus, at a later time it will be possible to find out whether the ability of the adrenals to produce estrogens was really related with favorable results in breast cancer.

Water on the Brain

Parents were warned against delaying an operation for relieving water on the brain, or hydrocephalus, in the hope that their child's head will stop growing. The warning appears in *Today's Health*, May 1963.

Very few deaths have resulted from the 20,000 operations of this kind that have been performed throughout the world. If allowed to continue, the condition usually results in permanent mental defects.

Clothing "Poisoned"

Six children in Fresno, Calif., were poisoned by wearing unwashed jeans that had been contaminated by an insecticide while in shipment eight months earlier. The children recovered, but not until they had been hospitalized with symptoms of severe illness.

The "poisoned pants" had been hauled 225 miles on a truck loaded with 120 gallons of Phosdrin, an organic phosphate compound that is readily absorbed through contact with the skin. The amount of Phosdrin spilled in this incident contained enough poison to kill 9,000 eight-year-old children, Fresno physicians said in *JAMA* 184:94, 1963.

Drs. Merritt C. Warren, John P. Conrad Jr., J. J. Bocian and Mary Hayes reported this clothing-borne epidemic.

• Science News Letter, 83:304 May 11, 1963