

• New Ideas and Gadgets •

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☼ **DISPOSABLE SHOE SHINER** the size of a pat of butter provides a quick clean way to shine shoes at home, office or while traveling. The shoe shiner, available in black, brown, white and neutral, is self shining and dries to a high gloss. Packaged in individual sealed units, eight to a set, the polisher can be carried in the purse for instant use.

• Science News Letter, 85:272 April 25, 1964

☼ **MOTORLESS BOAT PROPELLER** is hand driven and attains noiseless speeds up to four miles per hour in a 12 to 14 foot boat. The device propels backward or forward by turning a crank, eliminating the need for oar, paddle or noisy motor that disturbs fish or game. The propeller also serves as a safety device or emergency rig for the fisherman with motor trouble. Of rugged construction and easy to assemble it weighs only eight pounds.

• Science News Letter, 85:272 April 25, 1964

☼ **COIN VIEWER** for coin collectors speeds inspection and classification of coins. The manually controlled viewer shows coins electrically illuminated under a five-power lens so that coin condition, mint marks and other details can be readily observed. Coins can be turned over while being examined, and an entire roll of pennies, nickels, dimes or quarters can be loaded into the viewer at one time.

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☼ **FRANKENSTEIN TOY**, shown in photograph, will amuse both children and adults. The toy which is powered by two flashlight batteries waves its arms and makes an eerie screeching sound when a button is pushed. At the unexpected climax of his screeching, the monster's face glows red with embarrassment.

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☼ **SYRINGE-TYPE CONTAINER** for homogenizing small quantities of material is helpful in medical, pharmaceutical, biological or bacteriological laboratories. Designed for use with a homogenizer, the time-saving device permits preparation of small amounts of homogenates such as are used in 30 milliliter hypodermic syringes. The unit includes homogenizing blades and lucite holding cup.

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☼ **VACUUM SECURED VISE** useful to hobbyist and shopworker, holds firmly in any position to smooth non-porous surfaces, such as formica, linoleum or metal. The portable vise, weighing less than three pounds, is anchored into place by pressing down a lever. To release, the lever is lifted up again. No clamps or screws are required. Its 2½-inch jaws have "V" grooves to hold work firmly.

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☼ **TACK STORER/DRIVER** that drives, removes and stores all kinds of tacks is handy for schoolroom, office or home. The tool consisting of a hollow handle to hold a supply of tacks is provided with a magnet and steel prong on one end. The tack is positioned on the magnet and firmly pressed into place with the handle. The steel prong pulls out tacks easily and quickly. The unit comes with 36 colored thumb tacks.

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• Doctors Are Reading •

No Murder-Epilepsy Link

► **ATTEMPTS** at the trial of Jack Ruby to link epilepsy with murder were unfounded and immaterial, six experts on the disease stated in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 188:172, 1964.

An epileptic is no more a potential murderer than the so-called normal individual, Dr. Samuel Livingston, Baltimore, Md., said in an editorial. He based his opinion on 27 years of specializing in the study and treatment of some 15,000 epileptics on every social level.

Five other physicians who testified at the trial of Ruby, who was convicted of murdering President Kennedy's accused assassin, submitted a statement denying that Ruby had epilepsy anyhow. In a letter to the editor they addressed "the many physicians responsible for the health and peace of mind of nearly one million patients with various types of epileptic seizures."

The letter, signed by Dr. Francis M. Forster, Madison, Wis., Drs. Peter Kellaway, Houston, Roland P. Mackay, Chicago, Robert S. Schwab, Boston, and A. Earl Walker, Baltimore, said: "Neither the clinical history nor the electroencephalogram of Mr. Ruby indicated any definite evidence of epilepsy."

"Epileptic seizures are never associated with complicated and planned criminal acts of violence."

"Epileptics are as safe to be with as any group of people except in extremely rare and usually predictable situations."

Drug Affects Offspring's Teeth

Antibiotics taken during pregnancy can cause tooth discoloration and abnormal teeth in children later on.

Abnormal teeth were found in seven children whose mothers had taken a tetracycline after the fourth month of pregnancy, Drs. Allen H. Kline, Russel J. Blattner and Martin Lunin, all of Houston, reported in *JAMA*, 188:178, 1964.

TV During Thyroid Count

A tip for examining physicians might be taken from scientists examining children's thyroid count at the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, University of California, Los Alamos, New Mex.

To keep the youngsters quiet during a 15-minute examination to determine radioiodine content following nuclear explosions, they are placed in a tilting chair with the head tipped back to expose the thyroid area in the front of the neck. A small television set is mounted in such a way that good viewing requires the head to be kept in the desired position. A double tracer technique using small doses of tracer is used along with a large crystal of the type generally used for estimating radioactivity in humans.

Drs. M. A. Van Dilla and M. J. Fulwyler reported the study of radioiodine metabolism in *Science*, 144:178, 1964. Doses were within the "acceptable" range and were similar for children and adults.

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