

• New Ideas and Gadgets •

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⊗ **MEMBRANE FILTER UNIT** for laboratories, drug manufacturers or food industries is a disposable sterile assembly ready for immediate use. The unit, which includes a membrane, filter cup and suction flask, is suitable for both cold sterilization and bacteriological culture studies. To use, the filter is removed from its protective bag, inserted in a clamp and attached to a vacuum source.

• Science News Letter, 88:16 July 3, 1965

⊗ **INFLATABLE BUCKET SEAT** useful to every member of the family is made of sturdy vinyl plastic of sports car design, and available in beige or aqua. The seat can be used in an automobile, boat or chair and even in pools as a floater, but not as a life preserver. The seat, which is also useful for raising the level of a child's chair at the table, weighs less than one pound.

• Science News Letter, 88:16 July 3, 1965

⊗ **DNA MODEL** is a working model of deoxyribonucleic acid, suitable for use as a teaching aid. The kit contains color-coded nucleic acid bases molded of tough plastic, a stretchable strand representing phosphate, supporting rods and illustrated instructions. The parts can be readily assembled or taken apart and come in a leatherette-covered fitted box.

• Science News Letter, 88:16 July 3, 1965

⊗ **ELECTRIC BLENDER**, shown in photograph, chops and liquefies whole fruits



or vegetables without the need of pre-slicing or dicing. Safe, the stainless steel blades cannot rotate unless the food container is locked on the console. The clear unbreakable container holds 48 ounces, is wide based and can be used as a serving carafe at the table. Its console, with a long-lasting power unit, has five push-button speed controls to regulate food textures.

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⊗ **PORTABLE FLUORESCENT LIGHT** suitable for outdoor use operates either on a 12-volt automobile battery or 110-volt electric current. The lamp provides illumination equivalent to a 100-watt bulb. Provided with a built-in extension rod, the light can be placed into the ground where desired. It can also be hung with an attached chain or placed on any level surface.

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⊗ **ANCHOR HINGE** simplifies door installation both for do-it-yourselfers and carpenters. Designed with threaded arms instead of hinge plates, the hinge requires no wood screws and is automatically self-aligning. Its threaded arms are screwed into holes bored in the desired positions. Each side of the hinge forms a cantilever action with its opposite for greater strength. The door can be readily adjusted even after installation.

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⊗ **POT AND PAN STRAINER** is a perforated aluminum cover that attaches to the top of a pan. The strainer, which can be adjusted to fit two-, three- or four-quart pans, is made with holes along one side. After the vegetables, spaghetti or other product is cooked, the water is poured off. The food is retained in the pan and the hands protected from the burning steam.

• Science News Letter, 88:16 July 3, 1965

• Doctors Are Reading •

Fewer Addicts Going to PHS Hospitals

► THE NUMBER of first admissions of male narcotics addicts to the two Public Health Service hospitals at Lexington, Ky., and Fort Worth, Texas, has declined more than 1,400 a year since the peak year 1950. Admission of women, whose peak year was 1953, also has declined.

This does not mean that the number of narcotics addicts is declining appreciably but that fewer are sent to these hospitals. Thousands are in Federal prison, and others, because of the diluted heroin now being sold, do not have the withdrawal symptoms that require hospitalization. Some are treated in their own cities.

Addict patients are younger now than formerly, and a greater percentage are Negro and Puerto Rican rather than white. The use of heroin has increased, and the number from the largest metropolitan areas has markedly increased.

Dr. John C. Ball, chief of the sociology unit, National Institute of Mental Health, Public Health Service, Addiction Research Center, Lexington, with Mrs. Emily S. Cottrell, social science analyst at the center, reported their findings in Public Health Reports 80:471, 1965.

Birth Control Pills, Thrombosis Linked

A British physician warned of the possibility of a link between birth control pills and arterial thrombosis.

Dr. Nevin, Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast, England, who re-

ported his findings in the British Medical Journal, June 19, 1965, based conclusions on analyses of other previous reports and on detailed case studies of three young women who suffered intravascular thrombosis while on oral contraceptive therapy.

The fact that one woman died led Dr. Nevin to direct attention "to the possibility that arterial thrombosis may also exist in addition to the more common thrombophlebitis of the legs and pulmonary embolism."

Cretins' Thyroid Glands Respond to Iodine

Three cretins have had their abnormal thyroid function made normal for up to nine months by taking potassium iodide, two Israeli physicians reported in Nature 206:1258, 1965.

The stimulative effect of iodine on thyroid function in these cases is "diametrically opposed to its well-established suppressive effect in hyperthyroid and euthyroid (normal thyroid) individuals," said Drs. Herman Zondek and Hannah E. Leszynsky, who reported the study.

The iodine treatment followed large doses of thyroactive substances. The purpose of the investigation was to determine whether the conditions of the "stosstherapy," or treatment by a single dosage, merely served as a vehicle for iodine or acted as a whole. The researchers found that iodine was the important factor. Whether the cretins could now become normal is doubtful, even with functioning thyroid.

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