

# • New Ideas and Gadgets •

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⚙️ **WELDING-CUTTING KIT**, useful on farms and ranches, in machine shops and trade schools, contains cutting tip, welding tip, torch handle and mixer assembly, goggles, sparklighter and 20 feet of dual hose. Models are available for use with oxygen and acetylene or oxygen and propane. Regulators for either combination of the gases are included. Completely interchangeable heads convert the tool in seconds from welder to cutter and vice versa.

• Science News Letter, 88:207 September 25, 1965

⚙️ **HAND-OPERATED SHAVER** is especially useful for those on trips or in remote areas where electricity is not readily available. The unit, which fits in the palm of the hand, is operated by a flick of the thumb, which sets the free-wheeling power-plant of the shaver spinning at a speed equal to that of an electric shaver. The built-in cutters of the round-shaped shaver, made of fine steel, eliminate the need for replacing blades.

• Science News Letter, 88:207 September 25, 1965

⚙️ **CAR WASHER** is a spray-on product that eliminates the need for sponge mitt, brush and chamois to clean the car. The non-toxic substance is sprayed on the car, which is then rinsed clean with plain water. Washing time is from two to eight minutes. Easy to use, it will not harm the paint, wax, clothing or skin.

• Science News Letter, 88:207 September 25, 1965



⚙️ **RETRACTABLE DOG LEASH**, shown in photograph, is useful for either training or walking dogs. The 12-foot leash, made of 290-pound-test nylon cord, is wound on a spring reel enclosed in a strong plastic housing and can be released or retracted at will, thus enabling a person to prevent his dog from straying too far. A lever on the side of the reel serves as a control for the leash.

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⚙️ **ELECTRIC AIR CLEANER** no larger than a desk lamp projects a laminar flow stream of clean air that prevents contaminated drafts from entering a specific area. Useful to research and testing laboratories, the unit can be focused in any direction and on any item to surround it with a flow of clean air. Weighing only a few pounds and small enough to place into a large briefcase, it is also useful for in-the-field inspection.

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⚙️ **PEN OR PENCIL HOLDER** has a pressure-sensitive adhesive backing that attaches to any flat surface. Suitable for use on the side of a typewriter, desk, telephone, auto dashboard, cash register or inside a student notebook, the holder, made of soft plastic, is made with a cylindrical loop about two inches long through which most pencils can be inserted. The holder comes in various colors.

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⚙️ **PERMANENT HAND STAMP** carries its own ink supply and requires no ink pad. The printing element is made of a micro-porous plastic in which the ink is incorporated during molding to provide a printing surface with a continuous supply of ink. Up to 25,000 impressions can be made with the stamp. The ink will not smudge, leak or dry out. Stamps with red, black or purple ink can be custom-made.

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# • Doctors Are Reading •

## Aspirin Can Cause Temporary Deafness

➤ **ARTHRITIS PATIENTS** and others who take unusually large doses of aspirin to overcome pain often complain of ringing in the ears, loss of hearing, or vertigo. A team of physicians reported that these symptoms were only temporary, however, and disappear soon after the medication is stopped.

This is in contrast to other drugs, the researchers say. Permanent hearing loss can follow excessive use of neomycin, dihydrostreptomycin and kanamycin, they warn.

Aspirin may alter enzyme activity in the inner ear, the doctors believe. A close relationship was noted between the hearing loss and the level of salicylate in the blood plasma.

Drs. Eugene N. Myers and Joel M. Bernstein, residents at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, Boston, and Dr. George Fostiropoulos, formerly a clinical fellow with the arthritis unit, Massachusetts General Hospital, and now at the Medical School, Birmingham, England, reported the study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* 273:587, 1965.

## Doubt Cast on Cause of Schizophrenia

New tests reported from Japan cast doubt on the theory that schizophrenia, the most common mental disease, could be caused by abnormal metabolism of nitrogen compounds.

Comparing seven schizophrenic patients who had been ill from five to seven years with eight normal persons on the same diet and schedule of physical work, the Japanese scientists said they found

no pathological changes in urine specimens from both groups.

In 1963 the Japanese group at the Osaka University Medical School found a chemical compound resembling the hallucinogenic drug mescaline in 57 of 62 schizophrenics, but in only 21 of 46 normal persons.

The present report in *Nature* 207:1199, 1965, states that their previous findings were not verified by the later research.

Drs. Masashi Takesada, Eishichi Miyamoto, Yasuo Kakimoto, Isamu Sano and Ziro Kaneko reported the findings.

## Limewater in Corn Decreases Tooth Decay

Lack of severe tooth decay in many Guatemalans and Mexicans can be explained by the fact that corn from which tortillas are made has been soaked for a long time in limewater solutions or in water to which wood ash has been added before grinding into dough.

Dr. Edward A. Sweeney of the Harvard School of Dental Medicine, Boston, reported in *Science* 149:1118, 1965, that this staple foodstuff, which remains very alkaline and is high in calcium and phosphate, tends to accumulate in areas "which are poorly self-cleaning" such as the sides of molars in the jaw next to the cheek. In this way calcium phosphate and calculus deposits in these areas prevent dental decay.

Dr. Sweeney doubts that merely drinking the water, which has a high mineral content, would contribute to calculus deposits, because the contact is too brief.

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