

# • New Ideas and Gadgets •

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☸ **REFRIGERATOR LIFTER** makes it easier for a housewife to clean under the refrigerator. The device, which is an air flotation unit, allows a fully loaded refrigerator to be moved with ease. Air blown from the vacuum cleaner into the lifting pad creates a thin air cushion floating the refrigerator above the floor. While thus riding on air, the refrigerator can be moved with only fingertip pressure.

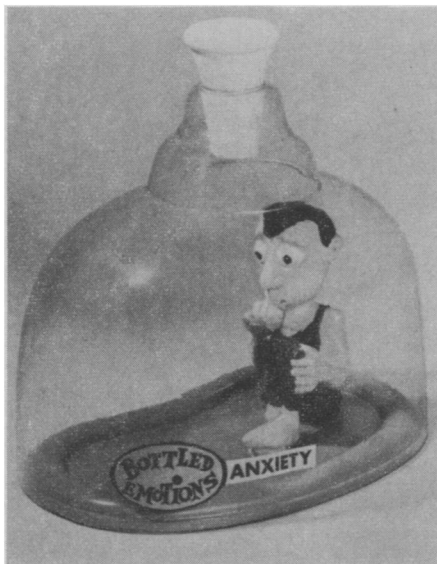
• Science News Letter, 88:400 December 18, 1965

☸ **HOME WATER FILTER** connects directly to the kitchen faucet and removes objectionable tastes, odors and cloudiness from tap water by diverting the water through an activated charcoal filter. The blue and white filter housing, only 10 x 4 x 4 inches in size, is made of plastic and weighs less than three pounds. A push of a button restores waterflow through the sink faucet.

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☸ **WATCH STAND** for displaying a cherished pocket watch is made of hand rubbed walnut, shaped like a clock of early American design. The watch is placed securely in a felt lined niche in its center and is easily accessible for winding. Outside measurements are 5¼ inches wide by 6 inches high.

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☸ **IMPISH FIGURE**, shown in photograph, is a hand-painted humorous vinyl figure bottled in lightweight, permanently corked clear polystyrene. For display in playrooms, dens or knick-knack corners, figures representing anxiety, claustrophobia, gluttony, greed, extroversion and vanity are available.

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☸ **KENNEDY MEMORIAL MEDAL** shows a profile of the late President John F. Kennedy on one side and a wreathed design symbolizing the eternal flame on the other side. The circular medal, made of silver or bronze, is 1½ inches in diameter. It comes with a special desk-display stand and descriptive booklet, and is packaged in a gift box.

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☸ **CAR BATTERY HEATER** makes it easy to start a car in cold weather. The heater unit is placed on the car's battery at night and is removed in the morning before starting. Non-toxic and non-flammable, the heater will not harm the battery nor the car. It is rechargeable with ordinary tap water.

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☸ **FLEXIBLE HOLDER** ties down items of any shape securely on boat, truck or other vehicle. The handy holder is a flat strap made of tough gray synthetic rubber with stainless steel clips molded on each end. The strap hooks onto screw eyes fastened to wall or bulkhead on each side of the object to be secured. Available in 10- and 18-inch lengths, it will withstand up to 100 pounds of pull and stretches to double its length.

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# • Doctors Are Reading •

## Memory Recall Reduces With Age

► **MEMORY** actually does become less efficient with age, a Canadian psychologist found in an experiment with words.

Deterioration seems to appear in an individual's ability to recall memories, not in his capacity to store them, Dr. David Schonfield, University of Alberta, Calgary, reported in *Nature* 208:918, 1965. Dr. Schonfield's elderly subjects had no more trouble than young subjects in recognizing words they had seen. However, the older a subject, the less able he was to recall words straight from memory.

The psychologist tested 134 people age 20 to 75. Half performed a recall test first; the other half began with recognition.

Two lists of 24 words were flashed on a screen with intervals of four seconds between each word. Testing began immediately after the last word in each list.

Age made no difference in a person's ability to pick the listed words from groups of four, Dr. Schonfield found. Subjects merely had to match words in front of them with those in their memories.

Straight recall, on the other hand, deteriorated progressively with age. Each decade added to an individual's life reduced his ability to remember the words.

## Fertility Control of Men Seen

Fertility control may soon become the province of the man as well as the woman. It certainly is feasible and problems involved in its application are currently being studied.

A report in *Lancet* 11:892, 1965, on Dr. Carl G. Heller's Oliver

Bird lecture in London, reviewed the effectiveness of a number of compounds in achieving this end. The oral contraceptives used by women suppress not only the formation of sperm in the man but also his sex drive and potency. Testosterone would be effective but it is expensive and has to be injected at least twice a week. Certain diamines arrest spermatogenesis but they were found to be incompatible with alcohol.

Dr. Heller suggested that an orally active derivative of testosterone may be the best hope but the presently available ones are not active enough and their side effects include cholestatic jaundice.

Dr. Heller believes that the man, on the whole, is as willing as the woman to participate in limiting the family size.

## Bleeding Danger in Tonsillectomy

Removal of tonsils and adenoids is still a common operation—possibly the commonest in children, an editorial in the *British Medical Journal* 2:1321, 1965, pointed out.

Deaths from bleeding are particularly tragic, inasmuch as the operation is often a matter of choice rather than of necessity. Complications of anesthesia also add to the danger. A report in the same issue by Drs. H. B. Holden and J. J. Maher, 2:1349, 1965, stated that there was no difference in the effects of halothane or ether on loss of blood, but that straining and spasms of the throat produced by imperfect anesthetic technique can increase the amount of hemorrhaging. They also noted that children admitted to the hospital for adenotonsillectomy tend to take less fluid than they require during the pre-operative period. The problem of fluid deficit can be particularly important in smaller children.

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