

• New Ideas and Gadgets •

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☞ **SMOKE DETECTOR** is a fire alarm triggered by smoke. The unit which is mounted on the wall near the ceiling is equipped with a sensitive electronic control and detects smoke, sounding an alarm usually before the fire has had a chance to spread allowing persons to escape. Housed in a durable plastic case, the small unit can be connected to any AC wall outlet. A red pilot light that glows continually indicates that the unit is in operation.

• Science News Letter, 89:15 January 1, 1966

☞ **FIRST AID KIT** designed to facilitate emergency treatment has unit-wrapped items boldly labeled and arranged for immediate recognition and access. A facsimile index on the inside of the case lid shows at a glance the exact location of all items with concise instructions for their use. The case made of steel finished either in olive green or grey enamel can be permanently mounted on a wall if desired.

• Science News Letter, 89:15 January 1, 1966

☞ **CHLORIDE-ION TEST KIT** for testing chloride-ion content in power, desalination and chemical plants, as well as in well water and oil wells, is suitable for rapid on-the-spot chemical analysis. If chloride ions are present a clear yellow stain appears in the test vial contained in the kit. The unit comes in a break resistant plastic carrying case.

• Science News Letter, 89:15 January 1, 1966



☞ **CHILD'S ACTION CHAIR**, shown in photograph, shaped like a bucket seat has no legs and sits directly on the floor. Made of strong polypropylene plastic, the curved base of the chair allows a child to twist, tip or just sit and rock. Shaped so that a child from one to about six can curl comfortably in it, the rocker makes no noise and will not mar the floor. It can be easily carried.

• Science News Letter, 89:15 January 1, 1966

☞ **ADJUSTABLE SHIP CURVE** eliminates the need for an expensive set of rigid ship curves. Made of clear flexible plastic, its segmented construction provides a smooth, non-rippled line. The instrument which comes 18 or 24 inches in length is easily shaped with the fingers into the desired curves. The ruling edge on one side permits use of a pen, while pencil can be used on either edge.

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☞ **BATTERY OPERATED CLOCK** runs a year on a single "C" battery. The portable clock which is suitable for use in car or boat, for camping or travelling, as well as in the home, has a fibermesh fastening arrangement on its base allowing it to be positioned on any metal, wood or plastic surface to which it will firmly adhere. The clock can be easily detached for transfer from place to place.

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☞ **RUBBER DOORS** for industrial plants and warehouses are easy to operate and are about one-half to one-third the weight of metal doors. The flexible doors, about 1.5 inches thick, open only the width of the material passing through making them especially useful for doors between rooms of different temperatures and humidities. The doors are easy to install and require little maintenance.

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• Doctors Are Reading •

Cold Hands, Warm Heart A Superstition

➤ **RAYNAUD'S DISEASE**, that not too uncommon and distressing disorder which causes cold hands and feet whatever the weather, is without known cause, but three Scottish researchers have found what may explain the mechanism.

An abstract of their report in the *Abstracta Dermatologica*, Nov.-Dec., 1965, suggests that the mechanism may be due to thickening of the blood, which may impede its flow through blood vessels of the extremities.

Of the patients whose blood was studied under varying conditions, 12 were females and 10 were males. Ages ranged from 11 to 70 years. The blood of 22 healthy patients served as controls.

The study confirms that there is a significant increase in viscosity in Raynaud's disease.

Authors of the article, which was originally published in the *Lancet*, are R. Pringle, D. N. Walder and J. P. A. Weaver of Queens College, Dundee. Unanswered is the question of what causes the blood of some persons to be over-viscous or to sludge.

Helps Leprosy Patients

Thalidomide, which was convicted of deforming unborn babies when given to pregnant women in certain stages of their pregnancy, has been of some help as a tranquilizer to patients with Hansen's Disease, the preferred name for leprosy.

The drug, which was tried in Carville, La., more than five years

ago on a limited number of patients, is expected to be tried again as a result of its success in Hansen Hospital, Jerusalem, Israel. Dr. Felix Sagher, head of the Dermatological Department, Rothchild Haddash University Hospital, Jerusalem, wrote to *The Star*, published at the U.S. Public Health Service Hospital in Carville, asking that thalidomide be used at this hospital.

Trials in Jerusalem are now being carried on to find out if the drug has any effect on leprosy itself, Dr. Sagher said. It definitely suppressed nerve pains and allowed the sufferers in Israel to sleep. His collaborator is Dr. Jacob Sheskin, who also works at the Rothchild Haddash University Hospital.

Scalded-Skin Syndrome

Scalded-skin syndrome is a disorder in which the victim looks and feels as if he had just been immersed in very hot water. No other skin disease looks like it, and it has been named "toxic epidermal necrolysis" because it has been thought that it involved dead skin tissue. The name now appears to be a misnomer, Dr. Robert L. Wolf of Urbana, Ill., reported in *Medical Times*, Dec. 1965. After reviewing the medical literature, the dermatologist, who is on the staff of the Carle Clinic in Urbana, reported that only 57% of biopsied cases actually showed epidermal necrosis. He suggested that the disease be referred to as the "scalded-skin syndrome" until a more accurate name can be found. This is a case in which the symptoms are better known than the disease.

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