

# • New Ideas and Gadgets •

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☸ **POCKET VALISE**, useful as an overnight case or for storing souvenirs when traveling, opens to 20 x 15 x 4½ inches and folds to 10 x 6 x 2 inches. Weighing only 18 ounces, it can be stored in a man's coat pocket or a lady's handbag. The valise is made of lightweight waterproof navy canvas or gray rayon sharkskin. It is also available in tapestry or nylon.

• Science News Letter, 86:368 December 5, 1964

☸ **VARIABLE INTENSITY LIGHT BOX** helps reduce eyestrain when maximum brightness is not required for tracing, making layouts using overlays, viewing transparencies, negatives or microfilms. The unit, provided with an intensity control, allows the light output to be dimmed as much as 50% to suit viewing needs and gives an even shadow-free light over the entire working surface of 23 x 28 inches.

• Science News Letter, 86:368 December 5, 1964

☸ **SOLAR HOUSE KIT** contains all necessary working parts and equipment for building a small working model of a house heated by solar energy, 19 x 16 x 15 inches in size. Suitable as a project in school or home, the kit, which is based on the design of a full-scale home, includes complete construction details and drawings. The builder supplies only a little wood, small stones and insulating material.

• Science News Letter, 86:368 December 5, 1964



☸ **POCKET-SIZE SCALE**, shown in photograph, weighs only one ounce and comes in a flat case about the size of an average pocket comb. Measuring accurately the weight of a letter or package from one to four ounces, the scale is useful in home or office. Both ounce and metric readings are given in black on the gold finish scale, and a chart giving air mail, first and third class U.S. postage rates is included.

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☸ **WHIRLING PAINT REMOVER** is a tool helpful to the handyman for removing paint, rust or scale from steel, concrete and wood quickly and easily. The tool, which fits any one-fourth-inch drill motor, contains a series of steel-cutting heads that rapidly whirl, scraping away paint or corrosion. It is useful also for cleaning garage floors, swimming pools and boat hulls. Replacement cutters are available.

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☸ **ELECTRIC WARMING TRAY** has a built-in cold spot on the surface thus allowing both cold and warm foods to be served at the same time from the same tray. The unit, made of Fiberglas, is lightweight, easy to carry, waterproof and immersible in water for washing. Wall brackets are included for storing the tray on kitchen or dinette wall. It measures 25 x 15 inches and stands 2¼ inches high.

• Science News Letter, 86:368 December 5, 1964

☸ **POCKET RADIATION DETECTOR** contains an alarm monitor. Useful to field workers or those in radiation areas, the detector weighs only five ounces and can be clipped into the pocket. When the pre-set level for radiation is exceeded, the alarm buzzes a warning. The alarm level can be easily changed as needed. Operated by mercury penlight cells, it will run for 130 hours, its battery condition indicated by a light.

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# • Doctors Are Reading •

## Pain Sensitivity Related to Age

➤ **PAIN SENSITIVITY** drops with age, an investigation indicated.

Persons ranging from 30 to 64 years were tested for skin pain by burning the middle of their foreheads with a light of varying intensities. Two endpoints were recorded by scientists: when the first jabbing sensation of pain was perceived by those examined and when the person first reacted to the pain by wincing at either end of the slit between his eyelids.

The most striking drop in pain sensitivity was noted between the 40-49 and 50-59 year groups, researchers said.

Dr. E. David Sherman and Eugene Robillard, both of the University of Montreal, Canada, reported the study in the *Journal of The American Geriatrics Society*, 12:1037, 1964.

## Problems of Eradicating Syphilis

Both the public and the physician need more information on the threat of syphilis if the disease is to be eventually eradicated, a physician reported to the *American Academy of General Practice (GP)*, 30:102, 1964.

The view that syphilis is a disgraceful disease and that people who contract it are breaking society's laws is the biggest stumbling block to its eradication, indicated Dr. William J. Brown, chief of the Venereal Disease Branch, Communicable Disease Center, Atlanta, Ga.

Since penicillin treatment, developed in the 40's and 50's, appeared to be controlling syphilis quickly and easily, its threat has been deemphasized, contributing to the problem of its control.

## Computers Diagnose Skin Diseases

Diagnosing diseases of the skin can be done by using computers.

Symptoms of 25 skin disease cases were compared by a computer against symptoms in a standardized "symptom dictionary." Eighteen were correctly diagnosed. Four were missed but these were not listed in the disease dictionary.

Dr. Arthur L. Norins, Palo Alto, Calif., reported the study in *Archives of Dermatology*, 90:506, 1964.

## 'Kissing Disease' Has Long Incubation Period

Mononucleosis, sometimes called "kissing disease" because it is believed by some to be transmitted through such romantic contact, has a longer incubation period than previously thought, a study indicates.

In a study of 410 persons who had mononucleosis, the period between coming down with the disease and exposure was 33 to 49 days. This disagrees with other estimates that mononucleosis has an incubation period of 4 to 14 days or 5 to 15 days.

Colonel Robert J. Hoagland, chief, department of medicine, U.S. Army Tripler General Hospital, Honolulu, reported the study in the *American Journal of Public Health*, 54:1699, 1964.

• Science News Letter, 86:368 December 5, 1964