

• New Machines and Gadgets •

For addresses where you can get more information on the new things described here, send a three-cent stamp to SCIENCE NEWS LETTER, 1719 N ST., Washington 6, D. C., and ask for Gadget Bulletin 631. To receive this Gadget Bulletin without special request each week, remit \$1.50 for one year's subscription.

➤ **BEVERAGE PITCHER** that can be filled to the brim with $2\frac{1}{2}$ quarts of cool summer drinks remains relatively easy to lift because of its light-weight plastic construction. A baffle in the pitcher's mouth prevents ice cubes from rattling out and splashing into the glass being filled.

Science News Letter, July 19, 1952

➤ **ONE-WAY VIEWER** for door allows persons inside to see who is outside the door, yet keeps the caller from knowing he is being looked over. Made of plastic, the unit is $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter and fits doors up to two inches in thickness. Its shatter-proof lens magnifies and gives an extra wide-angle field of vision.

Science News Letter, July 19, 1952

➤ **TRAINER FOR** automobile drivers allows the student to practice realistically nearly all of the manipulations associated with driving a car. Instead of using a movie to show the trainee what conditions he is encountering, a moving belt just ahead of the steering wheel simulates the road ahead. A miniature car mounted on the belt responds to the trainee's "driving."

Science News Letter, July 19, 1952

➤ **SHOWER TESTER** for industrial plants permits safety engineers to stay dry while



testing showers installed to quench clothing fires that might occur in the laboratory. A vertical assembly funnels water from the sprinkler into a can, as shown in the photograph, and a connecting hose carries the water to a nearby sink, thus protecting the clothing of the testing engineers.

Science News Letter, July 19, 1952

➤ **BELL-LIKE SHOWCASE** for family heirlooms is made of clear plastic that fits into a mahogany or ebony base. The covering stands $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches high and has an outside diameter of $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The "treasure dome" is designed to protect, as well as to enhance, items displayed within it.

Science News Letter, July 19, 1952

➤ **GOLF-BALL SPRAY**, applied directly from its can, whitens old golf balls and makes them as bright as ever. The container holds enough of the solution to treat 70 balls. A hand-held wire holder is used to suspend the ball in the path of the quick-drying spray.

Science News Letter, July 19, 1952

➤ **CARPET-JOINING TAPE** with built-in metal grips uses, in addition to the grips, a tough rubber-based adhesive to join carpet sections quickly and securely. Seams can be made without turning the bulky sections over.

Science News Letter, July 19, 1952

➤ **FUSEHOLDER THAT** takes standard panel-size fuses has a built-in neon light bulb that lights up instantly when the fuse blows, thus making it easy to spot the bad fuse. Spent fuses are easily replaced from the front of the panel.

Science News Letter, July 19, 1952

• Nature Ramblings •

➤ "THOSE AWFUL long Latin names" are often offered as an explanation of reluctance to study botany or zoology.

Yet the same person who gives this excuse will, without hesitation, order chrysanthemums, cinerarias or geraniums from the florist, or go out into the garden to plant nasturtiums, delphiniums and campanulas, or to prune philadelphus, forsythia and rhododendron bushes in the shrubbery.

We manage all right with the long names we know; the unfamiliarity of new names, rather than their length, would seem to be the real stumbling-block.

Many of the botanical names that have been taken over "as is" into our common garden English are short even if Latin—or, more frequently, Latinized Greek. Among them are iris, phlox, dahlia, azalea, salvia, yucca, trillium, cosmos, geum, smilax, clematis, silene, lychnis, and dozens of others.

Many other botanical names were the common names by which the ancients knew the same plants, were adopted as

"Calling Names"



scientific names by early modern botanists, and have come over into English slightly modified—frequently by passage through French or Italian.

Thus Rosa was turned into rose, Viola into violet, Pisum into pea, Pinus into pine, Ulmus into elm, Papaver into poppy, Mentha into mint, and so on. A most interesting sequence is from Greek Lirion into Latin Liliun, thence into English lily.

The advantage to the scientist of botanical names over common names is that the former are governed in part by rules established by international congresses of biologists and are thus uniformly regulated and the same all over the world.

Some botanical names are actually shorter than their English opposites. It takes less time to say *Nymphaea* than it does to say water-lily, *Convallaria* than lily-of-the-valley, *Smilacina* than false Solomon's seal, *Specularia* than Venus' looking-glass.

A few of the long plant names have been cut down to monosyllables by florists for convenience in reference and display advertising, like "mums" for chrysanthemums and "glads" for gladioli.

The surprising thing is that there are so few such trade terms. You never hear geraniums called "yums," or centaureas referred to as "cents," or aspidistras shortened to "asps."

Science News Letter, July 19, 1952