

• 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 637. To receive this Gadget Bulletin without special request each week, remit \$1.50 for one year's subscription.

⊗ **NECKTIE CASE** for persons who travel frequently holds 10 ties in its plastic folds so that they are easily visible. The transparent case also protects ties from becoming wrinkled or soiled in suitcases.

Science News Letter, August 30, 1952

⊗ **SLIDE PROJECTOR** small enough to fit into a topcoat pocket or briefcase will enlarge 2" x 2" color transparencies up to widths of 10 feet. Weighing a little less than two pounds, the miniature projector has a multiple lens condenser system and an f.2.8 coated color-corrected anastigmat projection lens.

Science News Letter, August 30, 1952

⊗ **NAIL HOLDER** that clips to the head of a carpenter's hammer is especially good for persons who often mash their thumbs while starting nails. Holding nails in sizes from shingle nails to spikes, the device is useful in form work, roof framing and scaffold building, permitting the carpenter to position the work with his free hand.

Science News Letter, August 30, 1952

⊗ **EYE-SHIELD MADE** of lightweight plastic keeps sunlight from shining into the wearer's eyes and reduces nose sunburn. Held on by two hinged earpieces, the shield



stands straight out from the forehead as shown in the photograph, and has a non-reflecting underside that cuts down reflections from below.

Science News Letter, August 30, 1952

⊗ **FLOOR WAX** with an insecticide ingredient, lindane, kills roaches, ants, waterbugs and silverfish while serving as a gloss

coating for wood, linoleum, asphalt, rubber tile or cement floors. Applied with a paint brush or cloth, the wax is not harmful to humans or to pets.

Science News Letter, August 30, 1952

⊗ **POST-HOLE DIGGER** powered by an electric drill that will handle 1/2-inch bits or larger takes some of the tiresome work out of digging fence post holes. Made of case-hardened heat-treated steel, the device works in either hard or soft ground.

Science News Letter, August 30, 1952

⊗ **EXPANSION ANCHORS** made of plastic are driven into 1/4-inch drilled holes. Molded gripper fins prevent the anchors from turning inside the hole as screws are tightened into place. If necessary, the screws can be withdrawn from the anchors and put back as firmly as before.

Science News Letter, August 30, 1952

⊗ **AUTOMOBILE LIGHT**, handy for use while changing tires at night, also blinks a red warning at oncoming traffic. Small enough to be carried in the glove compartment, the light plugs into the cigar lighter socket and has 17 feet of cord in its base.

Science News Letter, August 30, 1952

• Nature Ramblings •

➤ **CROP PLANTS** native to this hemisphere form an old and familiar catalog: corn, potatoes, tobacco, beans, pumpkins, squashes and all the rest. However, all these came from the south, from the tropics and subtropics.

Even the ones that the Indians of the East and Midwest were cultivating when the first white settlers came had been brought to them by nameless prehistoric forerunners of today's agricultural extension workers.

But a whole array of highly appreciated fruits and nuts occur naturally in the more heavily populated parts of the United States. Indians used them, though they did not cultivate them, finding enough for their needs in the wild state. European settlers, finding them to their taste, brought them into orchards and gardens, some in Colonial times, some more recently.

Among the earliest, and certainly among the most successful, were our native grapes. Old-world grapes did not take very kindly to our eastern conditions, though they do very well in California. But three species native to the East were made into good

Success Stories

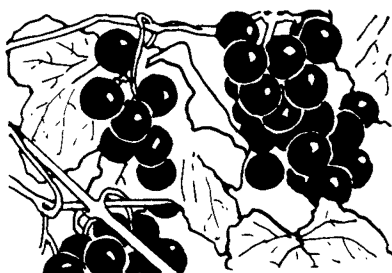


table and juice grapes by selection and hybridization, and became the foundations of such types as Concord, Catawba and Scuppernon.

Cranberries and blueberries were long gathered for the white man's market just as the Indians gathered them, direct from the wild. In recent times, however, great areas of eastern bog and acid-soil uplands have been devoted to the cultivation of improved varieties of these native berries.

Native species of strawberry, raspberry, gooseberry, currant and plum have been used in producing successful hybrids with European, Asiatic and South American fruits. Our American wild crabapples, however, have not been used in breeding new apple varieties, probably because they are too sour and too puckery with tannin.

Three native fruits that are still largely neglected are paw-paws, persimmons and red haws.

The roster of native nuts that have made good in cultivation is shorter, but contains some notable items. Outstanding is the pecan, native to our South. More recent, but highly promising, has been the cultivation of two of its relatives, black walnut and shellbark hickory.

Best-flavored of all chestnuts was our native species, now virtually extinct from the deadly attack of the blight fungus. Sole chance of survival of the American chestnut flavor lies in the use of stray flowers, still found, as source of pollen for producing hybrids with the better kinds of Asiatic chestnuts.

Science News Letter, August 30, 1952