

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

⚙️ **SLAT CLEANER** for Venetian blinds grips both sides of the slat with sponge-like jaws, removing dirt and grime as the device is slid along the slat. Having a built-in cleaning-fluid reservoir, the device permits the housewife to clean her blinds without taking them down.

Science News Letter, December 13, 1952

⚙️ **FLANNEL SUITS** and slacks for men now are being made of a material that is 60% wool and 40% acrylic fiber. The fiber makes the suit hold its shape. Pants hold their creases even when soaking wet. Longer wearing, the lightweight material is warm and has a woolly feel.

Science News Letter, December 13, 1952

⚙️ **ROOF COATING**, resembling aluminum paint, reflects heat from the sun, prolonging the life of industrial roofs and lowering below-roof temperatures by 13 to 26 degrees. Brushed or sprayed on, a gallon of the coating covers about 300 square feet of roofing.

Science News Letter, December 13, 1952

⚙️ **FLEXIBLE HARDBOARD**, made in $\frac{1}{8}$ -, $\frac{3}{16}$ - and $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thicknesses, sells competitively with standard hardboard, yet is so flexible that a small strip can be bent into a circle almost as tight as a hatband. Consisting of wood fibers that have been blown



into a thick, spongy mat and then pressed, the board, shown in the illustration, has high strength and dimensional stability.

Science News Letter, December 13, 1952

⚙️ **DRINKING FOUNT** for cattle maintains outdoor drinking water at the desired temperature even in sub-zero weather. Thermostatically controlled, the heated water is prevented from overflowing its

basin by a float valve. The "standard" fount works on regular 115-volt electric power, but a 230-volt model is available.

Science News Letter, December 13, 1952

⚙️ **PAINT MIXER** for stores produces the exact shade of paint or pigmented stain selected by the customer from nearly 150 samples. Using one or more of 12 concentrated colors, the machine automatically mixes them with a base paint, completing the job in about 90 seconds. Easy to operate, the machine works on standard electric current.

Science News Letter, December 13, 1952

⚙️ **"PLASTIC GLUE,"** complete with nylon brush applicator, joins plastic airplane models and mends broken plastic toys and dishes. Although many broken articles will stick together if held for 10 seconds after the glue is applied, best results are obtained if the glue is allowed to set an hour.

Science News Letter, December 13, 1952

⚙️ **FILM CLEANER**, because of its fast-drying properties, speeds up the cleaning of commercial movie film by 10% to 20% in machine operations. The cleaner effectively dissolves and washes away gums and oils that "dirty up" photographic film. It does not harm the emulsion of black-and-white or color film.

Science News Letter, December 13, 1952

• Nature Ramblings •

➤ **BIG THINGS** can evolve out of little ones, but not little things out of big ones.

The whole course of evolutionary history is littered with examples of developmental lines of animals and plants that started small, grew big, then huge, and then—died. Faced with changed and adverse conditions, they apparently could not contract the scale of their operations to weather the storm. They could only go into involuntary bankruptcy and pass out of the picture.

It was so with the dinosaurs. The earliest reptiles, in the age that succeeded the lush days of the coal era, were moderate-sized beasts. The biggest of them did not outrank modern crocodiles or the giant tortoises of the Galapagos. In succeeding geologic periods, one reptilian line, the dinosaurs, began to take on size; first as big as a horse, finally as big as a house.

Then came one of the world's periods of major geologic change—a revolution—and down went the dinosaurs. The reptiles that survived and now possess their modest share of the earth were the less ambitious, less

Meek Inherit the Earth



grandiose orders—lizards, tortoises and turtles, crocodilians, and later, the snakes.

The same is true of the giant plants that lived in the coal age. They were, some of them, relatives of the common horsetail rushes that now grow along railway embankments and in moist sandy soil. They aspired to great heights, developed into things as big as the giant cacti of our Southwest.

But when geologic hard times came they

couldn't "take it," and so passed out, leaving their share of the picture to their poor relations, the smaller horsetails, that struggled through not only those hard times but all that followed, and are still with us.

The same story could be told about a dozen families of mammals that appeared on the scene much later. Elephants will do as a type example. The earliest ancestral elephants we know anything about were animals not much bigger than a pig, without the later trunk and tusk development.

They grew and grew in succeeding geologic periods, until just prior to and during the last great glacial epoch they were beasts more than a dozen feet high at the shoulders, with tremendous curved tusks.

But they all went, with the exception of the two surviving species in Asia and Africa. And these, even without the deadly interference of man, must surely have followed their forefathers before many more thousands of years.

The meek always inherit the earth.

Science News Letter, December 13, 1952