

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

⚙️ **NEW REFRIGERATOR** freezes ice "cubes" without trays and stores them in a basket, automatically replacing them as they are used. Actually crescent-shaped bits of ice, the "cubes" are said to be drier than the ordinary ice cubes and will not stick together in the storage basket.

Science News Letter, December 27, 1952

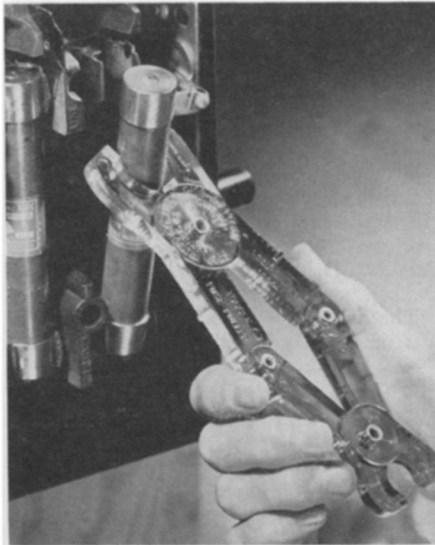
⚙️ **TOOL SET** for children is a bright-colored educational toy that lets Junior imitate his dad's handicraft around the house. The tool set includes a screw driver, wrench, hammer, threaded bolts, screws and nailing pegs, all of them wooden.

Science News Letter, December 27, 1952

⚙️ **SCISSOR SHARPENER** has a self-adjusting carborundum hone that conforms to the cutting edge of the blades. To sharpen scissors and shears, the user straddles the blades over the hone, squeezes them gently and pushes them forward, repeating until they are sharp.

Science News Letter, December 27, 1952

⚙️ **FUSE-PULLER**, molded of a butyrate plastic, lets electricians and homeowners grip fuses firmly and safely while changing them, as shown in the photograph. Weighing only two ounces, the puller will work on fuses ranging in size up to 100 amperes. It is capable of withstanding over 4,000



volts breakdown after a 24-hour bath in salt water.

Science News Letter, December 27, 1952

⚙️ **FLYING CAR**, now available on a custom basis to select buyers, has foldable wings and a tail section that can be towed as a trailer on highways. Small enough to be kept in a home garage, the car can be

readied for flying by one person. In flight, the car is driven by a propeller attached to the tail.

Science News Letter, December 27, 1952

⚙️ **INSULATING FIREBRICK** is designed especially to back up refractory brick. It increases furnace efficiency. Made of clay binders and vermiculite, an insulating mineral, the bricks resist cracking due to impact or to heat, and have good physical and chemical stability up to 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit.

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⚙️ **TV LINE-SPLITTER** permits homeowners to attach from two to four television sets to a single roof-top antenna. No bigger than a pack of cigarettes, the line-splitter can be obtained to work on 75- or 300-ohm antenna lead-ins.

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⚙️ **INDOOR INCINERATOR** for the home works on gas and has a vent pipe that taps into the furnace flue. The incinerator dries garbage placed inside it, but does not cause the garbage to smolder. Set by the owner to burn for a desired length of time, the incinerator reduces the garbage and other wastes to fine ashes. A bell rings when burning is completed.

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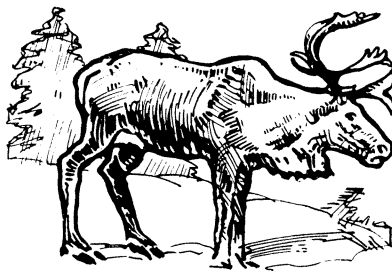
• Nature Ramblings •

► **LONG BEFORE** St. Nicholas became Santa Claus, with his six-in-hand team from Lapland, reindeer figured in the mid-winter feast. But they were the meat on the table, rather than the steeds of the gift-bringer; and the winter was a most uncommonly long and severe one.

Much longer and colder than any that Grandpa remembers, that winter was, for it was the Great Ice Age itself, that shoved deep glacial fields over most of Europe, where our Stone Age ancestors were struggling to keep themselves alive despite thousands of years of cold, hard times.

Bones piled up in their old dwelling-places, and vividly realistic animal paintings and sculpturings left by the astonishingly talented artists among those primitive peoples show that during a very considerable part of this long period a species of reindeer was a prime source of food, besides furnishing hides for clothing and bone and antler for weapons, tools and ornaments.

Ancestry in Doubt



These Ice Age predecessors of ours depended on the reindeer as the hunting Indians of northern Canada nowadays depend upon the reindeer's big, wild cousin, the caribou.

As a matter of fact, the reindeer which the Stone Age men hunted seems to have been closer to the modern American caribou in some respects than it was to the

modern European reindeer. Certainly it was considerably bigger than the domestic reindeer of Lapland.

Whether the modern reindeer is a descendant of the larger ancient animal, or represents a species that was distinct from it even during the Ice Age, there is no present way of telling. It is at least a plausible guess, though nothing more, that the modern domestic reindeer resulted from a long process of selection in which men strove to get animals that would be manageable despite the intractability and general obstreperousness of the whole reindeer-caribou tribe.

For the big, wild caribou is simply too strong for a man to "horse around," whereas the reindeer is small enough to be managed by the short but sturdy Lapps, no matter how he may balk at being harnessed, or how much the female animal may object to being milked.

Science News Letter, December 27, 1952