

• New Ideas and Gadgets •

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⚙️ **RUBY LASER RODS** for high school laboratory demonstration and science fair projects have the same chromium concentration and crystallographic orientation as those widely used in industry, yet are relatively inexpensive. They are completely fabricated with the ends highly polished and coated with silver to provide the proper reflectivity for laser oscillation. Instructions for proper laser operation are included.

• Science News Letter, 87:256 April 17, 1965

⚙️ **CHICK INCUBATOR** will delight and teach a child at the same time. The incubator, made of plastic, has a transparent dome through which hatching can be observed. Useful in school or home, the incubator comes with six bobwhite quail eggs and egg hatcher guide book. Also included are a seven-watt light bulb with cord, aluminum foil, plastic tube for ventilation, wire rack and thermometer. The incubator can be used to hatch other eggs.

• Science News Letter, 87:256 April 17, 1965

⚙️ **PORTABLE HEATER-COOKER** that can be connected directly to any large propane gas cylinder is used upright as a heater or horizontally, supported by a telescopic stand, for cooking. Weighing less than three pounds, the unit will operate at full output capacity for about 70 hours on a 20-pound cylinder. Useful for trailers, cabins, boats or patio as well as for home emergency heat, it will accommodate a 10-inch fry pan or large coffeepot.

• Science News Letter, 87:256 April 17, 1965



⚙️ **NEW MEAT THERMOMETER**, shown in photograph, made of stainless steel is rustproof throughout and will not discolor or fade. Safe to use, no glass parts enter the meat and all joints of the thermometer are welded to prevent leakage. Easily read even from inside the oven, its large dial is square-shaped to prevent rolling and breaking. A permanent timetable is included for judging cooking time.

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⚙️ **TELESCOPING SUPPORT ARM** that makes laboratory set-ups possible at any desired working position is constructed of lightweight chrome-plated brass tubing. Allowing expansion from 7½ to 18 inches in length, it can be used to support beakers, bottles, flasks, funnels, burners and other equipment. Two units can be used tandem for extra length. Two models, one to secure to a table and the other to a support frame, are available.

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⚙️ **SELF-ADJUSTING SUNGLASSES** for people sensitive to sharp contrasts in light changes have lenses that become darker as glare increases. When the person steps indoors from the bright sunlight, the sunglasses revert to their normal yellow-orange color designed for use on cloudy, foggy days. The sunglasses are available in styles for both men and women, as well as clip-ons.

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⚙️ **ADJUSTABLE FRENCH CURVE** for draftsmen and chartists takes the place of a big collection of rigid curves. Made of interlocking strips of plastic, the transparent instrument can be readily shaped by the fingers for drawing curved lines between series of plotted points. A pencil can be used against either edge of the curve, but the inside edge is especially adapted for pen use.

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• Doctors Are Reading •

Transfusions May Cause Hepatitis Deaths

➤ **THIRTY-TWO DEATHS** from hepatitis caused by blood transfusions have been reported in a study of hepatitis records in nine Boston hospitals.

The records covered 11 years, during which 1,675 cases were studied by Drs. George F. Grady and Thomas C. Chalmers, both of Tufts University School of Medicine, Boston.

Most of the patients had been transfused with whole blood, but some had also received pooled-blood products such as plasma and fibrinogen. Many had serious underlying illnesses for which the transfusions had been required. The researchers advised more careful blood-donor selection and use of hepatitis-free blood derivatives.

The study was reported in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, 272:657, 1965.

Service Answers Suicide Calls

A suicide-prevention telephone service in Los Angeles, Calif., has finished its first year of answering "calls for help" from 1,607 persons. Approximately two-thirds of the persons in distress were women whose median age was 35.

The service is operated at night and on holidays and weekends by the Los Angeles Suicide Prevention Center. The telephone "therapists" are graduate students in medicine, psychology, psychiatric social work, religion and other related fields.

Some of the findings of a study of the service were reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 192:21, 1965.

The telephone therapists try to stimulate the callers toward action away from suicide. They set up a series of return telephone calls back and forth to necessitate action, and refer more than a third of the distressed persons to the Suicide Prevention Center for day-time help. If they fail to call the next day, the center calls them.

Drs. Robert E. Litman, Norman L. Farberow and Edwin S. Shneidman with Sam M. Heilig and Jan A. Kramer of the Prevention Center and department of psychiatry, University of Southern California, School of Medicine, Los Angeles, reported the study.

Childbed Fever A Hazard

Childhood fever, or puerperal sepsis, which 100 years ago killed thousands of mothers in hospitals where doctors did not wash their hands between patients, is still a hazard. In the aseptic obstetrical service of the Massachusetts Memorial Hospitals, two cases have been reported, one of them caused by a nurse with streptococcal throat infection.

Drs. William R. McCabe and Archie A. Abrams of Boston University School of Medicine reported the small outbreak of childbed fever in the *New England Journal of Medicine* 272:615, 1965.

They warned that all obstetric patients entering the hospital with respiratory infection should have a thorough examination.

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