

NOTES & NEWS

Lift For Car Servicing

A four-post platform lift for vehicle servicing at two levels, with the wheels free and the maximum amount of underbody accessibility, is being produced by a British company.

The platform is raised on four trunnion-mounted phosphor-bronze nuts, engaged with a steel screw in each lift post. This gives a positive drive and ensures perfect levelling. The screws are chain driven, each pair being operated by a 3 h.p. motor complete with gear unit. The motor units are controlled by a "dead man" push button switch to ensure the presence of the operator whenever the lift is moving.

Conventional lifts do not have this positive drive. In most cases the platform is suspended on cables which are winched and can stretch in time.

The frame's contact post assembly is also unusual, as the swing arms which support the vehicle are completely adjustable and independent, unlike other lifts in which either cross members and jacks have to be used to give wheel-free facilities or special support frameworks have to be inserted beneath the vehicle. The arms, which can be altered in length without moving the vehicle, can also be tilted upwards freely in their guide blocks--this prevents for tripping between the arms and platform.

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Dictating Machine

A small dictating machine has been approved by B.O.A.C. for use aboard their airliners.

It has been through tests which ensure that privately owned electrical equipment does not interfere with the safety of the aircraft in the air, especially with the aircraft's navigational aids. The machine, weighing 5 lb and measuring $8\frac{1}{2}$ in. x 6 in. x 2 in. is battery-powered and gives four hours' continual recording time.

It is re-charged by plugging in to an a.c. mains of 110 to 240 volts. To achieve airline approval the machine had to pass stringent tests as

laid down in a British Standard. It has already been approved by British Standard. It has already been approved by British European Airways and some other international airlines.

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High Power Diesel Engine

A diesel engine running at 2,400 h. p. is to power a fire pump producing 8,800 gallons of water a minute.

The engine is to be shipped from Britain to New York where it will be fitted to a fire pump developed for major fire fighting operations.

The engine is a type which is used to power high speed patrol boats and mine sweepers and is in service with 12 navies all over the world. It has 18 cylinders with opposed pistons. They are arranged in three cylinder blocks which are situated to form an equilateral triangle.

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Damp-proof Course

A polythene damp-proof course, which is as effective as top quality conventional materials is being produced more cheaply, by a British plastics firm.

The material can be used for all types of damp-proof course work, either in new buildings or for replacement courses in old buildings. It is light, clean and easy to handle. In use it is tough and retains many of the advantages characteristic of polythene, such as resistance to snagging, cracking and extrusion and retention of flexibility at temperatures well below freezing point.

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Automatic Spraying Machine

A spraying machine for the automatic decoration of metal or plastic bezels, such as are used on car fascia panels, car accessories, electrical instruments, toys and clocks, is being manufactured by a British firm. The machine is easy to operate and requires only one unskilled operator.

Spraying is performed upwards through a spray mask. Each article is placed face downwards in the mask and held in position by a clamp to ensure maximum contact with the mask. On pressing a foot pedal

the spray gun follows the contour of the bezel applying a smooth even thickness of material. On completion of the spray cycle, the component is removed and the process repeated.

Results, it is claimed, are consistently better than those obtained by highly skilled operators using conventional methods.

Pitch Fibre Pipes

Pitch fibre pipes, cheaper than cast iron, steel and glazed stoneware for land drainage, sewage, irrigation and electrical conditing, will be produced in a new British factory which goes into operation later this year.

Use of pitch fibre pipes could result in other savings. Because of the smoothness of the bore the gradient can be lower, resulting in less excavation work, and additionally they can be laid in any weather conditions because no cementing is involved. The joints are "dry driven" — made by driving the pipes together in a colon. The trench could be even full of water.

This technique of joining the pipes also means that the trench can be narrower than it would if any cementing work had to be undertaken.

Advantages expected from the pipes include flexibility and resistance to chemical action, exceptional wearing properties, and comparatively lower laying costs.

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Electronic Eye

A robust electronic eye which can "see" in the dark is now available in Britain. The manufacturers claim this device is the first of its kind in the world and should have a wide application for picture-taking at night or for any industrial process where a low level of light needs to be recorded.

It consists of an electronic tube, 12 in. long and $3\frac{3}{4}$ in. diameter, which multiplies the strength of the available light a million times. It gives a circular picture of 2 in. diameter visible to the naked eye, but which can again be magnified by a television camera to fill the screen of a normal television set or any number of such sets.