

# WHEN SANTA CLAUS BOARDS MAN-O-WAR

## NEWS for the YOUNG PEOPLE

### KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN

Little Story of What an Observant Boy Accomplished.

#### HANDY BOY ABOUT THE HOME

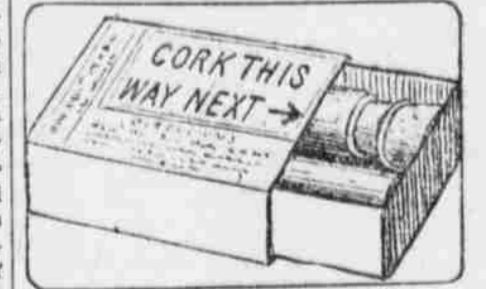
Every Young Man Should Have Box of Tools and Learn to Repair Articles Damaged About House.

I like the handy boy about the house, who knows how to hang a picture, drive a nail, and do the little necessary repairing that any mother wants done. It is easy enough to learn how to use a saw or chisel, and every boy should have a box of tools, so that he can repair articles that may become damaged. The boy who is handy about his mother's house will be of inestimable value to his wife when he shall marry. Boys who do not care to go out at night may learn to make many pretty pieces of furniture, if they will only devote some time to studying how to use tools and paints. With a few lessons, the handy boy may make picture frames, or cabinets, odd corners, or desks or other articles of usefulness and value. The boy who is handy about the house and a help to his mother is one who learns how to make purchases for the household, who can tell a good piece of meat at the butcher's, or pick out fresh vegetables at the market. Oh, no, do not say that marketing is woman's work. It is quite as much man's work, and besides, none of us can know so much in this world that we can afford to ignore even the details of marketing.—Foster Coates.

Ingenious Lad Invents Paper Box for His Mother to Take Medicine Without Any Confusion—Idea Soon Became Popular.

A great many boys are always looking forward to the time when they will grow up and be able to do something big, but they overlook the chances they have to do something worth while when they are still boys. Here is a little story of what an observant boy did:

It often happens that people have to take two different kinds of medicines alternately, and endless ways have been tried to remember which comes next. Sometimes they take No. 1 at the odd hours and No. 2 at the even



Box for Medicine Bottles.

hours, and sometimes they put the spoon in the one to take next, or they place one to be taken in the morning in a different glass from the one to be taken at night.

On ingenious boy who saw his mother always forgetting which of the little bottles of pills to take next noticed that there were two of the bottles in pasteboard box, lying side by side. They each had a number on them, but there was no way to be sure which number his mother had taken last.

Then he had an idea. He pasted a little slip of paper on the cover of the box and wrote his directions on it.

As the little box inside slipped out of the cover it was easy to put the cork of one bottle toward one end and the cork of the other at the other end. After taking a dose from bottle No. 1 she just pushed the cork into the cover first, so that the cork of No. 2 was toward the end with the arrow mark, and she always knew that was the one to take next.

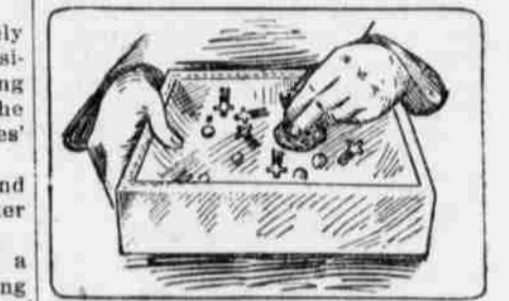
A druggist that saw this simple little trick had labels printed for all his boxes, and it proved so popular with the doctors that used those medicines that they made the boy a present of a bicycle for his invention.

If you keep your eyes open and think about things you never know when you may hit upon some useful thing like this, which others will pay you for. A girl that stooped to fix a broken shoe lace and tried to pull it through the hole with a hairpin invented the surgeons' needle that is used today all over the world for sewing up wounds. Some boys that built a fire upon the sand with seaweed found the secret of making glass.

#### AMUSEMENT IN A MAGIC BOX

Balls and Paper Men Made to Jump About in Fantastic Manner—Static Electricity is the Secret.

A novelty which affords much amusement is the magic box. It is 4x6x2 inches, made out of wood with a glass cover and lined with foil. The directions for operating the box are as follows: Rub the pane of glass with the little leather cushion and the balls and paper men will begin at once to produce their performance, jumping about in the most fantastic



Magic Box.

manner. The only thing necessary is to keep the box and leather cushion clean and dry, which is done best by cleaning the pane of glass before using, with a piece of dry cloth, says Popular Electricity. Static electricity is the secret of the odd movements.

#### In a Predicament.

The teacher was reading the history of England to some of the little pupils. When she came to the statement that Henry I. never laughed after the death of his son she noticed one of the little girls had raised her hand and seemed very desirous of attracting her attention.

"Well, Amy," said teacher, "what is it?"

"Please, ma'am," said little Amy, "what did Henry I. do when he was tickled?"—Harper's Bazar.

#### It Was Hard to Tell.

The Music Teacher—Johnny is improving daily in his violin playing. Johnny's Mother (gratified)—Is that so? We didn't know whether he was improving or we were just getting more used to it.—Winnipeg Town Topics.

#### Leg a Tease.

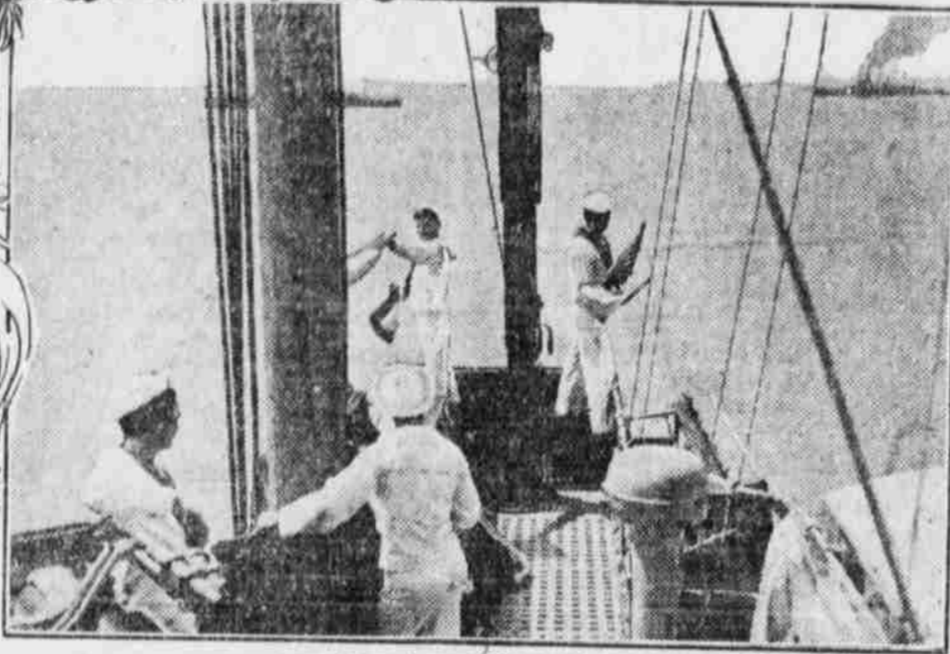
Why should a man troubled with gout make his will. Because he will then have his leg at ease (legates).



ABSURD as it may sound to every one, the bluejackets still believe in Santa Claus. That rotund, rosy-cheeked little old man pays as much attention to the thousands of boys on board the warships as he does to the thousands of, perhaps younger in years, boys and girls ashore. Instead of coming in a sleigh with reindeer and merry bells, he comes in a precarious-looking boat, fully armed and convoyed, with the boom of musketry and the loud blowing of horns. The blowing of horns is a universal custom with the boys of all countries and colors and with the bluejackets too.

On Christmas day Santa is the highest ranking officer of the fleet, and all flags are junior to his fur tree hoisted to the masthead. With his flag lieutenant, his aide and the rest of the staff, he cruises about among the ships distributing the gifts with which his argosy is laden. His method of doing this is fraught with as much red tape as was ever the greetings of the old admiral of the Dutch fleet in the time of Queen Boss. All the paraphernalia symbolical of austere rank and bounty that can be gotten together are used as adornments and no end of work is expended on the rig of the boat to be used, which is sometimes the wherry and sometimes the punt.

In order to hold to the traditional custom used in the time of Paul Jones and down through the years, the boat is rigged like a brig, that is, with two masts and yard arms crossing, with jib and staysail and spanker out astern. On the fore and after quarters they arrange large wooden tubs, in which are inserted small arms. These "spigoty guns" com-



EXCHANGING CHRISTMAS GREETINGS BY FLAG SIGNALING



CHRISTMAS DINNER IN THE U.S. NAVY



PLAY TIME ON BOARD



BLUE JACKETS WRITING CHRISTMAS LETTERS

affable lot. The preparation of the potatoes is the work of a dozen men, since they must be extraordinarily nice.

The "skinners" arrange themselves astride a bench in range of a tub where one man sits and tosses potatoes continually. The tub is kept full by another man who dumps in from a sack carried down from the upper deck. So a cycle is made, the clean peeled potatoes going constantly into another tub, which is dragged into a great urn through which water is percolating. These are rinsed around by another mess attendant and dumped into other urns where steam is turned on, while attendant and dumped from the skimmers.

When they are done the ship's cook himself, who pees to and fro in the galley all the while, mounts upon the nearest urn with his, and taking a great six-foot masher proceeds to pound them into a white flakey mass fit for a king.

But this is not all he has to do, either. The turkeys are browning in the long ovens and he and his three assistants have continually to open the doors, probe with long forks into the swelling breasts and ascertain when to take them out.

The mess tables are all numbered so that each sailor knows just where to go when he gets down through the hatchway, and he doesn't waste any time getting there on this occasion. It is indeed a singular and lively scene on the gundeck at this period. Every man's plate is heaped to the brim before him and all apply themselves with a daring and disregard for mere stomachs that would make a dyspeptic wince and turn his head. Dozens of tables dangle from hooks between parallel columns of sailors, who seem only restrained from eating each other alive by the flimsy, vacillating boards which support the food.

When these ravenous appetites have been slaked and even those who have the dilating powers of an anaconda are put at rest, or in pain, as the case may be, some of the "old shellbacks" will begin to grow reminiscent and tell of the Christmases they have spent in lands where there were no turkeys nor anything else fit for the "big feed."

Says old Pete, the sailmaker's mate: "I mind the time down in Darien, when the steward had nothin' in the storeroom but a ton of crusty hard biscuits full of bugs, so when y' busted 'em with the handle 've yer knife they went whinty nifty in every direction—under yer plate, behind yer cup, up yer sleeve and around the mess pans. But, mates, that was a Christmas fer yer life! We couldn't eat the buffalo meat, it was that much like bolt rope, so we drunk or coffee and engaged ourselves in bug races down the table. By tryin' all the bugs out we got some speedy ones. And they was speedy. I had one that could trot down that table—trot, mind y'—like it was Maude S herself. The devil of it was the bloody bug wouldn't keep in the course between the plates. She'd break for a hole near the finish. I bet big money on 'er, though, and after losin' 20 bones by her duckin' out of it when she was two whole plate lengths ahead, mind y', I figured I could head her off the next time and win anyhow, so I put up 50 bones—50 good cold plunkers on that skiny little runt of a bug, and strike me blind! You ought a seen that race! Go! That cussed little bug slid down that mess table like it was on ball bearings. I headed 'er off at the hole with a piece of tack and she run clean along the bottom board of the table an' butted 'er brains out, kicked over on 'er back stone dead. But that race! Whew! I raked in the coin from the captain of the hold Christmas! Well, strike me, fellers! That was some Christmas even if we didn't have any cats."

pair of binoculars in the form of two quart wine bottles lashed together, to his eyes and makes a pretense of getting his bearings by scrutinizing the sailors about him. Presently he reports to Santa, who has deposited his basket of presents on the quarter deck, "Sir, I see we are now in the Cannibal Isles."

Santa begins then to pick up presents and read the names aloud, giving them to the crew of "Der Prosit" and the admiral's wife, and even to the admiral himself, who distributes them accordingly, cutting many ridiculous capers.

The presents are of a type that bring laughter. They are gotten up and made by the friends of those to whom they are sent, with an idea towards characterizing the ambition, the whim or the standing jokes that mark the receiver. If the captain is a four stripe he will probably get an admiral's star, unless he has some other whim by which he is more properly known. When he is presented with this he can only blush in the presence of everybody, and take his dose, as Santa is supreme on Christmas day.

But the greatest gift that Santa can bestow falls to the lot of those who, through some misfortune or slip, have come in line for punishment. It is customary for Santa to walk boldly up to the captain and ask him to "whitewash" the books. In the face of everybody and on Christmas day the captain can not very well refuse this request, although some captains have been seen to wince and cough before granting the immeasurable favor. The report book, in which all punishable acts are entered, is swept clean and the culprits are reinstated to first-class standing and enjoy all the privileges held by their more fortunate shipmates who have not fallen before the multiplicity of temptations that daily assail the man-o-war'sman.

The event which forms a background for all this merriment is the regular "big feed," as the sailors call it. For the last week this has crept into their conversation. Pie, turkey and plum duff are the three great delicacies to the sailors, and they have more respect for them than for the three graces.

"What kind of a feed is the commissary gonna hand us?" one sailor asks of another. During this time of anticipation excitement runs high and the commissary is a very much respected person. In fact, he is never a retired person, for his billet is a hard one to fill to the satisfaction of every one who eats at the general mess. There is always some old tar or other who imagines himself to be slighted by the quality of his food, and the apprentice boys take from him the habit of complaining with very little reason on their side. Quarrels often result and have to be referred to the "mast," where the first lieutenant (first luff) settles the matter in favor of the commissary, so that the sailor arranges a private settlement with the commissary later on where the first luff has nothing to say about it.

The burden of the repast falls naturally upon the cooks and mess attendants. It is far from an enjoyable affair with them, although they are an

pose the saluting battery and heavy main battery also, and are manned and fired by the boatswain of "Der Prosit," who is a ponderous man in his official garb and daring in the way he approaches the ships, whose crews through the sides and answer the salute with a revolver shot from the poop.

The saluting takes place before "Der Prosit" is within hailing distance, and all hands have a laugh at the tiny sounds, strongly contrasted in their minds with the salute of the big guns which they are accustomed to hear. Next the boatswain gets up in the bows and resting one hand almost on top of the foremast and lifting a megaphone as long as himself to his lips, calls out at the top of his voice, "Ship, ahoy!" The quartermaster answers from the bridge, "Hello, hello! Der Prosit?" "Aye, aye," the boatswain returns. "Come alongside," calls the quartermaster. Then the admiral of "Der Prosit" rises in the stern, some ten feet aft of the boatswain in the bow, his head on a level with the topmast, and bawls out through his megaphone, "All hands fur-r-I sail." With that the crew, consisting of one man, who also acts in the capacity of foghorn, gets amidships and climbs the mainmast, which ways to and fro as if about to capsize the entire craft, and pulls down all the sails. "The vessel is standing to," he then calls out to the boatswain, who reports to the admiral over the crew's head, who in turn reports to Santa Claus, sitting in the stern sheets at the tiller. All these orders are given and carried out in the most solemn manner, to the merriment of the ship's crew looking on from the rail above.

The crew of "Der Prosit" then gets out oars and pulls alongside while on deck the real boatswain's mate pipes eight side boys to stand at the head of the gangway and salute the admiral and Santa Claus when they come aboard. The president of the United States only rates six side boys when he comes aboard, while Santa has his eight, besides his are petty officers while the president's are only good-looking apprentice boys. As the argosy draws alongside the boatswain pipes the long, low tune and three short blasts characteristic of the coming aboard of great men.

No less a person than the captain of the ship meets the admiral of "Der Prosit," his wife, Santa, laden with a huge basket full of presents, the boatswain and the crew, while the bugler sounds three portentous ruffles and the ship's company, assembled aft, stands at attention. Indeed the officers are all present, for they believe in Santa as well as do the crew. When the admiral's wife, some fair faced sailor with Manila rope hair and a tawdry skirt, swings aboard holding her train high and exposing a generous view of red stocking to the eyes of the sailors, a great laugh is evoked and a shout goes up, "higher, higher," or "Oh, you Kiddo!"

The boatswain in command of the crew shouts to his one man for, "Attention!" then puts him through a series of gymnastics of a peculiar and intensely funny character. The admiral, as if not thoroughly taking in the landscape, lifts a huge