

# CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

**R**ETAIL MERCHANTS are urging every one to do their Christmas shopping early. We would also urge the public to act on this suggestion at once. As Christmas day approaches, the crowds become greater. Many shoppers will not wish to take chances on delivery and will return on the cars loaded down with packages and bundles. Although we will make every effort to provide adequate facilities to carry the crowds, we know there is bound to be severe congestion. Therefore, take advantage of this splendid weather; the unbroken stocks of merchandise at the stores, and the opportunity to travel in safety and comfort before the rush commences.

## Do Your Shopping in the Morning

Experienced shoppers will tell you that you can accomplish twice as much in the forenoon with one-half the fatigue. There are no crowds; it is much easier to secure a seat in the street cars; you will be waited upon more promptly at all the stores; the clerks will be more agreeable and take more pains to show goods, because, they, like yourself, will not be tired.

We suggest that all ladies able to do so, try this plan and do their shopping not only as early in the month as possible, but also in the early part of the day.

# Omaha & Council Bluffs Street Ry. Co.

### EVANS' MEN WON'T DESERT

Pacific Fleet Sailors Likely to Stick it Out.

### NO PLACE TO LIGHT FOR SKIPPERS

Even the Rarest Recruits Know Better Than to Take Chances in a Latin-American Town.

NEW YORK, Dec. 14.—"Bob Evans—it makes him fighting mad to be called 'Fighting Bob'—always did have more luck than a blue gummed dingie in a crap game," remarked a man who knows a lot about the American navy. "Granting him his aggressiveness, he ought really to be called 'Lucky Bob.' He always gets a break. Things have a way of coming his way. "Take this stunt he's just embarking upon—guiding the battleship fleet around to the west coast. That in itself is the sweetest assignment ever pulled down by an American admiral in a time of peace. Of course, the job belongs to him. He's the man in line for it. But doesn't that fact in itself help to brace up my assertion—and don't imagine that I'm alone in making the assertion—that Evans is one of the luckiest heavy weather men we ever had? "But I didn't start to talk about his luck in being in line for the fat assignment. That's been pretty well fanned over already. What I'm thinking about particularly as an element of his unflinching luck is the soft time he's going to have of it with his ship's crew on the way 'round to San Francisco. "Now, ordinarily, when an admiral takes a fleet off on a distant sea hike of this character he's got to figure and does figure upon

a most shocking and irritating thing—out of the freshly shipped enlisted force by desertion. Admiral Bob doesn't have to make any calculations on that at all. He'll have his ships' companies for'ard right up to their full strength when the fleet pulls through the Golden Gate. Why? Simplest thing in life. Because he'll only touch on the cruise at South American and Central American and Mexican ports to do his fleet coaling. And men-o'-war's men don't jump their ships in South of Central America or in Mexico. You can gamble among the enlisted flatfoot will put them up to a lever, but they know better than to go over the sides of their ships in countries where busted Americans don't even class with billygoats in popular esteem and where they've got just about as much chance to do any good for themselves as a spangled cigarette 'ud have in a coke oven. "Raw ships' companies will hop ship first port they make, anywhere else in the world, but not for the ship jumpers when they get into South or Central American or Mexican ports. They're too wise for that, and they're not the old timers among the enlisted flatfoot will put them wise. A ship hopping gringo isn't anybody's baby in a Latin American country. He's a leper, that's what he is—or might as well be for any life he'll get, except maybe the lift at the top of a boat. There are too many busted beach combing greasers, anyhow, to pick up an occasional crumb to leave any room for ship jumping Yankee men-o'-war's men to lam for those beaches—even if the greasers that have got something possessed or ever did possess the slightest inclination to lend an assistful hand to a down and out gringo. And they never did possess and don't possess any such feeling toward United Statesians of any class. "When a native of this country gets himself into the position of a beachcomber in any Latin American country his plight is miserable beyond description. Better, far better for a ship jumping sailor man to be combing the beach of any of the mid-

Pacific or South Sea islands. If he doesn't get much on the islands they won't run him, any way; they sort of let him alone and permit him to mooch around, doing his best he can, till he sees a chance to shake a shovel or swab paint or something on the ship or steamer bound for some American port. The gringo beachcomber in a Latin American country is herded with the sandflies and the fiddler crabs. "Men-o'-war's men know these things, and that's what gives Bob Evans his fine, close hauled, housed over, battered down crotch on his heap big wise cruise he's starting on. He'll carry his ships' companies into California's chief port with him. They'll stick along with him just like little birds that've got clipped wings. "They'll stand for the constant coaling all right—they'll have to stand for it. They wouldn't have to, as I say, and wouldn't in any other mess of ports than the Latin American ports—but down that way they'll stand for and by any old thing. "If, for lumbering up purposes, Evans had, for example, to take his fleet down to Havana and then bring it back to some United States port before the final get-away to Charleston or Savannah, he'll say—why, then, the aggressive, Robley would have something to keep him toasting in his admiral's bunk about. For at the American port to which he returned in such a presumed case I guess maybe Admiral Bob wouldn't lose hands so fast that there'd be some embarrassment about spreading mess gear! That's what he would. The new clamps with the cooled-out deep sea ambition would do that hand over hand scamper from the battleships at the American port in such numbers that they'd look like an overestimated school of porpoises, and the gang of them that would get absent-minded while on liberty and quite forget that they'd ever been aboard of a guard to recruiting purposes would be something mournful for Robley to contemplate. "It's all the coaling. That's the main thing that gets 'em. Coaling ship is the snail that makes it hard for all of the 'chomies and deservies framed up by crafty recruiting officers to keep the navy up to its full, or anything like its full, enlisted strength. "The fellows who ship are not such softies as to suppose that they're going to have a snap in the navy; nothing like that. But they rarely have the slightest advance understanding of the monstrous and devilishness of coaling a man-o'-war, and their first experience at that stunt gets them on the raw and causes many of them to quickly make up their minds to make the forget-it jump at the very first decent opportunity. Their point of view is that they've been conned, as they usually call it. They say that they never understood that they'd have to poke through such measly, bedinged labor as coaling ship comes to for all hands, or (they go on) they never would have shipped. And so away they go. "The coal passers' force suffers the most at the first port made by a ship with a new crew. Hardy, rugged fellows imagine before they ship in the navy as coal heavers that they've got a pretty good idea of what they're going up against, and they figure that they can endure it, if only for the sake of the additional money that they make over and above the pay doled out to landmen (rubber deck hands) who ship at the same time with them. But they rarely allow sufficiently for the misery of the coal heaver's billet. They can't possibly apprehend the gloom and sweating labor and choking wretchedness of those four-hour watches in the dead dark ship's bunkers. That work is enough to take the heart out of the spiniest kind of chaps, and it does. That's why the black gang on a man-o'-war is rarely kept up to its full enlisted strength. A large proportion

of the hands of the black gang simply will not stick. "Pretty soft, then, for Bob Evans to have his little route map so fixed up that his crew'll just have to stick for the entire hike. And he'll probably have pretty good luck in hanging on to the ones inclined to desert even after he makes the harbor of San Francisco. Of course, wages are high out in San Francisco now, and all like that—but they've got a little way in that town of keeping out butters-in. The already-ins want to keep wages up, and they mean to and they know how to. They've got ways and means of making it hot for interlopers for any outsiders, that is, who drift in, either by a land or sea route, with the idea of sharing in the good wages and things. "And so there won't be much of a disposition on the part of the ships' companies of the battleship fleet to hop ship quick, if they don't know already, that they've got a little way of surrendering deserters out that way that makes ship jumping unwholesome work. Moreover, the guiding impulse of a ship jumper is to get back home. Him for the simple life, back home if he can only make it. The homes of most of the enlisted fellows attached to the battleship fleet are far on this side of the Rocky Mountains. Well—oh-by the way, did you ever happen to be broke in San Francisco? No? Well, don't you ever let that thing happen to you, that's all; don't. "And if it's the awful place to be stranded in it's the devil's own town to get away from—to get east, for instance. Those intervening mountains, plains, peraries and deserts—man, man, don't you ever be so foolish as to permit yourself to be broke in San Francisco, because if you do it'll be the dimest, dirtiest experience of your whole life, and then some. "Well, men-o'-war's men, when they're making up their minds to jump ship set to work to obtain a sort of line on what their chances are going to be to get away from the port at which they make their jump, and any inquiries that they make in respect to this in and around San Francisco are bound to be discouraging. Of course those with money coming to them can hop at San Francisco if they feel like digging up the main part of the earned wage or all the rest of the money they've got on the Atlantic seaboard. But enlisted men sure do nubbly hate to surrender the whole pile just for a ride, and so the chances are overwhelmingly in favor of Admiral Robley Evans losing proportionately fewer of his enlisted men by desertion on this the biggest time of peace sea hike in our naval history than ever happened before since we had a navy."

### END OF FIRST BATTLESHIP

Texas Dropped from the Navy After Stormy Career.

### BAD LUCK RECORD IS LONG

"Hoodoo Ship of the Navy" Constantly in Trouble from the Day It Was Launched—Its Close Call at Santiago.

The second class battleship Texas, recently retired from active service in the navy, formed part of the beginning of Uncle Sam's new navy. Although it covered itself with honor at the battle of Santiago it was so unfortunate in time of peace as to earn the title of "hoodoo ship of the navy." "The end of the Texas does not come suddenly. For a year or more it has been little more than a floating boarding house for enlisted naval men, stationed most of the time at Charleston, S. C. Ever since the Spanish war it has done nothing but cruise up and down the Atlantic coast, taking the midshipmen on their annual practice jaunts to the New England regions, and steaming around Hatteras in all kinds of weather for the fall and winter maneuvers in the tropics. During the Jamestown exposition it was at anchor in Hampton Roads. "Now that it is no longer considered even good enough for a station ship, its future is in doubt. In all likelihood it will be assigned to some state for the use of the naval militia, several states having made application for it. At all events it will be saved from the fate that threatened it last winter when a congressman prepared a bill authorizing its use as a target for a new kind of dynamite shell which was to prove that the greatest effect of a shell is obtained by outside explosion rather than by penetration. "Building of the Texas. "The necessity for more powerful ships in the United States navy was demonstrated by the battle between the French and Chinese fleets in August, 1884, at the Paigoda anchorage, Min river, when the Chinese ships were sunk in half an hour. It was decided that this country should have a modern naval defense force as soon as possible. "On August 3, 1886, President Cleveland approved a naval appropriation act which directed the building of the Texas, a second class battleship, the Maine, an armored cruiser; the Vesuvius, a dynamite cruiser, and the Cushing, a torpedo boat. With the exception of the protected cruisers Charleston and Baltimore, built later, the Texas was the only vessel constructed according to designs purchased abroad. "A prize was offered by Secretary of the Navy Whitney for the best designs for a battleship to cost \$2,500,000. Many naval architects competed and the prize was awarded to an Englishman, Mr. John. "The Texas was constructed at the Norfolk navy yard, being the first and only battleship ever built there. Work on it was so slow that although the keel was laid down in January, 1892, it was not launched until June 1, 1893, and by that time the plans had been altered so much that it was practically of American design. "The Texas showed up badly almost from the start. On its deck trial at Norfolk one of its propeller blades cut into and sank a schooner. When it was brought to the navy yard and put in drydock it was found that it was not strong enough to bear its own weight. "It proved itself a poor steamer and

burned great quantities of coal. On November 9, 1896, while it was lying at the cob dock in the Brooklyn yard, one of its sea cocks became unfastened and it sank. "So much criticism was directed against the Texas after this prank that Secretary of the Navy Herbert made an official statement to demonstrate that the Texas instead of being in any way a failure ranked with the finest warships in the world and certainly was not surpassed by any American vessel. Among other things Secretary Herbert said: "The Texas has been cruising as part of the North Atlantic squadron for the last four months, since its bottom was stiffened at the Norfolk navy yard. Captain Glass, one of the most efficient and reliable officers of the navy, declares that it is the stiffest, most easily managed and entirely seaworthy ship in the service. Captain Robley D. Evans, commanding the Indiana, says the same thing. "He says that when the fleet on the 12th day of October was on its way to New York, in the worst sea he ever encountered, the Texas showed it was the most seaworthy ship in the service. The Indiana was just ahead of the Texas and the Maine, its rival ship, just behind. The Texas rolled only five degrees, while the Indiana rolled thirty-nine degrees." "In that storm the Indiana's turret lock bolts broke and its thirteen-inch guns rolled from side to side. The Texas, on the other hand, was a perfect gun platform and could have fought its guns easily. "Sample of Its Espades. "The Texas went ashore in the Tortugas in February, 1897, and in the winter of the same year grounded in Wallabout channel, in Boston harbor an engine in one of its launches exploded and hurt six men. "It was only a miracle that the Texas was saved from being rammed and sent to the bottom by the Brooklyn in the battle with Admiral Cervera's fleet off Santiago July 3, 1898. "Admiral Sampson has issued standing orders that if the enemy tried to escape the ships were to close and engage as soon as possible and to sink the Spanish vessels or send them ashore. On the day of the battle the American vessels moved toward the mouth of the harbor. "When the Maria Teresa started to run for it the Iowa gave the order 'Enemy's ships escaping,' and then signalled 'Clear for action,' and gave a third order, 'Close up,' all in execution of Rear Admiral Sampson's standing order. As the Brooklyn steamed toward the mouth of the harbor Commander Schley, who was aboard it, explained to its commander, Captain Cook, that the order 'Close up' meant

that he was "to keep somewhere within 1,000 yards from the enemy, so as to be outside of its broadside torpedo range." "Captain Cook then gave orders to port the helm, and thus the Brooklyn began to turn away from the battle line and presented its stern to the hostile cruisers. The Brooklyn ran about 2,000 yards south, and all but collided with the Texas, which saved itself by reversing its engines. A hole was then left in the blockading line, through which the enemy promptly steamed. "Captain Phillip's Amount. "The late Captain Phillip of the Texas in describing this incident once wrote to Secretary Long: "Suddenly a whiff of breeze and a lull in the firing lifted the pail, and there, bearing toward us and across our bows, turning on its port helm, with big waves curling over its bows and great clouds of black smoke pouring from its funnels, was the Brooklyn. It looked as big as a half dozen Great Easterns. 'Back both engines hard!' went down the tube to the astonished engineers, and in a twinkling the old ship was racing against itself. Had the Brooklyn struck us then it would probably have been the end of the Texas and its gun men." "Aside from this incident the share of the Texas in the fighting off Santiago was conspicuous. On June 22 a shell from the Almirante Oquendo pierced a six-inch hole in its bow under the anchor and killed Frank Jilkely, a first class apprentice. In the fighting of July 3 a shell from the Almirante Oquendo pierced the starboard bulkhead under the bridge. Then it entered the smokepipe and exploded. "The last accident on the Texas came on November 20, 1902, when at target practice along the New England coast. The discharge of July 3 a shell from the Almirante Oquendo pierced the starboard bulkhead under the bridge. Then it entered the smokepipe and exploded. 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