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IS THERE A MRS. CLAUS?

By CHARLES V. STANTON

Men are such a great help around the house at Christmas time!

We can't imagine what our womenfolk would do if it were not for the valuable (?) assistance given by their men.

Of course, there are times when the schedule is slightly upset, as, for instance, the other day when the good wife was putting out a rush of Christmas work, while preparing lunch at the usual time, and we didn't get home until an hour later. But such things must be expected occasionally.

We have been of much help in furnishing advice.

The wife, for instance, would ask, "What shall we get for Aunt Kate, a pair of woolly slippers, a dressing gown, a good book, or what?"

We always have a pat, stock answer—"Uh-huh."

Very helpful!

We're also quite considerate.

After the wife spent many hours wrapping packages, we let her take the family automobile so she wouldn't have to carry the bundles to the postoffice.

We feel rather badly though about our Christmas card deal.

The wife has a camera and an improvised darkroom, where she does all her own developing and printing. This year she decided to make her own Christmas cards. She used one of her beautiful scenic views, penned the greeting, copied the whole thing and then put the film through the enlarger. Pretty neat, huh?

But whenever there was printing to be done, something we could have assisted in, it just happened that we had an important engagement which simply couldn't be avoided. (We hope our pinochle pals don't squeal on us.)

We did help with the Christmas cards though. We suggested the greeting verse. The wife didn't use it.

But we carried the cards to the postoffice.

We were spared the usual Christmas tree embarrassment.

Sometimes the wife gets the idea of putting up a Christmas tree and suggests that we go out in the woods and get her one. She keeps on suggesting. A time or two we have gone for a ride, but seldom have we brought back a tree. It winds up that she goes to one of the downtown stands and buys a tree. She usually can persuade us to mount it, except that after the tree is decorated, our mounting goes a little haywire and the tree departs somewhat from the vertical, so that all the trimmings have to come off, while she nails the base back on.

This year she decided not to have a tree. We haven't yet figured out why.

Of course, we have to admit that the Christmas season does make some extra work for the Little Woman. Women don't seem to be able to take those things in stride like men.

Take shopping, for instance. Women will visit every store in town and look at everything to be had before they buy a single item. We usually don't know what we want, ask the clerk for a suggestion, take the first thing that's handed out, and that's that. Simple if you go about it right. But women will fuss for hours about whether a proposed gift is the right shade of red.

It's always a joy to be happily married, but it is especially true at Christmas time, when the husband and wife can "cooperate" in the Christmas work.

Our good wife has been especially "cooperative." In fact, she's done all the cooperating.

And, holy smokes! That reminds us we've forgotten to buy her a present. What to do now!

Aw heck, we'll give her a couple of bucks and let her buy what she wants. She deserves it.

But seriously, as we ponder man's part in the Christmas rush, we sometimes wonder . . .

We read about Santa Claus and his great workshop at the North Pole, and all the little gnomes that work busily throughout the year to prepare for Santa's one-night trip all over the world. And Santa gets all the credit.

There IS a Mrs. Claus, isn't there?

Confessed 'Rape Slayer' Committed to Hospital

CHICAGO, Dec. 23.—(AP)—A steel worker who said he was the rape slayer of Roberta Rinearson, 10, was committed to a mental hospital yesterday.

The man, Herlindo Perez Arias, 31, made a brief appearance before Chief Justice James L. McDermott of Criminal Court and said "I did it," when arrested in Hammond, Ind., he made an incoherent statement to police that he was the missing rapist and stranger.

Richard B. Austin, assistant state's attorney, informed the court that Dr. William H. Haines, head of the county behavior clinic, examined Arias and found him insane.

The doctor's report said Arias' statement about the killing was untrue and that he should be committed to a mental institution. Atty. David Linn, representing Arias, told the court the Arias family agreed to commitment.

Tattooing Idea Gives Official Mental Shudder

NEWARK, N. J., Dec. 23.—(AP)—The thought of drinking and tattooing intermingled gives the state of New Jersey the shudders.

State Alcoholic Beverage Control Commissioner Erwin B. Hock voiced this thought. A tavern-keeper asked if he could allow a

Truman Inaugural Cost Estimated at \$315,000

WASHINGTON, Dec. 22.—(AP)—It will cost about \$300,000 to reinstall Harry S. Truman as president next month—plus some \$215,000 more to celebrate the occasion.

The first figure is for erection of the platform and grandstands at the Capitol, where Mr. Truman will take the oath of office January 20. Congress pays for that.

The second sum was figured out today by the inaugural committee headed by Melvin D. Hildreth. This group is putting on the week-long gala, which is being underwritten by local businessmen.

OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. Williams



Scrapes from the MENDING BASKET

By Viahnnett S. Martin

"Always keep the Christmas spirit going," Abbie told them. "Promise me that when you get big and have homes of your own, you'll keep the Christmas spirit in your homes."

Anybody would think me a native of Bess Streeter Aldrich's home state, the way I've been talking about her lately, but I always remember at Christmas-time the beautiful chapter in "A Lantern in Her Hand" where Abbie looked to see what she had in the house and made the most of it.

"When at last they slept, Will brought in the little cedar tree. The morning found it trimmed with popcorn and tallow candles. And a marvelous flock of butterflies . . . bodies made of dried apples dipped in sugar, and antennae were pink and feathery. Will had constructed a hobby horse, the body and head of cottonwood chunks, real horse's hair for mane and tail, reins and bit in the steed's mouth.

"From the barn Abbie got clean husks and made a family of dolls; bodies, heads and limbs from the husks and braided the corn silk for the hair; dressed

them in cornhusk clothes. Will made a small bedstead for them."

With her paints she marked off a checkerboard and Will whittled checkers from cottonwood branches. She cut a pattern and made a calico-dog for little John, stuffing it with cornhusks and covering it with ends of rag carpet to give it a woolly appearance. She ironed out brown wrapping paper, tied the pieces with yarn and drew waggish looking cows and horses in it for him, too. She ran tallow into tiny molds for the candles, boiled eggs and painted faces on them and made little calico bonnets for them.

"Historians say the winter of '74 to '75 was a time of great depression. But historians do not take little children into consideration. Deep depression? To three little children on the prairie it was a time of glamor. There was not much to eat in the cupboard. How could a little cabin hold so much white magic? How could a little sod house know such enchantment? How, indeed? Unless, perhaps—unless, perchance the Star DID stop over her house?"

In the Day's News

(Continued from Page One)

The Indonesians may get their independence just in time to be gobbled up by Communism.

It is a reasonably basic fact of nature that wherever there is soft flesh there are sharp teeth to tear it. Universal SECURITY is hard to reconcile with that situation.

In Los Angeles the other night, somebody broke into a doctor's office, removed a cast from his own presumably injured arm, re-bandaged the injury and went his way, leaving a \$20 bill in payment for the use of the doctor's equipment.

If you yearn to be a writer of thrillers, especially gang thrillers, here's your plot, all tailored to order.

As a matter of fact, if you yearn to be a writer of any sort, READ THE NEWSPAPERS. That is where PLOTS come from.

Why? It is because the newspapers, with all their faults, DO hold up the mirror to life as it is lived. All writing that is worth reading is about PEOPLE and what they do.

MUCH of the criticism of newspapers (and there is plenty of it) goes back to the fact that the newspapers mirror life. So many of us are DISSATISFIED with life as it is lived. We want it to be better. So, when the newspapers tell us unpalatable truths, WE TAKE IT OUT ON THE NEWSPAPER.

PEOPLE are good.

They are also bad. It is quite probable—indeed, it is practically CERTAIN—that the good in human nature far outweighs the bad.

Otherwise, this world would have gone to pot long ago.

DOWN in San Fernando, below the Tehachapi, a partly crippled

from Multnomah County boards to make adjustments for larger upstate units going into uniform in earlier calls. He said the group will be men 22 to 23 years old.

PRINEVILLE, Dec. 23.—(AP)—Arthur L. Vaughn, 35, Oakland, Calif., police patrolman and a minister of the Missionary Baptist Church, is to become police chief here.

Tojo Leaves False Teeth, Spectacles to Spouse

TOKYO, Thursday, Dec. 23.—(AP)—Hideki Tojo's last gifts to his wife are his world-famous horn-rimmed glasses, his false teeth and his Buddhist rosary.

The condemned warlord who was hanged today for war crimes obtained a promise from a Buddhist priest that he would take the mementos to Mrs. Tojo after the executions.

This was disclosed in the manuscript of a book written by Hanayama, who attended Tojo in his last days and walked with him to the scaffold.

ROOF DEAL PUT ON ICE
COLUMBIA FALLS, Mont.—Mayor John O'Connell spared the treasury in a deal with 15 high school students. They put a roof on the new town hall and he arranged to have a skating rink flooded for them.

Use canned apricots for a soufflé and serve with a soft custard sauce flavored with vanilla.

Traffic Deaths At Peak in Holidays, Motorists Advised

"Don't let death take your holiday!"

This Christmas Eve warning from Secretary of State Newberry is aimed at a happier holiday season for Oregonians, with fewer traffic accidents and deaths.

"Traffic deaths reach their peak during December and the holiday season," Newberry pointed out. "The month of December, 1946, when 56 persons were killed, was the worst single month we have ever experienced, and last December was not much better."

The secretary declared that what happens over the holiday season may determine whether the 1948 death record shows any improvement over last year. The number of lives saved over last year is now so slight that a high number of fatalities will wipe out the margin gained earlier.

Newberry said the major factors in the holiday problem are heavier vehicle and pedestrian traffic, seasonal hazards, and more widespread drinking. By overcoming the first two with careful driving, and avoiding the last when planning to drive or walk in traffic, Oregonians could reduce holiday tragedies by at least two-thirds, he asserted.

"It's the season to be merry, of course. But let's make it the season to be wary, as well," the safety official suggested.

Lumber Output In November Drops

PORTLAND, Ore., Dec. 22.—Lumber production from West Coast sawmills fell off during November in the face of curtailed demand, and total output to date in 1948 fell behind 1947 figures for the same period, reports H. V. Simpson, executive vice president of West Coast Lumbermen's Association.

Mills in the Douglas fir region produced 7,903,638,000 board feet in the first 11 months of the year, Simpson said, 53 million feet behind last year's record lumber cut. The lumber leader listed three main factors as affecting 1948 lumber output: unseasonal spring floods, boom and longshore strikes and less demand.

The lumber industry, which has hardly stopped to take an extra breath since the end of the war, Simpson said, has finally caught up with the pentup demand for lumber for housing and industrial uses. Simpson reported that there is ample lumber available for any foreseeable housing program.

Simpson said the West Coast lumber industry was producing two billion feet a year of inexpensive utility and economy grades of lumber suitable for use in low-cost homes.

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