

Having Fun With Old Santa Claus



"CYCOL" Lubricating Oil

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A STRANGE STAR

Birth of New Life Which Was to Shine Over the Earth.

Conference of the Beasts of the Nativity as Portrayed by Imaginative Writer.

"**C**AREFUL, Brother, thy horns! Keep thy head straight. Remember, tonight we share but the one stall between us. The man and his mate, there, have thine." The little tawny-hided ox of Palestine on the farther side leaned hard against the stable wall.

"'Tis a strange star that shines tonight," his yoke-fellow answered, sighing restlessly as he turned back his gaze from the open door. Even with care their horns clicked in the narrow space. "If men must take my bed, why did they not turn us out into the free air? The grass would have dew on it tonight—and I could watch the star."

"Ho!" snorted the little gray ass which had carried hither the woman who lay stretched on the straw between them. "What grass wouldst thou pluck from the cobblestones of the city?"

"Aye," lowed the first ox. "There is hay here; eat and be still. The star is no concern of thine."

"The star shineth on the whole broad earth, Brother. He hath the peaked hills to wander in, and the dark valleys, the fields and the towns alike. I wish I were free like the star."

"Then, like him, thou wouldst come slipping in at our stable door again. Hey, come off thy knees! We must sleep standing," his mate grunted warningly.

"Hush, Brother. There is something wondrous in my old stall! Something very small and white! It gleameth as with hoarfrost in the star's light. It hath the smell of lilies. It moveth. The star can stroke it with its long, pale tongues." He leaned longingly against the barrier which shut him away, until it creaked.

The little ass slipped his soft ears between his own bars and sniffed inquiringly. "Why, 'tis a child!" he whinnied with delight. "Children are lovely things. His small fingers will play with my mane and he will sing little songs to me as I bear him along. Look up, little Master. We will see great days together."

"There, that serveth thee right!" reproved the far ox as the woman made a quick motion toward the inquisitive nose. "Thy black muzzle belongeth in thine own manger, Brother Ass."

"She did but brush it aside," the little gray beast breathed contentedly. "She is pleased that we know her son. No fear, Brother Ox. Her husband

will not take his staff to us. She is gentle, this woman of mine. Her child, too, will love us."

But the ox had not drawn back. He knelt there, his broad forehead pressed against the bars, his wondering eyes fixed on the new life which was to shine over the whole broad earth with a brighter glory than that wondering star's.—John Breck, in the Detroit News

SETTING UP THE TREE

AT ALMOST every corner grocer's stands can be purchased very cheaply that will hold the Christmas tree firmly in position.

The simplest of these consists of a crosspiece of wood raised a little from the floor by wooden supports and having a hole in the center to insert the trunk of the tree.

More elaborate ones take the form of a wooden square, painted a bright red and surrounded by a low wooden railing.

Country dwellers who cannot purchase these trees at the corner store, but have to cut them in the nearest wood lot, must devise some other way of holding the Christmas tree in position.

The easiest way to do this, if the tree is not too large and heavy, is to insert the trunk into the hole through the bottom of a wooden box, and either paint this box green or red or cover it with green or red paper.

A starch box will hold up a small tree perfectly, but a somewhat larger box must be chosen for one of larger growth. If, in spite of all precautions, the tree seems too heavy and is inclined to wobble, weight the box on either side with heavy stones. Sometimes the box is filled with sand, the trunk planted in that, and then the wooden cover nailed in place to make all very solid.

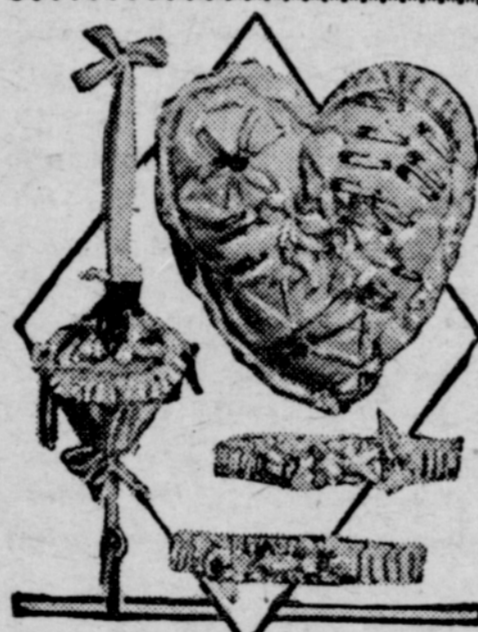
If one has any talent for carpentry, even of the roughest sort, an effective support can be made by nailing two pieces of wood in the shape of a square cross, holding the tree upon this and nailing cleats to both tree and support until it stands firmly.

A very pretty effect can be obtained by covering the support of the tree and the floor directly around it with white cotton batting on which silver tinsel, called "rain" in most shops, has been sprinkled. This makes the tree look as if it were growing in a bunch of snow glittering in the sun.

Ginger Cookies.

Cream together one cupful of sugar and one cupful of shortening. Add two tablespoonfuls of molasses, one teaspoonful of ginger and a whole egg well beaten. Stir two teaspoonfuls of soda in half a cupful of boiling water. Sift in a teaspoonful of baking powder with enough flour to make a soft dough. Roll out and bake far apart.

Ever Welcome Gifts



If a Christmas were to come and go without leaving with us pin-cushions, pin-holders, garters and other pretty furbelows made of ribbon, it would be remembered with something of disappointment. A heart-shaped pin-cushion, a small bag for holding pins and a pair of ribbon-covered garters represent a few of many ribbon novelties for the holidays.

For the Hostess



Gifts that every woman who entertains will delight in are pictured here and they will be all the more appreciated because they are made by their donor. A set of numbers for card tables is attractive and easy to make. They are cut from white cardboard and have gummed figures in black placed on one side. On this black and white background graceful sprays of gay flowers are painted and the cards are supported by small wire holders.

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