



OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

A CURIOUS CHRISTMAS MORNING

BY TUDOR JENKS

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In spite of the fact that he wore spectacles Eddie Grierson was a lively sort of youngster. That is why he wore spectacles instead of eyeglasses—the eyeglasses would not stay on a boy who was always on the go from the time he flung off the bedclothes in the morning to the time when he chucked off his shoes at night.

And holidays!—Eddie kept his eyes (and spectacles) on the calendar, always knowing just how many days there were before the next event, whether it was St. Valentine's, Fourth of July or Christmas. No one in the family—neither his mother, nor sister, nor grandfather, was allowed to overlook any holiday. Not that there was any danger, except in the case of the grandfather. After the loss of her husband Mrs. Grierson had come back to her father's home. Eddie's grandfather was a professor of astronomy in a big university, and much as he loved his daughter and her two children the professor knew more about the planet Mars than about mere earthly holidays.

Of course the coming of Christmas was to Eddie the event of the whole year, and it was the subject of which he talked for a month beforehand. He found no trouble in interesting his mother and sister, but with the grandfather it was different. He was likely to be thinking of stars, comets, the sun or the moon rather than of Santa Claus, reindeer, chimneys and Christmas trees.

On the day before Christmas Eddie helped his grandfather to put on his overcoat, and said:

"Grandfather, don't forget that we are going to have a Christmas tree, will you?"

"No, no," said the professor, "a most curious celebration coming from the Egyptian commemoration of the winter solstice. Remind me to explain to you the reason for the apparent halting of the sun in its"—

But Eddie had run away to attend to some matters he thought more important, and the professor set forth for the college observatory. Nevertheless, Mrs. Grierson when the professor came home after the children were in bed insisted that he must forget the stars long enough to help fill the stockings that hung from the mantel in the sitting room. Now, the professor had been busy at the telescope that evening, and consequently he had taken off his spectacles and put them in his pocket. To arrange the stockings he put them on again and after the bumpy, lumpy, crooked stockings were rightly stuffed the professor put his spectacles on the table in the middle of the room.

Next morning at the first gleam of daylight Eddie came flying downstairs half dressed and went to look at the stockings. Without noticing that he had left his own spectacles in his room, Eddie picked up from the table his grandfather's spectacles and put them on.

Just then came his sister, crying out:

"Oh, Eddie, have you waited for me?"

"Waited for you, my dear?" he answered, slowly. "I was not aware that I was to wait for you. You needn't have been in such a hurry as to come down only half dressed. You will be sorry before night that you rose so early."

"But—have you got your stocking?" she cried.

"Stocking?" asked Eddie, looking puzzled.

"Your Christmas stocking!" she said, seizing her own and sitting down to examine it.

"Oh, ah!—yes," Eddie replied, indifferently.

"It's Christmas morning, then. It seems a pity that mother should waste money on trifles when we need so many

"Haven't you looked at your stocking?" his mother asked, glancing at it.

"Not yet," said Eddie, and, turning to his grandfather, he said:—"You spoke yesterday of the winter solstice, grandpa. Has the festival of Christmas anything to do with that?"

But his mother interrupted.

"Why, Eddie," she asked, "don't you take any interest in your stocking?"

"Certainly, certainly, mother, dear," he said. "I appreciate your kind thought for me; but I am sorry that you spent your



Do You Want to Hear "Boots and Saddles?"

things for the house. A professor's salary is rather small for such foolishness."

"Eddie!" his sister exclaimed. "Just look at this lovely doll. Isn't it a beauty! Open it and shut its eyes. See!"

"Nothing new in that," said Eddie, coolly. "I have seen the inside of them. It is by means of a little piece of lead that moves the eyeballs."

"I think you're mean," said his sister. "Go and look at your own things."

"After breakfast will be time enough," said Eddie. "I find I'm still a little sleepy, so I'll go up and finish my morning nap." And with that he turned away, leaving his sister staring at him in wonder.

When Eddie next appeared the family were at breakfast.

"Merry Christmas!" said his mother, kissing him.

"Thank you," said Eddie, politely, as he sat down at the table.

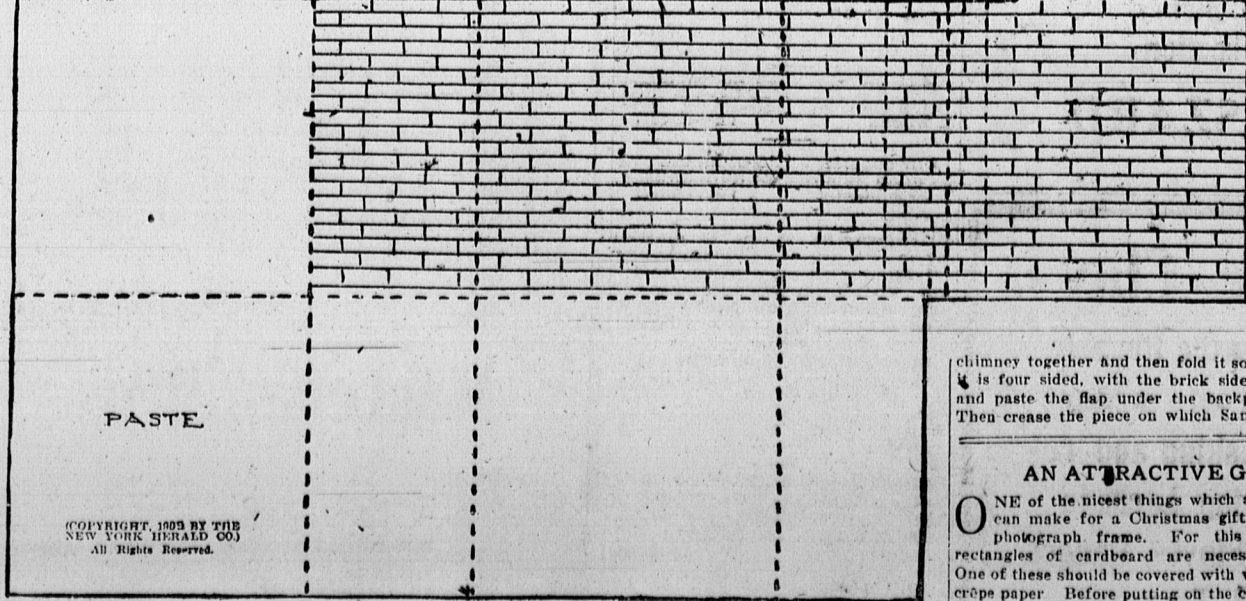
POLLY'S PUZZLE

During Her Morning Walk the Other Day Polly



A Word of Five Syllables Completes the Above Sentence. The Picture Will Tell You What It Is

MR. SANTA POPS OUT OF THE CHIMNEY!



PASTE

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Directions for Making Santa Claus and the chimney. Cut out Santa Claus and the chimney and fold on all dotted lines. The part of the chimney that is marked out in bricks is the outside. The plain part turns up and goes inside the chimney. This is merely to make the chimney stronger. Paste the inside and outside of the

chimney together and then fold it so that it is four sided, with the brick side out, and paste the flap under the backpiece. Then crease the piece on which Santa is placed first in and then out and then is again, according to the dotted lines. Fold Santa and paste him. The long straight piece marked "holder" should then go straight down the chimney. By taking hold of this on the lower end and pushing it up and down you can make Santa go straight up and down the chimney. You must be careful that everything is pasted smoothly.

money for toys. Somehow it seems as if it would be better to buy things that would last longer. A good book, for example, would be more improving than the foolish knickknacks that are put in Christmas stockings. Think of the great sums of money people waste every year in these foolish ways!"

"You seem to have got out of bed on the wrong side, Edward," remarked his grandfather, squinting a little at the boy, as he absent-mindedly searched for his spectacles—of course without finding them.

"Not at all," said Eddie, gravely. "I never realized before the absurdity of it. Here you put your great trouble to get presents for me and myself, and what does it amount to? We should be just as happy without them."

"Well," said his mother, a little hurt, "I am sorry you did not tell me this before. But you can give your presents to Willie Thorn next door."

"A good idea," said Eddie. "Willie has few of his own. I shall never miss them, you know. In fact, I can't see the sense of such things. A little girl may find some pleasure in dolls, but with a boy like me it is different. I can remember that I once liked to play with toy soldiers; but now nothing seems sillier than to arrange a lot of lifeless pewter images on

"But I didn't get you anything," said his mother. "I thought you'd be disappointed."

"Ah," said Eddie, "I'm not a little disappointed and I'm not in my studies." This sudden interest in his studies seemed so funny to his sister that she began to giggle.

Eddie looked reprovingly at her.

"It is all very well to laugh," he said solemnly, "but there is work to do in the world, and I must fit myself for it."

Supposing now that the boy was acting a part, the whole family began to laugh at him.

"I'm surprised," said Eddie, looking from one to the other. "That you and what I say amusing. Because I have been a child you believe I do not think seriously. But I feel strongly that I should try hard to fit myself to earn something for my mother and sister."

The family became grave, and looked at Eddie curiously. Finally his mother said:

"Are you feeling well to-day, Edward?"

"Fairly well only," he answered. "The truth is, I rose absurdly early, and that may be the reason for a slight headache."

"May be you tired your eyes yesterday," said his sister. "You read that book about pirates all day."

"So I did," he answered, "and yet to-day it seems to me a very silly and untrue sort of tale. No such ridiculous things could ever happen, I'm sure. Yes, my eyes may be a little tired."

So saying, Eddie took off the spectacles and rubbed his eyes.

"Why, those are mine," said his grandfather, taking them from him.

"Sure!" Eddie cried, jumping from his chair. "And mine are up there!"

Away he went up two steps at a time. Down he came with a rattling bang, and was at his stocking in an instant.

"Oh, look here!" he cried. "these are just the bulledest presents. Look at this, grandfather," and he held up a little bugle. "Now you'll hear me give the call. Do you want to hear 'Boots and Saddles?' Here she goes."

And he capered about giving the army calls.

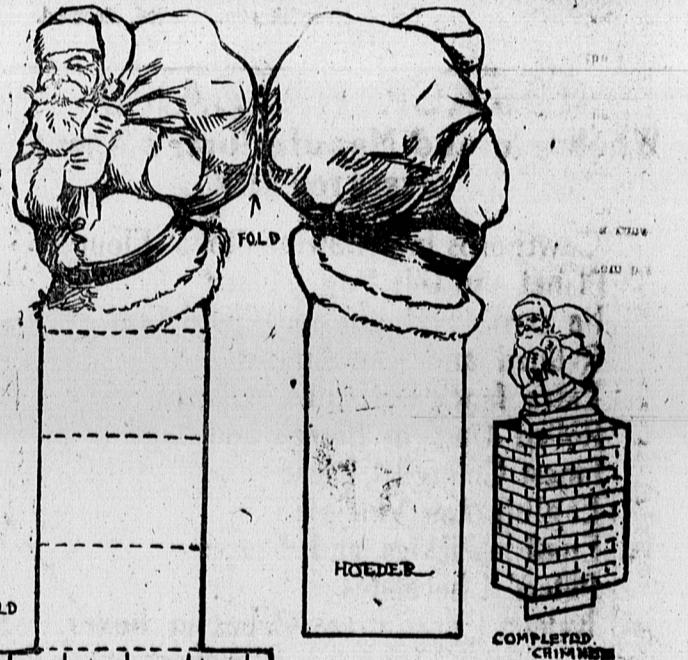
"Won't you finish your breakfast," his mother said, covering her ears.

"Breakfast he hauged!" shouted Eddie. "It's Christmas!"

"You didn't talk so a moment ago," said his mother.

"Didn't I? Well, I say so now. I think grandpa's spectacles made me feel different."

And I believe that was the reason for the whole thing. Grandfather's spectacles are not meant for small boys or Christmas Day.



Things Boys May Make From Boxes

ALTHOUGH there are only a few days left before Christmas, there is still time for the boy who is anything of an amateur wood worker to make at least one attractive Christmas gift for one of his relatives or friends. There is no time, of course, for elaborate work of any kind, but there are many things which are easily made and which will give a great deal of pleasure to persons of various ages. If one is trying to get up a last moment gift of this sort it is well to consider first what can be done with boxes.

It is usually possible to buy for a few cents light wooden boxes of various sizes and shapes, or perhaps you have such a box in the storeroom or cellar. In any event you are quite sure to be able to obtain one for a very small cost if you set out in earnest on the quest.

Now as to what you may make from it. The first person to consider is your mother, and here is something which you can make from various size boxes for her.

One of the most useful things is a shirt waist box. This may be any length more than twenty-seven inches, about the same width and as deep as you like. It is a good plan, if you can do so, to get a box whose length will be the same as the width of a window in the room for which the box is intended, as it is very convenient to have the box fit just below the window. It can then have a cushion placed on it and will serve as a window seat.

It is necessary first to secure a fairly good box or else if the boards are not close together they may be taken off and put neatly together again. The top is put on the back with hinges and casters are put on the four corners. If instead of being kept up in the room the box is to be kept under a couch or bed you should have, instead of the casters, small wooden wheels, on which it will roll very easily. These may readily be bought at a hardware store.

First cut out six pieces of unbleached muslin and then six pieces of cheesecloth, in white or some light shade. The pieces fit the sides, bottom and top of the box. The muslin goes next to the wood and the cheesecloth forms the lining. Baste each piece of cheesecloth to a corresponding piece of muslin and then tack in the piece with tiny tacks.

The outer covering is adjusted in the same fashion. It may be of linen, denim, chintz or any material desired. If the box is quite rough put on muslin as on the inside, basting each piece first to the outer covering. Then put on the two together with small tacks, or, if desired, you may first put on the muslin, holding it in place with a tack in each corner until the outer covering is put on. Carry the outer covering over the edge of the box and tack it neatly inside. Finish the lid in the same way. At the bottom turn the material under and tack it on the bottom of the box. Be sure to use very small tacks for this.

If the box is to be kept under the bed or couch it will only be necessary to paint it or cover it with paper. In this same way many other useful boxes may be made.

For a younger sister any number of toys may be made of boxes. There is no nicer way to make a doll's house. One large box may be used and partitions made of cardboard or several small boxes large enough for one room each may be fitted together.

Doll's furniture may also be made of the boxes. A particularly easy thing to make is a wardrobe. The box must be of the proper shape and then all that is necessary is to put it on small casters, hinge on a door and paint or cover it. If you are going to paint it the wood must be smooth. If it is to be covered that is not so necessary. Then pieces to fit each side, and the door, may be cut from denim or linen and fastened on with small tacks. A chest for doll's clothes is another good thing to make for the small sister. There should be a tray such as a trunk has in the top, which must rest upon cleats nailed to the sides. If possible it is rather nice to put a tiny padlock on the chest, so that it may be locked. It may be painted on the outside or covered with paper. Flowered paper is very nice for this purpose, and the paper may also be used on the inside.