

My Christmas Drawer and Bin

Yield Annual Gifts and Decorations

By PEGGY HOPE

There was a time when toward the close of each year Christmas seemed ready to leap out of the calendar and fling itself ahead of schedule. That was when my Christmas preparations had been backward. Everything was wrong because I had the deluded impression that gifts and decorations must be picked fresh, like eggs, and used immediately.

Then came the knowledge of an easy way which has enabled me to meet Christmas untired and waiting. First of all, the plan includes a little book containing a list of those who are dear to me, with an additional name from time to time of people who have made the interval between Christmases exceedingly pleasant. Beside the book there is a bin and a drawer.

Nothing but Christmas stores go into them; but how they fill! A little gift bought here, another there, a bit of needlework, some glasses of jelly are dropped in their turn. Magazines contribute a fruitful crop of suggestions and the actual gifts in themselves. Almost every cover that comes through the mail suggests someone on my list. Illustrations supply thumb-nail and full-page pictures that fit surprisingly well into the lives of those about me and as soon as the family and the neighbors have read my periodicals I cut the pictures I want and file them away. Verses and witticisms follow the pictures.

I save every clean box and good piece of paper. The paper can be pressed with a warm iron if not too mussed. At odd times I apply pictures to my boxes and sometimes they are so pretty I shellac them for permanent use—boxes for stockings, gloves, neckwear and stationery. From colored advertisements I often find borders for the sides of my boxes. Perhaps I select a handkerchief for a friend. I have little money to spend, but I wrap the tiny object with a wealth of loving thoughts. Nine, ten or even eleven months before Christmas I may have seen a small illustration that was particularly reminiscent of her. I know too that the subject will amuse her, so I save the picture and paste it on the wrapper. A letter may be written months or weeks in advance and illustrated at the top

with a cut-out picture which will recall a happy occasion.

Place cards for the Christmas dinner are more individually appropriate when made at home by combining a verse with a magazine illustration than indiscriminate ones bought at a shop. Tree decorations also are made by pasting odd and amusing colored magazine pictures on cardboard cut in the same shapes, care being taken to insert a loop for hanging before varnishing both sides.

A variety of tree ornaments I found could be made into little personages of which painted empty spoons are the bodies. Two lengths of thin wire, eight inches each, are pulled through the centers of the spoons; the upper ends are bent forward for arms and the lower ends are left hanging for legs. The tips of the wires are bent to simulate feet and hands. The wires may be wrapped with colored yarns. Pants, pantalettes and sleeves are added when necessary to complete a characterization. The heads of disks of cardboard anywhere from a nickel to a quarter in size, and faced with white paper or oilcloth to be painted with faces. The headpieces and wires are held with sealing wax.

When my house needs a Christmasy dress I think at once of the window. A decorative window I like is made by cutting green crepe paper into narrow strips long enough to reach two thirds up the windowpanes. Pasted eight to ten inches apart they appear to be tree trunks. More green paper is cut into wing-like patterns and hung as boughs, the larger ones at the bottom and pyramiding to an acute tip. The "trees" are made more realistic by applying artificial snow to the moist glue.

A circle of candlelight stars is a charming substitute for a lack of real trees. A round barrel hoop may be used for this, painted a bright color or covered with silver paper, silver stars hung from it every four inches and the large-sized birthday-cake rosettes pierced into the upper edge of the hoop between the stars. The circle is suspended by four wires from a hook or chandelier and can be elaborated with holly or greens.

Pictures, paste, paper, paint and spoons are treasured with the gifts, buy or make from month to month and store for the most blessed day in all the year.

Alberta Boasts Identical Triplets

Two cases of that extremely rare phenomenon, human identical triplets have been revealed by Alfred E. Clarke and Daniel G. Revell, biologists of the University of Alberta, Canada.

Triplets of this type are, like identical twins, developed from a single egg cell. They are always of the same sex, and since they have the same hereditary endowment, they are very much alike in appearance and also in mental and emotional make-up. Says Science Service's "Daily Science News Bulletin" (Washington): "When twins develop from separate egg cells, or syzyotes, they are no more alike than ordinary brothers and sisters, except that they are of the same age. Indeed, they may be decided contrasts in temperament as well as physical appearance."

Triplets are usually of this non-identical type, because when a division occurs in the egg cell, the tendency is for it to form two parts, not three.

The identical triplets reported by Professors Clarke and Revell are all boys. One set are the children of a family of German origin living in Stony Plain, Alberta. They are fine lads, now ten years old, and they are the youngest of fourteen children. They look so much alike that their mother resorted to the scheme of having each wear a gold bracelet with his name engraved on it for identification. The hair of all three grows in an odd clock-wise whorl at the back of the neck, although no other member of the family has this characteristic. The finger and palm prints of the triplets also follow a similar pattern, which is like that of the father, but unlike any others in the family. The boys received practically the same score on an intelligence test; they enjoy the same games and sports; and in school they all are good in arithmetic and poor in language.

The other set of triplets are still in infancy. They are now over two, but were only seventeen months when they were examined. These boys look very much alike, although the parents are able to tell which is which without any great difficulty. The fingerprints follow the same pattern, which is different from their only sister. They are all left-handed; all are backward about walking; and all suffered from the coming of the various teeth simultaneously.

World Bank Policy To Undergo Change

Basel, Switz.—The committee of directors of banks of issue has decided to recommend a new policy for the Bank for International Settlements designed to eliminate radical fluctuations in national exchanges.

The International Bank Council meets Dec. 12.

Dinner-Time!



Orphaned when two days old, this litter of young porkers faced a dark future until their owner, John Vincent, devised ingenious feeding trough. Dinner gong has sounded.

Santa Pays Last Visit To Mexico

Quetzalcoatl to Replace Jolly Old Figure

Mexico City.—Quetzalcoatl, the aztec god of the air, pictured as a gigantic plumed serpent, may replace the Canadian Santa Claus in the minds of Mexico children if an experiment to be tried out by the Ministry of Education as a part of its program to instill the principles of nationalism in the minds of those of school age is successful. In an official statement, the Ministry announces that figures representing Quetzalcoatl instead of Santa Claus will distribute toys and clothing to 15,000 needy children at the Christmas celebration.

The statement refers to Quetzalcoatl as "the symbol of our aboriginal dieties and of our apostles, the forerunners of our christian civilization." The giant image of Quetzalcoatl is one of the archaeological treasures of Mexico, forming part of the main temple at the pyramids of San Juan Teotihuacan near Mexico City, sometimes referred to as the Egypt of America.

The word Quetzalcoatl is a literal translation of the name of the great Aztec Maya god, Kukulcan, who bore the attributes of combined bird and snake. He was revered in the centuries preceding Columbus as god of the arts and crafts and of general culture. The tradition was that after instructing the people in the useful arts he departed eastward over the sea, promising to return in a specified year. He was white-skinned and bearded and when the Spaniards therefore made their first irruption in the year specified in the legend a hesitating policy was followed toward them by the natives which enormously facilitated Spanish penetration.

Panama Canal Toll Rates May Be Raised

New York.—Toll rates at the Panama Canal may be increased shortly by the United States Government, in the opinion of Col. Henry Burgess, Governor of the Canal Zone, who arrived here recently.

The canal is only paying three-eighths of one per cent. on the capital invested, he said. The total tonnage carried through it in 1930 will be approximately 1,000,000 tons below the figures for 1929 and 1928, according to the governor.

Farm Problems

Conducted by Prof. Henry G. Bell, Dept. of Chemistry, Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph

The object of this department is to place at the service of our farm readers the advice of acknowledged authorities on all subjects pertaining to the farm.

Address all questions to Professor Henry G. Bell, in care of The Wilson Publishing Company, Limited, Toronto, and answers will appear in this column in the order in which they are received. When writing kindly mention this paper. As space is limited it is advisable where immediate reply is necessary that an addressed envelope be enclosed with the question, when the answer will be mailed direct before being published.

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Farm Problem Service

At no time since man undertook to till the soil has farming been fraught with so many or so great problems. Questions of type, location, organization and management of the farm—questions of crops, varieties, culture, disease and insect control; questions of soil types, adaptabilities, maintenance—questions of tillage, manuring and fertilizing—questions of livestock-breeding, feeding and care, and questions of the marketing of the products of the farm, force themselves on the attention of farmers who aim to make their business

one of pleasure and profit. Definite answers to many such questions are impossible, but a bringing together of such information as applies, can be of untold help to the farmers of Ontario.

A few years ago this paper published a double column weekly, of questions and answers. If popularity of this section is an indication of its value to Ontario farmers, then we are justified in reviving this service. This we have arranged to do under the same editorship that proved so acceptable before.

Prof. Henry G. Bell, who will again conduct this work, is well known to Ontario farmers. He is Associate Professor of Chemistry at Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, where he has special charge of field demonstrations and extension work in soil fertility. His wide experience in farming methods, both in his native province and in United States are of great value in this work. Besides his own preparation and experience, Prof. Bell will have the co-operation of specialists of all departments of the Ontario Agricultural College to whom he will refer questions outside the field of soil fertility. This fact should make this column of increasing interest and value.

We shall conduct the new service under the title of Farm Problems. The published questions will be identified by initials and county.

Professor Claims Earth Is At Least 1,825,000,000 Years Old

New Haven, Conn.—The earth is at least 1,825,000,000 years old, according to calculations of Professor Alois F. Kovarik, professor of physics at Yale University.

In a recent address here he revealed a new formula, based on the commonly-used "radio-active time clock," by which he had been able to arrive at a calculation which agrees approximately with recent astronomical computations.

Professor Kovarik's formula extends the scope of a previously known method of determining the age of radio active minerals—by measuring the extent of transmutation from their

known original form. Scientists know that radio-active miner disintegrate atomic weight. Because this rate of discharge has been found absolutely constant through centuries of change, physicians have called these rocks the "radio-active time clock."

A fragment of uraninite dug from the earth of Sinyana Pala, Carelia, Northwestern Russia, indicated the age of 1,825,000,000 years. It is entirely possible, the professor said, that other rocks will indicate still greater age.

Bring in the bottled lightning, a clean tumbler, and a corkscrew!

Some Last Minute Christmas Cookies

To make Bohemian Christmas cookies rub together a quarter of a pound of powdered sugar and a half pound of butter, add the yolks of four eggs, three tablespoons of cream and one pound of flour. Mix sufficient sugar and flour in equal parts to sprinkle over the dough board. Roll the dough on this until it is about a quarter of an inch thick then cut into stars and when the cakes are baked ice them with tins icing: Beat two tablespoons of water and thicken with confectioner's sugar. Spread this together the yolks of two eggs and on the cakes and sprinkle thickly with almonds that have been blanched and cut fine, then set in the oven a few minutes to dry.

Kris Kringle Cookies

Cream three-fourths of a pound of sugar with the same quantity of butter, add a cup of preserved quinces pressed through a colander and three cups of molasses, then add a tablespoon and a half of grated orange peel, a teaspoon of mace and one of cinnamon and enough flour to make a stiff dough. Roll very thin in oblongs, sprinkle with red sugar and bake.

Chocolate Creams

Cream well one cup of butter and slightly beaten, four tablespoons of half a cup of sugar; add two eggs, sweet milk and a teaspoon of vanilla or almond flavoring; then three cups of flour in which has been sifted two and one-half teaspoons of baking powder and half a teaspoon of salt. Have ready two squares of chocolate, melted; add this to the above mixture, blend well and chill; roll as thin as possible—using only a small portion of dough at a time—cut into any shape desired and bake in a moderate oven. When cool put two together with a white icing.

German Fruit Snaps

Cream one cup of butter and add two cups of sugar gradually; stir into this mixture, without separating, three eggs, one teaspoon of soda dissolved in half a cup of warm water, one pound of chopped raisins and one cup of chopped English walnuts. Add sufficient flour to make a soft dough, roll out, cut into rounds and bake at once.

Pop-Corn Cookies

Mix well one cup each of pop corn (finely ground), figs cut up fine and sugar; have ready mixed half a cup each of butter and milk and a beaten egg and add the above mixture to it; then add gradually one cup each of cornmeal and flour, into which has been sifted a teaspoon of salt and one and one-half of nutmeg and four teaspoons of baking powder. Roll out about a third of an inch thick, cut into rounds and bake in a moderate oven.

St. Nicholas Filled Cookies

Blend half a cup each of butter, brown sugar and molasses, add one well beaten egg, four tablespoons of sour milk, then three cups of flour with which there has been mixed a teaspoon of baking powder, one teaspoon of baking soda, one teaspoon of cinnamon and half a teaspoon each of nutmeg, cloves and salt. Chill well by setting on ice, then roll thin and cut into oblongs—about two by four inches. Have prepared a mixture of half a cup of honey, half a cup of chopped walnuts or pecans, a quarter of a cup of freshly grated (or shredded) coconut and a teaspoon of flour. Spread half of each oblong with the filling mixture, fold over to a square shape and bake in the quick oven.

Christmas Rocks

To two-thirds of a cup of butter and one cup of sugar, well blended, add two beaten eggs, beat well, then add one and one-half cups of flour, with which has been sifted a teaspoon each of cinnamon and cloves. Put one pound of English walnuts, one pound of dates and one pound of raisins through the food chopper and add to the above, then one teaspoon of soda dissolved in one and one-half tablespoons of hot water. Stir well and drop by half teaspoons on buttered tins and bake in a moderate oven.

Maryland Sand Tarts

1½ cups butter, 2 cups sugar, 4 cups flour, 2 eggs. Cinnamon and almonds. Cream butter and sugar. Add yolks of both eggs and the whites of one. Add flour until the dough is still enough to be rolled out and cut. With a pastry brush paint each cookie with the remaining white of egg, dust with cinnamon and place almond in center. Bake in a slow oven for ten or fifteen minutes.

Jack Miner Tags

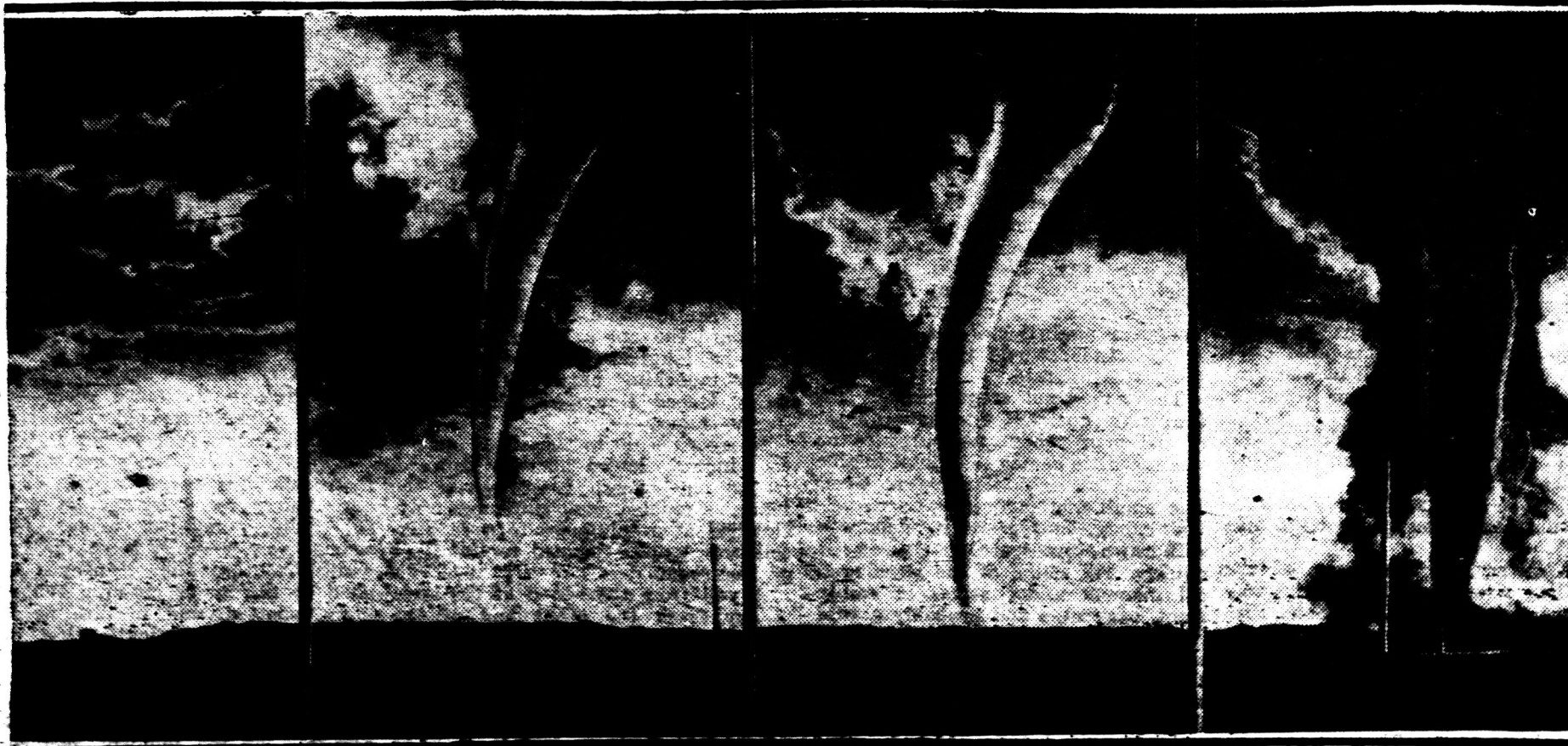
323 Geese in Day
Kingsville—Jack Miner, Canadian naturalist, had a busy day at his bird sanctuary recently. He caught, tagged and liberated 323 Canada geese in the work of compiling a record of the flocking activities of the birds. In addition he caught three geese he had tagged six years ago, four similarly treated four years ago and ten marked last year.

One Hundred Million Trees

Since 1901 when the Department of the Interior through its Forest Service commenced the distribution to prairie farmers of seedlings and cuttings to establish shelterbelts to beautify and protect their homes, well over 100,000,000 trees have been sent out.

It is better, going through the world, to have the arms chafed in that narrow passage, than the temper.

The Path of The Tornado



Unusual photographs of progress of disastrous tornado in Nebraska. Left to Right—Tornado cloud shortly before it strikes. Tornado as funnel cloud. Tornado as it strikes. Photo at end shows funnel as it struck and sucked it dry.