

SANTA APPROVES A CHRISTMAS GIFT

Santa Claus has been down a great many chimneys since he started business, and he is intimately acquainted with a large number of people. He knows that the best kinds of gifts are those which please the whole family, and which bring the excitement and enjoyment of Christmas every week. That is why he looks so jolly when he receives hundreds of subscriptions to the Youth's Companion with which to fill his pack. And, being wise from long experience, he knows that people are likely to overdo things around Christmas, so he chuckles when he sticks a Companion into the top of a stocking. "Be as greedy as you like," he thinks, "the more, the better for you!"

The 52 issues of the Youth's Companion for 1926 will be crowded with serial stories, short stories, editorials, poetry, facts, and fun. Just send your order to the address below and Santa will take care of delivering the paper to your home or to the home of a friend. Subscribers will receive:

1. The Youth's Companion—52 issues in 1926, and
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Gifts Imagined to Amend for Ugliness

An English writer tells how being in a theater with a foreigner he asked him the inevitable question as to what he thought of London. "I never saw so many ugly people in my life," was the startling reply. On looking about him the writer felt that the reply of the foreigner was not far astray. From this he infers as to why it is that in a country blessed with practically children there should grow up such unattractive adults, and he concludes that civilization is doing something to the race—something undesirable, unless we are to assume that ugly people are brainer than handsome ones. This very handsome man and woman among us will hasten to deny the fact is, no doubt, that when a person is ugly something has to be said to command him to our acquaintance, so they are hastily assured that this person they are about to meet, while he does not look well, is really quite an unusual person and highly gifted. One statement like that about a man may keep him going for years, for others repeat it. All he needs do is refrain from showing that he is without gifts of any sort.

Horror of Horrors

She was charming and she knew it. What's more, she knew that the whole car full of north-bound passengers knew it, too. She revelled in their admiring glances although assuming an air of modest conceit. Decidedly well groomed she was, trim in every detail and minkish to perfection. About her there was that air of conscious perfection characteristic of those who are confident of their grooming. There was nicety in every detail save one. When she arose to leave the car with that languid, graceful air of hers, the whole car saw the flaw. And she observed it, her cheeks would probably have blushed had she not mortification, just where her silken-entwined ankle entered the black satin slipper, there was—a hole—Columbus Dispatch.

Had Oral Proof That "De Clips" Had Arrived

When I was a boy, living with my parents near Waterloo, Iowa, writes a Companion reader, we had some Scandinavian neighbors living across the street from us. They were excellent neighbors, kind-hearted and obliging, honest and hard-working, but with very little education. There was to be an eclipse of the sun on a certain day (one summer). Naturally, people in the neighborhood in advance, and neighbor Lars and his good wife had heard it talked about, though they had not much comprehension of what it was all about.

During the forenoon of the day of the eclipse the wife rushed across the road and excitedly informed my mother that "de clips is comin'; I hear it clippin'!" Curious to learn what had caused the good woman's excitement, mother stepped out of the house to look and listen. "Don't you hear it clippin'?" earnestly exclaimed our neighbor. Then it dawned on mother's comprehension what she meant. In a field a half-mile away, but out of sight of either house, mother heard the click of a mower where some neighbor was mowing hay. The "clip" of the knives was "de clippin'" that our good neighbor had connected in her mind with the mysterious eclipse of which she had heard so much and understood so little.—Youth's Companion.

Model Realized That Work Had Drawbacks

The late John S. Sargent, the artist, used to tell a story about an old man who once called at his studio, saying he had just been discharged from a hospital, and asked for a little food or money. Mr. Sargent gave the old fellow a small sum, and then decided that he would make a good model, and sent a maid out to call him back. "Hi, come back," said the maid, as she overtook him. "The master wants to paint you." "The old fellow hesitated. "Will he pay me well?" he asked. "Oh, yes," said the maid. "He'll probably pay you a pound" (\$5). "The old fellow took off his shabby old hat and scratched his head. Still he hesitated. "It's an easy way to earn money," said the maid. "Yes, I know that," said the old man with a troubled smile. "It was only wonderin' how I'd get the paint off afterward."

Grief in Animals

A man or woman who loses some dear one is overcome with deep sorrow, remembering only the admirable qualities of the one lost, but this feeling is soon softened by a multitude of external impressions and influences so that sorrow gives way to melancholy, which in its turn diminishes. Not so in the case of many animals. These not only retain their grief much longer, but there are cases in which it lasts as long as life itself. The cat will swim after her kittens which some cruel man is trying to drown. The story of the dog who starves to death on the grave of his master is no fable. A stone in the Paris dogs' cemetery is thus inscribed: "He was so intelligent that he might have been taken for a human being—but that he was faithful."

Words, Mere Words

When Columbus discovered the West Indies he heard, even if he did not himself see, the Carib' Indians, the inhabitants of which were spoken of as Caribales, although quite as frequently they were called Canibales. These Canibales were said to be man-eaters. The association of the Canibales with the terrible practice of eating human flesh led immediately to the transfer of the name to the people of a horrid custom. Whence we have the word cannibal coming from the West Indies, although the ancients knew of many cannibal races long before the Christian era and had their own words for the practice of cannibalism.—Detroit News.

Loathsome Affiliation

"Comprachicos" was the name adopted by a nomadic affiliation, famous in the Seventeenth century in Europe. This band of persons made a practice of buying and selling children. These children were then placed in England, Spain, France and Germany. The name is a compound Spanish word meaning "buyers of little ones."

Money Transport Costly

Many kinds of food are shipped from the Pacific to the Atlantic coast in specially made express cars, which are attached to passenger trains and run on fast-time schedules. The cost of building one of the "passenger express refrigerator" cars is officially stated to be not far from \$4,600. The California shipper who fills one of these cars with butter and ships it to New York or Philadelphia does so at an express charge of about \$1,000. The cost of shipping a car of this type filled with fruits and vegetables from the Pacific to the Atlantic usually runs from \$800 to \$900.

BELL EXPANSION MAY REACH TOTAL OF \$23,000,000

PRESIDENT KUHN ANNOUNCES HEAVY CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM FOR MICHIGAN.

WIDESPREAD GROWTH OF SERVICE

Toll Lines to Expand \$2,400,000, Local Lines, \$7,100,000; 40,000 Telephone Gain Expected.

Franz C. Kuhn, president of the Michigan Bell Telephone Company, made the announcement that it is planned to spend approximately \$23,000,000 for telephone plant expansion in Michigan during 1926, according to present estimates, and that it is probable that the estimates of total expenditures be-



PRESIDENT FRANZ C. KUHN

Telephone plant expansion during the next five year period will bring the Michigan Bell's book value of plant up to about \$160,000,000. Billions of Feet of Wire. Gross additions to the company's exchange lines next year will approximate \$7,100,000, it is expected, with gross additions to the toll and long distance plant of \$2,400,000. The company's program of expansion calls for the annual installation of close to two billion conductor feet of wire in cable alone. Michigan is expected to make a net gain of 40,000 telephones next year. Net gain the next five years will be close to 212,000, it is anticipated. That will mean connecting 701,000 telephones, the difference being accounted for by disconnects and move orders. Judge Kuhn states that an average of more than 53,000 telephones is involved in move orders each year, each more involving a disconnect as well as an installation. In five years, therefore, there will be a total number of disconnects almost equal to the number of telephones now in service in Michigan.

Large additions of the latest types of central office equipment—both mechanically and manually operated—are included in the Michigan Bell's extensive program for next year. The 1926 program calls for the establishment of Kalamazoo as a machine switching exchange through the installation of complete mechanical central office equipment while new manual central office equipment is planned for Allegan, Buchanan, Belding, Grandville, Leosau, Niles, Plymouth, Ypsilanti, Trenton, Roseville, Bedford, Iron Mountain, Wyandotte and elsewhere. Extension of the Company's public pay station service in many cities and the addition of several large private branch exchange systems for various industries and business houses, additions to still others and the building of more trunk lines between existing central offices are included in the 1926 program, also.

Plans for the expansion of the toll and long distance plant call for the expenditure of more during 1926 than in any other one year in the company's history—the \$2,400,000 mentioned above. Hundreds of miles of new long distance circuits will be added and much of the mileage of new wire will be in cables. For several years past there has been a rapid and steady growth of the long distance plant and modern methods of handling the traffic with speed and high grade of efficiency have been adopted. Special facilities have been added for handling and speeding the growing volume of long distance traffic between Detroit and Toledo, Detroit and New York, Grand Rapids and Chicago, Grand Rapids and Indianapolis, Grand Rapids and Milwaukee and Ann Arbor and Chicago, and from other points through those toll centers. These facilities will be added to during the coming year. Ad-

ditional facilities for the handling of toll business to Frootsey and north (including the upper peninsula, from southern peninsula points, also have been placed in service and will be increased.

Judge Kuhn says that by 1929 the Michigan Bell's toll circuits in cable form will measure 150,000 miles of wire, or approximately 71 per cent of the total toll wire mileage of the state. The sheathed circuits are being added to rapidly because they are less likely to get into trouble from storm or other causes than are the open wire circuits, although requiring great watchfulness and efficiency on the part of the maintenance forces.

The toll cable projects on the telephone company's program for the next few years according to Judge Kuhn will run into the millions of dollars in expenditures. Much of the work will be undertaken during 1926. The Detroit-Pontiac-Flint cable will be extended on to Saginaw and from there to Bay City during 1926 and 1927. It was completed as far north as Mt. Morris during 1925. A toll cable will be placed underground between Grand Rapids and Detroit next year. The cable from Detroit to Dearborn is being extended and will reach out in the direction of Ann Arbor during 1926. An additional cable to Wyandotte, from Detroit, is planned. The Detroit-Mt. Clemens cable, which has reached Conners Creek, will be extended eastward from there.

Protection Against Storms

Michigan is connected with the Boston-New York-Chicago cable at Maumee, near Toledo, and at South Bend, Ind., south of Niles. Connections have made through to Chicago this year. President Kuhn anticipates that cable connection will be made through from Niles to Benton Harbor in 1926, as an aid in handling the growing fruit-raising and summer resort business of that section. Plans are being considered for extending the cable from Niles to Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids, also.

The building of toll cable and strengthening of the pole lines which the open wire is carried, a great deal of which is under way, has been completed during 1925, will give added protection against storm and other damage. Sleet storms cost the utilities many hundreds of thousands of dollars and every effort is made to guard against such widespread destruction of plant as that caused by the recent unseasonable sleet in the upper peninsula. Through iron and copper districts of northern Michigan, during October a disastrous storm wrecked the long distance leads at a cost of more than \$45,000. This is one of the problems of giving telephone service.

In both the city and country districts, the telephone company also is doing everything possible to guard against damage by electric storms such as those that badly interfered with the service at Detroit, Kalamazoo, Jackson and elsewhere late the past summer.

Many big local cable building projects are under way in the large exchanges of the state. In Grand Rapids the consolidation of the Citizens telephone plant, purchased two years ago, with the plant of the Michigan Bell will be completed in 1926. The Grand Rapids consolidation job is one of the largest ever undertaken and has cost a great deal of money in special research and development work, designing and building of special circuits, standardization and rehabilitation. And while that work has been going on, Grand Rapids has been expanding rapidly, adding to the problems of giving the service desired. The Lansing consolidation was completed during 1925.

Local Problems are Many

Growing and shifting populations, building of new industrial centers and moving of big plants, the unbroken air or very rapid expansion of certain districts and the intensely rapid building up and settling of large sections the past year have brought the telephone utility in Michigan additional problems. These problems are being met and conquered, however, and many involved will be completed next year. The call for additional local service at many points is very heavy and the company is making every endeavor possible to care for current demand and to prepare to keep ahead of the call in the future Judge Kuhn says. Next year is expected to place the company in a very good position in that regard, he adds, because of the work now under way or contracted for. Michigan Bell Company serves more than 600,000 in the entire state, including those of its 275 smaller and connecting companies. The company operates approximately 450,000 telephones of its own and expects to reach the half million mark early in 1926. One and a quarter million local calls are made in Detroit each day and two and a half million are made in the whole state. About 85,000 toll and long distance calls originate each day at the company's telephone centers, but the short haul calls between points near each other. Twelve thousand persons are engaged in giving Michigan its telephone service, all included, Judge Kuhn declares, with the mental agility to serve well, realizing that they are in the public service. They are a part of that great body of public service employees numbering a quarter million that is serving a whole nation through 1,000,000 telephones, and the work which can be reached from any telephone connected with the lines of the Michigan Bell.

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LET US GIVE THANKS

In youth there are many things to be thankful for, such as ability to see and hear, a sound body, the privilege of enjoying life, and the power to earn a good livelihood. In old age many of the things which we enjoy in our youth no longer prevail. Our sight will grow dimmer with age, we will have to turn our ear to hear distinctly what we desire—our body will gradually weaken to the point where we will be compelled to confine ourselves to our home or immediate neighborhood—our earning power will be completely gone.

WHAT THEN will we have to be thankful for? We SHOULD be thankful for a well spent life and for the friends we have made and the good we have done. BUT the memories of those things will fade if we have not the financial means to assure ourselves of comfort and a good living.

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