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by K. C. Jerome

TOYS TAKE ON NEW REALISM

▲ Cowboys will love this Palomino Pal, hung on springs.

Rae Gilbert

REMEMBER PLAYING jackstraws as a child and smiling triumphantly when your butter-fingered opponent upset the pile?

Well, the world of toys has turned full circle, and this Christmas jackstraws are in vogue again. But the game's been electrified. Make a false move and you set off a light and sound a buzzer!

The same thing is happening to many other playthings this Christmas. Electricity has been applied to a building set, for example, so Junior can make things that are battery-powered. Even a toy shaver buzzes electrically.

The greater realism of this season's toys also is illustrated by "the first living organism ever introduced into a microscope set"—shrimp eggs ready to hatch right under the eye of a young scientist. Some model trains have been redesigned for narrower tracks to make them more like the real thing.

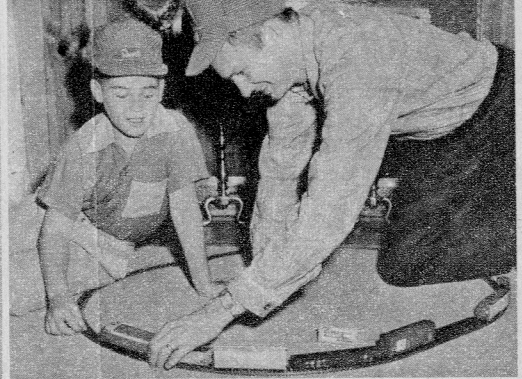
Sight and sound are combined in a new toy consisting of a phonograph record with a 16-sided mirror above it. As the record spins, the mirror reflects colored pictures printed on the disc, and the child sees a three-dimensional, filmless movie that illustrates the music.



She's fascinated by that 16-sided mirror reflecting pictures printed on the record.



Do-it-yourself can start early with carpenter tools.



As model trains look more like real ones, boys have more trouble keeping Father away.