

DEC 2 1960

Toy Sextants Training Skippers Of Future in Art of Navigation

Constellation Finder Is Also Contained in Youngsters' New Observatory Set

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For pleasure-boat families, the Christmas season in these Nineteen Sixties is a far cry from those days when the present crop of parents and grandparents were young. Then it was a time for choo-choo train toys, dolls, toy soldiers and noisy rub-a-dub drums. Nowadays, the youngsters are almost certain

Pleasure

Boat

News

to grow up to skip-
pers cruising sail
and power boats.
That has prompted
the development of
child-sized sextants

where the small fry can learn the fundamentals of navigation.

The New Haven concern of A. C. Gilbert, which for years has been responsible for putting science toys in many homes, has introduced a new observatory set for kids that contains a plastic sextant.

It really works. It resembles a naval training device used for elementary instruction. Although it makes no claims to being a precision instrument and it does not have a vernier scale, a little boy or girl can use the sextant to make a fairly close determination of latitude by taking a noon sight.

Table Aids in Calculations

To assist with the calculations a table with the sun's declination for every day in the year is supplied. The Gilbert Observatory Set retails at about \$12.98.

It contains a constellation finder similar to those carried by all ships. Clear plastic slides containing etched images of such constellations as the Big Dipper and Ursa Minor are placed in an illuminated viewer. When oriented with the North Star the constellation sought is located in an instant. A built-in compass on the illuminator helps young navigators get a reading they can transfer to their boat's compass.

Another feature of the Gilbert Observatory Set is a star pointer. With it a youngster can locate planets, comets and meteor showers. He can use it as a solar compass or even tell time with it.

The mentor and patron saint of all mariners, Nathaniel Bowditch, has come into the lives of today's young ones. For pleasure boating this is a fine idea.



Youngster with sextant
made by A. C. Gilbert Co.