

CELEBRATING NEW YEAR'S HERE AND THERE

CELEBRATED by religious observance and festivals among the Egyptians, Chinese, Jews, Romans and Mohammedans many centuries before the Christian era, New Year's day is still the one holiday celebrated by all nations, civilized or savage. While true that the first day of the new year does not fall simultaneously in all sections of the globe, since all countries do not use the Christian calendar, it is nevertheless, a fact that each nation has its own New Year's day. Even the cannibals of the South Sea islands and savage tribes of Central Africa celebrate the beginning of the new year with some sort of ceremonies. One general characteristic, however, marks all the celebrations, and that is the spirit of rejoicing and feasting. Many of the customs are quaint and unusual, but still fraught with the spirit of revelry and good will.

In our country, of course, especially in the large cities, merriment and conviviality hold full sway, though the watch-night services in the churches appeal more to those of serious bent, to whom the passing of the old year and the welcoming of the new are causes for reflection, meditation and even sadness.

In New York, Chicago and most other cities the New Year's frolic is a veritable Bedlam of noise and revelry. Millions are spent in wine and costly suppers, and as the hour of midnight



CALLERS AT WHITE HOUSE, NEW YEAR'S



"THE HEALTH OF THE NEW YEAR!"

reading of the stars. It furnishes standard time for half the world, and as the new year is born will send its message clear up to Alaska, to South America, to China and to London.

Over in France New Year's day is not entirely one of rejoicing; that is, unless one is able to rise above such mundane things as finance, for New Year's in France means—bills! It is the universal paying-up day of the year. All the dear, familiar old bills that have been joggling along and accumulating during the year suddenly pile in en masse and greet the head of the house on New Year's morning. It is not difficult to obtain credit in France, provided one possesses the externals of a comfortable competence, and the tradesmen and landlords and shopkeepers are content to wait—until January first. Then they drop their gentle little reminders in the mails or, more frequently, present them through representatives. The butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker—and all the galaxy of "their sisters and their cousins and their aunts"—are to be reckoned with.

Festival, banqueting and merrymaking likewise hold high carnival. From New Year's eve until the morning of the second day of the new year the streets of Paris are en fête. Beautifully gowned women, in richly decorated carriages, and groups of beribboned holiday-seekers form a boulevard. Cafe life then is wild and brilliant surging, happy pageant that throngs the spacious and the students from the Latin quarter contribute their full quota of roistering and revelry in the restaurants and along the streets.

The German celebration of the New Year is not lacking in wholesome good cheer and festive pranks, but it is pre-eminently a decorous one. In Berlin elaborate musical programs are rendered and everywhere anthems and festival songs are chanted, beginning at twilight of the last day of the old year and continuing until the bells peal forth the glad tidings of a new year born unto the centuries. There is one German custom that dates from the year 1848 that has no little of the spirit of the typical "bad boy" in it.

On New Year's eve anyone walking along the streets of Berlin and wearing a high hat need take no umbrage if a couple of German students, who may have endeavored a trifle too zealously to find the bottom of the flowing bowl, slip up behind him and smash the aforesaid hat down over his eyes. This is the penalty he pays for wearing such a hat at such a time and he has no kick coming to him, even if his hat is knocked off his head and kicked until it ceases to be a hat.

The good folks in the Rhenish provinces have an adaptation of this custom that is more gentle and—yes—less expensive, considering the damage done. This consists of stealing up upon a friend as he is walking along the street and whispering in his ear: "Froisit Neujahr." The friend thus accosted straightway comes across with a little present, such as a cigar, or a drink or an invitation to dinner. In Frankfort-on-the-Main the entire city rushes to its windows as the old year dies, flings them open and, glasses in hand, drinks a toast to Father Time's latest born. Then the windows are slammed down, the merriment ceases and all retire for a peaceful night's slumber.

In England the New Year customs are of very ancient origin and even more generally observed than in this country. Every English family sits up to see the old year out and the new year in, and always there is a bowl of hot punch, etc., with which to drink the toasts to the New Year. The custom is a survival of the time when the head of the house assembled his family around a bowl of spiced ale from which he and they drank each other's health and the health of the New Year. The words used in the toast were: "Wass Hael," meaning "to your health." Presently, the toast bowl came to be known as the wassail, or wassel bowl.

In Scotland the wassel bowl is the center of

the celebration, which is a distractingly mad and merry one. God-cakes, triangular in shape, filled with mincemeat and about a half-inch thick, are eaten on New Year's day in both England and Scotland. They are sold in large numbers and can be purchased for from a penny apiece all the way up to one pound. Feasting is really the chief feature of the Scottish celebration, more so than at Christmas or any other time of the year. Steaming hot wassel, too, is carried from door to door and indulged in by neighbors and friends.

In Russia the Julian calendar is still in vogue and January 1 there corresponds to January 14 of our calendar. The Russian festival begins on New Year's eve and lasts until the fourteenth day of the New Year. At midnight, as the old year is dying and the new being born, the Czar attends public mass, and precisely on the stroke of 12 o'clock a hundred cannons are discharged and the revelry begins. At the end of the celebration—two weeks hence—the people fast and attend solemn religious services, marking on the doors of their houses, also, a cross to prevent Satan from crossing the threshold.

In the rural sections the Russian children make the day peculiarly their own, for, armed with peas and grains of wheat, they saily forth in bands early New Year's morning, stop at every house, enter and wake the inmates with a bombardment of peas or by scattering the wheat over the sleepers. Later in the day they choose the very finest horse raised in the village that year, decorate it and present it to the nobleman who is master of the village. In return he scatters small coins among them. Their elders, too, make presents to the nobleman, such as cows, sheep and fowls. The strangest of all Russian customs, perhaps, is the gathering around a jar of water by each family group in the belief that, if their faith is sufficiently strong, the miracle performed by Christ in Cana of Galilee when he turned the water into wine will be repeated.

New Year's day in Japan is picturesque to the extreme. The emperor holds a formal court reception, much as our chief executive does, which is attended by the foreign diplomats and high officials of the Japanese government. The celebration among the people lasts five days, and preparations for it are begun long before. The fronts of all houses are covered with emblematic decorations; branches of pine and of bamboo are planted in large vases filled with earth and placed before the doors, and over the projecting roofs of the houses are strung garlands of plaited straw. These latter bear leaves of certain trees, shell fish and other charms believed to be potent factors in bringing good luck to the household.

The people flock to the temples, which are open all New Year's night, and there cook their zoom, a sort of rice cake, always eaten before the sun has risen. Later, on New Year's day, there is much visiting and tea drinking and exchange of good wishes for the coming year. If he can do no better, even the very poorest of peasants wraps pieces of dried fish in paper, tied with a peculiar red and white string used only on this occasion, and sends them to his friends as his New Year's gift. The Japanese new year date falls simultaneously with our own, they having adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1872.

The Jewish New Year is usually celebrated some time in September and is called Rosh Hoshanah, also Yom Hardin, which last means days of judgment. New Year's eve is observed with fasting and the day itself with feasting. "May you be in favor with God this New Year" is the Jewish form of salutation, from which the Gentile greeting, "Happy New Year," is said to be a contraction.

BREATHE THROUGH YOUR EARS

In those prehistoric times "When you were a tadpole and I was a frog," we breathed through our gills, and if we still did tuberculosis and all kindred germs would have a batting average of .000.

Such are the teachings of Dr. John G. Davis of the University of Virginia medical department, delivered before a local body of medical students, according to a Washington correspondent of the Pittsburgh Dispatch.

"You can exhale air through the ears now. Just take a chest full of air, close the nostrils and try to exhale. The air will come out through the ears. Muscles of this old breathing organ have been out of practice for a few thousand years and it will require some practice to get them in order."

"I would advise mothers to train their children in this new but old mode of breathing. It will greatly help against many troubles, as there would be no chance of getting infectious matter into the lungs or throat. After a little practice a child will be able to close or shut his ears just as a fish works his gills."

"Originally the nose was used for smelling only. After a while man began taking long, generous sniffs, and later developed his breather into a sniffer at the expense of his 'gills.' If my advice were followed, man would have three breathing organs instead of two within two generations."

PEOPLE MOST TALKED ABOUT

ONE OF UNCLE SAM'S MANY DETECTIVES



You haven't heard, have you, that in the work being done to assure you absolutely good oysters on all occasions, one of your most capable aids is a very charming young woman? She is Miss Ruth C. Greathouse, and she is a very important and busy personage just now that the oyster season is at its height.

Miss Greathouse is young—delightfully so. If one were called upon to judge by the amazingly childlike expression of her blue eyes, the freshness of her coloring, or the riot of curly locks, one might say "She's about eighteen." If one were called to make a guess by the very dignified letters of scientific degree following her name, or the importance of the work she does, one would place the figures among the years of spectacles and gray hairs.

Miss Greathouse is one of the expert scientists of the bacteriological division of the bureau of chemistry at Washington, and has done some of its most important and efficient work. Under the bacteriological division comes all the inspection of oysters and shellfish of all sorts as well as the testing of the milk supply.

DECLARES THAT TURKEY IS PROGRESSIVE

Gabriel Ble Ravndal, of Minnesota and South Dakota, American consul general at Constantinople, and honorary president of the chamber of commerce for the Levant, has been spending several days in Washington and New York before departing for his post. He has been in the United States for his annual leave of absence.

Mr. Ravndal states that Turkey offers a fine field for American brains and money and is making rapid strides in all branches of business.

"If I were to tell you about all the changes which are taking place in the east, including Turkey," says General Ravndal, "I would probably be accused of being untruthful; and at the risk of such an accusation, I want to talk briefly about a few of them."

"Fifty years ago, Port Said was a small Arab encampment; now it has 50,000 inhabitants. Piraeus, the port of Athens, has grown in eighty years from a single hut to a city of 80,000. Beirut, the chief seaport of Syria, has grown to 25,000 in the same time, and many other places show an equal growth. There have been several land booms in Egypt in recent years."

"When I left Constantinople two months ago they were tearing down old houses by the hundreds to widen and straighten streets and make them more sanitary."



CITY OF LONDON'S NEW LORD MAYOR



Once a year the lord mayor of London rides through the streets of his city, the old city, in all the trappings and regalia of office. He rides in a gilded coach and behind him come the city's minor officials and merrymakers.

It was once the custom at the lord mayor's show for those in the upper windows along Fleet street enthusiastically to hurl red-hot pennies on the indignant heads of those on the streets below.

Sir Edward Burnett, the new lord mayor, comes to an office which consists largely of entertaining distinguished foreign visitors to the city. His term lasts a year. In the old days when the king needed funds he had to ride to Temple Bar and receive the permission of the lord mayor before he could enter the city. The mayor offered his huge sword, which the king touched in recognition of the mayor's rights. This part

of the ceremony is even observed today. Although much of the mediaeval character of the lord mayor's office is still retained, there is at least one adjunct to it which has disappeared, namely, the "lord mayor's fool," a personage who filled in the city an office similar to that which the court jester undertook in the royal household.

MRS. GROVER CLEVELAND'S FIANCE

Prof. Thomas Jess Preston of Wells college, whose engagement to Mrs. Grover Cleveland has been announced, is fifty years of age and a graduate of Princeton. After his matriculation there, he began his university studies at Columbia, which were interrupted on account of illness. At that time he gave up the idea of completing his education and went into business in which he has, in the announcement made of the engagement by his friend, President John Grier Hibben of Princeton, "made a rapid and notable success, establishing himself at the head of a prosperous manufacturing business in Newark, N. J. After securing a substantial fortune, he closed his active business career and went to Paris to study for two years at the Sorbonne."

Returning to America, Professor Preston, then over forty years of age, took a special course at Princeton and at the same commencement received the degree of Litt. B. and M. A., a very unique attainment. Then he went abroad again as Fellow of the American School of Classical Study at Rome and later won the Fellowship of the Archaeological Institute of America. After taking his degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Princeton, he was called to the chair of archaeology and the history of art at Wells college. Mrs. Cleveland was graduated from Wells and she has always been interested in the studies of which Professor Preston is the exponent. Mrs. Cleveland, who was a beautiful girl and young matron, is still an extremely handsome woman. Simple and gracious, she won the hearts of all Americans during the two terms of her husband at the White House.



NEW YEAR'S IN FRANCE MEANS—BILLS!

strikes a full hundred thousand glasses are raised aloft in the joy palaces, and the health of the New Year is drunk.

The lobster show places of New York—human and crustacean—are jammed to the doors, with the tables engaged weeks before hand. The noise and the wine-drinking zone extends fully ten miles, with every foot of it packed by a yelling, struggling, good-natured crowd, marching in unending procession up and down the streets. At midnight the din, the roar and the rattle that has kept up unceasingly since the electric lights were turned on breaks loose in one mighty blast that threatens to tear even the subway trains from underground and jar the elevated from their tracks. Nowhere else in the country is the celebration so blatant, so ridiculous and so recklessly extravagant as there.

From the spectacular standpoint and the long list of notables in dress parade no celebration equals, perhaps, that at the White House, at Washington. All society of the capital attends. Second only in splendor of display to the glittering uniforms of the diplomats and the army and navy officers are the floral settings. Uncle Sam furnishes the flowers from his wonderful greenhouses and likewise the music, the famous United States Marine band, that always plays at White House functions.

Every vantage point is seized upon for the banking of flowers and extreme care has to be taken that they will not impede the progress of the 10,000 people and more who surge through the rooms at the reception. All mantels are covered with blooms and palms and bouquets in vases are placed at every convenient point.

The president takes his place in the blue room and the procession begins with the foreign ambassadors, headed by the dean of the corps, and the ministers and attaches of the various legations. Then come the chief justice and the other members of the judiciary; then the senators, representatives, army and navy officers and other officials of the government. Later in the day the president receives the people at large, and their waiting line generally extends from the front door of the White House out to and down Pennsylvania avenue for several blocks.

At the present instant old 1912 changes to new 1913, a million miles of telegraph wires and countless wireless stations will publish the glad tidings to every city and village in the country and to ships at sea. And this will be official, too, for the message will come direct from the United States naval observatory at Washington, and still more directly from an old sidereal clock that has long held an honored place in that institution. This plain-faced old clock is always correct, never varying even one hundredth of a second from the astronomical