

CELEBRATING NEW YEAR'S HERE and THERE

CELEBRATED by religious observance and festivity 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 of the 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 watch-night services in the churches are urged to those who are bent on 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 revelry is a veritable bedlam of noise and revelry. Millions are spent in wine and costly suppers, and the hour of midnight



CHATTERS 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 to Alaska, to South America, to China and to London.

Over in France New Year's day is not entirely one of reveling; 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 on one's doorstep at 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 clerks and their cousins and their aunts—are to be reckoned with.

NEW YEAR'S IN FRANCE MEANS—BILLS!

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

The lobster, silver 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 "bills," the bills, and the bills that has kept up incessantly since the electric lights were turned on, break loose in one mighty bill that threatens to tear even the subway trains from underground and lar 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 on dress parade no celebration is equalled, perhaps, that at the White House. At 12 o'clock, all society of the capital districts, Second Avenue to the tip of the city, the glittering uniforms of the diplomats and the army and navy officers are the floral settings. The 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. Later in the evening, the guests are seated at large and banquet tables, and 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 down Pennsylvania Avenue for several blocks.

At the present instance, the 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 the official, too, for the message will come direct from the United States naval observatory at Washington, and still more direct from an old tradition, that has long held an honored position in the institutions of the civilized world, is always correct, never varying even in the remotest of a second from the astronomical

the celebration, which is a distractingly mad and merry one. God-aches, triangles in shape, filled with mince meat 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. Steam hot wassail, 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 a solemn religious service, 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 rally 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 cow, 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 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 own rice, and eat it, always eaten before the sun has risen. Later in 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 up a piece of dried fish in a manner 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, having adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1872.

The Jewish New Year is solemnly celebrated some time in September and is called Rosh Hashanah also Yom He'atza, which last means day of judgment. New Year's eve is observed with fasting and the day itself with festivity. "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 tadpole," we breathed through our gills, and if we still did subventricular and all kindred germs would have a battling average of 600.

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 into the lungs air thrusts its way 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 by the ears. If my advice were followed man would have three breathing organs instead of two within two generations."



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