

A DUTCH NEW YEAR.

Old Time Hospitality in the Mohawk Valley.

CAKES BY BUSHEL BASKET.

Monet Grant For the Matutinal Milkman—Mum Toddy the Official Drink Festive Day For the Faithful Farm Hand—Open House Everywhere.

There was no day of the year so generally, particularly and joyously celebrated in the Mohawk valley by the early Dutch settlers and by their descendants as New Year's, and when Jan and Barent met Bjertje and Engeltje early on a bright, frosty New Year's morning the religious and somewhat formal greeting was when put into English:

"I wish you a happy New Year. Long may you live. Much may you give and happy may you die and inherit the kingdom of heaven by and by."

The preparations for the New Year's hospitality were begun by the mothers and their daughters frequently as soon as the first frost and snow made their appearance, for there was much to be done to be ready on the joyous day. New Year's cakes, rich and delicious (some of the descendants of the early Dutch housekeepers make them now, using the same recipe and the same ancient dies and stamps that their great-grandmothers used) and about the size and shape of a man's hand and less than half as thick, were made by the bushel basketful—literally. It was not unusual for the hospitable Dutch housewife to give from five to six hundred cakes to the children who called before the noon hour. The early rising by the boys and girls, which a proper observance of the day demanded, is equaled in our day by the early rising on the Fourth of July.

There was one old mansion in the Mohawk valley that was particularly notable for its hospitality (not only on New Year's day, but upon all occasions) and good times. It stood and is still standing on the estate of Alexander Lindsey Glen and was named by him in 1859 Scotia in memory of the land of his birth. The children started on their rounds at sunrise and went from house to house lustily pounding with the great iron or brass knockers. The little ones shouted, "Happy New Year for a cake!" but the older ones refrained from so far giving themselves away by leaving off the last three words. It was not at all an unusual occurrence for three or four hundred cakes to be given to the boys and girls before breakfast from the Glen mansion.

Coming down to more recent days in the Mohawk valley, the custom of giving cakes was extended to the milkmen. Each milkman always purchased a new bushel basket to carry about on New Year's morning in his wagon



"HAPPY NEW YEAR FOR A CAKE" for holding the supply of cakes and the other dainties which were sometimes added. Each house where milk was left helped fill the bushel basket.

At about 10 o'clock in the morning the men began to make their calls after making the most elaborate toilet of the year. A previous acquaintance was not necessary for one to make calls. It was the one day of the year when every home was open to everybody without regard to birth or position. The last day of the old year was spent by the women of the family in preparing dainty confections, solid, rich cake, and in the morning the choicest old wine was brought up from the cellar, and hot rum toddy was made, rum toddy being the official New Year's drink in the Mohawk valley.

The Dutch partook sparingly of the wine and toddy at each house, and, although nearly all the men were "mellow" by the time the festivities ended at midnight, no one was drunk. There was one exception to this rule. The farm hands were usually dead to the world by noon and so out of the way of their betters.

But all this charming hospitality and the delightful customs were made impossible a generation or more ago by the outsiders of other nationalities than Dutch, who flocked to the larger towns of the valley and turned the day of hospitality into a day of drunkenness. —New York Times.

AIRSHIP AHOY! WHAT IS YOUR CARGO?

When first the New Year came to town
Appeared a baby boy
In nothing but a pair of wings
And smiles of dimpled joy.

But growing fast, the next decade
He wore a wig with curls
And rode a fiery prancing steed
And courted all the girls.

He next arrived in coach and four,
A squire in coat of blue
And snowy stock and buckled shoes
And neatly ribboned cue.



RENOLED HIS ANORAK IN FLIGHT.
Still making progress with the times,
A dandy with a cane,
Tall hat, tight waist and ruffled shirt,
He made his bow again.

'Twas only one short year ago
We heard a rush and jar,
In dust and smoke before us stopped
A scarlet motor car.

Forth stepped a chauffeur clad in furs
And, mid the mingled din
Of horns and bells, invited us
To take a twelvemonth's spin.

But now above the chimneys, behold,
We listen in the night
To hear the whirling fans that bear
His aeroplanes in flight!
—Minna Irving in New York Times.

Watching the Year Out.
Throughout the world the practice of watching the old year out and the new come in has been a common observance for many centuries. In the monasteries and convents of various religious orders it has always prevailed, and several Protestant denominations observe it as a beneficial institution, promoting, as it does, piety and the formation of good resolutions. Resolves for the future are not limited to our own time, for nearly 1,900 years ago Pliny, the scrapbook maker, noted in his quaint fashion the return of the Saturnalia; made a memorandum that during the coming year he must make sacrifices to certain gods whom he had neglected and that in other ways he must amend his life. There is no record that he did, so his New Year resolutions were probably forgotten as quickly as those made nowadays. —St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

"Ducking the Drunkard."
In Herzegovina "ducking the drunkard" is a New Year's practice by the common people, and if no drunken man can be found a prisoner from the nearest jail is borrowed, then ducked, soundly kicked and set at liberty. In Oman it was until lately the custom to celebrate all marriages on the first day; hence during the last month of the year business was good with the go-betweens. In Dalmatia any man whose conduct had not been what it should was expected to go before the priest of the neighborhood and put good resolutions in writing, a certified copy being given to his wife, or, if unmarried, to his mother. —Boston Herald.

Why We Call It January.
The Romans called the first month of the year January in honor of the god Janus. At dawn of the year the people robed in white, sacrificed elaborate offerings to their gods, especially to Janus. Fraternal greetings, benevolent gifts and exchanges of costly presents marked the day. All evil speaking, quarrels or excesses were for one day laid aside, and the ideals of a nobler future were brought to mind by parables enacted in public places. The soldiers renewed their vows of loyalty to Caesar and put on new uniforms.

New Year's in the Alps.
Among the many time honored customs of the Alps none is more interesting than that of New Year. The village pastor delivers his sermon, which is listened to by people who have come a distance of many miles over snow frequently thirty feet deep. When midnight comes the bells ring out upon the frosty Alpine air, and as they re-echo far and wide over the hills and valleys there are mountain villages where the melody of other village church bells chords in harmony, producing a concert no city could afford.

Scotch Kisses.
A highly popular custom of the young Scots of past years was for young men to go about the streets ringing doorbells, and theirs was the right to kiss the girl who answered the ring. In case the girl proved elderly or unattractive there was no evading the expected salute, however much it might go against the grain of the bell ringer.

A NEW YEAR INJUSTICE.

The Barkeeper Complains of the Good Resolution Habit.

"John, I'll have to lay you off for the first two weeks of the new year. You Harry, will have to lay off a week." The speaker, a lean man, stood in a splendid and spacious beer saloon, a place of polished mahogany, onyx columns, great mirrors and large paintings of beautiful women. Ropes and wreaths of evergreen twined about the pillars and the electroluxes, and on the massive bar stood a bowl of fresh punch, for it was New Year's day.

"Yes, boys," said the lean man, "you'll have to go." "What for, boss?" asked the younger of the two bartenders. Mechanically with his wooden bar cloth he polished the bar till it shone again, and anxiously he gazed in his employer's face.

"Why, John, you ought to know what for." The saloon keeper spoke impatiently. A fat man entered from the street, approached the bar with reluctant steps, then all of a sudden turned hurriedly and departed.

"Well, I'll be danged!" said Bartender John. "That's the fourth fellow has done that this mornin'. What's it mean anyway?"

"You ought to know what it means," John repeated the saloon keeper. "It's meaning is the cause of your suspension." "Yes, John," the man resumed; "your suspension is caused by the New Year's swear off of that fellow and thousands like him. All over the broad land, John, countless numbers of men swear off drinking for a year on New Year's day. Half of them stick to their swear off for a week and the other half, with just a few exceptions, stick to it for two weeks. Those two weeks of January, John, are always the two poorest weeks on the publican's calendar. He can't pay expenses; hence he retrenches; hence he lays off prudent, industrious young chaps like you—chaps with a bit of pay, so that they can stand a little idleness without privation."

"All right, but," said John sulkily, "but I ain't got nothing put by, and I think it's a shame that my poor wife and innocent babe have got to suffer at this joyous holiday season through the swear off of a lot of foolish, thoughtless men. It don't seem right nor just." —Philadelphia Bulletin.

THE CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY.

In China New Year's is the Little One's Great Festival.

Except at the Chinese New Year, which comes in February, it is very hard to catch a glimpse of children in China. Little beggars will run beside you for miles to earn a cash, a copper coin with a square hole in the middle of it, worth the twentieth of a cent, but children who have parents to care for them seem to be kept indoors all the time or only allowed to play in walled yards and gardens. We used to say to each other: "Why, where are the children? Haven't they got any?" But at New Year's we found out that they had. This is the great holiday of all the year in China, when everybody hangs out flags and colored lanterns and sets off firecrackers. (We borrowed our custom of firecrackers for the Fourth of July from China's New Year's.) All the people put on their best clothes and the children the best of all, jackets and trousers of bright blue or green or yellow or purple, the boys and the girls so much alike that you can only tell them apart by their hair. The boys of course are bearded in a pigtail, and the girls' is done up on her head with silver pins or, if she's a very grand little girl, with gold or jade. Thus decked out, the children go walking with their proud papas and mamas and often go to the theater, which is a rare treat for them.

Perhaps Chinese children have romping plays together, but they always look as if they were born grown up. —St. Nicholas.

Where New Year's Lasts a Month.
The celebration of New Year's is carried on more extensively in Japan than in any other country. The reason for this can only be accounted for by the fact that the custom has been handed down to succeeding generations for centuries. The time the occasion involves is quite lengthy, lasting from the 13th of December (Koto Hajime—viz., beginning of things) to the 10th of January (Hokonnin no yaburiri), which is apprentices' holiday. On both of the occasions a sort of stew is eaten, composed of red beans, rice, sliced fish and konnyak root.

Every Little Bit Helps.
"You say you encouraged our friend to make another New Year's resolution?" "I did," answered the man whose heart is all right. "But don't you know he'll break it at the end of six weeks at the latest calculation?" "I hope not. And even if he does he'll be six weeks ahead of the game."

A Persuader.
"Did you make any New Year's resolution?" asked Miss Miami Brown. "No," answered Mr. Ernest Pinkney, "but I done persuaded Miteh Coffey to make one. After I got thoo with him at de las' parlor social he was willin' to promise dat he'd stop tryin' to pick 'sturbances' forever and ever."

Revised Version.
I remember, I remember.
The house where I was born
And also the janitor, bellboy, butcher boy,
Baker boy, bootblack, elevator man,
Grocer's boy
And sawdust Christmas men.
—New York Times.

REVOLUTION'S UNSEEN POWER

Formations of Leagues and Leaders Hurt the People's Cause.

The secret of much of the force of the Russian revolutionary party—which is at times all powerful—would seem to lie in the anonymity of its apostles and the disguise of its agitators, all of whom speak and act in the name of the entire nation, says that Contemporary Review. In tactics that party is ahead of all others, just as it is in earnestness, perseverance, enterprise and influence. It makes a few thousand members do the work of hundreds of thousands and then gets the country to think that millions are up in rebellion. It is a most powerful hypnotizing agency, always playing on the right key. The workingmen would be glad of higher wages, fewer hours and a voice in controlling their employers' capital, but they are little about political rights. A league is, therefore, at once formed, a council elected, and on the board sit a number of professional revolutionists, who turn the economic agitation into a political channel, draw up programmes and operate with strikes. The most influential "workingman" is a lawyer, who bears a double name, one in his capacity as "operative," the other as man of the law. The peasant wants more land and would sign a bond with Bealzebub himself in return for ten or fifteen acres, but cares naught for legislative assemblies or writs of habeas corpus. The moujik is devoted to the Czar, believes in God and instinctively dislikes students and so-called "intelligentsia." But the party, always equal to the occasion, organizes a "peasant" league, and a council selected and holds a congress in Moscow, which solemnly condemns the government passes Decree on resolutions, invites the peasants to be up and doing. * * * And when the principal peasants on this council are arrested they reveal themselves as literary gods, sojourning among the lowly; they are "not" horny-handed farmers, but poets, men of letters, archaeologists. Then, again, the blue-jackets are sometimes not at all amenable to temptation; but, nothing daunted, the revolutionists despatch men attired as naval officers to proselytize them and persuade them to revolt. And the ruse succeeds. Army officers, engineers and others can be improvised in like manner almost at a moment's notice. The end sanctifies the means. "All is fair in war, and we are at war with the autocracy and bureaucracy and all their friends and followers." It is thus that a few thousand resolute men have moved a nation to 140,000,000 to its depths.

How the Earth is Weighed.
The world is to be weighed once more. It has been weighed before, but so long ago that modern scientists are not satisfied with the accuracy of the figures, and so the work will be done again. Most interesting project will be this expedition to Egypt to determine the earth's weight. The mere idea sounds chimerical, and yet it is one of the simplest of scientific propositions. First, the weight of the pyramid will be ascertained, and then the weight of the earth estimated from its proportionate size. More than half a century ago pendulums were swung, under the direction of the famous astronomer, Airy, at the top and bottom of a coal pit in England. A comparison of their times of swing showed how heavy the whole earth was, compared with the outermost shell of a thickness equal to the depth of the pit. As geologists were able to give a fair estimate of the weight of this shell of surface rock, to calculate the weight of the entire world became a mere matter of multiplication. As Airy used this thin shell of known thickness as a basis for getting at the weight of the world, so the scientists who will be selected by the Survey Department to go to Egypt will make use of the great pyramid as an intermediary. It is argued that their estimate of the weight of the earth will be much more accurate than Airy's because the weight of the pyramid can be more easily estimated than that of the thin shell used by Airy. In the forthcoming project the pendulums will be swung at the apex of the pyramid and in the chambers at its center and base.

But what part will the pendulums play in the project, and how can the weight of the pyramid be determined by the swinging of a pendulum? Simply by the power of a large or small body exerting its power of attracting. Without going into unnecessary figures it may be explained that the pull one body exercises over another is in proportion to its size. With this principle laid down the reason for the swinging of the pendulum from the pyramid as a first step to the weighing of the world can be seen at once. From the force exerted by the pyramid in pulling the swinging pendulum from its natural course the weight of the pyramid can be estimated. With the weight of the pyramid as a basis the scientists will only have to figure in this way.

The number of cubic miles in the earth is about 259,800,000,000; each cubic mile contains 147,200,000 cubic feet; and each cubic foot upon the average whatever the weight estimated from the experiment at the pyramid. The combination of figures, it will be seen, presents no great difficulty when once the preliminary stage of the project is passed.

New Kind of Broker.
A woman who appeared in a London police court the other day was described as a "pawning agent." She makes her living by pawning things for her neighbors, who pay her a commission because they believe she is a pawn broker and not a thief.

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