

EDITORIAL

LIBERTY BELL TO RING ONCE MORE

THE SACRED Liberty Bell will ring once more when it rings in New Year, 1926, which is the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of America's independence. The peals of the bell will be broadcast to the world by radio.

The sounding of the bell will be part of a unique ceremony arranged for the night of December 31st, at Independence hall, by Mayor Kendrick of Philadelphia. The ringing of the bell will incidentally signalize the advent, on January 1, of America's sesquicentennial year.

Not only will the tones of the historic old bell be audible to listeners in the United States, but to those of other countries abroad and in South America, through the aid of a national and international radio hookup which is in the course of preparation by officials of the sesquicentennial exposition.

As president of the Sesquicentennial association, Mayor Kendrick has transferred the traditional New Year reception of the mayor of Philadelphia to Independence hall and square. Actors costumed as signers of the Declaration of Independence will enact the tableau of the signing in Declaration chamber in the hall, where the immortal document actually received its signatures in the summer and autumn of 1776.

A radio program will be broadcast from the hall during the late evening, and exactly at midnight, Mrs. Freeland Kendrick, using a rubber padded mallet, will sound the bell, indicating the new year, 1926, with taps properly spaced.

To determine that no danger of further cracking of the bell might result from the tapping, scientists were consulted before it was determined that the ceremony might be gone through with without any danger to the bell.

Just a bit of history in the making, but of interest to every American at heart who delights to harken back to the days of 1776 and the years that saw the birth of this mighty nation.

TO TRANSPORT IMMIGRANTS FREE

AS AN AID to immigration a direct method of co-operation has been worked out by the Canadian Pacific Railway and the province of Nova Scotia. The European agents of the railroad will select and issue permits to such immigrants as are deemed most fitted to the needs of the farmers in Nova Scotia. It is also believed that vacant farms in the province will become occupied through this arrangement. J. S. Dennis, Commissioner of Colonization for the railways, in commenting upon the arrangement stated:

This agreement will unquestionably increase the flow of immigrants to Canada. The stimulus given the immigration movement by the enormous Western Canadian wheat crop this year will also favorably affect the number of immigrants coming to Canada.

Professor Flynn, of Halifax university, coöperating with the railway, has reported seventy finds of various minerals in Nova Scotia and is of the opinion that

these will furnish opportunities for industries which will grow rapidly.

If the prospective immigrants will stay on the Nova Scotia farms and help to develop the country's agricultural resources, first of all, the transportation aid for both the railroad system and the province may prove a good investment.

UNDER THE MISTLETOE

WHAT'S Yule and Christmas without a sprig of mistletoe—one of the ancient derivatives of the season coming down to us from the Pagan times. Though a sprig of mistletoe is indispensable in any home to make the festal joy of the season complete, there are few who know the origin of the playful custom and the kiss under the mistletoe.

The story runs back through centuries to Pagan times in ancient Briton, and to the sad days of human sacrifice to appease the anger of a frowning deity. Let us try and picture the scene: Winter solstice was at hand. The season had been one of distress and sorrow and suffering. Scourged by pestilence and disease from within, and threatened by the Roman legions from without, despair, like a pall had settled upon the ancient Britons. The sacrifices of the Druids had been unavailing; all power appeared to have passed from the plant Salago, which, it was believed, preserved from harm those who wore it about their person; virtue had gone out from the vervain, gathered five days after the new moon; savin and shamrock-trefoil carefully plucked in accordance with magic formula had been of no avail. The gods were unappeased and tribulation was upon the land.

A solemn procession wound slowly across the moor toward the grove of sacred oaks, for now the berry of the mistletoe was mature and the time for the sacred festival at hand. First came the bards chanting in melancholy strains to accompaniment on their rude harps; then followed the heralds bearing the gilded sickle; then a white-robed youth and white-robed maid, silent and pale leading two white bullocks; then came the Druid priests, aged men with long white beards, walking with grave dignity, bare breasts and feet, their loose white garments billowing to the keen breeze which floated across the moor. The prince of the Druids followed, with the golden dagger swinging in a sheath from his belt. Then came the Britons, male and female, in an uncouth and motley band. Their breasts were bared to the biting air, their demeanor wild and fierce. Many bore strange paintings on stained wood and others carried plants of supposed mystic virtue.

Then this weird procession reached the grove of oaks, a tree was selected, which was most abundantly hung with mistletoe, and the prince of the Druids taking the golden sickle, ascended into its branches. Branch after branch of the berried parasite was severed and dropped on a snow-white mantle, held extended by the priests below. Having gathered a quantum sufficient, the chief priest descended; the white bullocks were tied to the tree. On an altar near at hand—an altar made of great flat stones, two set upright and a third laid across—at a word from one of the priests the youth and the maid laid themselves, silently side by side. Then the Druid priests covered