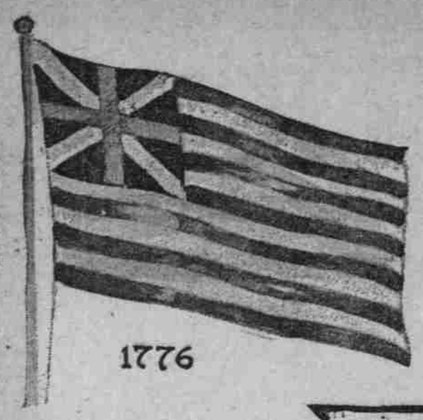

Flag Facts for Flag Day

BY WILLIAM P. KENNEDY.

YOUR Uncle Samuel is mighty particular about the sturdiness of texture, fastness of color, reliability of workmanship and general wearing qualities of his flags. When he hoists his "colors" he wants to be sure that they will stand out right smart to the breeze, jauntily and saucily, as though there was real life and substance and enduring quality in them. He wants his glorious "Red, White and Blue" to proclaim their great meaning of color undimmed, unfaded by the elements—the white of pure and noble purpose, the red of daring and patriotic consecration and the blue of loyalty as enduring as the heavens.

And with this in view he makes annual contracts for the thousands of flags that float daily over every Federal building throughout all the United States and that flutter proudly over every government-owned vessel that sails the rivers, lakes and seas that comprise three-fourths of the world's surface. The specifications in those annual contracts are very rigid. For the current year the flags are being manufactured by William H. Horstmann, of Philadelphia, and Arthur Copeland, of Washington. During the last year more than 3000 flags have been bought by the Government, at an average price of about $3.20, making a total expenditure of something like $10,000.

While the Government buys flags in all sizes from 20 by 38 to 1.31 by 2.49, the size most in use is that with the 5.14 hoist. There were 1327 of these bought last year, and it is estimated that more than 1500 are being purchased this year. There were but 50 of the Union Jack of the same size purchased last year.

It should be explained here that these figures refer only to the United States flags. In addition to these the Government buys many other kinds of flags under the same contract—such as the flags of the various secretaries and commissions, the international code flags, coast survey, signalling, revenue cutter, quarantine, storm warning flags, etc.

Of the man-of-war ensigns of various nations, which are of standard size, 7½ by 12 feet, which are displayed by United States ships when entering a foreign port and in extending proper international courtesies, there were but 10 sets purchased last year.

The largest American flags used by the Government are those with the 20 foot hoist, and but four of these were bought last year. There is a Union Jack of the same proportions and the garrison flag, 20 by 36 feet.

The smallest United States flag bought by the Government is 1.39 hoist with a 2.49 fly. These, with a Union Jack of the same size, are used on boat tenders and other similar small craft.

Some idea of the numbers of other flags bought by the Government can be gained from the following figures: Revenue cutter ensigns, 150; revenue cutter pennants, 50; Weather Bureau flags, 311; quarantine flags, 50.

The proportions of the Government flags are all regulated from the hoist, or depth from top to bottom. These proportions, as prepared by the Navy Department and established by Executive order two years ago, are that the fly, or length of the flag, shall be 1.9 of the hoist. The hoist, or width, of the union, the blue background for the stars, shall be 7-13 of the hoist of the entire flag. The fly, or length, of the union shall be .76 of the hoist and the width of each stripe in the flag shall be 1-13 of the hoist.

As stated in the introductory paragraph, Uncle Sam is very exacting about the quality of weave, coloring and workmanship on the flags. To be more specific, he requires that the bunting fabric shall be entirely of wool of the best quality, of all colors required in the international code and in foreign flags, well woven and finished and made in the best workmanlike manner. The yarns are to be well and evenly spun; the count of filling and warp must contain not less than 36 threads to the inch, the warp to be two-ply and the filling one-ply yarns, properly twisted. The tensile strength is given vigorous test and must show warp 33 pounds and filling 23 pounds in pieces one inch wide.

The cotton cloth, dark blue and turkey red, must show fast colors, to weigh three and one-half ounces to the square yard, to have a tensile strength in the warp of 44 pounds and in the filling 32 pounds, and to have 82 threads to the inch in the warp and 72 in the filling.

The canvas for the bands must be of American cotton, woven in a workmanlike manner, entirely free from sizing, to weigh not less than seven and one-half ounces or more than eight ounces a lineal yard 29¾ inches wide. The tensile strength in test pieces one inch wide, of the warp is to be 105 pounds and of the filling 93.2 pounds. It is to contain not less than 88 single-ply threads to the warp and 32 two-ply threads to the filling.

And in the instructions for making, as well as in specifications for material, the Government is very particular. The bands of flags larger than five feet hoist must be of standard canvas, four inches wide, doubled to the flag, making it two inches wide when finished, and to have run through their length a rope of nine-thread manila with a one and one-half-inch eye at each end, properly spliced and secured to the ends of the band by waxed cotton twine doubled. The band is to be finished with three rows of stitching.

The bunting at the hoist of the flag must be turned in one inch in two thicknesses and secured between the folds of the band by two rows of stitching. The union and stripes are to be joined with triple-stitched seams three-quarters inch wide. The end of the flag is to be turned in two thicknesses, three-quarters inch wide, with three rows of stitching.

The upper and lower sides of the revenue ensign and pennant, and other flags of all sizes whose stripes are vertical or where a raw edge is left, are turned in two thicknesses one-half inch wide, and finished with three rows of stitching.

Flags of all sizes must have at each corner at hoist a square stay piece of bunting the width of the stripe in the flag.

International code flags must have in place of the eyes galvanized iron snap hooks spliced to the ends of the roping.

Flags of five feet hoist and smaller must have bands of standard canvas two inches wide when finished and to be lined with a stout piece of jute webbing one and one-half inches wide, with three rows of stitching, the ends of the bands to be furnished with patent spur brass grommets. In other respects they are to be finished the same as the large flags, as detailed above.

The seams in the flags larger than five feet hoist must be not less than one-fourth inch wide and in smaller flags not less than three-sixteenths inch wide. In joining the stripes the selvages are sewed together and the raw edges are sewed together and finished with double seams. There must be at least twelve stitches to the inch. The canvas bands are to be sewed ten stitches to the inch with No. 20 sea island cotton thread. The bunting is to be sewed twelve stitches to the inch with No. 50, six-cord, unbleached sewing cotton. The white stars are to be sewed with No. 50 thread. All of this sewing must be done in lockstitch. In sewing on stars on the smaller flags and sewing on emblems the zig-zag stitch is allowed.

The National flag must have 13 horizontal stripes of equal breadth, alternately red and white, beginning with the red. In the upper quarter, next to the hoist, is the union, composed of 48 stars, equal to the number of states in the Union, on a blue field extending as far down as the lower edge of the fourth red stripe from the top.

A special National flag, known as a boat flag, the union of which consists of 13 white stars on a blue field, is made in all sizes of less than five feet hoist.

The National pennant has the union composed of 13 white stars in a horizontal line on a blue field one-fourth the length of the pennant, the remaining three-fourth of the length being made up of a red and white stripe of equal breadth at any part of the taper, with the red uppermost.

The revenue ensign has 16 perpendicular stripes of equal width, alternate red and white, beginning with the red. In the upper quarter, next to the head, is the union, composed of the arms of the United States in dark blue on a white field, eight-sixteenths the entire length of the flag and extending down the hoist half way. The depth or hoist of this flag is ten-sixteenths of its length. In the escutcheon on the breast of the eagle are 13 perpendicular stripes of white and red, beginning with the white.

The revenue cutter ensign is the same in design as the revenue ensign, with the addition of the distinctive emblem of the service, in blue and white, which is placed on a line with the lower edge of the union, and over the center of the seventh vertical stripe from the mast of the flag, the emblem to cover a horizontal space of three stripes. The stripes in the shield in the union are seven white and six red, and in the emblem of the service seven blue and six white. The emblem of the service is stamped in fast colors on standard cotton cloth and sewed on the flag.

The revenue pennant has the union part composed of 13 blue stars in a horizontal line on a white field, one-fourth the length of the pennant. The remaining three-fourths consists of 16 perpendicular stripes of equal width, alternate red and white, beginning with the red, and a tailpiece of red, about one-fifth the entire length of the pennant, ending in a fork shape.

The flag of the Secretary of the Treasury, which department has charge of the purchase of all the flags, consists of the seal of the Treasury Department, on crossed anchors of white, circled by 13 white stars on a blue field.

The star pennant is triangular in shape. The length of the fly from the center of the hoist to the pennant end is 14 feet, the hoist five feet. It contains three perpendicular stripes. The stripe next to the hoist is blue, four feet in width, with a white star 21 inches in diameter in the center. The middle stripe is white, four feet in width. The end stripe is red, six feet in width.

The Coast and Geodetic Survey pennant has a union of 13 red equilateral triangles, base down, on a white field, one-fourth the length of the pennant, the remaining three-fourth being blue.

The Fish Commission flag consists of a white fish on a red diamond, centrally placed on a blue field.

The emblem of the United States Public Health Service in blue on a yellow ground is required in the quarantine flags. The emblem stands in the center of the flag at an angle of 45 degrees.

WHY JUNE 14 IS FLAG DAY.

Flag day was originated in 1889 by Professor George Bolch, of New York, who introduced into his free kindergarten the practice of holding special exercises on this day in celebration of the adoption of the flag by Congress, June 14, 1777.

The flag that was adopted on that day, which was the first American flag, had been made at the suggestion of George Washington by Mrs. Elizabeth Ross (Betsy Griscom) at No. 239 Arch street, Philadelphia.

The celebration of Flag day soon became popular and was before long a part of the programme of many patriotic societies. For many years it has been universally observed by the public schools of this country.

THE FLAG IN TIME OF WAR.

The flag of the United States in the days of the Revolution had 13 stars.

During the War of 1812 it had 15 stars.

In the Mexican War 29 stars gleamed in its blue field.

In the Civil War there were 35 stars.

The Spanish-American War saw 45 stars shining gloriously and victoriously.

In these days of the greatest war in history our National flag bears 48 stars, proclaiming a union of so many states.

AGE OF AMERICAN FLAG.

Whether we date from the first common flag of the 13 original colonies, first unfurled over Washington's headquarters at Cambridge, Mass., January 2, 1776, or the Stars and Stripes adopted by an act of Congress June 4, 1777, the flag of the United States can justly claim to be the oldest among the ensigns of the nations of the world.

It antedates England's royal standard, established in 1801; the flag of Spain, adopted in 1785; the French tricolor, decreed in 1794; the existing flag of Portugal, selected in 1830; the flag of the Empire of Germany, which represents the sovereignty of 14 distinct flags and states, established in 1870; the Italian tricolor, dating from 1848; the Swedish-Norwegian ensign, the recent flags of the old empires of China and Japan and the colors of all South American states, which have been modified generally from our "Star Spangled Banner."

THE FLAG OF TO-DAY

Submarine Danger Is Lessened

IT WILL make submarines valueless against battleships in warfare, and will render still greater service in time of peace by insuring ships against collisions at sea, either with one another or with icebergs. That is the claim put forward for an invention known as the Fessenden electric oscillator, which takes its name from Professor R. A. Fessenden, whose idea, after various severe tests, is being adopted by European powers.

Briefly, the Fessenden oscillator is a submarine sounding apparatus, fixed to vessels that send and receive signals through water, not through the air. These signals travel more swiftly than they would through the air, since sound moves through the water at a rate of 4400 feet per second, while through the air it moves at the rate of only 1100 feet a second.

For some time past submarine bells have been used with excellent results on lightships and buoys, and to some extent on moving vessels, their warnings being transmitted for miles through the water, and it was while trying to extend the usefulness of these submarine bells that Professor Fessenden evolved his present electric oscillator and solved the problem of protecting vessels from collision at sea.

His system of submarine signaling is really a kind of water wireless. A vessel fitted with a couple of these oscillators, or ears, is able to hear for a distance of several miles any disturbing influence in the water. Furthermore, by means of these instruments it is able to send messages through the water itself, just as messages by wireless are dispatched and received. That is to say, a battleship equipped with such instruments could talk to its own submarines miles away and submerged, and could actually direct their movements against enemies' vessels.

Already several American battleships have been fitted with these oscillators, and the tests to which they have been subjected have proved that they are in every way to be relied upon. The oscillator makes it possible for a ship's officer to hear the propeller movements of an enemy's submarine. These propeller sounds can be distinguished at a distance of two miles, while with a sound-amplifying device the distance may be extended to five miles or more.

Had the Titanic been fitted with such an apparatus as the Fessenden oscillator it might have received a definite signal of the presence of an iceberg, for the mechanism of the apparatus, which is placed in the hold of the ship—one oscillator on each side—is so delicate that it is possible to detect an iceberg within a radius of a couple of miles.

There is no doubt, according to naval experts, that the Fessenden oscillator will revolutionize naval strategy, for it is obvious that a battleship which can control the movements of submerged submarines has an enormous advantage over the ships of the enemy. A single cruiser, accompanied by half a dozen deadly craft steaming far below the surface and able to maneuver at the dictation of the mother ship, which can see what is going on, might easily wipe out a whole squadron of dreadnoughts unprotected against this new danger.—London Tid Bits.

WORLD'S LARGEST FLAG.

The largest flag in the world is 70 feet long and 36 feet eight inches wide. It hangs in the court in the center of the Postoffice Department building, in Washington, where it has a very appropriate setting on account of the relatively proportioned height of the building. It is prettily framed against the granite gray masonry.

The flag was paid for by popular subscriptions from employes in the building, and, besides being a daily patriotic inspiration to the hundreds who work in the Postoffice Building, where it can be seen from the various floors that surround the courtyard, balcony-like, it is one of the sights for visitors, and the hundreds of tourists who see it daily are amazed at its gigantic proportions.

Each star in this flag is more than a foot in diameter. It required 400 yards of bunting.

Little Known of Russia.

"It is remarkable how little Americans know about Russia," observed D. L. Hough, an American who has spent the last four years in that country. "It is the least visited of the European countries, although the number of tourists has been considerably increasing in recent years. In fact, more than 200 self-called 'refugees' assembled in the first days of the war in Petrograd in order to be near and secure the protection of the embassy.

"Russia lacks a great middle class, such as is the strength of all civilized countries, but its upper class is perhaps better instructed, and in its social relations and in its customs is quite as exquisite, if not more so, than that of any other country; its court is the most stately in the world.

"The great lower class might be compared to what the English call the masses. It is more rugged, healthier and far less vicious than that of any other country. In the larger cities a healthy middle class is fast developing.

"The lack of education among the masses may be in part responsible for the scarcity of material out of which skilled labor may be trained. In these days of automatic machinery, this is less of an obstacle in the development of manufactures, while for all physical labor of the common type the Russian is equal to and perhaps better than men of any other race.

"There is little produced in Russia that this country needs, but there is much produced in America that Russia needs. We want to sell to Russia, and success in trading with the Russians will depend upon whether our manufacturers put on the counters of Russia the things that the Russians want. It was in accommodating itself to its customers' ways of doing business, as well as to its customers' wants, that Germany was conquering the world commercially. If we are to make any impression on Russian commerce, we must accommodate ourselves to the Russians' way of doing business."—Washington (D. C.) Post.

Searching of Pockets.

What a strange, dubious, lost sensation pervades one's system as he fumbles through his pockets, one after another, and then over again in fruitless search of some misplaced object! It is a sensation that happily is confined to the sex masculine with its multiplicity of pockets. Woman, who can have but one pocket—and that only findable by herself—is immune from this harrowing search. A great number of feeble jokes have been manufactured in the less lucid moments of professional humorists about incursions made upon our pockets by our wives.

But these incursions are made when we are not in our clothes. It must be different when one is in them and the search is made, not by a loving and devoted wife, but by an unsympathetic policeman.

The other day the writer saw such a search, such an official search, in broad daylight, on the sidewalk on the east side of Illinois street a few steps south of Washington street. There were but two characters in the drama, the policeman and the searched one, a colored youth about 20 years old.

The young man of color, limp as a long feather bolster, stood with arms curved like parentheses, himself between, meek and silent as the search went on. From one pocket after another various objects were withdrawn by the exploring official fingers. Here was a necktie with a brass ring from which in all its glory glowed a glass ruby. From another pocket came almost a handful of nickels, among which nestled two dice. "Craps?" said the policeman. "Nope," was the answer, "been workin' in a shine parlor." "How long have you been here?" "'Bout five days." "Where did you come from?" "Memphis." "I've seen you around here much longer than that." No answer from the subject. The policeman explored another pocket. There was a bit of pasteboard between his thumb and forefinger. He smiled a hard, grim smile. He had evidently struck pay dirt. "Ah," he said, "this is a pawn ticket. How did you come by it? Where did you get it?" No answer. "Well, I don't think I'll leave you out in the open any longer. Come along"—and he put the nippers on him.—Indianapolis News.

Peace on a War Basis.

New Republic.

Two billions and a half represent our reserve economic forces, unutilized, wasting year by year. If we were at war we should find a way to put a great part of these resources to use. Why can we not find a way of doing this in time of peace? Are we so well supplied with all the necessities and comforts of life that this colossal waste is a matter of indifference to us? Consider the fact that we have millions of homes in which little children are growing up, unfed, improperly clad, to become a prey to disease and often, consequently, to vice and crime. Consider the fact that there is scarcely a great work of public utility in the whole country that is not handicapped or thwarted for want of funds. And yet we permit two billions and a half of economic resources to run to waste, even congratulating ourselves on the fact that we have them to draw upon in case of war.

Where Great Armaments Fail.

World's Work.

The present war proves that great armaments are likely to beget enemies even faster than they develop strength. This is what has happened to Germany. No people could be better organized for war. Germany had the greatest army in the world. It was bigger than the French army, more powerful than the Russian army, superior to any other army. The rulers of Germany knew this and they seemed to believe also that their rights were as wide as their army was efficient. When France realized it, it began reorganizing its army. When England realized it, it prepared its fleet to meet the situation. Nothing that Germany could do could enable her to keep her forces or those of Austria and Turkey increasing as fast as the combined forces of her neighbors.