

OBSERVANCE OF NEW  
YEAR'S DAY CHANGESGreed of Sovereigns Makes  
Gifts Burden to People.

PILGRIMS ENJOY FEASTS

Modern Celebrations Pass Through  
Period of Hilarity and Extrava-  
gance Until Prohibition.

NEW YORK, Jan. 1.—New Year's day isn't what it used to be. This is in a small way attributable to the addition to the constitution of some dry reading matter. In still greater part it is because the international obsession for celebrating whenever Father Time takes a fresh start in plotting the earth around the sun is thousands of years old. The manner of observing the day has changed greatly through the centuries.

The urge to give presents at least once a year was felt even before Christmas and Santa Claus came into the scheme of things, and the ancient Greeks, Chinese, Egyptians and Romans tendered their gifts to one another on the first day of the year. Kings got into the habit of receiving extra gifts from their subjects on these days and liked it so well they began extorting larger and larger sums. This practice got so bad in Rome under the Caesars that Claudius called a halt.

**Sovereigns Spoil English Celebrations.**

It spread to other countries, however, and the English had their New Year's celebration spoiled annually by rapacious sovereigns until Queen Elizabeth's modest demands of her subjects cut gifts down to a minimum. In those days the celebration of New Year's day had become world-wide. With variations to suit all nationalities, it consisted everywhere of eating, drinking and merriment.

Christopher Columbus, so far as is known, was the first white man to jubilate on New Year's day in the western hemisphere. While his ships were undergoing repairs on January 1, 1492, he enjoyed a sumptuous dinner with two savage monarchs on the island of Haiti. After this meal, history says, the discoverer of America had his first smoke of tobacco. Whether he enjoyed it is not recorded, but he left it to a later generation—Sir Walter Raleigh is generally credited with the function—to introduce tobacco in Europe.

The Pilgrim fathers and the first

families of the older states of the union enjoyed a quiet holiday as each year came around. They feasted, but not until they had attended religious services. In the 18th century people with big houses and flowing sideboards held open house on New Year's day and from all over friends came afoot, on bicycles and in surreys and stanhopes to pay short visits and sample the contents of the wine cellars.

Then they went off to call on other friends. Popular maidens in those days witnessed traffic jams in front of their homes, so prevalent was the penchant for short calls on young women during the afternoon of the year's first day. This custom began to pass out quietly with the dawn of the 20th century, automobiles and cabarets. It was succeeded by "nothing but wine" habits amid the thousands who frequented cafes and grillrooms in the cities on New Year's eve.

**Bolsterous and Costly Period.**

For 25 years, up to the dawn of 1920 and the era of war-time prohibition, the celebration in New York became noisier and more expensive each year. Thousands used to crowd into places of merriment while Broadway was packed with a surging throng of merry-makers with squawkers, clappers, bells, ticklers and confetti.

Every hotel and most of the restaurants were jammed with gay diners. In 1908 it was estimated that \$1,000,000 was spent in the white-light district on New Year's eve. After that statisticians gave up trying to figure out the sum.

The din, and probably the cost of the celebration, was greatly diminished under war-time prohibition in the New Year's demonstration of 1920. Old timers said all the "singer" had departed with John Barleycorn.

The cupid of 1921 is the first to make his bow under constitutional prohibition. In New York he finds that times have changed.

## CABLES TORN BY QUAKES

Seismic Convulsions in Alaskan  
Zone Wreck Federal Lines.

SEATTLE, Wash. Jan. 1.—(Special.)—Earthquakes which extended over the entire Pacific region have been responsible for the recent government cable interruptions between Seattle and Alaska, according to Lieutenant-Colonel C. A. Sloane, officer in charge of the Washington-Alaska cable system, with headquarters in Seattle, who returned Friday after a cable-repairing cruise aboard the United States cable ship Burnside.

"The earthquakes were most violent in Prince William sound, at the head of which lies Valdez, Alaska. In this region the cables were torn apart on the sea bottom at depths exceeding 1000 feet."

"The earthquakes also extended over the Resurrection bay district near Seward, Alaska, where the cable also was broken. The most violent disturbances occurred November 23."

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