

# This New Year Is Leap Year

By ROBERT DONNELL

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**T**HE year 1912 is a leap year. Query: Why is a leap year? Why did the chicken cross the road? To get on the other side.

Maybe that's why the year leaps. Anyhow, what's the use to bother about such a tangled mathematical, astronomical, scientific question as to why February has an extra day every four years—hold on there, now! It hasn't. It has an extra day only when the number of the year is divisible by four. Hold on again! Even that is not strictly true, for the year 1900, which was divisible by four as long as it lasted, was not a leap year. The reason was—hot go and look it up in the public library. Celebrate the New Year by finding out just how leap year came about. This story has to do only with leap year matchmaking.

ungallant gentleman shall present the tender damsel with a new silk dress. There is a reservation, however, that the right to claim this penalty depends on the circumstance that when she proposed the damsel was the wearer of a scarlet petticoat, which



Beware of the Ladies.

Albeit it is now become a part of the common law, in regard to social relations of life, that as often as every blessed year doth return, the ladies have the sole privilege, during the time it continueth, of making love unto the men, which they do, either by words or looks, as to them it seemeth proper; and, moreover, no man will be entitled to benefit of clergy who doth in any wise treat her proposal with slight or contumely.—From a Book Published in Shakespeare's Time.

Leap year is ladies' year. Yes; only year out of four when the ladies have the privilege of popping the question, and even then they don't do it. There is a prevalent fiction to the effect that girls propose to young men during leap



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years. It is nothing but a fiction, however. That is, they don't propose any more in leap year than they do in other years. As a matter of fact, girls do a large share of the proposing anyhow—larger than most of us imagine. Perhaps they do it with their eyes instead of their voices, but it is a fact that women are the real proposers.

If you don't believe it just keep your eyes open and watch. "Drink to me only with thine eyes" is not a vain toast. The eyes have it always when the motion "to love" is put, provided, of course, she really loves you, oh, lashful and love sick await!

Yet there comes eternally back this seedy old superstition to the effect that in leap year women propose marriage to men—do it deliberately by word of mouth. Now, let's be sensible. Did you ever know or hear authentically of a woman who took ad-



Present the tender hearted damsel with a new silk dress.

vantage of this presumed leap year privilege? Ten to one you never did, and you never will.

"A lady has the privilege," says one of the writers who take things for granted just because they have always heard so and so, "in leap year of suggesting marriage between herself and a bachelor acquaintance. In the event of his refusal the penalty is that the

Not many unadvertised business opportunities will be considered by people who have money to invest in this city this week.

(or a little of the lower portion of which she must exhibit to the gentleman, the understood idea being that the silken dress shall cover the petticoat and thus assuage dire feminine indignation at the rejection of her offered hand.)

Wherefore it behooves us bachelors—or widowers—in the new year to be aware of ladies whose scarlet petticoats peep out when they cross a wet street or climb into an automobile or carriage.

Albeit, as often as leaps years doth occur, the women holdeth prerogative over the men in matters of courtship, love and matrimony; so that, when the lady proposeth, it shall not be lawful for the man to say her nay, but shall entertain her proposal in all good earnest.—From the Statute in the Old Saxon Code.

According to the old Saxon code, as quoted above, no man may refuse a maiden who proposes in leap year without being discourteous. Therefore it is to be taken for granted that if any damsel or dame makes love, with proposal of matrimony, to any bachelor or widower said victim must accept the "suggestion" or forever after be held discourteous to the fair sex.

Leap year truly is an ancient institution. It was created, we are told, by no less a personage than C. Julius Caesar, who announced to the world that "all Gaul is divided into three parts." The late Mr. Caesar in the year 46 tacked the extra day in the calendar on to February, and for his services in thus giving a local habitation and a name to the day that had been wandering around every four years without where to lay its head the future calendarists honored him by naming the month of July for him—Julius, July.

Seven hundred years ago, which was 1,200 years after Caesar's dust was turned to clay, to stop a hole to keep the wind away, as somebody quaintly remarked, leap year was the subject of lawmaking. A Scotch statute of the year 1228 reads thus:

It is statut and ordaint that during the return of her maist liegeit maistie, ilk fourth year, known as leap year, ilk maiden ladye of health high and low estate shall have liberty to bespeak ye man she liketh; albit, if he refuses to take her to be wif, he shall be mulcted in the sum of one pound (£1) or less, as his estate shall be, except and swite if he can make it appear that he is betrothed to one woman, and then he shall be free.

**Mr. Taft's New Year's.**  
President Taft will be a weary man before New Year's day is over, but no doubt his personal smile will conceal the fact. Every year the president gives a New Year's reception at the White House. An ingenious statistician has figured that he shook a mile of hands last New Year's day, and this time he may have more than a mile of shaking. Last Jan. 2 the statistician wrote as follows:

"The Taft handshake yesterday was a long one. It is estimated that all the hands if raised one above the other would be taller than the combined heights of Eiffel tower, the Metropolitan Life tower, the Singer building, the Washington monument and St. Peter's dome, in Rome.

"The president shook the hands of 5,575 persons in three hours. The average length of a hand is seven inches. The total length of the hands shaken computed on this basis is 39,025 inches, or 3,252 feet 1 inch, or over half a mile.

"The Eiffel tower is 985 feet high, the Metropolitan tower 657 feet, the Singer building 612 feet, the Washington monument 555 feet and St. Peter's dome 330 feet, a total of 3,139 feet, as against the president's handshake of 3,252 feet high, or as long as you wish to compute it."

Not many employers will talk business with work hunters who cannot be reached through want advertising in this city this week.

# Our Correspondents

## TABLE ROCK ITEMS.

Table Rock observed Christmas with a very elaborate program and a tree on Christmas eve. The school house was filled with a joyous and appreciative audience.

E. W. Carlton is visiting his old home at Elizabeth, N. J. He expects to return to Table Rock about the middle of February.

Mr. and Mrs. Horace Venerable and Mrs. Rankin of Applegate were the guests of W. R. Byrum Sunday and Christmas day.

A number of the Sams valley people organized a systematic coyote hunt on Christmas day and they had the good luck to secure an acap.

About all the turkeys in this community were shipped to San Francisco last week.

Mr. G. E. Walling of Portland has come to Table Rock to live, having purchased what is known as the Means ranch.

Mr. and Mrs. John McBride spent Christmas with Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Pentland of Eagle Point.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Finkler of Kennett, Cal., are the guests of Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Reese.

Verne Pendleton and Clyde Barnum are visiting the family of S. K. Adams at McDowell, Cal.

Vass Thompson is spending the holidays with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Thompson of Canyonville.

Mae B. Nealon, who is attending the state normal at Corvallis, is home for the holiday vacation.

Miss Thelma McBride is attending the Naueheim sanitarium at Oakland, Cal., to become a trained nurse.

Mr. J. C. Conley has purchased a big ranch at Klamath Falls.

Many young trees have passed through Table Rock lately for up-river ranches.

The genial and efficient foreman at Modoc, Mr. Samuels, tells us that more improvements will be made at Modoc this winter than last. The big levee just completed contains 12,000 cubic yards, and the crew is now working on a job of grading which will require the moving of 6000 cubic yards. A concrete retaining wall will be built on the hill and 1500 yards of earth will be required to level up the ground where the fine residence will be built. Five thousand more pear trees and four acres of grapes will be planted this winter. The writer has worked for the Modoc people and he has this to say of them: If all employers of labor treated their employes as do the Modoc people there would be less ground for complaint among the laboring classes, and while good work is done and results obtained the ranch is more homelike than anything I have seen in its class.

Prof. V. A. Davis of Table Rock school is spending a few days in Portland.

Miss Ruth Hall will leave for California in a few days to attend school at Sacramento.

Modoc had a Christmas tree, which was said to have been laden with many valuable gifts, such as silk hosiery and diamond rings. But the sizes of some of the articles were sadly at fault.

Haskins for health.

## CENTRAL POINT ITEMS.

Victor Agner and family, who have resided here for some time, left Wednesday afternoon for Sacramento, Cal., where they will reside.

Mr. Spink of Medford has moved his family here and will occupy the residence vacated by William Smith.

Roy Dunlap and wife left Wednesday evening for Grants Pass, where they go to take charge of the Stewart house.

Prof. and Mrs. A. J. Hanby left on Thursday afternoon for San Francisco on a few days' visit.

J. N. Smith spent Thursday in Grants Pass on a business trip.

A number of our young people attended the play, "The Three Twins," at Medford Wednesday evening.

Many Central Pointers sent Thursday afternoon in Medford. Among them were Rev. and Mrs. Crane, Miss Shuek, Mrs. J. D. Parker, Mrs. J. C. Ward and son, Councilman J. W. Myers, A. J. Dunlap, City Recorder J. W. Jacobs, Councilman B. F. Peart, George E. Fox and S. F. Hathaway.

The ladies of the Christian church will hold a bargain day sale of all kinds of good things to eat Saturday, December 30, at the Quality store.

## ANOTHER PIONEER PASSES TO BEYOND

Died, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Jane Morgan in Ashland, at 2 o'clock Saturday morning, December 23, 1911, Mrs. Susannah S. Ferguson, aged 85 years and 8 days. The funeral services were held in Jacksonville, the interment being made in the beautiful cemetery of that historic town, where is the final resting place of so many of the pioneers of southern Oregon, the remains being laid beside those of her husband, whose death took place 38 years ago.

Mrs. Ferguson was born December 15, 1826, near Dover, Hamburg county, Tenn. She was married in 1847 to Robert L. Ferguson and in 1851 she and Mr. Ferguson and their two children came by ox team to Oregon. The first settled in Milwaukie and later moved to Portland and while residing in the latter city (then town) Mr. Ferguson was sheriff of Multnomah county. In 1861 they moved to Jacksonville and lived here for four years and then moved to the Willow Springs district and bought a farm adjoining that of N. C. Dean, whose farm was the first located in the Rogue River valley. The farm remained in the ownership of the family until four years ago when Mrs. Ferguson sold it and moved to Ashland to reside with her daughter. Mrs. Ferguson was generous and hospitable and ever ready to lend a helping hand to those in need and to give a full mother's care to her large family, and she had many friends who sincerely mourned her death. She was the mother of 11 children, those now living being Francis M. and Robert L. Ferguson, Mrs. Jane Morgan, Mrs. Mary Abbott, Mrs. Sarah Oviatt, Mrs. Clara Barkdull, Mrs. Martha McReynolds, Mrs. Hannah Fisher, and all were with their mother when she passed away. She had 20 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

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Having no equal on earth in variety of mineral waters and curing diseases that medicines will not reach. If you are in need of health, come now. We are open all the year and can give the best of care and attention now as well as in summer. Stage daily from Red Bluff to the springs. Further particulars address  
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**New Year's Cards**  
Calendars  
Diaries  
All the week

**Medford Book Store**

**NEW LINE to TILLAMOOK**



**Pacific Railway & Navigation Co.**

Trains will run daily, except Sunday, on the following schedule:  
Lv. Portland..... 7:20 a. m.  
Lv. Hillsboro..... 8:50 a. m.  
Ar. Beach Points..... 1:20 p. m.  
Ar. Bay City..... 2:04 p. m.  
Ar. Tillamook..... 2:25 p. m.  
Lv. Tillamook..... 7:55 a. m.  
Lv. Bay City..... 8:15 a. m.  
Lv. Beach Points..... 9:00 a. m.  
Ar. Hillsboro..... 1:25 p. m.  
Ar. Portland..... 4:10 p. m.  
Through tickets on sale at city ticket office, Third and Washington streets, on Fourth and Yamhill, to all points on the P. R. & N. Further particulars from the city ticket agent or agent Fourth and Yamhill streets.

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All guaranteed. Now is the time to get your house wired. Good light adds to the comfort of winter months.  
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**Medford Theatre, January 2nd**  
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A JOLLY JAMBOREE  
With the Greatest of all Comediennes  
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AND A HALF HUNDRED OTHERS  
See the Gowns, Hear the Songs, and Last but Not Least, See the Bunch of Pretty Girls  
Seats at Haskins': \$1.50, \$1.00, 50c.

We have for sale some ten-acre tracts across the road from the State Experiment Station recently located between Phoenix and Talent. The soil is suitable for fruit, alfalfa or garden. Well water in quantity sufficient for irrigation can be had at 20 to 25 feet (we have a well on an adjoining tract which supplies 200 gallons per minute). The price is \$300 to \$350 per acre, and we can make very easy terms.

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