

A DUTCH NEW YEAR.

Old Time Hospitality in the Mohawk Valley.

CAKES BY BUSHEL BASKET.

Honest Graft For the Matutinal Milkman—Run 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 Hylbertje 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 hospitalities 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 hand 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, run today 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.

Next Trial.

"The new Thaw trial will be along different lines."

"So?"

"Yes; there will be a consistent plot, an intelligible libretto and no interpolated specialties." —Louisville Courier-Journal.

Another Name For It.

"Was Mrs. Gableton in the witness box this afternoon?" asked the judge's wife.

"Yes," answered the judge, "but it was a very quiet chatterbox during the time she was there." —Chicago News.

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.



BEHOLD HIS AIRPLANE 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 aeroplane 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 Philo, the scaphbook 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 reach 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.

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