

IN NEW AMSTERDAM

NEW YEAR'S WITH THE DUTCH SETTLEES.

WHEN our Dutch ancestors debarred from the Half Moon in the harbor of Manhattan, it was the year 1614. And they brought with them from their native Holland nothing of that spirit of religious intolerance which distinguished the New England Puritans who came six years later, says the Utica Observer. In fact, they were denounced by their Yankee neighbors as a "godless crew," but it is now plain that they loved their homes and families, they forgave their enemies, and they fanned to flame the spark of national honor which they possessed.

When Peter Stuyvesant came to New Amsterdam as governor in 1647, he was quickly dubbed "Old Silverleg" because he was a veteran who had given a leg to the cause of his country and replaced it with a substantial wooden one bound with silver. Though Governor Stuyvesant was a harsh and cruel man, all accounts agree that he was a good ruler, but in 1664 one day when a British fleet appeared off the coast of New Amsterdam and demanded its surrender "Old Silverleg" was forced to yield, his people refusing to fight. So the British took possession of the island of Manhattan and christened it New York, the name being the egg from which is hatched that Greater New York which today stands forth the second city in the world.

But what did our Dutch ancestors do to distinguish themselves? Well, they kept Christmas and New Year's day, both of which were frowned upon by the Massachusetts Puritans. On New Year's morning the old Dutch burgher would start forth from his own door and visit his neighbors, collecting all the money due him from the solvent debtors and forgiving the insolvent ones, and, having drunk numberless mugs of punch with the solvent and insolvent alike, he returned to his home a better man, more forgiving in spirit and (whisper this!) more religious minded than his Puritan neighbor who had spent the day precisely as he spends every other weekday in the year.

Why have we forgotten the example of our Dutch ancestors? We all keep the Fourth of July, sacred to liberty. We all keep Thanksgiving day out of respect to the pilgrim fathers perhaps, but more out of gratitude to the Giver of all good things. We all keep Christmas out of love of him whose birth it commemorates. Why don't we keep New Year's? Are we recreant sons of our Dutch ancestors who first settled New Amsterdam?

THE ROSY NEW YEAR.

Ho, you little fellow, With the sparkle in your eyes! Will you wreath your arms around us, Will you kiss away our sighs, You rosy little fellow, With the sparkle in your eyes!

Ho, you little fellow, Like a sunbeam from the skies! Will you set the bells to ringing,



Will you give us songs for sighs, You rosy little fellow, With the sparkle in your eyes!

Ho, you little fellow, Near your dimples sorrow dies; The darkness melts in music, And the glory's in the skies! You rosy little fellow, With the sparkle in your eyes!

A Scottish New Year Custom. In the more primitive Scotch towns poor children go around fantastically dressed, stopping at the different houses to call for a share of the good things made for the coming day. A curious old rhyme which they sing on this occasion follows:

Get up, good wife, And shake your feathers, And dinna think that We are beggars, For we are bairns, Come out to play; Get up and gie's our Hogmanay.

There were many other picturesque customs in Scotland which have long since died out.

The Bells. What shall the New Year hear to... The shadow of the sun, A hope, a beam, A sunshine gleam, Love's long, interrupted dream, Or dark for daylight done?

What does the New Year hide for you? A silence or a song, A sigh, a note, From joy bird's throat, Or stillness lying long?

What may the New Year hold for us? All light and shade are there, Both silence chill And singing, still, Old love that ever hath its will Will give each heart its share!

—Post Wheeler.

CHRISTMAS IN BOSNIA.

Queer Yuletide Customs of the Black Mountain Peasants.

Lest any should suppose that the peasants of Bosnia and Montenegro and especially those of the "Black mountains" proper do not earn their Christmas feast it should be known that for six weeks before the anniversary of the nativity the people do not put meat of any kind into their mouths, says the Chicago Tribune. Perhaps nowhere else in the world can be found so curious an intermingling of Christian and pagan rites at Yuletide. The peasants even mingle relics of ancestor worship with their observance of Christ's birthday. One of their practices at this season dates from a time when iron was unknown by their forebears.

The night before this eastern people begin their six weeks' fast prior to Christmas day all the meat dishes in every house in the land are put upon the tables. When supper is ready, each member of the family takes a bit of each kind of food and proceeds with it to the roof of the house, where it is placed as a potent charm against witches and uncanny spirits. This custom is traceable directly to a practice of extremely ancient times, when food was placed on the house tops as an offering to certain household spirits.

At the supper all the meat in the house is eaten, and if this proves to be a physical impossibility at one sitting the members of the household must needs rise in the middle of the night and finish the repast. After the meat has disappeared each partaker must rinse thoroughly his mouth lest a bit of meat adhere to the teeth. The next day no one eats anything. If the fast be broken, the culprit certainly will be shot with arrows by the spirits. It is the duty on this day to pluck out a pig, a sheep or a goat to be fattened for the Christmas feast. The animal is killed the third day before Christmas, and no more terrible misfortune can happen to a peasant than not to have a "bloody knife" in his house on that day.

Roast Goose.

For the roast goose choose one with plump, firm breast, soft white fat, yellow feet with tender webbing. The windpipe should crack when plucked. Before drawing it scrub the skin thoroughly with soapy water, which will open the pores and soften and extract the oil, removing the strong, oily taste which makes roast goose so objectionable to many. Then draw, wash quickly and wipe dry. Chop an onion fine, blanch and drain, brown in a tablespoonful of butter, mix with well seasoned mashed potatoes, add sage if you wish, truss, cover the breast with slices of fat salt pork, let cook for three-quarters of an hour, then pour off all the fat, remove pork, dredge with flour. When it is browned, add a little hot water and baste often, dredging again with flour. Cook about two hours. Seal the giblets in salted water, pour it off and cook slowly until tender. To make gravy pour off fat, put a little pork fat in pan, brown two level tablespoonfuls of flour in it and add one cupful of stock. Pour this on a hot platter, lay the goose in it and garnish with apples.

A Christmas Game.

A favorite Christmas game in England is snapdragon. A plate of brandy with raisins in it is placed on the table and the brandy lighted. The raisins must be plucked from the burning brandy with the bare fingers. Burned fingers are a common complaint in England on Dec. 26.

Christmas in the White House.

Christmas at the executive mansion under all administrations has been essentially a home festival. It is on New Year's day that the doors of the establishment are opened to the public, and everybody who is anybody comes to shake the president's hand.

Thanks to Mother Eve.

Eve had her faults, but in inventing clothes she gave the world the joy of the child's Christmas stocking.—Indianapolis Sentinel.

Concerning Christmas.

The best thing to put in a warm Christmas stocking is a poor child's foot.

Jews in most countries keep Christmas as a season of feasting and mirth and of gift giving.

Coptic Christians believe that savage beasts and venomous serpents are harmless on Christmas day and will neither bite nor sting.

The Yule log in England is a relic of Druidism and has no religious significance left. It survives merely as an ancient and time honored custom.

Christmas is respected by the followers of Mohammed, but not observed. With all their hatred of Christians they regard Jesu-ben-Miriam as a minor prophet.

The Star of Bethlehem.

When, marshaled on the nightly plain, The glittering host bestrode the sky, One star alone of all the train, Can fix the sinner's wandering eye.

Hark, hark, to God the chorus breaks From every host, from every gem! But one alone the Saviour speaks; It is the Star of Bethlehem.

Once on the raging seas I rode; The storm was loud, the night was dark. The ocean yawned, and rudely blowed The wind that tossed my foundering bark. Deep horror then my vitals froze; Death struck, I ceased the tide to stem, When suddenly a star arose; It was the Star of Bethlehem.

It was my guide, my light, my all; It led me through the storm and danger's thrall, It led me to the port of peace.

Now safely moored, my perils o'er, I'll sing, first in night's diadem, Forever and forevermore, The Star—the Star of Bethlehem! —Henry Kirke White.

Telegraphers' Grip.

"I have lost my grip." This phrase is applied by men to all kinds of failures. One of the technical usages of losing one's grip is in the case of telegraph operators.

Many of the most skilled operators suffer at times from a loss of the "grip" and are compelled to give way temporarily to a substitute. This "grip" is the hold on the key, and the moment the operator begins to lose the control of this "grip" he realizes a rest, although for only a brief time, is due him.

Another but unpleasant term applied to this loss of "grip" is "telegraphers' paralysis." It shows itself in many curious ways, all showing that the muscles brought into play in working the key are badly worn.

One of the most skillful operators in Louisville, who is subject to these attacks, cannot send "P." The Morse manual calls for five dots for this letter. The operator in question has by some hook or crook lost the power to stop at the fifth dot, and it is a common thing for him to warn the taker to look out for his "P's."

Recently he asked a fellow operator to watch him send "P's" and to stop him at the end of the fifth dot. It resulted that, although he would be warned at the fourth dot, the fingers, no longer mastered by the brain, would continue dotting beyond the fifth.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

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Written by a Kentucky Attorney-at-Law.

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BEDARD, THE TAILOR. J. L. FOBERT, Manager, Parsons' Bazaar, Emporium, Pa.

HOLIDAY IN SWEDEN.

CHRISTMAS THE GREATEST OF ALL ITS FESTIVALS.

The Old Time Norsemen Were Heavy Feeders—Dangers of Visiting a Neighbor—Children Make Merry Around the Tree.

FROM time immemorial Christmas has been the greatest of holidays in Sweden. In heathen times the midwinter festival was celebrated in honor of the sun, which had retreated more and more since midsummer and now, after the winter solstice, began to return, causing darkness to be defeated by light, says the Chicago Record. There was then great feasting in the chieftains' banqueting halls, where the bards sung songs in honor of fallen heroes and where eating and drinking played an important part. Touching the head of the god Frey's boar, the warriors made vows about the valorous deeds they would perform next summer, when the ice which now held their dragon ships fettered near the shore would be melted by the sun. The excessive eating and drinking at the winter festival continued also during the middle ages, when Christmas had taken on a new significance. Many peculiar Christmas customs prevailed until about the middle of this



A MERRY RING.

century, especially among the rural inhabitants. A few of them have been retained to this date, although the advance of civilization has almost exterminated superstition and has refined manners. Besides the customs still retained the Swede had formerly much to keep in mind at Christmas. Nothing that necessitated a rotary motion should be done on Christmas day. Anybody who visited a neighbor on that day ran the risk of getting boiled water thrown in his face. On Christmas eve straw must be laid on the floor for the children to play in and for the members of the family to sleep on during the night.

Christmas day is still the greatest holiday in Sweden. The Swedes of today are more temperate than those of olden times, but no miser is so mean that he does not prepare well for Christmas, and no home is so poor that it is not then better provided than usual with the essentials of good living. Especially in the rural home the housewife is for many days busily engaged in preparations for the great holiday. Bread of different kinds must be baked, Christmas beer brewed, the Christmas pig killed and sausage made, the dried lingfish must be soaked in lye, and everything must be scrubbed and cleaned. On Christmas eve as much animal food is cooked as the house can afford, and in certain homes where old customs are retained the dinner is eaten in the kitchen, and everybody dips his bread in the hot broth in which the pork has been boiled. The day before Christmas is therefore often in jest called "the great dipping day." In order that all beings shall be happy the farmer gives the cattle and the horses extra food, lets loose the watchdog and places a sheaf of unthrashed oats on a pole for the birds. This last custom prevails even in cities. Fresh spruce trees are placed outside the doors and on balconies.

After dinner the Christmas tree, a young spruce, is dressed with fruit, paper covered candy, bright colored glass balls and ornaments and paper flags of all nations. On each branch is hung a small candle or a taper. These are lighted in the evening, and the delighted children are allowed to make a merry ring dance around the tree. Hereafter the members of the family collect around the table, and the Christmas presents are distributed. Masked persons in picturesque costumes are seen on the streets carrying bundles of presents for friends or relatives. They greet nearly everybody they meet with the words, "Merry Christmas," and are answered, "Same to you." On and after Christmas day a Swede on meeting an acquaintance will say, "Good continuation of the Christmas," until New Year, when the game ceremony begins with the words, "A good New Year," etc.

When the present bearers have returned from their mission, all hands partake of the supper, in which the "tuttisk" (dried lingfish or codfish soaked in lye and boiled), the Christmas cheese and the rice porridge must not be lacking. Many families usually have also a pig's head on the table, perhaps in memory of the "god Frey's boar with apple in the mouth."

For the Stocking. Us chillun needs mo' civil rights; De white folks gotter make some laws, 'Case some ob us on Christmas nights Gits clean fogot by Santa Claus. —Washington Star.

I AM HERE!

BOYS AND GIRLS.

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Santa Claus.



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