

GIRDLING THE GLOBE.

How Uncle Sam Wishes All the World Happy New Year.

At midnight Dec. 31, from the white, towering time factory on Georgetown heights, Admiral Chester, superintendent of the National observatory, will have sounded completely around the earth by the cables which now span our great spinning top and to the continental and insular nations to the north and south by vast networks of wire ramifying in all directions from this great globe a signal announcing the birth of the year 1906 at the capital of our republic.

At one push of the official button the electric greeting will permeate our continent and leap across the Pacific from San Francisco to Honolulu, to Midway, to Guam, to Manila and to Hongkong. Flashing up and down the entire eastern coast of Asia, from Alexandrovsk to the Malay peninsula, it will cross Sumatra and the home of the wild man of Borneo; will speed over the coffee plantations of Java to Australia and New Zealand.

Hurrying over the snowdrifts of Siberia and Russia, it will be felt in Moscow and St. Petersburg and there be taken up by the thick mesh of wires covering northern and central Europe, going to London and at the same time spanning the coast of the black continent of Africa. From Alexandria it will be shot 750 miles up the Nile into the very heart of Africa. Leaping out into the sea, it will register itself in the isles of Madagascar and Mauritius. From Lisbon to the Madeiras and over the Cape Verde islands it will jump to Pernambuco, Brazil; thence down into the wilds of central Argentina and up into Bolivia, across the Windward Isles, the Lesser Antilles and the West Indies and then home again to the capital of the nation.

It is almost inconceivable that such a circuit of the earth can be made in scarcely more time than you would expend in wishing a neighbor "a happy new year!"—Washington Star.

New Year's on the Nile.

In all ages and all lands much importance has attached to New Year's day. In Egypt the new year fell between the 17th and the 20th of June and was called the "night of the drop."

The sacred Nile was thought to flow down from heaven, and at its lowest ebb—about the middle of June—a tear from Isis fell into the stream and caused it to rise. Consequently at this season the priests and people kept a sleepless vigil at the river's shore, watching for the miraculous rise which should bring such riches to the whole land. When the "night of the drop" came the priests cleared the altars of old ashes and lighted the sacred fires for the new year. Every one of the faithful carried a coal from the altar to light the fire at his own hearth, and from end to end the land was ablaze with light. The people put off their old garments and arrayed themselves in white, anointing their heads with sacred oil, crowning themselves with flowers and bearing palms in their hands, while chants and songs and feasting and processions filled the homes.

An Invention to the New Year.

Aureole our angel cake generously with imported jam; teach us to forgive our creditors; see to it that the straight and narrow path is sprinkled with ashes always and with banana skins never; put plenty of silver into our wallets and not any into our whiskers; cement our ties of love and friendship more closely together and fill the hearts of our wives to overflowing with the friskiness and enthusiasm that were theirs at that divine moment when we measured their lily fingers for solitaire diamond rings and prepared to camp out on their fathers' incomes; clip the wings of riches and of love that they may not fly out of our window, but remain with us forever, and if possible clip the cook in the same way and for a similar result.—R. K. Munkittrick in New York World.

Peter Stuyvesant's New Year's.

The custom of celebrating New Year's day in our own country is largely due to the Dutch. Old Peter Stuyvesant made much of the day, and cheery assemblages were held at the governor's home in New Amsterdam. The Dutch method of kissing the women for "a happy new year" was observed and toll taken of all who were young and handsome. In fact, during the reign of Peter Stuyvesant New Amsterdam was the most thoroughly be-kissed country in all Christendom.

and formed a marked contrast to the staid Puritans, who thought the observance of this day savored strongly of reverence for the god Janus and who made no note of their first New Year's day in the new world save to record, "We went to work betimes."—New York Evening Post.

New Year's in Caesar's Time.

At the Roman festivals of the god Janus, held on the calends of January, gifts and good wishes were exchanged, friends met together, and feasting and dancing, masking and mumming were the order of the day. January derives its name from the god Janus, who was represented with two faces looking in opposite directions, as the month was considered both to look back upon the past year and forward to that which was coming.

In the Scottish Highlands.

In the Scottish highlands the new year is ushered in by the tolling of the auld kirk bell and the playing of the bagpipes. In a clear, frosty night to hear this much maligned instrument played by a thoroughbred highlander among the hills and from a distance the notes are stripped of their harshness and seem to be wafted across to you by the clear atmosphere in one harmonious melody. It is beautiful and inspiring.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Keats' Opinion of Hamlet.

The middle age of Shakespeare was all covered over. His days were not more happy than Hamlet's, who is perhaps more like Shakespeare himself in his common everyday life than any other of his characters.—From a Keats Autograph Letter.

Easy Money.

Teacher—Johnny, write on this black-board the sentence, "Two heads are better than one." Now, Johnny, do you believe that? Johnny—Yes'm, 'cause then you kin get a job in a dime museum and make lots of money.—Youth.

Free will is not the liberty to do whatever one likes, but the power of doing whatever one sees ought to be done, even in the face of otherwise overwhelming impulse. There lies freedom indeed.

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