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opportunity by the forelock when it selected a period of excellent good feeling, the Christmas season, to present its protest. Nor should it be forgotten that the straightforward way in which the President handled the canal tolls affair increased perceptibly respect for and confidence in this Government. It makes it easier for the British Cabinet to handle the present problem.

The New Year THE New Year enters upon a heritage scarred by devastation and ruin. Half the world is in the heat of the blood lust. Humanity is staggering along in times so stressful that weaklings drop in multitudes and strong men find the turmoil almost beyond their endurance.

At home we still face a period of industrial depression. But there is no craze on the door and it is not locked to opportunity. We are not looking back. Our eyes are to the front. The burden of responsibility is not too heavy for us.

Philadelphia is the backbone of productive industry in America, and, therefore, at this period, in the world. The conjunction of circumstances, if nothing else, must soon set the wheels whirling. It is merely a question now of how long. It may be this month and it may be next; but the revival of industry casts its shadow before it, and the auguries all point in one direction.

Mince Pies in the Trenches ON CHRISTMAS DAY some of the British soldiers in Flanders carried a present of mince pie to their foes in the German trenches, an act which was later reciprocated by Teutonic courtesies.

Floods of Wisdom IGNORANCE, if it lingers among us, must be hiding in something deeper and more secure than bomb-proof shelters. While Europe is trying to blow itself to pieces by turning the energies of science to the work of destruction, America is adapting the resources of its scientists to the benefit of humanity through innumerable channels.

Fair Treatment To and From All FEELING that there will be a quick and amicable settlement between Great Britain and the United States relative to the rights of our shipping is increasing. That there should have been any doubt whatever is a friendly agreement is remarkable.

The Senate intends to have a literacy test, no matter what the President thinks, but the Senate's intentions before this have been accepted by little more than some of its resolutions.

"MONKEY BUSINESS" IN CONGRESS HAS HISTORY

Ceremony of House Mace Dates Back Thousands of Years—Has Prevented Riots Among Members—\$25,000 for "Misters."

By E. W. TOWNSEND IN A previous letter I wrote casually of the mighty force of precedents in the way the machinery of Congress, both Houses, is run. It is permitted to run. But to a new member or an outsider there are many even more interesting ways in which precedent, or perhaps in some respects it is more correct to say custom, rules in Congress.

Just So and Never Otherwise THE ebony silver-bound mace of the House is surrounded by a globe, upon which is perched an eagle with outstretched wings. When the House is not in session it is borne by an assistant into the House Chamber a few minutes before the opening of each day's session, and deposited by the side of a marble pedestal.

Presently, perhaps in a few minutes, the House goes into the Committee of the Whole House, and then the business is conducted not by the Speaker but by a chairman designated by the Speaker. As the latter leaves his desk, and just as his foot reaches the first step in descent, the mace is taken down to its place by the side of the pedestal.

Scott's View of a New Year From Harper's Weekly. Man is a conventional animal. He thinks one thing on the Fourth of July, another at Easter, another at Thanksgiving. When he hears of a particular death he grieves, though he knows that thousands die daily.

Serious "Monkey Business" I've heard a gallery visitor ask, having watched this ceremony repeated several times, "What's all that monkey business?" Well, if one feels about it that way, that is the way one feels about it. Not the members, though. Once the assistant was inattentive and the mace did not go up with the Speaker.

Members fighting mad and trying to fight, shouting in rage, heedless of the Speaker's threatening voice, have never in any known instances—and in some instances blows had already been struck—failed to retreat to their seats, melt away, as it were, before the sign of authority, the mace. Why? Is it heredity; an inborn respect for the authority of rank, or its symbol? Let the psychologists answer.

President Never "Told" There are many fixed forms of language required by precedent. Once a secretary of the Senate, having been duly announced, proceeded with his message to the effect that a special committee of the Senate, having been appointed for the purpose, had called upon the President and "told" him that the Senate was ready to proceed with business.

In the Senate the pages, when not in service, sit about at the foot of the presiding officer's desk. When a Senator wants a page he summons him by clapping his hands. In the House the pages are corralled when not in service in the two corners at the rear of the chamber and are summoned by electric bells.

"YOU'RE FIFTEEN TO-DAY, OLD ENOUGH TO BEHAVE!"



Ashurst, Bacon, Bankhead, &c. After the start the names are run off without any prefix. Until the second session of this Congress the House roll-call form has required the "Mr." before each name.

KEEPING THE CALENDAR TRUE TO THE SUN It Has Had a Vagarious, Romantic and Sometimes Amusing History Twisted All Out of Shape Many Times and Never Entirely Straightened Out.

By R. G. F. MANY people are dissatisfied with the calendar. They propose to take it back and change it. They would have to go back to an act of the British Parliament in 1751—that is, English-speaking folk would—and then still farther into the recesses of time. It was that statute which later led American schoolboys into doubt as to whether George Washington was born on February 22 or February 11.

The scientist, however, is never satisfied with anything less than accuracy, and he wants a perfect calendar. He has taken his ideas of reform into the legislatures of several nations, but nothing has happened yet. Reform is sure to get into trouble, anyway, when it gets into politics. But truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again, and maybe the dream of the scientist will come true.

The calendar—as an institution—has passed through so many vicissitudes that it really deserves a rest from meddling, after one last attempt has been made to set it right forever. It originated early in the earliest ages. At first it was merely a record of events in the life of an individual or the history of a tribe, and consisted of curious inscriptions on trees, or pieces of bark, or of a succession of notches and symbols on wands or canes.

The changes of the moon furnished the obvious method and the one which was most universally adopted among primitive peoples. The reason is said to have been that the old agriculturalists had a special interest in the moon, which presided over the fate of crops and furnished enough lunar superstition to last even unto this present. Months of 29 and 30 days were instituted. Then it was discovered that the seasons furnished a more serviceable mode of division, and years came into existence. Civil years, of course, not truly solar.

The moon, the first love of the calendar-makers, fared badly. It was supplanted by the sun. The months were retained as subdivisions of years, but when it was observed how the solar year and the 12 lunar months failed to coincide, and how the first day of the year kept sliding along into the wrong season, the ancient scientists decided to regulate the calendar by the sun, and it was so. Thus the moon was left out of consideration, and the month became only an arbitrary affair.

Romulus, the builder of Rome, divided the year into 10 months. That is, if history can place any reliance on tradition. There were 304 days under his arrangement, and what became of the rest of them neither history nor tradition sayeth. A little later the Romans had 12 months, with an occasional intercalary month. This was a lunar year of 355 days. It was Numa Pompilius—mythic history again—who added the two extra months, January and February. March had previously started the calendar, and was now displaced by January, February taking last place. February was reduced from this position when, 300 years later, the decemviri moved it up to second position. But even February, some would say, was not so happy as it seems. The month was of 28 days, and was called Februa, meaning purification.

Most Europeans and Americans are like the ancient Egyptians in regarding the night as the beginning of day. The astronomer, after the example of Ptolemy and of Broadway celebrants, begins it at noon. The modern Greeks, like the ancient Chaldeans, choose sunrise; the Italians and Bohemians choose sunset; the Chinese and Japanese divide the day into night and day, and give the night the name of day, and the day the name of night. We divide ours into day and night.