

YOUR NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

HOW LONG DO YOU HOLD THE DETERMINATION TO KEEP YOUR TEMPER OR QUIT GOSSIPING OR STOP SWEARING? WISE ONES SAY WE PROFIT BY MAKING RESOLUTIONS SINCERELY EVEN IF WE KEEP THEM BUT A DAY



A PUBLIC NEW YEAR'S EVE REVEL

ANY weakling can make resolutions. It needs a strong man to keep them. That is perhaps why New Year resolutions are so often futile. The strong do not wait for high days and holy days to amend their conduct or carry out their resolves. They obey Goethe's dictum: "Seize this very minute. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it."

And so it happens that the large army of people who wait for the New Year before effecting a reformation in their lives are seldom successful in carrying out their intentions. They are not possessed of the spirit of energy and resolution necessary to achievement. It may be argued that it is better to make good resolutions, even though they are not carried out, than not to make them at all. This is open to question, however. Unless one is absolutely determined to do what one has decreed, it is perhaps on the whole better not to make promises to oneself. Unfulfilled resolves continually repeated, tend to weaken the character, and to reduce one's faith in oneself, just as resolutions put into practice are conducive to strength and self-confidence.

Very little tends to overbalance the resolutions of the average person. In fact, many people welcome any excuse to exonerate them from the carrying out of their resolves. One individual determines, let us say, never to lose his temper. He comes down on New Year's morning with a set smile on his face. Alas! it is short-lived. The whole world seems in conspiracy to drag him back to his former frame of mind. The coffee is cold, the letters which look so alluring prove to be chiefly bills and begging epistles, he falls over the doorstep as he leaves the house. All these minor annoyances, which, if rightly met, would have helped him to conquer his weakness, serve but to throw him back into his original state, and before evening he is as bad as ever he has been.

Or, take another very general New Year's resolution, that of getting up at a certain time in the morning. When the day dawns, any reason whatever is grasped at to evade this. The weather is too cold, the alarm was not loud enough, he is sure his watch is fast, he doesn't really feel well enough to risk getting up earlier than usual, and, after all, he asks himself, is there any real reason why he should? A thousand-and-one excuses the average individual will make to himself rather than perform what he has designed to do. The world is full of wobblers of this kind, and the more they wobble the weaker they become.

Another reason perhaps why the average resolution-makers so seldom achieve their purpose is that they attempt too much. They make two, three, sometimes six resolutions at once, whereas to carry through one resolution successfully is quite an admirable feat.

As Thomas a Kempis says:

"If every year we could root out one vice we would sooner become perfect men." Impatience is at the root of many defeats. It is customary nowadays to sneer at the virtue for which the name of Job is synonymous, but those who say that patience is the virtue of an ass or a beggar's virtue are not so wise as the Spanish proverb-maker, who said:

"Patience! and shuffle the cards." Most people shuffle the cards eagerly enough, but the patience is lacking. Seeking to grasp the stars at a bound they fall back to the earth.

And so, if people at the commencement of a New Year adjusted their desires in accordance with their abilities, and instead of sighing for the unattainable made the very most of the opportunities vouchsafed to them, one would hear less of broken resolutions and wasted lives.

"Do the duty which lies nearest to thee which thou knowest to be a duty," said Carlyle. "Thy second duty will already have become clearer."

The Turning of New Leaves.

Good resolutions have almost gone out of fashion. On the last night of the year we no longer sit down to review our past lives and resolve to be "better and wiser" than we have been in the past. "It is of no use making resolutions, I never can keep them," is the plea that is usually proffered. This is a mistake, however. It is commendable to resolve (an alarm clock helping one) to get up half an hour earlier than usual in the morning, even though it results—as, alas! it too often does—in one getting up half an hour later. It is what one aspires to be that counts.

If people could live more in the present it would help them enormously in the keeping of good resolutions. So many people persist in being just a little ahead all the time.

"Tomorrow," they say, "we will reform," but the tomorrow of their imaginations never dawns. Ancient and modern philosophers have agreed as to the dangers of procrastination. Such widely diverse people as Horace, the Latin poet who flourished in 65 B. C., and pushful persons who flourish (exceedingly) at the present day, join issue in this particular.

"Who begins, possesses half the deed," says Horace.

"Dare to be wise; make a commencement." "Do it now," is the curt command of the modern apostle of "Hustle." Again, Horace says, "If you are ignorant how to live aright, give place to those who have learned of the lesson."

"Get on or get out," says a mankin, following in more concentrated, if less courteous language the same line of thought on a somewhat lower plane. The one was concerned with the things of the soul and the spirit; the other with worldly advancement. There are some who contend that the two cannot go together, but if (as has been contended by many men of wisdom) what a man is is of more importance than what he has, it is well to make spiritual advancement as the years go by. If we have not made progress, we have gone back. The soul never stands still. Time has no terror for those who have learned wisdom.

Pass thou, wild heart,
Wild heart of youth that still
Hast half a mind to stay,
I grow too old a comrade;
Let us part.
Pass thou away.

Some people drag the follies and immaturities of youth into old age. There is wisdom in adjusting oneself to time, to profit by past experiences, and to acquire that sense of proportion which refuses to magnify trifles into tragedies, and to worry over the inevitable.

IN THE LIMELIGHT

JAPAN'S LEADING FINANCIER



The "foremost business man of Japan," Baron Ei-ichi Shibusawa, to whom more than to any other his nation owes her commercial and industrial transformation, hater of jingoes, friend of peace and of America, has been making another visit to the United States.

A stocky little man, broadshouldered, round faced, few gray hairs on his large, well formed head, although he is only a trifle short of seventy-six years; small eyes, that twinkle in conversation; frequent smiles, revealing much gold dentistry—such is the baron.

Forty-two years ago, when Japan was emerging from feudalism and irresponsible government into the world's light, Ei-ichi Shibusawa threw away his brace of swords, all privilege and high office to stand for business honesty. Holding a prominent office in the treasury under the mikado's new vested in national finance. His soul became insurgent. In a bold manifesto in 1873 he denounced the irresponsible and antiquated methods of bookkeeping and of handling the public money.

He founded the first national bank of Japan, established commercial training schools, organized the Tokyo chamber of commerce, and also almshouses and philanthropic institutions. He served his generation as director or chairman of the organizations which he had started. In a thousand ways, through a day and night activity of over forty years, he has labored to make the business man and his calling honorable, public spirited and measurably unselfish.

In Japan he re-created the whole social situation. Today the merchant, manufacturer and shipper hold the place they deserve.

JACOBUS, JUNK EXPERT

Ever hear of a junk expert? Up to the time that William Jacobus, the scrap-metal expert, stepped into the limelight by showing how Uncle Sam could save millions on the scrap usually sold as "junk," very few people, if any, knew that one could specialize on junk and become a metal expert.

In 1911 Mr. Jacobus, who probably knows more about the scrapping and junk business than any one else, went to the "powers that be" in Washington and placing his finger on a leak said: "Here's where millions of dollars go every year because nobody knows anything about the business of selling the government's junk to the best advantage."

At that time there was what was known as the junkmen's gentlemen's agreement. Simply explained, the agreement amounted to this: A clique of junkmen agreed that they would pay a certain price for the junk offered by the government at the next sale. There being no junk expert in the employ of the government at that period, the junkmen, as planned, got it "dirt cheap." They then carefully assorted it, and resold it to metal dealers, dividing the profit among the clique. Through Mr. Jacobus' instrumentality the saving of the navy department was conservatively put at two million dollars.



DIAMONDS HIS TOYS



In a busy office on Broadway, New York, there sits, day by day, a man who plays with diamonds. He toys with the radiant gems as a scientist might beguile himself with some new theory, as a child might extract joy from the possession of an abnormal array of wonderful paper dolls. They are playthings.

Thirty full sets of gems, worth \$1,000,000, make up the glittering, dazzling, bewildering treasure store. For the most part, they are hidden in the gloomy, chilly, steel cave of a neighboring vault. Thither they are brought under guard for the inspection of their master.

Each night he selects one set, and, bedecked with the scintillating jewels, he sallies forth to permit his playthings to pick up the incandescent rays of the brilliant white way and to dart them back, transformed into wondrous mezzo-tinted, prismatically refracted vibrations, through the gatherings of the gay. The man who thus plays with fire—the fire of first-water gems—is James Buchanan Brady. Broadway knows him as "Diamond Jim."

"Diamond Jim" goes about among his fellows with freedom. He knows that he is an institution and that any "regular guy" among the local crooks would as soon think of stealing the torch from the statue of Liberty and "hooking" it as old bronze, or of taking Horace Greeley's bronze shoe from its park pedestal, as of dimming the luster of an essential part of New York's exterior decorative effect.

EARLY BIRD LINDBERGH

It is dark in Washington. Not even the rattle of the first milk wagon has been heard on Capitol hill and it still lacks two hours before the gold room of the congressional library will reflect the morning sun.

The measured beat of heel taps on the wooden cover of the marble steps leading to the house office building can be heard as the solitary figure of a man, tall, gaunt, and dressed in black, mounts the incline.

It is Congressman Charles A. Lindbergh of Minnesota on his way to work.

Lindbergh, besides being a millionaire, is the early bird of the Sixty-fourth congress. He goes to work between four and five o'clock every morning.

Lindbergh is a strong believer in the removal of private interests from the opportunity to influence congressional action. His first resolution has for its object prevention of the appointment of members of congress on committees where they might have personal interests conflicting with the public interest. He was voted down, but won on his second resolution, which was aimed at the secret meetings of the banking and currency committee.



THE FRENCH FOREIGN LEGION

DE MAUPASSANT, describing an officer, said that just to look at him made one feel martial. He did not say warlike or bellicose; the idea he wished to convey was much more subtle. In the presence of this officer one assumed the military attitude of mind and body.

This is a phenomenon that escapes the attention of most people—women, however, observe it. Practically every nonmilitary man at the sight of a well set up, fully accoutred soldier instinctively assumes something of a military bearing. And when the drums roll and a marching column of soldiers flashes into view the civilian involuntarily throws back his shoulders and steps out with a tenser, measured tread.

And as with civilians, so with soldiers. The ordinary regiment becomes more military in the presence of the crack regiment. The crack regiment itself gains something more when in proximity to a detachment of troops of heroic, almost legendary, fame, such as the Foreign Legion.

The Legionaries handle campaigns of their own, and probably no body of troops has ever done such constant and arduous campaigning. But France over and over again has used them also as leaven among other troops. They stiffen the mass, and men emulate their actions.

The Legion was sent out to the Crimea and got no special credit for covering itself with glory, as that had been expected of it, but did reflect great credit on the judgment of those who had sent it out to help to inspire a whole army.

The queen of Spain 80 years ago was in a hard fix with a civil war on her hands. The Carlists, whom she was fighting, were just as good soldiers as her own, if not a shade better. Then the Queen's generals had an inspiration of genius. If they could only get the French Foreign Legion into their army they felt the shade of advantage would move over to their side. So the queen bought the Foreign Legion from the then king of France, and for four years the Legion belonged to Spain.

In the present war, part of the French Legion has been sent to the trenches of France and Flanders and Alsace and to the Dardanelles. Part of it remains in Africa, its normal habitat, doing some mighty vigorous campaigning in the Moroccan part of France's wonderful new African empire.

The Americans and other foreigners who are enrolled as volunteers in the French army are put in contact with the Legionaries, and this, while giving them scope for their fighting qualities and assuring them an opportunity for genuine campaigning, is the highest measure of protection for them. It guarantees them against foolish rashness, as well as against being led into traps or losing their head in critical moments.

Fighting is routine work with the Legionary, just as sailing a yacht is to the expert mariner. The winds may be different on each trip and the craft is never handled twice in the same way, but the expert knowledge of the technique of his trade makes the Legionary and the skipper each acquit himself of his task in finished fashion.

Officially the Foreign Legion is composed of eight thousand men. In reality it is understood it has nearly double that number, and the Legion becomes readily a whole army corps, with the addition of some of France's colonial troops.

France for hundreds of years had regiments of German, English, Irish, Scotch, Swiss, Italians and other foreigners enrolled in her armies, but the present Foreign Legion may be considered as dating from 1831. One brief rule in its constitution says that the enlisting colonel may accept a man even though he does not present a birth certificate or identification papers. Wherefore the names of the English and American Legionaries have been Smith, Brown and Jones; of Germans Muller, Schwartz and Weiss; of the Italians, Rossi and Grossi; of the French, Petoit, Legrand and Leclaire, and so on.

The recruiting officer reads the candidate a warning lecture. "Don't you know what the Legion is, monsieur? Surely there is something better you can do. Severe campaigning in Africa or in China for a sou a day, or a few sous as you begin to advance, is no bed of roses. You had better think it over a day or two. No? You already are aware? Very well, mon cher enfant," and his tone changes as he now speaks as a colonel to his soldier: "There is a glorious career down there for the right kind. If you are a good and faithful soldier you may go far. Good luck!"

The recruiting colonel can generally tell at a glance what army the candidate has served in and if he has been a sergeant or an officer. In the latter case he is discreetly questioned on the point, and it is suggested, for his own benefit, that he confidentially inform his colonel when he arrives at the training-quarters in Africa. One who has been an officer in a European army is usually taken into the corporals' class and may be advanced within a couple of years to be a sergeant of the Legion.