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the old style, which differs from the generally accepted style by twelve days. Thus the new year in Russia begins on our Jan. 13. The Gregorian, or new style, was adopted in England by act of Parliament in 1752 and the change caused considerable confusion in dates which, for many years, were designated as old style or new style. In many histories the date of George Washington's birth is given as Feb. 11, 1732, old style—new style Feb. 22. As the czar sent his greetings on New Year's day, new style, it will be good form for President Roosevelt to defer a reply till Jan. 13.

LOOKING BACKWARD.

The new year is several days old, and already it is more than time to "look backward, not back." And yet the year has been such a record-breaker in many respects that it is impossible to dismiss it without more or less retrospection. The progress of the world has been so great, so many unlooked-for events have happened, our own country has accomplished so much, and on the other hand there has been such a succession of frightful catastrophes as to make the year 1903 a veritable year of wonders.

The year has witnessed the death of several of the world's most notable figures in various lines. Philosophy lost Herbert Spencer, its best-known representative and one of the greatest intellects the world has ever known. History mourns Mommsen, whose lifework is a monument such as few historians have left. The church of the world has lost in tears beside the grave of Leo XIII, whose saintliness, intellectuality and ability have been almost unequalled in the long line of Roman Pontiffs. To act loss its most notable representative in James MacNeill Whistler, and its greatest cartoonist in Phil May. The death of W. E. Henley meant the removal of one of the sweetest of contemporary singers. Henry Eaton Merriman (Hush Stowell Scott) is the novelist whose death will be felt the most. The stage will miss Stuart Robson and Sybil Sanderson.

These are only representative names picked from a long list of the great men and women who passed away during the year 1903. For this loss there have been compensations in the activity of literature, art and science, but the extent of these only future years can show. The year closed with an almost unprecedented number of fatal accidents. Floods, fires and railway horrors have piled up an appalling list of dead, and illustrated the fact that evils when they come—

"Come not as single spies, But in battalions."

The superstitious have accounted for this so-called "epidemic of disasters" by pointing to the fact that 1903 could not be otherwise than a fatal year, since the sum of its digits amounted to thirteen—the fatal number. If that is the case we may take comfort in contemplating the figures 1904. They add up a total of fourteen—the double seven, which astrologers tell us is the luckiest number possible. Let the world rejoice; it has already entered an era of unparalleled prosperity!

LEAP YEAR.

Of the millions of people who will remark "This is leap year," how many will stop to think what it means or what a time our friends, the ancient Romans, and their successors had in evolving the idea? Almost everybody knows, in one form or another, in the old verse beginning, "Thirty days hath September," etc.—and, by the way, it is surprising how many variations it has—and they know that leap year comes once in four years, but if they even give the matter of its cause or origin a thought, they probably conclude that the extra day in February is thrown in by the Weather Bureau once in four years for good measure.

Leap year is so called because, having 366 days, it leaps forward a day as compared with an ordinary year. It has a curious and remote origin. At first the ancient Romans divided the year into ten months of 30 days, beginning with March. This made September, October, November and December the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth months of the year, respectively, as their names indicate from the Latin septem (seven), octo (eight), novem (nine), and decem (ten). Originally July and August were called, respectively, Quintilis, fifth month, and Sextilis, sixth month, but long afterwards the present names were bestowed in honor of Julius Caesar and Augustus. Hence, when we say July and August, we unconsciously pay homage to the two great Roman Emperors.

One of the early Emperors changed the year from ten to twelve months, beginning with January instead of March, and placing February at the end. A few hundred years before the Christian era the order of the months was changed again by placing February after January. The months consisted of twenty-nine and thirty days alternately, based on the changes of the moon, and the year consisted of 354 days. Then a day was added to make the number odd, which was considered more fortunate. The ancient Romans had already dropped into the superstition that "There is luck in odd numbers," says Rory O'Moore. But this lunar year of 355 days, based on the moon's changes, differed from the solar year by ten days and a fraction, and to restore the equilibrium a sort of inter-leap month was introduced, making the average length of the year 365 1/4 days. This made the year too long by one day, and another change was made reducing it to 365 1/2 days. Finally, Julius Caesar, whose name was given to July, abolished the lunar year and the intercalary month and decreed that the civil year should be regulated entirely by the sun. With the advice and assistance of the Roman scientists of the period, he fixed the length of the year at 365 1/4 days and decreed that every fourth year should have 366 days, the other years having each 365. Under this arrangement February had, in ordinary years, twenty-nine days and every fourth year thirty, but when the month of August came to be named for Augustus, a day was taken from February and given to August in order that it might have as many days as July, which was named after the first Caesar. The additional day which occurred every fourth year was still given to February, as being the shortest month, and which thus came to have twenty-eight days in ordinary years and twenty-nine every fourth year.

But even this change was not final, for centuries afterward it was found that 365 1/4 days involved an excess above the true solar year that amounted to three days in 400 years. In order to correct this error and restore the equinox to its proper place, Pope Gregory XIII in 1582, directed ten

days to be suppressed in the calendar and decreed that the extra day should be added in every year of which the number is divisible by four without a remainder, except the century years, which are only leap year when divisible by four after omitting the two ciphers. Thus 1900 was not a leap year, but 1904, 1800 and 1900 were not. The year 2000 will be a leap year. This, therefore, is the rule for ascertaining leap year—every year the number of which is divisible by four without a remainder, except the century years, which are only leap years when divisible by four after dropping the two ciphers. No doubt there are persons now born who will live till the year 2000, which will be the first centennial leap year since 1600.

The term leap year is Anglo-Saxon. The Romans called the year in which the extra day was added to February the bissextile year. Notwithstanding the trouble they had in getting the matter adjusted so as to make the civil year correspond to the solar year, there is no evidence that they attached to leap year any of the romance or superstition that Anglo-Saxon peoples now do. These legends and traditions are somewhat like those that pertain to Halloween and other anniversaries of purely Anglo-Saxon origin. It would be difficult to locate their origin or trace their significance. The tradition which associates leap year with special privileges for maids in the matter of proposing marriage or soliciting favors must be of comparatively modern origin, for it is not alluded to in any of the earlier English poets, and the word leap year does not occur once in the whole of Shakespeare.

SENATOR BEVERIDGE'S VIEW OF THE EASTERN QUESTION.

When Senator Beveridge, the year following our acquisition of the Philippines, made a trip to the Orient, it was felt on his return that he was better equipped by personal observation to discuss the Eastern situation (Hush Stowell Scott) is the novelist whose death will be felt the most. The stage will miss Stuart Robson and Sybil Sanderson. These are only representative names picked from a long list of the great men and women who passed away during the year 1903. For this loss there have been compensations in the activity of literature, art and science, but the extent of these only future years can show. The year closed with an almost unprecedented number of fatal accidents. Floods, fires and railway horrors have piled up an appalling list of dead, and illustrated the fact that evils when they come—

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THE IRRESPONSIBLE CHILDREN

Fervent and Efectual.

One of our eloquent young clergymen has recently become the proud father of a boy—his first, the other children all being girls. Besides being a gratifying circumstance in itself, this event has a peculiar grace as illustrating the value of the New Year. For the youngest child, a devout little maiden not quite three years old. Having, of course, no knowledge whatever of the expectations or hopes of her parents, she added to her prayers, every night for the three months, this unique and original petition: "Oh, Lord, please send us a baby—none of your girls!"

Little Elizabeth's Blessing.

In the Lindsay family grace at table is always said by the children—Elizabeth, aged six, or little Elizabeth, aged four. On Christmas day, at dinner, it was the small daughter's turn to offer grateful words of blessing for the coming year, and her tiny mind, no doubt, was throbbing with a confusion of Christmas joys and bewilderment by all the anticipations of the Christmas banquet spread out before her dancing black eyes. At any rate, when all was quiet around the board, her father said: "Now, Elizabeth." And when all heads were bowed in all necessary discretion, as they supposed, in the presence of a bright eight-year-old daughter, a society situation which involved the unpleasant and unrighteous elements of a handsome society woman widely known to be openly engaged in fascinating a married gentleman with her really acquired apostolic creed fresh in her mind, the small daughter mixed things sacred and profane and astonished her parents by breaking into the conversation as follows: "Well, I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, but I don't believe in any woman who tries to steal another woman's husband."

An Enphatic Denunciation.

It begins to appear that if fashionable society were only the enlightened espionage of very young ladies the morals of fashionable society would thereby be much improved. Only the other day, in an army or navy household of Washington, D. C., a father and mother were discussing with all necessary discretion, as they supposed, in the presence of a bright eight-year-old daughter, a society situation which involved the unpleasant and unrighteous elements of a handsome society woman widely known to be openly engaged in fascinating a married gentleman with her really acquired apostolic creed fresh in her mind, the small daughter mixed things sacred and profane and astonished her parents by breaking into the conversation as follows: "Well, I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, but I don't believe in any woman who tries to steal another woman's husband."

A Fancy Bathing Dress.

Even in this day of clubs there are still sewing societies, although they usually bear the less old-fashioned name of the aid society of such or such a church. However, their meetings are not characterized by the awful solemnity of a club meeting; they are more informal and domestic in tone. At the meeting of the afternoon, the proud possessor of a baby the baby is expected to be in evidence. Hence, when a lady on the North Side expected to entertain the aid society on Friday afternoon, her baby daughter, who had been brought to the club in a mischief, had to be especially arrayed and decorated. Extracted from her beloved bath, which she left with extreme reluctance, she was dressed in a fairly-ink white dress, with resplendent blue tulle, and her hair was piled high in a bun. She was a manna and sunshine to the vision of loveliness the aid society came to arrive. For the next fifteen minutes both the hostess and the maid were fully occupied in relieving the ladies and assisting them to remove their wraps.

THE HUMORISTS.

Willie—Pa, what does r-a-c-h-e-r-c-h-e mean? Pa—What do you call it? Willie—Looks like "r-church."

A Guess.

Willie—Pa, what does r-a-c-h-e-r-c-h-e mean? Pa—What do you call it? Willie—Looks like "r-church."

Need His Services.

"He's a doctor of laws, you say?" "Yes." "Well, by gum! there ought to be more of them. There's a whole lot of 'a' laws that need doctors to make 'em good for anything."—Chicago Post.

Couldn't Understand It.

"Where I came from," he said, as he stood with his hat in his hands, "it is customary when a young man bids a young lady good-night, for him to kiss her." "Mercy!" she exclaimed. "And yet you came away!"—Chicago Record-Herald.

Strong on Quotations.

Broker—Poets are no good, sir. I promised one bright young one a try-out, but he fell down. "How did that happen?" "I asked him to get me the quotation on clover seed, and he began reciting "Maud Muller."—Cincinnati Commercial-Tribune.

An Unusual Individual.

"He is positively uncanny; he is so unlike the average man." "What's the matter with him?" "I don't know. I told him to-day that I was suffering with a bad cold, and he didn't suggest a single remedy for it."—Cincinnati Times-Star.

How He Looked at It.

Fond Parent (to young hephew)—Unless you keep your hands and face clean, your teeth brushed and look neat the children of nice people won't have anything to do with you—they won't play with you. Young Hephew—I bet if I had a goat and wagon they would—Judge.

Not Real Ball.

"Play ball!" shouted the umpire, as the home team took the field. "What?" snorted the disgusted patrons in the stands. "That is," shouted the umpire, hastily correcting himself, "the best imitation of it of which you are capable."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Trouble in the Flat.

"Madam, I've come on behalf of the families living on the floor just below yours to ask if you can't persuade your daughter to be a little less industrious at the piano. She pounds it all day long and nearly half the night and we're getting tired." "Then you can't stop her?" "We don't object to music, madam. It's your daughter's piano playing we are kicking about."—Chicago Tribune.

An Indianapolis Native.

"I was a barefooted boy selling newspapers in the streets of Indianapolis during our civil war," said Mr. L. J. Canda, of San Francisco. "Whenever there was news of a battle and a printed list of Indiana soldiers who had been killed and wounded, my papers sold like hot cakes, customers snatching them out of my hands and often not stopping to get any change. On the day of the publication of Mr. Lincoln's death I made \$25, often getting 50 cents for a single paper. One advantage I had was in being allowed the freedom of Camp Morton, where hundreds of Confederate prisoners were kept, and the Johnny Rebs were among my best patrons. Last month I went out to my old home and in vain sought for some reminder of Camp Morton. Not a vestige of it is left, and the city is built out more than a mile beyond where it stood, though in war times it was quite remote from the residence section of Indianapolis."—Washington Post.

Better Than Digging for Gold.

Between April and November a corn crop was raised in the United States valued at \$52,000,000. Digging gold is a slow business compared with plowing corn.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

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