WOMEN® OF SPECIAL INTEREST

NEW YEAR'S CUSTOMS ARE FAST VANISHING

Many Influences Are Responsible for Abandonment of Quaint Practices.

Old customs which tradition and

Old customs which tradition and history have associated for generations with the birth of the new year are fast becoming extinct. This year this fact is more pronounced even than during the decade that preceded. The war and all it suggests and stands for tends to the hurrying over of the festive season. Certain things have to be observed, especially where the poor or the children are concerned, but apart from this, festivities seem to jar on the public sentiment and are in a manner avoided.

The season, however, recalls that New Year's Day, as a time when men called upon the women of their acquaintance as a special formality, no longer exists. The tables groaming with New Year's fare in the shape of rich cake, tea, coffee, wine or probably something stronger, are something now seldom seen. So too is the day following, oftentimes kept as a day sacred to calls from women friends. One cannot help thinking that the banishment of "John Barleycorn" and his relatives from the majority of homes and the taboo which has been banishment of "John Barleycorn" and his relatives from the majority of homes and the taboo which has been placed on "treating" in many quarters, has had no small part in banishing New Year's calls.

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More picturesque still, if less decorous, was the custom that pertained in the land of warlocks and witches, when Jock and his companions bottle in hand waited at the door of their friend Sandy, until the bells rang out the dirge of the old year and the birth of the new. Then the door was knocked upon loudly and peremptorily and Sandy, perhaps nothing loth, had to show himself at the door, accept the proferred "drapple" and join in the toast of "a giud new year to ane an a" ending up with "Auld Lang Syne," and all hands round.

These were customs of our grandmothers' time, illustrative of the hospitality of the land o' the heather.

Ireland, too, favored the passing of the "loving cups" and the clasp of hand between even those who all the year thru had regarded one another as enemies. The New Year must bury all old scores, and a clean sheet must be shown to the new visitor in the cycle of time.

England had its "waits" who sang carols and made the air glad with their vocal greetings, while the Frenchman laid the kiss of peace upon the cheek of everyone within his circle of acquaintance. The interchange of gifts was common to many countries, not extravagant donations such as often take place in our own Christmas season—perhaps a currant loaf or milk-white scone—a mere expression of

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THEATRES

MUTT AND JEFF IN COLLEGE."

All positively new is the announcement regarding "Mutt and Jeff in College," the offering at the Grand next week. As the title signifies, it has the college environment from start to finish, and is said to be one continuous "scream" of laughter from curtain to curtain. To begin with the characters are a.l new with the exception of the heroes, Mutt and Jeff, themselves. They also are in a new etmosphere entirely. The story of the play deals with the students of a pepular university where there was a scarcity of football players among the regular enrolled students. In order to strengthen the team Mutt and Jeff were induced to take an elementary course in college in order to secure All positively new is the announce course in college in order to secure their services on the football team.

"THE BIRTH OF A NATION."

Manager Norman Withrow of Massey Hall announces an extension of the engagement of "The Birth of a Nation" at Massey Hall, beginning with the usual matinee and evening performances on Monday, Jan. 3. Altho Looked elsewhere in Ontario, the nanagement of the wonderful Griffith production has consented to allow it to remain for twelve additional performances, only on account of the steadily increasing business to which it has played since the opening on Christmas Day. It is their intention to give the entire population of Toronto an opportunity of witnessing the picture. Matinees begin at 2.30, and the night show at 8.15 sharp. Election results will be announced on New Year's Day. Year's Day.

ELMAN AND N. Y. SYMPHONY.

Jan. 20 will bring to Massey Hall one of the few orchestral concerts of the season, when the New York Symphony Orchestra, Walter Damrosch, conductor, in association with the renowned young Russian violinist, Mischa Elman, will be the attraction. Last year's appearance of the New York Symphony Orchestra registered an advance sale which exhausted the plan days before the concert took place, and this time Manager Withrow requests all those who desire to reserve choice seats to send in mail orders addressed to himself. Elman, always a favorite in Toronto, reappears here after a complete season of rest, during which his phenomenal powers have attained a maturity of richness and brilliancy unrivalled in America.

were necessary to comply with the Lábote the somewhat dublous promise and made the air glad with their vocal greetings, while the production of the producti comedy antics, and feature film at tractions, complete the bill.

NEXT WEEK AT LOEW'S.

Bob Hall, one of the hits at Loew's Yonge Street Theatre, will make his second apearance within a short time at that playhouse the entire coming week. The comedy playlet in two scenes, "He, She and Him," by Charles Teckeberg, will be another feature on this bill. Mahoney Brothers and Daisy will offer a melange of dances, songs and fun. Jenkins and Covert will present a talkative originality entitled, "Just Married." Others on the bill will include Lockhard and Leddy, pantomimic acrobatic comedians, the Melody Four, in new songs and Frisco,

AT THE HIPPODROME.

The Six Kirksmith Sisters, one of the best musical organizations in vaudeville, wil headline the bill at the Hippodrome next week. The six charming young women are taiented instrumentalists who have a refined offering in which they introduce many varieties of instruments. Eugene Lockhart, former Argonaut football player, hart, former Argonaut football player, will make his first professional appearance in Toronto in his own original pianologue. Mme. Petrova, the distinguished Russian actress, will be featured in the Broadway success, "What Will the People Say?" Mme. Petrova will be here personally on Thursday, Friday and Saturday and will deliver an interesting lecture on will deliver an interesting lecture on the "movies." William Wilson and the "movies." William Wilson and Company in a comedy sketch; Dale and Boyle, singers and dancers; W. L. Cockburn, Scottish baritone; the Monte Trio, in a singing, dancing melange; feature film attractions and "The Sidonias" in "The Laugh Factory," complete the bill.

LAURA HOUSTON AT STAR.

There is said to be no soubrette be-fore the public more captivating than dainty, pretty and magnetic Laura Houston, who will be at the Star Theatre with "The Girls from the Follies" Company, next week. She is credited with singing her songs with a naivete that impels and then she dances, and with her twinkling toes wins as great applause as with her voice and man-

NEW YEAR'S CONCERT TONIGHT.

Scotch folk, and others who love an ola-time Scottish concert, will be attracted by Mr. Campbell's annual New Year's concert, in Foresters' Hall, 22 College street, tonight. An all-Scottish company has been engaged, including Jessie Alexander, Miss Mary Bruce-Brown, the charming star soprano from Aberdeen; Miss Nellic McGhie, the Ayrshire violinist; Mr. James E. Fiddes, our best Scottish tenor, and Miss Florence Mackay, accompanist Those who have not already secured their seats should do so today at For-

"BON TON GIRLS."

Bert Baker and the "Bon Ton Giris" Company begin a week's engagement at the Gayety Theatre Monday matinee, in

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what is said to be the most pretentious offering ever attempted in burlesque, embracing every essential feature in this line of entertainment. Bert Baker, the well known comedian, wrote and staged this show. Included in the cast are: Babe La Tour, Lucille Manion, Mabel McCloud, Rose Ford, Lee Hoyt, Salm Hyams, Micky Feeley, Mike Forster and others. There is also a big beauty chorus selected for polse and talent, as well as for beauty of face and figure.

"THE GIRL WHO SMILES."

"The Girl Who Smiles," with the original New York cast, headed by the dainty prima donna, Natalie Alt, inaugurates an engagement of one week at the Alexandra Theatre, Monday evening. The remarkable thing about the "Girl Who Smiles" is that independent of its beautiful music, it has a story that in itself, without music, would make an exceedingly good entertainment.

"Teach Me to Smile" is the theme of the love song that runs thru the play, Natalie Alt has made the hit of her career in her rendition of Marie. She is the possessor of an unusually dathty manner, and her voice will be found as

delightful as it was in "Adele." In addition to the original New York can is a large beauty chorus, which has been rated as above the average. The piece is beautifully mounted and the costumes are real thrillers. Matinees will be given on Wednesday and Saturday.

FOR FRENCH SUFFERERS.

A bazaar held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton, 28 Beaty avenue, in aid of the women and children sufferers of France, resulted in the very traiseworthy sum of nearly \$250. The musicale held under the same auspices at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bradshaw, No. 2 Schofield avenue, netted

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