WHEN FATHER TIME ENTERTAINS

When your guests first arrive they may feel a bit stiff or shy. If you can make them all forget themselves in the excitement of some unusual game or unique stunt they will soon be "quite at ease." Here are some suggestions.

People never tire of having their fortunes told, and if it is a clear starry night Father Time can take them out and pretend to read the stars. Before hand he will have read up on the subject of astrology. There are little books giving the characteristics of people born in the different months. These are usually on sale at newsstands.

Father Time's Fortunes. Asking the date of the birthday, Father Time will consult the book for that month by the light of his old lantern and with frequent glances at the stars will give them interesting facts about their virtues and shortcomings, their lucky days and special talents. If you are not able to procure the little books he can draw upon his own imagination and the following suggestions:

MARCH 21st-APRIL 19th—Aries.

Mental energy, often headstrong and impulsive, ambitious, independent, persistent, quick tempered, elevating ideality, pioneers and leaders, good executives, would do well as architects and designers—pen sketchers, writers, lecturers, milliners, auctioneers, reformers, promoters, electricians.

APRIL 20th-MAY 20th—Taurus.

Self-reliant, persistent, firm, careful, abhor pain, patience, secretive or reserved, practical, faithful friends, sincere, make excellent public servants, executive workers, bankers; can succeed as doctors, nurses, farmers, gardeners, financial agents, singers, actors, taxidermists.

MAY 21st-JUNE 20th—Gemini.

Sympathetic, kindhearted, affectionate, sensitive, individual, idealistic, studious, nervous, excellent reasoners, changeable, impulsive, like change; make good as bookkeepers, demonstrators, commercial travelers, writers, newspaper men, solicitors.

JUNE 21st-JULY 22nd—Cancer.

Quiet, reserved, sensitive, versatile, dramatic ability, industrious, prudent, frugal, retentive memory, fear ridicule, conventional; make good as actors, nurses, confectioners, cooks, dressmakers, hotel keepers, managers.

JULY 23rd-AUGUST 22nd—Leo.

Good natured, generous, natural leaders, determined, persistent, honest, conscientious, impulsive, intuitive, ardent and sincere. Make good as executives, writers, goldsmiths, lecturers, policemen, army mechanics.

AUGUST 23rd-SEPT. 22nd—Virgo.

Modest, contemplative, industrious, refined, desire wealth, active, not easily contented, blends the ideal with the practical, careful, keen, intellectual, and successful as authors, draftsmen, decorators, lawyers, philosophers.

SEPT. 23rd-OCT. 22nd—Libra.

Courteous, pleasant, agreeable, even tempered, affectionate, sensitive, peacemakers, modest; are fitted for influential posts, lecturers, librarians, writers, doctors, lawyers, actors, housekeepers, secretaries, carpenters.

OCT. 23rd-NOV. 21st—Scorpio.

Strong characters, shrewd, mentally suspicious, reserved, tenacious, secretive, fond of luxuries, but economical, quick, restless, energetic, make good as detectives, doctors, surgeons, chemists, druggists, lawyers, dentists, butchers, mechanics, soldiers, hotelkeepers.

NOV. 22nd-DEC. 21st—Sagittarius.

Jovial, hopeful, generous, self-reliant, enterprising, honest, good foresight, direct, great economist of time and energy, rarely fail, aggressive, aspiring, reserve power; make good as musicians, artists, writers, printers, cashiers, teachers, inventors, astronomers, horsemen, advance agents.

DEC. 22nd-JAN. 19th—Capricorn.

Quiet, thoughtful, good reasoners, practical, religious, prudent, faithful, economy, thrift, may rise in life through own efforts; make good as builders, designers, lawyers, ministers, miners, aviators, grocers, huge undertakings.

JAN. 20th-FEB. 18th—Aquarius.

Determined, quiet, patient, faithful, philosophical, refined, cautious, intellectual, discriminative, sympathetic, generous, often radical, easily influenced but can't be driven, artistic, make good as authors, lawyers, teachers, musicians, explorers, reformers, engineers, electricians.

FEB. 19th-MARCH 20th—Pisces.

Loving, kind, industious, methodical, logical, scientific, trustful, honest, amiable, idealistic, capable, orderly, precise, prudent, often modest and timid; make good as actors, teachers, language instructors, artists, milliners, tailors, nurses, sea captains, accountants, advance agents.

CLOCK GAME.

Form a large circle with one person called the Striker in the centre. Give each person an hour and if there are more than twelve use half hours. When the Striker touches a person he or she must immediately strike the hour and give a small pantomime of what it stands for. For instance, if he is twelve noon, he could pretend to eat, if twelve night, he could snore. And all this must be done before the striker counts fifteen. Continue until each person has had several turns.

FATHER TIME'S GRAB BAG.

If the party is made up of young people this will be good fun. Otherwise it might hurt some of the older folk's feelings, though almost anyone is fond of a joke. In an old sack tied up in many papers put enough articles for everyone present. Then give everyone a chance to find out what Father Time has in store for them. Huge spectacles, small battles of rheumatism liniment, red night caps, foot warmers, suggest themselves. A little bag full of pennies would denote wealth, a wreath made of shiny leaves and labelled "Fame" could be mixed in with the funny articles, a bottle of hair restorer, a wig, a pussy cat, signifying single blessedness, and several weights from a scale would of course mean added weight for the unlucky drawer.

FATHER TIME'S QUESTIONS.

Pencil games are always popular for a large party, especially when there is a surprise to work for.

1. What is Father Time's favorite pudding? (Hasty pudding.)

2. What is Father Time's favorite flower? (Four o'clock or century plant.)

3. What is his favorite furniture? (Time tables.)

4. What is his favorite bird? (Rooster.)

5. Give a timely verse.
(A few are suggested here, though many will occur to you.)
For instance:

"Turn backward, turn backward, oh, time, in thy flight,
Make me a child again just for tonight."

"Early to bed and early to rise,
Makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise."

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime
And departing leave behind us
Footprints in the sands of time."

6. Why does Father Time prefer country folk to city folk? (Because city folk are always punching the clock.)

7. Name everything you could find in a clock. (Face, hands, glass, wheels, works, figures, springs, bells, minutes, seconds, hours, etc.)

8. Why is a road going over a hill like a clock? (Because it winds up and runs down.)

9. Why is time like a bird? (Naturally because it flies.)

10. Put down all the times you can think of. (The list will vary but might contain all of these: Good time, bad time, right time, wrong time, standard time, daylight-saving time, summer time, winter time, day time, night time, ship's time, lost time, some time, high time, betimes, any time, and no time.)

For the best answers Father Time could award a subscription to a magazine, so they could keep up with the times. To the person who answers the least number of questions Father Time could give a time table to some funny place.

If you wish your guests to come in costume, ask them on the invitations to come dressed in timely garb. This will give a wide choice as they have the seasons, months, holidays, and various historical periods to choose from.

The costumes for winter, summer, spring, and autumn are not difficult to contrive, nor are costumes for the various months. For the holidays, there would of course be old St. Nick, a clown to represent April Fool's day, Jack Canuck for the First of July, a witch for Hallowe'en, and a man in overalls for Labor Day.

Guessing the days, months, or periods the various guests stand for will be mighty amusing, and where it is hard to do Father Time will ask them to either recite a verse giving a clue to their costume or give a short pantomime to enlighten the company.

Magic Colors.

The part played by color in our daily lives is only just beginning to be understood by science. Hitherto we have always taken colors for granted.

Recently Lord Chudleigh claimed that in the range of the spectrum lay the secret of happiness—a somewhat startling assertion, but one which is supported by many scientists.

So it seems quite possible that the physician of the future will, instead of writing out a prescription for some combination of drugs, give us a color prescription to cure our ills.

Some colors, say these discoverers, act as irritants, others as sedatives.

For instance, repeated experiments have proved that yellow is soothing to tortured nerves. Violet light causes bone to develop; blue is claimed to stimulate the growth of muscle tissue; green adds to our store of energy.

Already these facts are being enlisted in the task of curing the sick. There are now several nursing homes which specialize in distinctive colorings for the bed-rooms of various types of sufferers. The jaded will be stimulated by skyblue, the excited quieted by yellow, and so on.

The truth is, that most people, although they may be unaware of it, are influenced and affected by colors. Take, for example, the impression a room makes upon you when you enter it. What causes that impression? Setting aside the taste of the furnishings, there is but one thing: color.

In cities, where there is none too much sunlight, the object should be to procure the maximum of sunlight effect. This is now generally recognized. Hence the growing popularity of golden tints in mural decoration. They induce a feeling of freshness and happiness, just as browns and violet crimsons depress and distress the sensitive.

Carlyle A. King

Nineteen-year-old westerner, who is studying for his master's degree at the University of Toronto on a research fellowship, has been awarded the Saskatchewan I.O.D.E. overseas scholarship for $1,400. Mr. King, whose home is in Tugaske, Sask., graduated from the University of Saskatchewan this spring and will spend a year at Oriel College, Oxford.

Keen-Eyed Worms.

Glow worms and dragon flies have keen sight.

Forests in Sahara.

The Sahara desert once had dense forests, judging from ancient rock inscriptions.

A Classy Camel.

The name dromedary is most correctly applied to the better class breeds of one-humped camels.

Rafael Sabatini

Who has been said to write the best screen stories, studies small ship models of 17th and 18th century craft for the details he needs. He is shown at his desk in London, where he wrote Captain Blood, Sea Hawk, etc.

Revenge.

They had been married just long enough for him to realize that her cooking did not equal his mother's. One morning he happened to mention this.

But his wife was a modern woman, and, instead of weeping, she made a fresh cake alleged to be equal to anything he'd ever had before.

"Angel!" he cried upon tasting it, "this is superb—just like mother's! What a lucky man I am to have married such a wonderful girl! Tell me how you happened to hit on the recipe."

"It's no great secret" answered his angel wife, a glitter in her eyes. "I used margarine instead of butter, watered the milk, and dropped a chunk of alum in the flour!"

No Smart Man—

—Ever lets himself think that crookedness pays in the long run.

—Ever takes his criticism or his flattery at its face value.

—Ever worries over an anonymous letter.

—Ever imposes upon a friend he wants to keep.

—Ever tries to make a sale by impressing the customer with his smartness.

—Ever makes a display of his smartness without losing some of his reputation.

—Ever hoodwinked the Almighty even when he fools himself.

Shallow and Deep Ploughing.

Shallow plowing during four years at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, has given as large a yield of corn and oats as has deep plowing. It is necessary, however, says the Dominion Field Husbandman in his annual report for 1925, to do good plowing, to turn all the land and to cut and cover all the weeds. A table in the report shows that at four inches deep on light soil the yield of corn after sod averaged 21.71 tons and of oats after corn 69.2 bushels. At seven inches deep the average of corn was 21.45 tons and of oats 65.4 bushels. Last year was especially good for oats after corn, the yield at four inches being 95.5 bushels and at seven inches 78.6 bushels.

The Exception.

Husband (balancing the household budget)—"I don't believe I've made one extravagant expenditure so far, dear."

Wife—"But what about that fire extinguisher you bought a year ago? We've never used it once."

Speak to the Janitor.

"My apartment is just full of curios and antiques."

"That's too bad. Can't you do anything to get rid of them?"

Store seed corn in a dry place. If it has cured thoroughly, it can be hung overhead in the granary.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 1927

BY CAROLINE B. KING.

I always look forward eagerly to the week between Christmas and New Year's Day. It is the most blissful, serene week of the whole fifty-two to me, a time I can spend just as I please, a peaceful interlude between two great days, a sort of clearing-up period before I return to the comfortable routine of everyday affairs, which I shall welcome also, after all the festivities, just as I welcome the joys of home and shabby familiar clothes and humdrum pleasures after an exhilarating journey.

I like to spend these last seven days preparing for the New Year, clearing away all the odds and ends, solving the left-over problems, and banishing the bothers and worries I've saved up so long. like to check up with myself and decide what sort of homemaker I've been the past twelve months, what sort of neighbor, what sort of citizen.

It's a splendid way to clear the mental atmosphere, and when I have finished I feel I'm all ready to make a brand-new beginning. New Year's Day is not the world's birthday alone, it's everybody's birthday and we all have a chance to begin over again. The new milestone is clean and white and just filled with possibilities.

* * * *

One of the nicest things about this kind of stock taking is that it can go right on while one is dusting or darning or even cooking. I manage to go through my whole house—to be sure it's not very big—during my mental check-up, putting in a stitch here, a little patch there, making over half-worn sheets, transforming old tablecloths into excellent everyday napkins and table runners, getting some useful and very good-looking aprons from out-of-style gingham dresses, making dusters and holders from old and all but hopeless stockings, and getting as much fun out of it as though I were doing a piece of needlepoint embroidery.

Incidentally, I make a very careful list during my mending and make-over orgy, so that I know exactly what the home requires; now I am prepared to buy intelligently and economically when the January white-goods sales take place, and, by the way, I intend to include in my purchases then several unbleached muslin sheets of the best quality. They are durable, launder beautifully and wear indefinitely.

* * * *

One of the very first things I am going to do, however, after the New Year festivities are over, will be to supply myself with a little household kit of tools. It will contain a small supply of casters, an oil can filled with a good oil, a bar of hard yellow soap, a hammer, an assortment of nails and tacks, a jar of paste, some pieces of clean cloth and a screw driver. Perhaps later I'll even add a small plane and a saw. Then, once a month or so, I'll take my little kit on a tour through the house, easing squeaky doors, oiling hinges, soaping drawers that stick, mending torn wall paper, and doing all the little odd jobs that usually wait and wait until one's nerves and patience and sometimes temper are worn out.

I'll spend one day this month looking over the contents of my preserve closet and examining the canned fruits and vegetables. Some of the jars or cans may require attention and prompt action may save them. Then, if I find my stock of jams and marmalades is getting low, it will be really good fun some stormy day to replenish it with a few sweetmeats made from dried fruits, cranberries, raisins and apples.

The days will just fly, I'm thinking, and before we know it the fascinating seed catalogues will be making their appearance. I always like to have as much of the big midwinter work as possible out of the way when they arrive, so that I can give my whole attention to their glowing pages, make my seed and plant lists, and perhaps plan my garden on paper. I never realized until recently what a help a paper plan is in garden making. It saves both time and seeds when the planting season comes, and one doesn't have to be either an artist or a landscape gardener to do it, I've discovered.

* * * *

One of my friends has asked me to suggest a way for her to spend her Christmas-gift money. She says there isn't anything she needs at present, but very evidently the dollars are beginning to burn their proverbial hole. I wish she would put some of them in into the bank, and then try to add to them regularly each month. It's such a comforting thing to have a little nest egg all your own. You feel so secure to know it's there all safe, waiting to be used when some need arises, and perhaps, while it is waiting, it is gathering up a few more dollars in the way of interest. It's surprising how soon a mickle becomes a muckle when one gives it a chance.

Of all the letters that I have received for many a month, the one that appeals to me most, perhaps, is from a young housewife who writes:

"I don't think I'm a very good housekeeper. I know I do let the children get the house very untidy, and perhaps don't clean up as often as I should, for the children do so like to have me with them in their play, and they like to be with me helping when I cook and generally messing things. But I always feel that when they're all grown men and women they won't remember whether the house was always in apple-pie order, but they will remember, I know, that they had a jolly home."

Isn't she a wise woman?

On a Rainy Day.

The black umbrellas are like waves
upon an angry sea,
They are so sorry and so grim—it
somehow seems to me,
That folk should carry brighter hued
umbrellas in the rain,
To smile into the sullen sky and
make it glad again.

Umbrellas—red and green and blue.
The avenue would bloom
Like any garden through the mist—
there would be no more gloom.
Oh, faces would seem brighter far,
beneath a cheery glow,
And hearts would sing a happy song,
despite the rain, I know.

The sidewalks would reflect each tint
in tiny rainbow gleams,
That laughed and danced unceasingly
like friendly little dreams;
And folks would find that all the world
was pleasant and sincere,
And everyone would be as gay as if
the sky were clear.

The black umbrellas are like fears that
worry and distress,
They make us feel dissatisfied and
quarrelsome, I guess.
I think that folk should carry bright
umbrellas in the rain,
To smile upon the sullen sky and make
it glad again.

—Margaret Sangster.

Width of Ploughing.

Comparisons that have been made for four years at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, between narrow and wide plowing—that is, between 8 and 16 inches, have shown that the latter gives as large yield as the former. With furrows 8 inches in width the yield of corn after sod on light soil has averaged 22.71 tons and of oats also after sod 64.9 tons. At 16 inches the yield of corn has averaged 21.70 tons and of oats 66.9 tons. Drawing his conclusion, the Dominion Field Husbandman in his report for 1925 remarks that inasmuch as the wider furrows usually make possible the plowing of a larger acreage per day, it will be observed that it is more economical than plowing narrow furrows.

Many of those who are taken in never allow this fact to be found out.

Soil acidity is a big factor in winter-killing of wheat. Experiments show that fields receiving enough lime to overcome the natural acidity of the soil came through the past winter with a good stand of wheat. Plats not receiving lime were practically bare of wheat because of winter-killing. Barnyard manure was found to a small degree to reduce the losses, but not enough to warrant dependence on it for this purpose.

HOWLING FOR APPLES

One of the quaintest customs associated with New Year's Eve is "apple howling," which dates from very early times, and is still carried out with all the old-time formalities in many parts of England.

In the West Country the ceremony is known as "wassailing the apples," the wassailers being men and youths, who pass through the orchards beating the trees with sticks and sprinkling them with beer or cider.

This is done to the accompaniment of a kind of song, which calls for a blessing on the coming year's crop.

In some parts of the country one particular tree is chosen to represent the orchard, and cakes dipped in cider are hung upon its branches, after which the "howling" or "wassailing" proceeds in the usual way.

The "howlers" carry horn lanterns fitted with short tapers called "ghost candles." These are supposed to frighten off evil spirits, which are still further kept at bay by frequent prolonged blasts sounded on a cow's horn.

On the completion of the ceremony those taking part proceed together to the house of the owner of the trees, who regales them with cake, cider and nuts, supplemented, if the previous year's "howling" had been effective, by a plentiful supply of apples.

Learned men tell us that "apple howling" is a relic of paganism, the beer and cider used being in the nature of an offering poured out to Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruit trees.

FLOGGING THE COMMONERS.

A curious custom associated with New Year's Day is that known as "flogging the commoners," which has been carried out annually on this date for one thousand years at Malmesbury in Wiltshire.

Long ago King Athelstan gave to the commoners of Malmesbury 500 acres of land as a reward for driving out the Danes, and this land, which is still known as "The King's Heath," is to-day held in trust and regularly cultivated by their descendants.

No outsiders, excepting those who have married a commoner's daughter, have ever come into the king's gift.

Each man admitted to common rights is "flogged" by the bailiff with a hazel twig. At the same time he chants the ancient formula of initiation as follows: "Turf and twig I give to thee, the same as King Athelstan gave to me, and I hope a loving brother thou'lt be."

This is repeated at each plot, and the new owner rewards the bailiff with a shilling, presumably for his trouble in "flogging" him.

GIFTS OF NEEDLE AND THREAD.

Another quaint New Year's Day custom is enacted at Queen's College, Oxford.

This consists in the solemn presentation to each guest at "hall"—the college dinner—of a needle and thread. The gifts are in each instance handed to the recipients with the injunction: "Take this, and be thrifty."

The custom dates back more than five hundred years to the days of Prince Hal, son of King Henry IV. The young man had had his gown torn in one of the "town-and-gown" rows then and for long afterwards prevalent, and he appealed to his father to buy him a new one.

But the angry king refused point blank, and gave his son a lecture on his extravagance.

Afterwards the Prince, who was then a student at Queen's, made his appearance at "hall" with needles and thread hanging all over his gown, explaining that, in accordance with the commands of his royal father, he had been trying to mend the rents in the garment in the cause of economy.

A Glad New Year.

Hear the joybells gaily ringing on the
midnight air;
Listen to glad voices singing, singing
everywhere.
'Tis a new friend we are meeting,
with a smile of cheer,
Holding forth the hand of greeting to
our glad New Year.

Hear all round the joyful humming,
mortals, at their best.
Gladly "welcome in the coming, speed
the parting guest."
On no face is sorrow showing, not one
falling tear;
All are welcome sweet bestowing on
our glad New Year.

May he bring us joy and gladness,
free our hearts from care;
May his advent banish sadness, here
and everywhere;
May he usher in a measure of content-
ment dear;
May he prove a world-wide treasure,
this our glad New Year!

—Alice Wise.

Siftings From the Spice-Box.

—"The end of the season," remarked Johnny, holding up the empty pepper-box.

—A father's advice: "'Lay by something for a rainy day,' my son, even if it is only an umbrella."

—"Generous to a fault," is sometimes said of men who really are generous only to their own faults.

"I am jam full," as the boy said, slipping out of the preserve-closet.

The Blind Man's Bible.

The complete edition of the Bible, printed in Braille type, fills thirty-eight volumes and weighs 1¾ cwts.

MUTT AND JEFF—By Bud Fisher.

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