

Our News Snapshot Page

Shall We Have a Denatured Fourth?

Uncle Sam, in account with the celebration of Independence day (1903-1908)—

DEBIT:
1,316 deaths and 27,980 serious injuries, property loss amounting to millions of dollars.

CREDIT:
Jubilant and noisy outlet for the patriotic instincts of Americans, mainly youngsters anxious to celebrate the Fourth of July "fittingly."

By CHARLES N. LURIE.

So reads the account in the nation's books. In your opinion, reader, does it balance exactly? Or do you believe that the advocates of the "safe and sane Fourth," which have been making great gains, have the better of the argument?

Perhaps your enthusiasm for the noisy Fourth varies in inverse proportion to your age, as the mathematicians might say—that is, the greater the number of your years the smaller your amount of ability to find joy and patriotic inspiration in the sizz-boom-bang of what has come to be known as the conventional Fourth. If you can look backward over a long series of Fourth's, all of them marked to your personal knowledge by death and suffering and loss, perhaps you are less enthusiastic about the noisy celebration of Independence day than you were when you were younger.

On the other hand, if you are old enough to read this and yet young enough to feel a thrill instead of a groan when a big firecracker lets off its "bang," perhaps you think the danger of the Fourth of July has been grossly exaggerated. Probably deep down in your subconscious self you have a feeling that the Fourth is worth all that it costs.

If you belong to the former class and believe that the style of celebrating the Fourth that prevails generally is thoughtless, reckless, barbaric and destructive the people who are leading the crusade against it want your cooperation. If you are one of the latter unconvinced class your attention is invited again to the figures printed at the top of this article. They are not manufactured, exaggerated or colored. They are authentic and bona fide figures gathered by an able statistician employed by one of the leading newspapers of the country.

The "Safe and Sane" Argument.

These figures are impressive enough to give pause to the most enthusiastic of the believers in "letting the children enjoy themselves on the Fourth." "Certainly, let them enjoy themselves," say the advocates of the "safe and sane Fourth," "but let them do it without the frightful sacrifices entailed by the indiscriminate use of toy cannons, bombs, giant firecrackers, firearms and other death dealing agencies. We have no quarrel with the Fourth; we are as patriotic Americans as can be found, and we can discourse to you about the history of Independence day at least as intelligently as the advocates of the 'noisy Fourth.' But we believe, and a large part of the nation is coming around to our way of thinking, that the sacrifice of life and limb and property laid each year on the altar of the Fourth as a literal burnt offering is too great. Let us celebrate the Fourth as ardently as you and I wish, but for the sake of the mothers bereft each year of their children let us make the sacrifice as light as possible."

It is with this sort of argument, backed by figures such as those set forth above, that the men and women who are preaching against the perils of Independence day are re-enforcing

their cause and making recruits for it. The movement has made great advances this year. From almost every section of the country—one could almost say from every state—have come reports of the placing of greater restrictions on the sale of fireworks. Some cities have gone the length of abolishing altogether their sale, following in this respect the lead of Springfield, Mass., which decided several years ago that the lives and the safety of her youngsters were of more value to her than the boom and crackle of the individual setting off of fireworks. Her example was quickly followed by other cities and towns. This year no less than eighty cities and towns have either prohibited the sale of fireworks or have taken steps to provide their inhabitants with public shows and entertainments, such as the reading of the Declaration of Independence, patriotic orations by prominent men, the setting off of fixed fireworks under competent direction, etc. Some have adopted both measures.

The recent action of Mayor Gaynor of New York forbidding the sale of fireworks in the metropolis between June 10 and July 10 focused the country's attention on the subject. Other cities hastened to fall into line behind the metropolis. In Hamilton, O., an ordinance of similar effect was passed, and the city proceeded to buy up all of the fireworks within its limits. The money was subscribed by citizens. The fireworks will be set off in a public park on the night of July 4, and there will be the usual patriotic exercises.

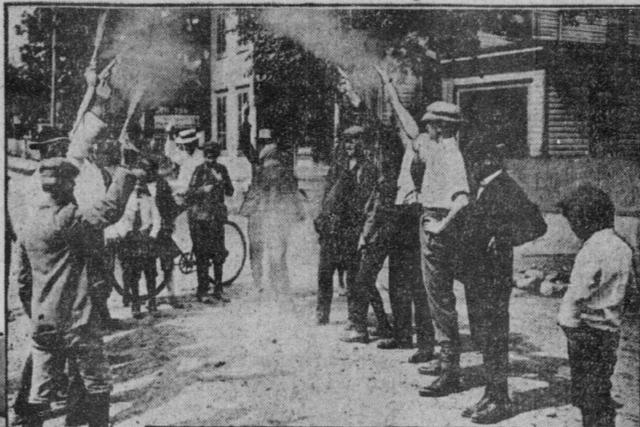
Some Unhappy Names for the Fourth.

A prime mover in the action against what has been called "the insane Fourth," "the slaughter of the innocents," "a holiday of disasters" and other opprobrious names is Mrs. Isaac L. Rice of New York, who came prominently before the public a few years ago as the founder and chief supporter of the Society for the Suppression of Unnecessary Noises. Mrs. Rice bases her objection against the style of celebrating the Fourth now generally prevalent not on the amount of noise it produces, but solely on the needlessness of the sacrifices made.

Early in the present year Mrs. Rice wrote to the governor of each state in the Union soliciting his official help in her furtherance of the celebration of the Fourth in "safe and sane" fashion. Ten of the governors replied, offering all the aid in their power. This encouraged Mrs. Rice to prepare a petition which asked the state legislatures to pass laws doing away with the sale of dangerous fireworks. Among the most ardent advocates of the newer celebration is Governor Weeks of Connecticut, who has been urging "a day of pleasure and profit instead of a day of unrest and horror."

The Other Side of the Argument.

Turning to the other side of the question, it must be admitted that the movement for a less dangerous Fourth has not met with unanimous approval. One of the newspapers of Washington commented thus caustically on the fact that the movement to raise \$5,000 for a formal celebration of the Fourth in



THE KID'S VIEW OF THE FOURTH.

By EARL MARBLE.
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My pa wants a Fourth that's safe and sane!
Well, wouldn't that jar you worse than the noise?
That kind of a Fourth might suit Mary Jane
And ma, but not on your life for the boys!
We're just wound up, and we've got to let go.
No matter what breaks, on the Fourth of July,
And pa can go driving and yell out "Whoa!"
In his funny way as the fireworks fly.

My pa isn't getting so very old,
But he's losing his memory awful fast.
He was full of pranks as his hide could hold,
As he could tell if he only darts.
For grandma said so herself, she did,
When he kicked last Fourth about the noise
And said he was just the awfulest kid—
He forgets about being one of the boys.

Or if pa wants a quiet Fourth of July
He might go out in a boat on the lake
In the country, like he did when a guy
And took ma out and made her quake—
She wasn't my ma then, only a girl—
But he rocked the boat, and her scream was immense,
So loud it just made his straight hair curl
And my cannon seem like thirty cents.

When I sat pa last Fourth of July
How he came to have a crippled hand—
For, you see, one hand is a finger shy—
He balked enough to beat the band.
"Twas an accident," was his reply,
And nothing more, but grandma said,
"He was firing an anvil Fourth of July
And come nigh losing his crazy head."

So I'm no worse, I reckon, than him.
Leastways I've got ten fingers, you bet!
And I'm just sound in life and limb
And up and having my bed made yet.
And when pa says a Fourth of July
"What's safe and sane for his I grin
And give a wink with the other eye
And duck to see the fun begin.



"HERE SHE GOES, FELLERS!"

the national capital showed signs of

dying ingloriously: "Are the old folks going to break their part with the young folks as to celebrating the Fourth of July? We put this question squarely up to the elders, because the fireworks committee is making the S O S signal. The zest and enthusiasm which marked the inauguration of the new style of patriotism has about petered out.

"Would the boys and tomboys promise to let off burning their fingers and blowing their eyes out and setting fire to awnings and show windows and exploding cannon crackers under people's feet in return for the privilege of enjoying from a safe distance at the close of a sleepy and prudish day a display of fireworks on an elaborate

scale, typifying great events in the history of the republic? Without waiting for an answer from the youngsters the grownups stopped the sale of fireworks and got up a celebration by contract.

"It proved all it was advertised to be spectacularly, but popularly it did not enjoy a responsive chord. With the vital element of spontaneity lacking, with the real spirit of the day chilled to a perfunctory shout, the Fourth of the forefathers became a barren idealism, an emasculated joy. The elders no less than the kids realized that the new departure took them too far from the spirit of '76, and unless the movement can be galvanized and given a fresh start on a more liberal basis it is booked to die of inanition.

"Again we put the question in behalf of the fireworks committee, Are the old folks going to break their part with Young America as to celebrating Independence day?"

Young America Not Unanimous.

The Washington editor is at fault in at least two particulars. In the first place, Young America is not quite as unanimous about the noisy celebration of the Fourth of July as he would have us believe. There is no evidence that

the boys and girls of cities in which the sale of fireworks has been prohibited are less patriotic than those in the cities in which the other style of celebration will prevail.

In the second place, the scribe is probably mistaken in his reference to "the Fourth of the forefathers." To them Independence day was an occasion for solemn rejoicing, not of loud celebration. Witness the views of John Adams, signer of the Declaration of

Independence and later second president of the United States, as expressed in a letter to Mrs. Adams in July, 1776: "I am apt to believe that it [Independence day] will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward, forevermore." You will observe that he spoke of the use of guns. Did he mean that the guns were to be intrusted to irresponsible youngsters, as they are today?

World's Newest Baby Nation



HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
CAPE TOWN

GOVERNMENT SQUARE,
PRETORIA



VISCOUNT
GLADSTONE

years, if, indeed, it would ever have come. There seems to be no fear that the cry, "Taxation without representation is tyranny," the slogan of the American patriots in '76, will ever be heard in South Africa. The four colonies which form the Union of South Africa have not only the union parliament to consider measures relating to their joint interests, but each of the four—Cape Colony, the Orange River Colony, Natal and the Transvaal—has its own council, consisting of as many members as the colony is entitled to send to the union parliament. All matters of provincial interest are thus certain of a full discussion and airing.

The inauguration of the first parliament of the union, in the fall, will be made the occasion of great pomp and ceremony. In recognition of the importance of the event the King

Edward planned to send the heir to the throne, now King George, to open the parliament in the name of the sovereign. Death intervened, and the new king has named to go in his stead the Duke of Connaught, his uncle.

A few years ago King Edward declared in a speech that the union of the South African colonies was "very near to his heart." It is believed that the steps leading to the new union were submitted for his majesty's very careful consideration and that he thought great good would come of the union. The development of the resources of the country required the tranquillization of its government, a strong central form of administration and the elimination of the causes of friction between the important British and Boer elements of the populace. It was believed that the white men, of Anglo-Saxon and of Dutch descent,

must stand shoulder to shoulder in facing the very serious negro problem of South Africa, among other matters that required concerted action and disinterested work for the good of the country.

It is by no means a small country that has been brought into legislative unity in the new government. The combined area of the four colonies comprised in the union is 467,291 square miles. There are 1,118,185 persons of white descent and 4,061,117 negroes. The largest and most populous of the four colonies is Cape Colony, with 276,995 square miles, 580,330 white inhabitants and 1,825,172 colored. The imports of Cape Colony from Great Britain in 1908 amounted to more than \$5,000,000 and the exports to more than \$4,000,000. The second of the four colonies in size and importance is the Transvaal, the third is the Orange River Colony and the fourth is Natal. By an ingenious compromise the branches of government of the united colonies are divided among three of them. After a long discussion of the best possible site for the capital of the union it was decided to make Cape Town, in Cape Colony, the seat of the legislature; Pretoria, in the Transvaal, the seat of the executive government, and Bloemfontein, in the Orange River Colony, the seat of the judiciary. It is believed that this is the first time in the history of the world that a compromise of this sort has been effected.

The assembling of the new parliament in the fall, probably in September, will bring together some of the most interesting men in the world. First and foremost of them will be General Louis Botha, head of the first union cabinet ministry of united South Africa. He is the same General Louis Botha whose name was in the mouth of all the world ten years ago as commander of the Boer forces fighting against Great Britain and defeating them in such terrible battles as those at Colenso and Spion Kop. The years that have passed have transformed him from one of the most determined and able of the foes of Great Britain in South Africa into a firm believer in the unity of the British empire and in the justice of its rule in South Africa. Prior to his assumption of the office of premier of the new colony he was prime minister and minister of agriculture of the Transvaal. Through the change in his political convictions General Botha has managed to retain the good will of his fellow Boers, and he is today their acknowledged leader.

Among the other men who will invest the new parliament with immense interest are the governor general of the union, Viscount Gladstone of Harwarden, son of the famous statesman who declared thirty years ago his belief in the advisability of uniting the colonies of British South Africa into one strong central government.

ROBERT DONNELL.

On the "Stern and Rock Bound Coast"

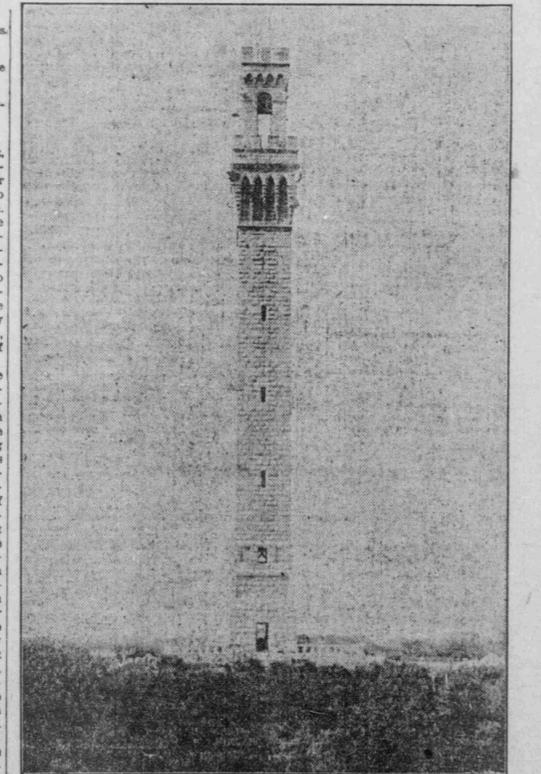
The pilgrim spirit has not fled.
It walks in noon's broad light,
And it watches the bed of the glorious,
Dead.
With the holy stars by night,
It watches the bed of the brave who have
bled
And shall guard this icebound shore
Till the waves of the bay where the May-
flower lay
Shall foam and freeze no more.

Sung the Rev. John Pierpont, poet, descendant of the pilgrim fathers and grandfather of the famous financier who took his Christian name from him. The pilgrim spirit of which he wrote will have occasion to rejoice this summer in its own quiet, subdued manner, for it will receive convincing evidence that it has been transmitted to the descendants of the men and women who founded New England. The evidence has taken shape in the lofty pilgrim memorial at Provincetown, Mass., which awaits the convenience of President Taft for its dedication.

The pilgrim memorial is the outcome of the efforts of several years by patriotic men and women who saw unbecoming neglect of the memory of an important historic occurrence in the fact that the place of the first landing of the pilgrim fathers in America was unmarked by a fitting monument. Almost every one who thinks himself acquainted by the primary facts of American history believes that the pilgrim fathers and mothers set foot first on the famous rock at Plymouth. The town on the inner side of Massachusetts bay is made the destination yearly of thousands of patriotic travelers. But they err in thinking that in paying veneration to the rock under the stone canopy at Plymouth they are setting foot on the first place in New England trod by white men. That honor belongs to Provincetown, Mass., the village on the inner side of the fish-hook barb of which Cape Cod is the shaft. It lies across the bay from Plymouth, in an easterly direction. The date was Nov. 1, 1620, old style.

It was just before the landing was made at the spot which is now Provincetown that the pilgrims signed their immortal agreement for the "better ordering and preservation and furtherance" of their colony that has been called the first written constitution in the world. Abraham Lincoln declared that this document did more for human liberty than the great charter won by the barons from King John at Runnymede.

There will be imposing ceremonies at Provincetown when the new memorial is dedicated, probably in August. In addition to the president of the United States, dignitaries of the commonwealth of Massachusetts and others will be present. The historical ad-



PILGRIMS' MONUMENT AT PROVINCETOWN, MASS.

dress will be delivered by President Emeritus Elliot of Harvard. The cornerstone of the monument was laid Aug. 20, 1907, by former President Roosevelt, but he will probably be in the west when the monument is dedicated. The monument is 252 feet and 7 inches high and is constructed of Maine granite. It is modeled after the famous tower of the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena, Italy, which is considered one of the most beautiful campaniles,

or bell towers of Italy. The construction of the Provincetown tower was supervised by engineers of the army. It rests upon a concrete foundation six feet thick. The monument cost about \$100,000, of which \$40,000 was contributed by the national government and \$25,000 by the state of Massachusetts. The remainder was raised by private subscription through the efforts of the Cape Cod Pilgrim Memorial association.

WILLIAM HENDERSON.