JULY WOURTH

When the clock struck four, I was on the floor, The bells began to ring and the cannon to roar, The guns to fire and the crackers to snaphis is the Fourth of July.



NCE upon a time-if you are exacting as to dates, the time fell between 1836 and 1860-there was a country parson who kept a record of his Fourths. In the year 1855 he broke into poetry and the quoted quatrain was the result. This record of his Pourths, taken from his journal, was published in the Atlantic Monthly.

reasons, all excellent in their way, did not keep this esteemed magazine closed to the eyes of boyhood, it is to be feared that this parson, despite his poetry, would be voted a cross old man. For when the Fourth fell on Sunday he saw no reason why it should be celebrated on any other day or in any fashion not in keeping with a seemly observance of the Sabbath. Instead of gladly accepting the bounty of the calendar and having a trilogy, a series of three dramatic and exciting days traught with danger and delight, this gloomy

a sermon and a prayer. In his records can be found testimony against

personage would have limited the day's events to

him, for they read:

July 4, 1847. Sunday "July 5. Monday morning. This is celebrated as the Fourth of July very improperly. Yesterday was the day and ministers might have preached upon the subject of religious freedom; this would have been sufficient and ought to have been satisfactory. But no; there must be noise, the drum must beat and the cannon roar, the children be dressed in their best and paraded, and 'Don't these children look nice?

Oh, yes, very nice, but if their parents would teach them to respect their superiors and behave with propriety it would be far better. Well, there has been a general turnout, rich and poor, young and old, all mixed up together. This is a free country-but not so, it is a country of slave holders. We hold 3,000,000 of our fellow mortals as slaves-and how inconsistent."

"July 4, 1852. Sunday.

"July 5. Monday.

The community were not satisfied to have yesterday as being the Fourth of July because they could not serve Satan so openly and boldiy as today. My opinion is that when the Fourth of July comes on the Sabbath it ought to be remembered in a suitable and proper manner by assembling in the sanctuary and hearing the proclamation of peace announced from the pulpit, good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people.' Suitable prayers and suitable readings would be a suitable acknowledgment that our blessings are of God, but because this won't do we must have a great noise and bustle and much that is derogatory to the Christian character must be put in operation.".

He didn't like the methods of celebration any better when the glorious day fell in the middle of the week, for July 4, 1849, he wrote:

"Wednesday. At the rising of the sun the bells of the city are ringing and the cannon roaring calling upon those within hearing to awake, arise and call upon their God, and give him thanks for thig great blessing, our national independence. which we this day commemorate by making all the noise we can and by acting as well as we can and as bad as we can."

All of which would justify any boy in the bellef that though the parson may have been a God-fearing personage who walked the narrow path all his godly days and was never even tempted by a lingering desire for pleasant primrose byways, he must certainly have been rather an unpleasant person to live with and that the milk of human kindness which was his portion, though it may not have soured, was as certainly lacking in cream.

How different was the letter which John Adams in the first flush of joy over the adoption by congress of the Declaration of Independence, wrote to his wife. Its date, July 3, may give some ardent young Americans excuse for firing their crackers before the dawn of the day which even lawmakers say may have its claim shattered into flery noise.

This first historic Adams, first vice-president, second president of the republic which he helped to bring into being, was a good husband. Busy as he must have been, for he was a foremost figure in the stirring events, "the Atlas of Independence," the "Colossus of that debate" which preceded the vote on the nation-making resolution, he wrote on July 3 two letters to his wife, Abigail. In one he said: "Yesterday the greatest question was decided which ever was debated in America; and a greater perhaps never was, nor will be, decided among men. A resolution was passed without one dissenting colony, that these united colonies are and of right ought to be, free and independent states." In the other: "The second day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable epoch in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it 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, bells, bonfires and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forevermore You will think me transported with enthusiasm, but I am not. I am well aware of the toll and blood and treasure that it will cost us to maintain this declaration and support and defend these states. Yet through all the gloom I can see the rays of ravishing light and glory. I can see that the end is more than worth all the means; and that posterity will triumph in that day's transaction, even though we should rue it, which I trust to God we shall not."

Though posterity selected, instead of July 2. July 4, the day on which the formal Declaration

of independence prepared by a committee of five, headed by Thomas Jefferson, was discussed and accepted, the resolution for independence was, as

these letters show, really adopted July 2.

It took a long time for the petitioners of the colonies to conceive of independence. Leaders like Samuel Adams waxed impatient with those who believed a peaceful settlement of the trouble was possible without separation from the mother country. Yet Washington in the first congress denied that the colonies desired or that it was to their interest to set up for independence. Franklin looked upon it as an event which, if it must come, was lamentable.

Lexington and Concord and Bunker hill favored the radicals. June 7, 1776, Richard Henry Lee of the Virginia delegation, following the instructions which he had received from the council of Virginia, presented a resolution, "That these united colonies are and of right ought to be free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown; that all political connection between them and Great Britain is and ought to be totally dissolved." John Adams seconded the motion and a debate followed. There are no authentic reports of these debates. The war had not yet been won. Public report of what was said would have been of extreme danger to these men, who, indeed, would have been hanged had good King George been able to get them, but hanging men is like making rabbit ple-you must first catch the rabbit.

It is likely that those who led the debate in support of the measure were John and Samuel Adams, Roger Sherman, Oliver Wolcott, Richard Henry Lee and George Wythe. Those opposing were probably John Dickenson, John Jay, James Wilson and Robert R. Wilson. It appeared that four New England colonies, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and three southern colonies, Virginia, Georgia and North Carolina, were prepared to vote at once in the affirmative, but as unanimity was desired a final vote vas postponed until July 1, and a committee composed of Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Roger Sherman and Robert R. Livingston, was appointed to prepare a formal statement for the world.

Lee, the mover of the resolution, would perhaps have been named chairman of the committee had not his wife fallen III. As it was, Jefferson received the honor and save for a few alterations by Franklin and Adams the Declaration of Independence was written by him. The original draft in the state department in Washington, save for these interfineations by Franklin and Adams, is to his handwriting

July 1 debate was resumed on the Lee resolution. July 2 all the delegates but those from New York voted in favor of it and it was of this action that John Adams wrote to his wife. The original resolution having been carried, the formal declaration prepared by the committee to show a due respect for the opinions of mankind was reported and discussed until late July 4, when it was finally accepted and signed by the president of the congress, John Hancock, and the secretary. Within a week the provincial congress of New York expressed its approval. August 2 an engrossed copy of the declaration was laid before congress and received the signatures of delegates from 12 colonies, 56 in all, though Matthew Thornton of New Jersey did not sign until November.

Grim jests were passed. Hancock, writing his name large, said that John Bull could read it without spectacles and impressed upon his comrades that since the fatal die was cast they must "all hang together in this matter," which gave Franklin a chance for his bon mot, "Yes, indeed, we must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately."

A fat delegale-some say it was Harrison, others that it was Carter Bruxton of Virginia-said to one of light weight, either Carroll of Carrollton or Gerry of Massachusetts: "When it comes to hanging I shall have greatly the advantage, for my neck would be broken at once, while I fear you will dangle in the air and hang for some time." The first public celebration of the Declaration

of Independence was probably that of July 8, 1776, when John Nixon read the statement in the yard of the statehouse in Philadelphia and the king's arms were taken down in the courtroom. In New

In 1777, in honor of the first anniversary of the glorious day, every soldier was ordered an extra gill of rum. In 1778 the general orders read: "Tomorrow, the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, will be celebrated by firing 13 pieces of cannon and a feu de joie of the whole line." Even as early as that parades were in order. A description of one shows that elaborate hair dressing is not of the twentieth century only and that the Tories were not so insignificant as to escape notice.

"We had a magnificent celebration of the anniversary of independence when handsome fireworks were displayed. The Whigs of the city dressed up a woman with the monstrous headdress of the Tory ladies and escorted her through the streets with a great concourse of people. Her head was elegantly and expensively dressed. I suppose about three feet high and proportionate width, with a profusion of curls. The figure was droll and occasioned much mirth. It has lessened some heads already and will probably bring the rest within the bounds of reason, for they are monstrous indeed. The Tory wife of Dr. Smith has christened the figure Contenella, or the Duchess of Independence, and prayed for a pin from her head by way of relic. The Tory women are very much mortified notwithstanding this."

Barbecues, fireworks, parades, picnics, white dresses-these seem early to have become a part of the day's celebration. Noise and accidents. also, early developed. Julia Ward Howe, in her reminiscences, tells that she remembers her own distress as a child because the Democratic mayor of New York, Gideon Lee, prohibited home fireworks. Fortunately for her and her sisters and brothers, they lived next door to the mayor and he made an exception in their favor.

In 1857 she listened to the ode written by Emerson and read in the town hall at Concord July 4, 1857. Perhaps he caught the spirit of even the day's noise better than the other parson. At least he wrote more kindly of it:

The cannons boom from town to town. Our pulses beat not less, The joy bells chime their tidings down, Which children's voices bless,

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Or Scrambled It.

Shirts-of the "boiled" variety-are often very refractory, and it takes more than courage and patience to put one on. Mr. Jones, one evening, struggling into his, which was fresh from the laundry, remarked to Mrs. Jones that it was a foolish custom, this wear ing of stiff shirts. A writer in Tit-Bits tells the story.

"We've got plenty of time, dear," said his wife. "I guess the only trouble is that the girl boiled it a little

"Looks to me as if she had fried it." said Mr. Jones, as his head emerged. -Youth's Companion.

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It is curious to see how the space clears around a man of decisive spirit and leaves him room and freedom .-John Foster.

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