

No. 60

A SAFE AND PATRIOTIC FOURTH

BY

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NEW YORK CITY

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The following letter from the Governor of Oregon arrived too late to be included in *The Forum* Article.

STATE OF OREGON
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

SALEM, February 24, 1910.

DEAR MADAM: In reply to your favor of recent date, I beg to advise that I am heartily in favor with the objects of the Society for the Suppression of Unnecessary Noise, and I believe that the efforts of your organization will in time bring about a safe and sane observance of our National Independence Day. Good patriotic men and women in all parts of the country should cooperate with your organization in order to bring about the desired results. I do not believe that the signers of the Declaration of Independence, when they affixed their signatures to that immortal document, ever had in mind the character of celebration that we witness annually in our large cities.

I have always been a believer of appropriate patriotic celebrations, and would not care to see any of our time-honored customs discontinued, but the present method of celebrating the Fourth of July has passed beyond the bounds of reason, and the time has come for a wholesome reform. Let us always appropriately celebrate the anniversary of our National Independence, but let there be no features of our celebration that will endanger life, limb, or property.

Wishing you and your society success in your most laudable undertaking, I am,

Very sincerely yours,
FRANK W. BENSON.

For a Safe and Sane Fourth

By Mrs. Isaac L. Rice

THE question of putting an end to the barbarity of our present observance of Independence Day is now assuming an importance undreamed of several years ago. No longer need one fear to be branded with the stigma of disloyalty to country if one inveighs against the madness of parents who place dangerous explosives in the hands of their little ones, or protests vehemently against the crime of permitting wee children to be maimed and killed in the celebration of a holiday. Partly as a result of the untiring efforts of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in compiling statistics of the cost of our observance of the Fourth, a wave of indignation is sweeping over the country, and the time now certainly seems ripe for some concerted action for the protection of our boys and girls.

Several months ago, the Society for the Suppression of Unnecessary Noise, through its President, began a new line of work in its endeavor to establish a sane and safe observance of Independence Day. This consisted in interviewing, by means of correspondence, men whose names would carry weight in any cause and who could never, by any stretch of imagination, be deemed unpatriotic or indifferent to matters affecting the public welfare. Letters, petitions, and literature were sent to Governors of all the States, to Mayors, to Fire Chiefs, to Commissioners of Health, to Heads of Police Departments, and to Presidents of Colleges. The State Executives were asked to permit their names to be placed on a National Committee for the promotion of a safe and sane Fourth, and the others were asked to express their opinion on the necessity for the agitation. In response to this request, much valuable material has reached us, all of which, as a splendid manifestation of enlightened and humane patriotism, deserves to be made public. As the limited space of a magazine article, however, would not admit of this I shall only give the letters from the Executives in their entirety, and, from the other communications, shall simply make extracts. They need no comment, for they speak with a note of authority that renders superfluous any word of mine. Indeed, it is scarcely necessary to say that no article from a single pen could rival in interest this symposium of those whose high

position, official duties and intellectual attainments command the respect of the public.

The first letter is from the Governor of Illinois:

DEAR MADAM: Your letter with reference to the formation of a national committee composed of the governors of the States to promote the sane and safe observance of Independence Day is received. I appreciate the value of the suggestion and shall be glad to coöperate with the other governors in bringing about the abandonment of the noisy and dangerous use of fireworks and explosives to which so much suffering and loss of property are due every Fourth of July. I am glad that such a movement has been entered upon to bring about this result. This plan I am sure will be far more effectual in securing a more rational observance of the national holiday than the usual proclamations issued by the mayors and police authorities of cities each year. These have proven almost invariably a dead letter and have been totally disregarded. Wishing you success in your laudable efforts, I am,

Yours truly,

C. S. DENEN.

The next is from the Governor of Wisconsin:

DEAR MADAM: I am in receipt of your letter, with enclosures, relating to the effort being made to promote a safe and sane celebration of the Fourth of July. I agree with you that the truest patriotism consists in living and working for our country—not in dying or in placing ourselves in such positions that we are liable to be maimed,—and I am in hearty sympathy with the efforts that are being made to secure a sanely patriotic safe celebration of our national holiday. I shall be very much pleased to give every assistance within my power to promote the objects for which you are striving. You are hereby authorized to use my name as a member of the national committee for the promotion of a safe and sane Fourth of July in any way which will further the objects of the organization. Thanking you for your courtesy, and wishing you all success, I am,

Very truly yours,

J. O. DAVISON.

The third is from the far Northwest, from the Governor of Washington:

DEAR MADAM: Your kindness of December 3d, addressed to the late Governor Cosgrove, relative to a safe and sane observance of Independence Day, placed upon my desk for reply. Agreeable thereto would say that I will certainly be very much pleased to do what I can toward securing a more rational observance of our National Birthday, and if you so desire I shall be pleased to join with the other Governors in the formation of a National Committee to bring about a less noisy and more patriotic observance of our National Day. I am,

Very respectfully yours,

M. E. HAY.

And next, one from the Governor of Vermont:

MADAM: I am in receipt of yours of the 21st, and I shall certainly be very glad to do anything I can to assist in promoting a sane and safe Independence Day Celebration, and should be glad to coöperate in any way that I am able to that end.

Yours very sincerely,

G. H. PROUTY.

From the Governor of Montana came the following:

DEAR MADAM: Your letter dated December 22d relative to the same observance of the Fourth of July, has been received. I assure you that I am in thorough sympathy with the movement and shall be pleased to coöperate in any way possible in its furtherance.

Yours truly,

EDWIN L. NORRIS.

And this, from the Governor of South Carolina:

DEAR MADAM: Your letter of the 21st instant, asking the use of my name as a member of the national committee for the promotion of a safe and sane Fourth of July, has been received, and I thank you very much for the same. I have also received copies of letters received by you from other governors, and I join with them in wishing you great success in the movement you have on foot. I think a moderate amount of celebration on this occasion is permissible, but the use of great crackers, firearms and other things of that kind are the cause often of accidents, and I shall be glad to do anything I can in a reasonable way to help the cause.

Yours very respectfully,

M. F. ANSEL.

From another Southern State, Alabama, came this letter:

DEAR MADAM: Yours asking for coöperation from the State Executives in the suppression of unnecessary noise received and noted. Thank you for the invitation. Agreeing with you fully, I would suggest adding another line. For the suppression of suicides. You will easily recall the many deaths as a result of explosives used in celebrating the Fourth of July. With regards, I am,

Yours very truly,

B. B. COMER.

The Governor of Delaware wrote:

DEAR MADAM: Your letter of January the 21st has been received. The movement for the promotion of a safe and sane Fourth of July meets with my hearty approval. I will gladly coöperate with your society, and join with the Governors of other States in bringing about this reform.

Yours very truly,

SIMEON S. PENNEWILL.

From North Dakota, this:

MY DEAR MADAM: In answer to yours of recent date I will say that I shall be glad to act with you in securing a safe and patriotic observance of our National Holiday. The explosives used are becoming more dangerous every year. When I was a boy there was no such thing as a giant firecracker and the firecrackers used were small and almost harmless compared with those of to-day. I am willing to lend what assistance I can.

Very sincerely yours,

JOHN BURKE.

And this from the East, Massachusetts:

DEAR MADAM: Your letter of the 21st instant has been received. I am perfectly willing that you should use my name in the manner indicated in favor of a safer July Fourth. I do not object to the noise so much as I do to the danger to our children and young people through an indiscriminate use of dangerous explosives.

Yours very truly,

EBEN S. DRAPER.

From Maryland:

MY DEAR MADAM: In reply to your letter, addressed to the Governor, he directs me to say that he shall be very glad to act as a member of the National Committee for the promotion of the safe and sane Fourth of July.

Yours very truly,

EMERSON R. CROTHERS (Sec'y).

This, from Colorado:

DEAR MADAM: I am in receipt of your letter of January 21st, and in reply thereto would say that I have no objection to my name being used in connection with the promotion of a safe and sane Fourth of July. I have long felt that the injuries and loss of life, occasioned by the present method of celebrating the Fourth, were a great reflection upon our intelligence. I wish you well in every particular in your excellent movement.

Yours truly,

JOHN F. SHAFBOTH.

From another Western State, Nevada, I received the following letter:

DEAR MADAM: I am in receipt of your letter of January 21st requesting me to act as a member of the National Committee for the Promotion of a Safe and Sane Fourth of July. I shall be pleased to act as a member of such committee and to assist in any way I can to further the objects for which the committee is formed.

Sincerely yours,

D. S. DICKERSON.

The Governor of South Dakota sent me this:

MY DEAR MRS. RICE: Your favor of the 21st received to-day with enclosures. The contents of your letter has been noted with care, and I assure you that I shall be glad to act with you in regard to bringing about a safe and sane Fourth. I shall also be pleased to act on your National Committee if there is anything that I can do to assist in furthering the work you have undertaken. With good wishes for the success of the movement, I am,

Very respectfully yours,

R. S. VESSEY.

Coming back again to the East, this from Maine:

DEAR MADAM: I am in receipt of your letter of January 21st in relation to a safe and sane Fourth of July. The alarming list of accidents that is annually

brought to our attention as a result of the reckless use of dangerous explosives certainly warrant the effort your Society is making to bring about a more rational observance of our National Holiday. If I can coöperate with the Executives of other States to aid the movement it will assuredly give me pleasure to do so.

Very truly yours,

BERT M. FERNALD.

And once more from the West, Idaho, came another endorsement:

MY DEAR MADAM: I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of December 21st calling my attention to a letter from Governor Deneen of Illinois, both with reference to the formation of a National Committee of the Governors of the several States to promote a sane observance of Independence Day. I heartily agree with the sentiments expressed by Governor Deneen. I shall be pleased to coöperate with your society and with the Governors of the several States in this regard. Trusting that your efforts will meet with a full measure of success, I beg to remain,

Very truly yours,

J. H. BRADY.

And from Tennessee:

DEAR MADAM: In reply to your favor of the 21st instant, will state that I shall be very glad to serve as a member of the National Committee for the promotion of a safe and sane Fourth of July, as requested by you. Thanking you, and wishing you success in your undertaking, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

MALCOLM R. PATTERSON.

From New Jersey I received the following:

DEAR MADAM: Your letter to the governor has been received. He is entirely willing for you to use his name in connection with a safe and sane Fourth of July, and he will be very glad to serve you in any way that he can.

Very truly yours,

LESLIE R. FORT (Sec'y).

Governor Weeks of Connecticut wrote as follows:

DEAR MADAM: I am in receipt of your favor of the 21st instant. I most certainly am favorably disposed toward any movement that will insure a sane and safe Fourth. I, with the hosts of others in our country, feel that the dangerous use of explosives at that season has passed all bounds of reason, and I will gladly coöperate in any way I can toward this desired reform. I am,

Respectfully,

FRANK B. WEEKS.

This cordial note of approval came from Minnesota:

DEAR MADAM: Replying to your valued favor of December 22d I take pleasure in saying that I am in hearty accord with the objects of your society and will be

glad to coöperate in any movement to aid in bringing about the reforms for which it is laboring. Kindly advise me as the movement progresses, if I can be of any further service and believe me to be,

Very truly yours,

A. EBERHARDT.

Governor Warner of Michigan wrote:

DEAR MADAM: I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your esteemed favor of January 21st. I take pleasure in complying with your request regarding the use of my name as a Member of the National Committee for the Promotion of a Safe and Sane Fourth of July.

Very truly yours,

FRED M. WARNER.

And from Louisiana came the last:

MY DEAR MADAM: In reply to your communication of January 21st I desire to say that I heartily approve of the object for which the Society for the Suppression of Unnecessary Noise was formed. I am very glad, indeed, to add my indorsement to the movement for a sane Fourth of July. I will be glad to encourage and assist in the movement in every way possible.

Respectfully yours,

J. Y. SANDERS.

No less encouraging than the replies from the Executives have been the answers received from the Mayors of many cities, who have put themselves on record as being opposed to the present celebration of the Fourth. From cities north, east, south and west, from cities large and small, have come words of endorsement and approval and, almost invariably, offers of assistance. Trenton, for instance, is evidently preparing for a sane Fourth, if one may judge from the reply sent me by Mayor Madden:

I beg to state that I am in hearty sympathy with this movement. When one reflects upon the frightful number of fatalities and accidents which have annually resulted from our thoughtless and barbarous manner of celebrating this National Holiday, it behooves every thoughtful person to contribute some aid toward a more sane method of expressing our patriotic feelings on this day. I have appointed a committee of twenty-five representative citizens to arrange for a safe and sane celebration of Independence Day, on July Fourth, 1910, in the city of Trenton.

The same attitude regarding this matter is manifested by Mayor Edgerton of Rochester, who, for a long time, has been working for a better observance of Independence Day:

I am in hearty sympathy with any movement to bring about a safer and

more rational celebration of the Fourth of July. We can show our patriotism just as effectively without the use of explosives, which annually causes the loss of so many lives and involves the destruction of so much property.

"Let the good work go on!" is the language of the Mayor of Duluth, while the Mayor of Chattanooga stated that our petition had not only his signature but his hearty endorsement. The Mayor of Bridgeport wrote:

The real significance of our National Holiday seems to elude the majority of our youths, who look upon it as a day of license to carry and discharge diabolical weapons and thundering explosives. Anything that will tend to correct this erroneous idea of celebrating will surely be welcomed by all thinking people.

In a communication from Mayor Mahool we learn in how drastic a manner Baltimore is engaged in the fight against the slaughter on Independence Day and about its protective ordinance:

"As mayor," he stated, "I have the right to grant a permit free of charge for the explosion of fireworks, but in the three years I have been in office, I have not granted a permit of this nature, with the result that the Fourth of July in Baltimore is celebrated in a safe and sane manner, the day being given up to celebrations of a patriotic character."

A most interesting letter has reached me from Mayor Meals of Harrisburg:

We appreciate the spirit that actuates our American people in celebrating this glorious event, but we are not unmindful of the fact that there is a danger of going to extremes, which in my opinion is not an observance of the great principles of Independence Day, but rather a noisy demonstration for personal gratification. This department is in hearty sympathy with the movement that has been inaugurated, and we are satisfied that the determined effort upon the part of yourself and others who may be interested with you, will result in a far more effectual and rational observance of the National Holiday than are such methods that bring disaster and sorrow to our homes.

From Hartford came the following:

Your work in interesting the Nation is certainly producing good results in very many cities, and I am glad to heartily commend the unselfish service that you have given which has accomplished so much for the benefit of all our people.

In his letter to me the Mayor of Nashville touched upon a point which seems strange to Northerners—I refer to the custom prevalent in the South of celebrating Christmas with pistols and fireworks:

Here in the South, it is the custom to celebrate Christmas with fireworks, toy pistols, cannon crackers, and various devices that cause death and injury to our children. I think the work you are engaged in will be a great benefit to the rising generation and I am willing to help you in any way that I can.

And this, from the Northwest, Portland:

I am in hearty sympathy with the movement you head. I think the time has come when a strong stand ought to be made for a less noisy, a saner and more patriotic observation of our National Holiday.

This came from Mayor Homer of Joplin (Mo.):

I note with pleasure the stand taken by your society in demanding a more rational observance of our National Holiday, and the assistance assured by twenty-one governors of various States, and you should have the support of every governor of all States.

Joplin, a city of 50,000 population, surrounded by a population of 75,000 people within the radius of ten to twenty miles, connected with interurban street-car lines, is generally the hot-bed on the Fourth of July, and naturally we have a great many serious accidents. So last year I not only issued a strong proclamation, but followed same up by making arrangements with the park managements to cut out all dangerous fireworks and to allow no one to have fireworks on the grounds, except competent men who had charge of the firework display, and also put on several special police, so that the Chief of Police McManamy could handle the city nicely. Consequently we had no accidents reported.

I have this month had an ordinance drawn which is now on its first reading before the Council, making it a misdemeanor for a merchant to display or sell cannon fire-crackers, bombs, canes, or toy blank pistols, and we expect to have this coming Fourth under absolute control.

I wish your Society success in your movement for a safe and sane Fourth of July.

From the town of East Liverpool came this:

I feel that the sale of any dangerous articles of any nature whatsoever, for any celebration of any kind, or for any other purpose, should be prohibited by law, as it is foolish and unnecessary at the best, and brings many serious and bad results.

And from another town, Wausau (Wisconsin), the following:

This city believes in a sane Fourth of July. Last year we did not have a single accident and no fires.

In a most encouraging letter, the Mayor of Lafayette (Ind.) spoke of the passage of a drastic ordinance in August, 1908, which prohibited the use of everything explosive:

At first the adoption and signing of this ordinance caused some inconvenience to dealers in such merchandise, but since its going into effect all our citizens are fully satisfied, and on the Fourth of July we no longer have burning buildings nor killed nor maimed and injured children, or other persons. Your society deserves the greatest praise in taking up this work, and no city should fail at once to put into effect such a law as this city is enjoying.

"I approve of your movement and am willing to do anything in my power to help you," wrote the mayor of Malden. "There is no sense in our present methods of celebrating the Fourth."

From the Mayor of Louisville came this very vigorous letter:

Turning this Republic into a field of carnage on Independence Day is horrifying. Glorifying our National Birthday with explosives is barbarous, as shown by the record last year—163 killed, 5460 injured. Every city should enact an ordinance looking to sanity and safety in celebrating the Fourth of July.

And now another town, Anderson:

I feel both honored and pleased to offer my humble coöperation in the movement you suggest. No honest mind will hesitate a moment to go upon such a programme of progress.

From the Mayor of Lebanon:

I am heartily in sympathy with the movement you have inaugurated to prevent the deaths and mutilation of the people and the destruction of property that occur from the manner of celebrating our natal day. Ever since taking office I have endeavored as faithfully as I possibly could to enforce all ordinances bearing on this subject, and have realized the most gratifying results. Because of the strict enforcement of this ordinance an effort was made by councils to repeal it, but a veto was interposed—a copy of which I enclose—which will give you my feelings in regard to our present method of celebrating our natal day. In my limited sphere, I shall continue in this matter as I started, and battle with you in the entire overthrow of the reckless and criminal use of fireworks, for the saving of life, limb and property.

Quite a number of Mayors have informed me of the work that has been done in their cities to promote a better observance of the Fourth, and have sent me copies of ordinances that have been enacted. One of these was the Mayor of Dayton, who wrote:

I can assure you that your plan is approved in this city, as a few months ago our city council passed an ordinance prohibiting the shooting of fireworks, pistols and other explosives on Independence Day. This ordinance is now in effect in our city, and we hope hereafter to have a quiet, and at the same time a patriotic celebration of Independence Day.

From Utica:

This question has had the attention of our people, to the extent that an ordinance is at present in force in this city having that object in view. We are enclosing you a copy of the ordinance.

And from Springfield (Mass.):

For several years past the city of Springfield has been working out the same idea which you are advancing, "establishing a sane and safe observance of Fourth of July." We have been most successful in our plans.

The Mayor of Topeka wrote:

The proposition or suggestion is a good one, and I am in hearty accord with it. I might say that in Topeka we are moving along these lines already, as you will notice by the enclosed ordinance.

Many others have sent us sympathetic words:

"I am heartily in sympathy with the object which your society hopes to accomplish," wrote the Mayor of Columbus (Georgia). "The work in which you are engaged meets with the Mayor's hearty approval," was the message that came to us from St. Louis; while from Passaic, nearer home, the Mayor wrote: "I am strongly in favor of a safe and sane celebration of our nation's birthday, and I believe that the patriotism of the people can be shown just as well by sane methods as by barbarous ones, and without blowing off the heads and hands and fingers and legs of our children and grown-up people." "It will give me pleasure to coöperate with your efforts, and those of your society, to secure a more rational observance of Independence Day," replied Mayor Speer of Denver. "I assure you that I am in thorough sympathy with the movement," came to me from New Brunswick.

And still more letters have come from the Mayors of Wilmington, Paterson, Des Moines, York, Newark, Galena, Cleveland and Cambridge. As for our petitions in favor of a safe and sane Fourth, they have been signed by the Mayors of Toledo, Richmond, New Haven, Holyoke, Cincinnati, Erie, Sacramento and Jacksonville.

Regarding the communications from Commissioners of various departments, all of which are valuable to our cause, many have already been received and many others are still coming in. Without exception, they lay stress on the urgency of putting an end to our present mode of celebrating the Fourth, and pronounce their willingness to help along the movement.

Beginning with those of Health Officers (which have come from State as well as from City Departments), here is one from Dr. E. H. Porter, of the New York State Department of Health:

I sincerely hope that your movement to secure a rational observance of the National Holiday will be successful, as I am in thorough sympathy with the movement and will be glad to help in any way in my power.

Commissioner Dixon of the Pennsylvania Department wrote:

I heartily commend the movement you have headed for a safe and sane Independence Day instead of "Our Barbarous Fourth." As Commissioner of Health I have done all I could to warn the people against the grave danger of explosive wounds, but it will take some strong united movement on the part of municipal authorities to put a stop to the unpatriotic practice of killing and disabling our young children, and your determined effort should command the heartiest support.

From Director Neff, of Philadelphia:

My thought on this subject is, that so long as manufacturers make high explosives and other dangerous fireworks, so long as local dealers fill their shelves with these implements of suffering and death, just so long will they be sold and used by "Young America," in spite of proclamations issued by municipal authorities. If ordinances are passed prior to the booking of orders by manufacturers, and dealers realize that the law will be enforced, they will not procure a supply of the interdicted articles, and their commercial interests will be protected, and no sale take place. This is the surest way of preventing the improper celebration of the day.

And this from Rochester:

For years past it has been customary for us to send out cards similar to the enclosed, warning the public against the danger of lockjaw from wounds produced by Fourth of July fireworks. I believe, however, that it would be a great deal better to suppress unnecessary noise than it is to distribute tetanus antitoxin.

Similar letters or signed petitions have also been received from the following Health Officers:

Dr. Ernst Lederle, New York City; Dr. E. C. Levy, Richmond; Dr. W. A. Evans, Chicago; Dr. G. W. Gordon, Springfield (Mass.); Dr. W. S. Rankin, North Carolina State Board of Health; Dr. J. Wigglesworth, Wilmington (Del.); President Thomas J. Clark, St. Joseph; Dr. W. C. Woodward, District of Columbia; Dr. C. E. Faney, Jacksonville; Dr. B. Bevier, Toledo; Dr. William D. Peckham, Utica; Dr. C. H. Thomas, Cambridge, and Dr. William B. Foster, Lexington, Mass.

And next letters which have come from Police Departments:

"We have an element in this city," stated the Chief of Police of Worcester, "who come from countries where firearms are strictly forbidden, so on the 'Fourth' they go out and buy revolvers and proceed into the public streets firing blank cartridges. We arrest all such offenders and put them before the court. This element sees that a certain celebration is going on, and though they have no conception of what it is all about, they see others celebrating, so join the procession. I send you a circular such as is issued to all dealers, posted in all mills and public places by patrolmen of this department. It is in several different languages to reach the non-English speaking element."

Accompanying this letter was a placard printed in seven languages.

"Personally I think the present method of celebrating the day idiotic," wrote the Chief of Police of Newport, while the message from Superintendent of Police Stewart, of Chicago, was: "The value of concerted effort and action throughout the country cannot be over-estimated." And this from Major Sylvester, Superintendent of Police of Washington: "I might add that the celebration of Independence Day, 1909, in this jurisdiction was devoid of the explosions, firing of crackers

and other noise-making devices. There were no accidents and but one fire on the day. . . . The success attending a quiet celebration of the Fourth of July was remarkable. It showed conclusively what can be done in that direction."

From Police Headquarters, Portland, Ore., Chief Cox wrote:

I am heartily in accord with your efforts. I have little ones of my own, and I presume the feelings of the average parent are about the same as mine, and in past years hardly a Fourth has passed which has not been accompanied by some apprehension for my own and other people's children. While I am in favor of bringing the younger generation up with a reverence and an admiration for the spirit exemplified on our National Holiday, I am also in favor and would be glad to see some of the element of danger eliminated from the occasion as they are now annually observed.

In addition to these, letters and signatures to petitions have come from Commissioner Wm. F. Baker, New York City; Superintendent McQuaide, Pittsburg; Chief Levan, Reading; Chief Hyatt, Albany; Secretary Skelly, San Francisco; Superintendent Birmingham, Bridgeport; Chief Davis, Memphis; Chief Randall, Duluth; Chief Creecy, St. Louis; Secretary Gee, Providence; Chief Persett, Galveston; Chief Moyer, Duluth; Superintendent Downey, Detroit; Messrs. J. M. Morton, Dansey and Lawson, Police Board, Fall River; Commissioner of Public Safety Hessler, Syracuse; Chief Millikin, Cincinnati; Chief Kohler, Cleveland; Secretary Kinsey, Baltimore; City Marshal Quilty, Springfield (Mass.); and Chief Werner, Richmond.

From the Fire Chiefs came the same recognition of the need of a change in the mode of celebrating the Fourth.

"I congratulate you," wrote the Fire Chief of Springfield (Ohio), "for leading this movement, as we have had, in years gone by, many fires and personal injuries resulting from the foolish and hazardous use of fireworks on the Fourth of July. I hope that the people of this country will see that the coöperation of the different mayors and the heads of fire departments will be the means of decreasing, on the Fourth of July celebrations, many personal injuries and losses of life and property. . . . You can count upon me at all times as against the unnecessary and hazardous risk of life and property in our city."

"I believe this great day should be observed and celebrated in a more moderate way, namely, by patriotic speech-making, music, athletic games, et cetera, and not in a way which is directly responsible for the destruction of life and property," declared the Fire Chief of Erie (Pa.), while the Head of the Fire Department of Chattanooga exclaimed: "Let the good work go on! Some of our greatest fire losses have been the result of fireworks. Several years ago one of our hotels was destroyed and three people burned alive as a result of such celebrations."

Further endorsement came from Chief Gernand, Galveston; Chief Salter, Omaha; Chief Randall, Duluth; Secretary Wilkinson, Baltimore;

Chief Mayo, Toledo; Horace B. Clark, President Board of Fire Commissioners, Hartford, and Chief Clancey, Milwaukee.

In reply to the letters and petitions sent to Universities and Colleges, many answers have been received, while hundreds of signatures to our petitions which had been posted on the bulletin-boards have been returned to us. If space only permitted it would be delightful to quote from many of these admirable letters, but—as it is—I must limit myself to one. This one, however, which came from President Woodrow Wilson, of Princeton University, voices the sentiment of all:

I most unhesitatingly sign one of the blank forms of petition accompanying your letter of January 25th. I wish to express my entire sympathy with the interesting work you are undertaking for the suppression of unnecessary noise and the sane reform of our present way of celebrating the Fourth of July. I shall take pleasure in placing the other blank forms on the bulletin boards of the university, as you request.

Other College Presidents who have complied with our request are: Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, Columbia University; Chancellor H. M. MacCracken, University of the City of New York; Dr. John Finley, College of the City of New York; President Ellis, Ohio University; Sister M. Paulinus, President College of St. Elizabeth, Morristown; President Levemore, Adelphi College, Brooklyn; President Schurman, Cornell; President Meserve, Shaw University, Raleigh; President Hamilton, Tufts College; Professor Crull, Concordia College; President Gallaudet, Gallaudet College; President Thomas, Middlebury College; President Sanford, Clark College, Worcester; President Cain, Washington College, Chestertown; President Blackwell, Randolph-Macon College, Ashland; President Ware, Atlanta University; President Thwing, Western Reserve University, Cleveland; Dean Carnell, Temple University, Philadelphia; President Gross, Union Theological Seminary, New York; President Smith, Smith College, Northampton; Director Aldrich, School of Technology, Potsdam; Dean Barr, Drake University, Des Moines; President Atkinson, Polytechnic Institute, Brooklyn; Acting President Hutchins, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; President Judson, University of Chicago; President Faunce, Brown University, Providence; President Gulliver, Rockford College; President Spooner, Norwich University, Northfield; President Boatwright, Richmond; President Needham, George Washington University, Washington; Chancellor Din-

widdie, Southwestern Presbyterian University, Clarksville; Chancellor Barrow, University of Georgia, Athens; President Booker T. Washington, Tuskegee Institute, Hampton; President Troxell, Midland College, Atchison; President Craighead, Tulane University, New Orleans; President MacLean, University of Iowa; President Briggs, Radcliffe College, Cambridge; President Frieden, St. Louis Institute of Law; President William Smith, Randolph-Macon, Lynchburg; President Mooney, Seton Hall College, South Orange; Bursar Zabriskie, General Theological Seminary, New York; President Denny, Washington and Lee University, Lexington (Va.); President Taylor, Vassar, Poughkeepsie; President Murphree, University of Florida, Gainesville; President Carson, Mills College; President Gunsaulus, Armour School of Technology, Chicago; President Baker, University of Colorado, Boulder; President Hammelkamp, Illinois University; President Baer, Occidental College, Los Angeles; President Lory, State Agricultural College, Fort Collins; Secretary Hawley, Teachers College, New York; Secretary Pratt, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn; Acting President Gunsolly, Graceland College, Lamoni; President George, Drury College, Springfield (Mo.); President Manck, Hillsdale College; President Harris, Amherst College; President Riley, McMinneville; President Marn, Iowa College, Grinnell; President Venneble, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; President Keister, Lebanon Valley College; President Kelly, Earlham College, Earlham; President Aikens, Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove; President David Starr Jordan, Leland Stanford, Jr. University, California; Rev. President Hosmer, Southern University, Greensboro; and President McClure, McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago.

I believe that the most potent factor in the fight for a safe and sane Fourth has been the set of tables of Independence Day casualties prepared by the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, although it must be remembered that these statistics, startling as they are, do not, by any means, state a complete case, as a large proportion of casualties never are recorded. However, until these figures had been tabulated, no one realized the price that we were paying for the celebration of our National Holiday.

Perhaps one could not give a better object-lesson of this than that of placing side by side with the casualty lists of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* for the past seven years, those of the American losses

in seven famous Revolutionary battles, namely, Lexington, Bunker Hill, Fort Moultrie, White Plains, Fort Washington, Monmouth and Cowpens, the figures for the latter being taken from Bancroft's *History of the United States*.

Battles	Killed and Wounded	Celebrations	Killed and Wounded
Lexington	83	July 4, 1903	4,449
Bunker Hill	449	July 4, 1904	4,169
Fort Moultrie	37	July 4, 1905	5,176
White Plains	100	July 4, 1906	5,466
Fort Washington	149	July 4, 1907	4,413
Monmouth	229	July 4, 1908	5,623
Cowpens	72	July 4, 1909	5,307
	<hr/> 1,119		<hr/> 34,603

And now, what are the instruments, by means of which Death reaps so large a harvest every Fourth? Unfortunately, but little is known, either by parents or children, concerning the dangerous playthings indulged in, and to this may be attributed, without doubt, many sad features of our "holy day." Only three attempts have been made, I believe, to remedy this, one in Philadelphia, the second in Boston and the third in New York. In Philadelphia, Superintendent Brumbaugh has arranged for lectures which are to be given to children in the public schools warning them of the dangers of explosive enthusiasm; in Boston lectures have been prepared for parents, in which they will be made acquainted with the risks that they allow their children to run in permitting them to purchase fireworks; while in New York, the subject is to be taken up in the Free Lecture Course of the Department of Education, beginning the latter part of April, for the purpose of promoting a better holiday observance.

It is surprising, considering the enormous sums annually spent for fireworks, that so little literature dealing with the subject can be found. One of the few articles that I have come across refers to a circular which has been issued by the Kentucky Board of Fire Underwriters. This states first that the composition of many dangerous pieces cannot be ascertained (the secret resting with the manufacturers), and then it goes on to speak of the composition of the common cracker and of the torpedo:

The largest cannon crackers contain two-thirds ounce of chlorate, one-third

ounce of sulphur, and a small amount of charcoal. The seven-inch variety contains one-half the amount of ingredients of the larger kind. Last Fourth of July one of these "murderers" exploded while under a man's arm, killing him almost instantly, and driving his watch from his vest pocket into a telegraph pole to the depth of one inch. And next. The small torpedo contains a small wafer of chlorate of potash, and gravel, while the largest variety contains chlorate, phosphorus and chloride of antimony. One manufacturer is using fulminate of mercury, which makes their explosive power almost as great as dynamite. These noise-makers have been responsible for many deaths and accidents, and have also turned valuable properties into bonfires, etc.

"Very few parents," the circular proceeds, "would allow their children to experiment with dynamite, yet they allow them to explode these fireworks, which are even more dangerous than that explosive."

Mr. H. J. Pain, the "Fireworks King," divides fireworks into those that are exploded by fire and those that are exploded by concussion. The latter he declares, with the addition of giant crackers which belong to the first class, are dangerous and should be prohibited. "There should be no giant crackers," he declares, "large torpedoes should not be allowed. Pistols, revolvers, and cap pistols should be prohibited from use." Mr. Pain voices, I think, the sentiment of most fireworks makers, in regretting that the trade in dangerous articles is harmful to that in beautiful, spectacular pieces which could be set off under expert supervision, on the occasion of public displays. "As the cities are going now they are stopping all fireworks," are his own words.

It must not be imagined, however, that toy pistols and giant crackers are the only dangerous devices that are yearly bought by our boys and girls, for there are many others. To the list must be added the shooting cane, the lozenges for which, made of potassium chlorate, sulphur, powdered glass and other substances, sometimes explode *en masse*, igniting clothing, or perhaps even blowing off a limb; fix rohr, too, is another gentle toy for children, a box of which some time ago exploded in the Boston Custom House, tearing up the floor and killing three men; toy-cannon are dangerous when they "kick" as well as when they burst, and toy balloons frequently start fires, because the paper of which they are made becomes ignited, five houses in one town, in one day, being burned in this manner.

Of many recent ordinances, either proposed or enacted, I shall simply quote that of Alderman Courtland Nicoll of New York, which is inter-

esting not only because it is one of the very latest (introduced February 1st), but also because it is absolutely prohibitive, and not merely restrictive. As Dr. Simmons, Editor of the *Journal of the Medical Association*, has said, this idea of regulating has been attempted in many cities already, and in no instance has it resulted even in an improvement. Here is the text of Alderman Nicoll's Ordinance:

Be it Ordained by the Board of Aldermen of the City of New York, as follows:

That section number 531 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of New York be and hereby is repealed and the following substituted in place of the present language of the section so numbered:

SEC. 531. That it shall be unlawful to discharge or explode or to have in possession for any such purpose, or to sell or offer for sale to any person under the age of twenty-one, within the City of New York, any toy pistol using a percussion cap, or any squib, rocket, fire cracker, roman candle or other combustible fireworks designed to be exploded with a sudden report or detonation; provided, however, that the Police Commissioner may issue a permit to any person above the age of twenty-one years to set off and have in his possession for such purpose for a period not exceeding one day any such fireworks, provided such person shall first satisfy the Police Commissioner by proof satisfactory to him that he is familiar with the nature and operation of such fireworks; second, shall pay a license fee of five dollars (\$5) for such permit; and third, execute a bond or undertaking under seal in the sum of five thousand dollars with sureties satisfactory to the Commissioner, the condition of such bond or undertaking being that the license shall save the city harmless from all damage incurred by reason of his having in his possession or setting off such fireworks. Such permit shall have endorsed thereon the time and place at which it is proposed to set off such fireworks, and no such permit shall be valid as permission to set off any such fireworks within any of the public parks or playgrounds of the City of New York without having endorsed thereon the consent of the Park Commissioner of the Borough in which such park or playground is situated.

There are many cities laying claim to protective ordinances, in which restriction—and not prohibition—is aimed at. Lynn, for instance, forbids large crackers, but permits them to be used up to two inches in length and half an inch in diameter; Springfield's new ordinance allows them to be used up to three and one-half inches in length; Syracuse permits a five-inch cracker and Boston, I believe, countenances one six inches long and one inch wide. When one recognizes the fact that fourteen-inch cannon crackers are commonly sold, even in towns where their use is forbidden, and that it is impossible for a police officer to differentiate (*after the explosion*) between a five and a fourteen-inch cracker, ordinances of a merely restrictive character appear to have little practical value. Dr. Evans, Health Commissioner of Chicago, has declared that even a two-inch firecracker could not be considered safe, because the wound made by it could become infected just as easily as that made by

a ten-inch cracker, and this statement has been corroborated by those in charge of many Chicago hospitals. "Tetanus," said Dr. Simmons, "frequently comes from wounds not more than a quarter of an inch long."

Efforts to promote a better celebration of the Fourth are now being made in many cities in various different ways—by prohibition, by restriction, by prohibition and substitution and by restriction and substitution. Of all these experiments, the most interesting is that which has been tried for several years in Springfield, Massachusetts, if one may judge by last year's official programme, a copy of which was sent me by Mayor Lathrop. The scope of the celebration was wide enough to interest and to please all, embracing as it did music and band concerts, a parade, athletic sports and exercises, aquatic sports, displays of fireworks, and historical pageants with floats representing scenes from events enacted there, such as Pynchon's purchase of the land from the Indians, the Corn Fleet, Defeat of Shay's Insurgents, and the Underground Railway. In describing one of these fete-days, Dr. Gulick said:

This splendid parade, which included the children and adults, the city government, the nationalities of which the city was composed—the history of the city—brought the people together as they had never come together. It developed a feeling of oneness, of belonging together, which was new. . . . By this means, Springfield has, by constructive rather than restrictive measures, won her day and is winning her city consciousness. . . . We have many holidays and other occasions which demand social expression, but the Fourth of July gives us the most dramatic point of attack.

Pittsburg is at present agitating the question of preparing a gorgeous pageant in honor of the Fourth, for which a large sum is to be raised by popular subscription. It is proposed to engage John W. Alexander, the artist, and Percy MacKaye, the dramatist, in order to arrange a marvelous historical and artistic festival, in which young and old, Americans and those of all other nationalities will take part. "Let us make our National Holiday a holy day," said the Mayor, a few days ago, "recalling and revering the heroic past and symbolizing the present reality with the ideal of the brotherhood to be."

Philadelphia, too, is now working for a holiday programme which will engage the public attention to the exclusion of gunpowder. In this celebration a military parade will be a conspicuous feature, and there will be patriotic music, speeches, pyrotechnic displays, both public and private, set off under expert supervision, and children's games in every breathing space in the city from a park to a vacant lot. In this work, Mrs. Imogen B. Oakley is the moving spirit and it is she who, more than any other Philadelphian, has led the movement for sanity on Independence Day. Newark is evidently in favor of a great patriotic and historical

festival in which civic organizations and the militia can participate, as well as the schools. In Indianapolis, the Mayor and the President of Council recently met the members of the Committee on City Interests in order to plan a suitable celebration of our National Birthday; later there will be a joint meeting of all civic organizations and all city officials. And thus, even in mid-winter, city after city is ranging itself on the side of those who are endeavoring to do away with a mode of observance that is a desecration of our National Birthday, a "devastating nuisance," as it has been called, and to replace it with one that is safe, instructive, attractive, artistic and patriotic.

I cannot bring this article to a more fitting close than by quoting a letter just issued by the Governor of Connecticut to the mayors of the municipalities of the State:

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

HARTFORD, February 21, 1910.

To his Honor, the Mayor of

SIR: The Society for the Suppression of Unnecessary Noise, with headquarters in New York City, is making every effort to interest the people of the states through their executives in the wisdom and importance of observing a "safer and saner Fourth of July." Statistics show that during the celebration of five national holidays 1,153 persons were killed and 21,520 were more or less injured. No computation can possibly be made of the harm, say nothing of the discomfort, our sick and nervous are obliged to undergo by the noise. All this, together with the immense loss through fires, leads the society to believe that all thinking people are more than ready to coöperate with the authorities toward securing a less noisy day.

Therefore, as I am in hearty sympathy with this movement, and believing, as I do, that the size and quality of some of the explosives used together with the unreasonable time allowed in which to celebrate has passed all bounds, I feel warranted in calling to the attention of the heads of municipalities and our people generally the advisability of taking steps toward making the glorious anniversary a day of pleasure and profit, instead of a day of unrest and horror.

Hoping for your coöperation in the matter, I am, Mr. Mayor,

Yours very truly,

FRANK B. WEEKS,
Governor.

From an article by the Hon. Henry Litchfield West, Commissioner of the District of Columbia, entitled "A Safe and Sane Fourth of July," published in *The Forum* for August, 1909.

"A little more than a year ago the *Century Magazine* contained a vigorous

and convincing article by Mrs. Isaac L. Rice, entitled 'Our Barbarous Fourth.'

**"Our
Barbarous
Fourth"**

It was a protest against a condition of affairs in the United States which had long attracted attention, but which no one, up to that time, had criticised in such emphatic terms. 'The grim statistics of the Fourth of July,' said the article, 'probably furnish a sadder commentary on human folly than that afforded by any other celebration in the world.'

"It is worth while to present in detail the indictment upon which the article in question arraigned the nation. It showed the heavy penalty which this country has for many years paid to the god of gunpowder under the mistaken notion that noise was patriotism, and that civic and national pride were measured by the explosion of firecrackers and cannon. The figures gathered from accurate sources, although admittedly incomplete, were startling in their presentation. They showed that during the celebration of five national birthdays, from 1903 to 1907, inclusive, 1153 persons were killed and 21,520 were injured. Of the injured, 88 suffered total, and 389 partial, blindness; 308 persons lost arms, legs or hands, and 1067 lost one or more fingers. 'But these figures, startling as they are,' commented Mrs. Rice, 'convey only a faint idea of the suffering, both physical and mental, which went to swell the total cost of these five holidays; in this we must include the weeks and often months of anguish of the injured, the suspense of entire families while the fate of some loved one hung in the balance, the horror of a future of sightless years, the pinching poverty now the lot of many because of the death or maiming of breadwinners.'

"It is true that a few thoughtful people had in more or less nonchalant manner observed the terrible toll of death and injury which the evil celebration of the day demanded. Quite a number of newspapers—notably the *Chicago Tribune*—were questioning the wisdom of a method which in one day had resulted in the death of 164 people, and the injury of nearly 5000. 'How can any satisfaction,' asked the *New York Tribune*, 'be taken in the perversion of a holiday to purposes of disorder and destruction, and how can any pride be felt in methods of observance which inevitably condemn hundreds—if not thousands—to be shot, burned, maimed, and otherwise disfigured and tortured in propitiation of the great god of senseless uproar? The *St. Paul Pioneer Press* deplored the fact that a day which ought to be the most enjoyable in the calendar had become a day of general carnage; while the *New York Commercial* characterized the popular celebration as ridiculous and senseless.

"Notwithstanding these occasional utterances of truth, which indicated a growing sentiment, the fact is, that at the time of the appearance of 'Our Barbarous Fourth' there was only one city in the country wherein any curb had been placed upon the insensate and reckless custom of observing the Fourth of July with dynamite and gunpowder. The cemeteries and the hospitals were claiming their victims and yet no one in authority seemed courageous enough to call a halt for fear of being charged with lack of patriotism.

"I believe, however, that the article in question appeared at the psychological moment. It was so straightforward in its presentation of the facts, so earnest in its appeal and so logical in its assertion that there were numerous sensible ways of celebrating our National Holiday, that it made a profound impression everywhere. At any rate, the fact is, that before that article appeared only one city in the country had prohibited the sale and explosion of fireworks, while within a short period after it had been printed the authorities in several cities took radical action along the lines therein suggested. It is no exaggeration to say that within the next ten years the old barbarous Fourth of July will have entirely disappeared, and it is also within the bounds of accurate statement to add that the one greatest individual factor in accomplishing the much-needed reform is the author of the *Century* article."