

July 6, 1899

LIBERTY BELL.

High up in the tower it hung,
Where the dust of ages clung.
And the spider's drapery swung,
That deep-toned, graven bell,
Holding in its silence most
Pledge of liberty complete,
Stern command and promise sweet,
All the waiting land to tell.

And the spire with life was vested;
On the beams the pigeons nested,
And the swallows swift infested
All the caves and niches high.

Spirits seemed they of the tower,

Winged notes of peace and power,

Circling through each sunny hour.

From the dark bell to the sky.

Silent as a prophet musing

Or a novice self accusing.

Through the air a spell diffusing

Subtle as a spirit's breath,

Hung the bell. And thus it waited

While in council wrongs were stated

And the patriot's stern debated

Themes of liberty or death.

Suddenly from out the spire,

Swelling fuller, clearer, higher,

Bell notes, setting hearts a-fire,

Broke the stillness of the day.

Shouting thousands heard the pealing,

Lifted faces all revering

Hidden depths of earnest feeling

At the vibrant music's play.

For they knew by that clear token

That the last strong plea was spoken,

That the English tie was broken,

Cast aside the galling yoke.

There was maddest joy that hour

Of a people born to power.

And from out his high, lone bower

Brazen tongued the big bell spoke.

—Sarah B. Kennedy.

The Fourth At Rustival.

Columbia was her name—Columbia Alpin. "I know it's queer," she used to explain, "for strangers, when they're introduced, always stare at me as if I were some sort of foreigner—which I'm not, thank goodness! But it's the name I've got, and I'm going to try to live up to it."

So Columbia was nothing if not patriotic, and her name, however odd, didn't seem inappropriate. She had little need to deck herself with the national colors which she so persistently flaunted, for nature had printed the red, white and blue in dawn tints on her glowing face, and bright stars shone there, too, right out of the blue, to make all absolutely perfect. She was herself our country's fairest, truest emblem.

But patriotism was at a discount in Rustival, or Rustville, as it was insultingly nicknamed by its hustling neighbors in Newburg, just across the lake. For Rustival was a sour, belated little country town, which had aspired to become the local metropolis and hadn't realized its ambition. I remember that when I went there to start a tannery in 1866, the year of the preliminary survey for the Z. V. and W. B. R., it was impossible to get a rod of ground for love or money, so extravagant were the expectations of the villagers. But they had seen the railroad, and the county seat and all the other good things which they had accounted their own one by one slip from their grasp and tumble into the lap of their upstart rival. Thus Rustival, dwindling and dingy, continually losing the more alert of its youth and retaining only those whose shallow, rustic conceit found scant encouragement elsewhere, had become the abode of peregrine and carping discontent, ripe for disloyalty. The whole country was going to the dogs—that was evident. A glance at their neglected street, weedy yards and the white paint scaling from a straggling line of houses was proof enough to this mildewed community.

Naturally, when the war with Spain broke out there was no enthusiasm. To be sure, Joel Slocum, the local politician, made off to Washington to try for an appointment, but he soon came back and reported a general state of rotteness.

"Them Spaniards," he declared, "are goin' to lick us out of our boots, and I'm hopin' it may do us good. Everything's all at sixes and sevens, and there can't nobody git any show exceptin' a ruck of rich men's sons."

"Why don't you enlist in the ranks

and serve your country that way?" de-



"WHY DON'T YOU ENLIST IN THE RANKS?"
manded Columbia with characteristic aggressiveness. "I'd call that better business for a big, strong man like you than loafing about and grubmeling here."

She had just entered the postoffice, where Joel was haranguing, and stood like an animated edition of the "Star Spangled Banner" on the edge of the crowd.

"Ketch me servin' under them nin-compoops!" roared Joel. "Bitter run home, little gal, and stick on a few more of them red, white and blue posies you're not out in yer pa's front yard. That's the way you gain fight for yer country, Chunky Alpin."

The men removed their pipes and guffawed approvingly.

"I'll just show you, some day," she cried defiantly, as she turned away with a letter postmarked Newburg.

Even the news of the brilliant victory at Manila fell flat in Rustival.

"Jest happened so," commented Joel. "Likely the Spanish wa'n't lockin' fer no such fool doin's way off 't other side o' nowhere. And what's the good on it? Should say we hed savvities enough on our han's a'ready—specially with that gal ravin' round in her war paint, makin' a walkin' barber pole of herself. Wouldn't mind givin' her a few feathers, though, to help out. She's corrupin' all the gals in the village."

For Columbia had indeed succeeded in firing the maidens of Rustival with something of her own spirit. The war appealed to them; the element of romance had been sadly lacking in their lives. They organized a Soldiers' Aid society, held patriotic meetings, and sent flowers and dainties to the boys in blue in the volunteers' camp near Newburg. They also established a boycott against the disloyal youth of their own town, though the young men strenuously insisted that it was just the other way, and the boycott was on the girls. Anyhow, there was a great dearth of "parties," and "sparkin'" was at a standstill.

Then, as an offset to the hated volunteers at Newburg, these brave lads formed a company of "Home guards." "For right here's where ye're goin' to be needed boys," asserted Joel, "and purty soon too. Fancy them crazy gals'll haul in some o' their striped petticoats'll be out for mischief."

And, in very truth, this blue eyed daughter of Revolutionary rebels and Scotch Covenanters was not the sort of girl to bear an insult tamely—least of all, an insult to her flag. And now a personal grievance was added, for some of the chivalrous bumpkins had deemed it a clever joke to break into her garden at night, uprooting the flowers and trampling down the beds—"exactly what a drove of hogs would have done," she cried, with angry tears, when she saw it. And this utterance didn't tend to increase her popularity.

Following close on the heels of this fest of vandalism, the announcement of the no-celebration resolution provoked a blaze of indignation in the Soldiers' Aid society, which was a fine display of fireworks in itself.

"That shows them for just what they are—mean spirited, cowardly traitors," broke forth the warlike president, her cheeks outflaming her costume. "I don't wonder they sympathize with the Spaniards, for they aren't one bit more inclined, insulting women and sneakin' about at night to get revenge! But two can play at that game, I guess, and if the men won't celebrate their own country's Independence day, we'll make a celebration ourselves, girls. I'd like to see them try to stop us."

So the rest of the afternoon was spent in plotting. Giant crackers and other fireworks were to be secretly procured and set off in various places at the first tap of midnight. The church bell was to be rung as usual, and two strong armed girls were detailed for this duty. One artful damsel undertook to get possession of the "Home guards' big drum and beat it"—"only I shall have to make up with Joe a little," she protested, puckering her lips. Others promised to blow horns and conches. But the great act was to be the firing of the cannon, and this the adventurous Columbian reserved for herself.

"They'll never believe we could do that, but I've watched them lots of times, and I know we can. I shall want you, Hilda Graham, to help me, and you, Mamie Miller. The three of us can manage it, I'm sure."

This cannon was a rustic relic of the Mexican war procured from the government for Fourth of July purposes in the days when Rustival esteemed itself a model of patriotism. It was kept housed in an open shed at the top of a slight rise of ground just outside the village.

"We won't try to move it down," said Columbia. "We'd best shoot it off right where it stands."

At last the night of great events had come to be signalized by a new revolt against overbearing tyranny. All Rustival was asleep—apparently—except Joel Slocum, who uneasily paced his porch and listened at the gate, still haunted by vague apprehensions about "them striped petticoats."

Suddenly the still moonlight was marred by the sharp clang of a bell: peal after peal rang out with clashing and discordant precipitancy, like a fire alarm. Then there burst forth an unearthly shrilling and squawking of a sputtering and banging of firecrackers of all dimensions. Joel rushed into the street, to be greeted by the hissing rush of a mounting rocket, and the meteoric glare as it exploded and spilled downward its shower of party colored sparks showed him that the aforesaid "striped petticoats" were abundantly in evidence. A moment later came the roar of the cannon from the hill, jolting the ear and rattling all the window panes with its harsh concussion.

Meanwhile the fair artillery corps were standing in terrified triumph by their fuming gun.

"I thought I was just blown to atoms," screamed Mamie, still dancing about.

"Lucky you didn't stay behind it, Cluny. That was a real cute idea of yours to set it off with a firecracker. See, it's kicked a hole right through the back of the shed!"

"And isn't the smell perfectly awful!" cried Hilda, sneezing.

"I rather like the smell of gunpow-

der myself," answered Columbia stoutly; but she, too, choked and sneezed.

"Now for another one!" shouted Mamie. "Hurry up, Cluny, before anybody comes! But we've hardly any newspaper left for wadding. I'd do better, the old thing would take so much. What will we do?"

"I've seen the boys use grass," replied the resourceful captain. "There's plenty of that."

So, with straining arms and heroic disregard of grim, they pulled their heavy ordnance back into position and filled it nearly to the muzzle with handfuls of dry grass, ramming it home with all their strength.

"Don't be afraid. They always fill it clean up," panted Columbia, breathless with her exertions.

"Ye didn't forget to put in the powder?"

"Not I," she responded. "That would be a girl trick, wouldn't it?"

At that moment shouts were heard at the foot of the hill. She hastily adjusted the priming and sprang to her feet. A throng of dark, gesticulating figures were pressing up the slope, Joel Slocum at the head of the column.

"You leave alone that cannon!" he bellowed as he cantered toward them



"ARE YOU BADLY HURT, SWEETHEART?" HE ASKED.

like an angry bull. "Ye shoot that gun again and I'll have you jailed."

"Put 'em under the pump!" bawled another of the gallant party.

"Look out for yourselves! It's goin'!" rang out the shrill, sweet treble of the captain, keyed to concert pitch by intense excitement.

The fuse was already sparkling and spitting gushes of fire. She stood in its full light, glow with color. Then the air was rent with a thunderous detonation—and both the cannon and its inclosing shed had vanished.

Slocum was hit full and fair by the huge wad of pulpy grass. Lucky for him he was no nearer! Stained green from head to foot, he lay writhing and racing like a blistered snake.

"She's a killin' folks," he yelled. "She fired right at us. Tar and feathers is too good for her," and the crazed mob took up the cry.

But the girls also had vanished. The two sides had fled in shrieking panic, but as the storm of threats broke upon her, Columbia staggered to her feet, groping for support, a little stream of blood trickling from her forehead. "Stand back," she said, faintly. "Don't you dare touch me."

"Stand back, you scoundrels!"

A clear, strong, menacing voice came like an echo, as with a reverie of hoofbeats from the farther slope of the hill a young cavalry officer, closely followed by a squad of his men, drew rein beside her. He lifted the girl to the saddle and drew a big revolver.

"This gun shoots lead," he warned them. "Don't you advance another step. I suspected there might be trouble tonight in a despicable little town where they respect neither country nor women."

"Are you badly hurt, sweetheart?" he asked tenderly, as they rode away.

"No. Edmund, only a little gash on my temple—just a scratch," she whispered, but she was shuddering uncontrollably.

"Anyhow," he responded—stifling a soldier's oath, for he was still hot with wrath—"you shall fight no more fights with the craven traitors of Rustival. If you will go to war, Columbia, you shall be served for herself."

"I thought I was just blown to atoms," screamed Mamie, still dancing about.

"Lucky you didn't stay behind it, Cluny. That was a real cute idea of yours to set it off with a firecracker. See, it's kicked a hole right through the back of the shed!"

"And isn't the smell perfectly awful!" cried Hilda, sneezing.

"I rather like the smell of gunpow-

SEASONABLE ADVICE.

Some Things to Avoid Doing on the National Birthday.

Don't set off fireworks on your front fence. It is likely to blacken the paint, and your neighbor's fence will answer every purpose.

Don't stand in front of the cannon when you touch it off, and, what is better, don't touch it off. It is a dangerous operation, and it is better to let some friend attend to it.

Don't try to take in all the things that are going on unless you are counting on a few days' vacation in bed.

Don't attend the literary exercises with anticipations of serene pleasure. The person who fires the cracker is the only person who thoroughly enjoys the noise it makes. It is the same with the man who shoots off his mouth.

Don't look upon the lemonade when it is red unless there be something in it to prevent its disagreeing with you.

Don't go about telling everybody what you used to do on Fourth's long gone.

Don't growl because there is so much noise in the air. You were once a boy yourself.

Don't go away from home unless you are obliged to go.

Don't you wish it was all over?—Excuse.

A Bloody Fourth.

July 4, 1776, was a day of butchery.

A force of Seneca Indians and British descended upon the beautiful Wyoming valley, on the Susquehanna river. The men had gone off to war, and only women and children were left, with a few aged and infirm men. The forts were captured, and over 800 persons were slaughtered by the savage allies. Every dwelling was burned.

Not only are the manufacturers engaged in making fireworks for land display, but they also make what they term "water fireworks." These are intended to make a display on the surface of the water. They are ignited by a slow fuse, and when thrown into the water they burn, after a short time, with wonderful effects in color and motion. The varieties are known as imps, dolphins, witches, devils, snakes, volcanoes, fountains and batteries.

"Spanish Jugglery" is the name of a new piece, which can be used on the water. It is built on the plan of an old flowerpot, and is to be used principally in lawn exhibitions. It starts out by pouring out a geyser of fire and winds up with an explosion that sends a number of flying pigeons into the air 200 feet. The gyrations of the pigeons and the beauties of the circle of fire with which they surround themselves is remarkable.

In the same class are the "Devil Among the Tailors," which is a fountain of beautiful lights; "Jack in the Box," that pours forth a glory of colors, and the "Colored Scandals," which go hissing and squirming over the ground like a pack of enraged serpents. These are floated out to sea upon a board or raft.

The day shell is used in daylight exhibitions, and is probably the most ingenious contrivance of its kind that ever came across the water, for it is of Chinese origin. It is a cylinder, about four inches in diameter, covered at both extremities. It is thrown from a mortar to a height of about 400 feet. At that altitude the cylinder explodes, releasing a large figure made of light fabric that is inflated with hot air rising from the powder that burns in small caps suspended from the underside of it. When expanded, these small wads take the forms of various animals, and they float in the air for a long time, never falling until the hot air is exhausted.—Boston Transcript.

Schoolmaster—So, then, the reptile is a creature which does not stand on feet, and moves along by crawling on the ground. Can any one of you boys name me such a creature?

Johnny—Please, sir, my baby brother.

Master