

The Fourth of July in 1776

JULY again!
And on the Fourth a holiday and a few fireworks and a lot of picnics and speeches and flags. And night finally settling down on the peace and security of a great nation—and its freedom.

A hundred and fifty years ago—
Well, wouldn't it be fun if we could roll back the years and look in on Philadelphia and that Fourth of July in 1776 when we became this great and secure and free nation? Wouldn't it be fun to see how they celebrated on that day?

Just supposing it was Philadelphia and the fourth of July at last after tense months of tense days. And supposing you were in the crowd outside Liberty Hall where the great bell hung that had said for twenty-three years: "Proclaim Liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof," without quite meaning it. Supposing you were just one of the common folks standing in the crowd in knee breeches or homespun frock with buckles on your square-toed slippers, and something mighty bursting your heart. And supposing you knew that in Liberty Hall were delegates from all the colonies who were going to vote to a man, on the Declaration of Independence. And you knew it was going to be read with grim lips and signed with defiant flourishes. But supposing it was very hot and it took so long—

And then supposing all of a sudden, flags began to fly and drums to beat and cannon to boom and fifes to shrill. And finally suppose above it all, old Liberty Bell began to ring and ring—clang, clang! clang, clang! For two whole hours until it cracked its voice shouting the words on its sides that it was meaning at last!

Oh, boy, wouldn't your voice rise to the blue heavens? And wouldn't your hat go flying upward? And wouldn't you cheer and cheer until your own voice cracked? And wouldn't you make "snoots" at the respectable old Tories standing silently about? And wouldn't you rush around helping build bonfires to burn that night and helping hurried couriers mount their horses to gallop away with the news? And wouldn't you crowd up to writing the hands of the signers when they came solemnly out at last?

Yes, wouldn't it be great if we could roll back the years and look in on the Fourth of July as they celebrated it in 1776, a hundred and fifty years ago. And when we came back to 1926 we would come with higher hearts. But would we find things so different, after all?

In garments, yes. In manners, yes. In understanding and appreciation, yes, perhaps a bit. And perhaps a bit in real remembering and grateful observance. But fundamentally we would find them no different at all.

For the thing that began glowing in the hearts of 1776 still burns in the hearts of 1926. And the same flag flies, thank God, unchanged save for new stars on the blue. Yes, and the same deep loyalty to land and home and freedom lies safe in our hearts. In my heart and your heart and the hearts of all our countrymen!

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

A DECLARATION

BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
IN GENERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED.

WHEN, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate, that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present king of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good. He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature—a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused, for a long time after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large, for their exercise, the state remaining in the meantime exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers, to harass our people, and eat out their substance.

He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us. He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation:

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us;

For protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states;

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world;

For imposing taxes on us without our consent;

For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury;

For transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offenses;

For abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies;

For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering, fundamentally, the forms of our government;

For suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us. He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow-citizens, taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections among us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms; our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them, from time to time, of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They, too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends.

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare 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, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that, as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

Signed by order and in behalf of the Congress,

Attested, CHARLES THOMPSON, Secretary.

JOHN HANCOCK, President.

The Declaration

YES, we are proud of those boys who, putting aside physical comfort and personal safety, affixed their signatures to the most sweeping summary of grievances ever formulated in the history of mankind, and who pledged their lives, their fortunes and their honor in a declaration of independence from the tyranny that had oppressed them in order that they and we might enjoy the benefits of political and religious freedom.

We like to claim kinship with them; we like to bask in the glory that is reflected by them and to think that we, had we lived in those stirring times, would have decided as wisely and acted as fearlessly as did they on that memorable Fourth of July.

But how many of us are there, if the question were asked, who could quote one paragraph of that beloved document or name even five of the twenty-seven grievances in abatement of which men pledged their lives in 1776? Do you suppose there would be one out of every hundred who could pass the test?

Maybe we are wrong. Maybe the Bancrofts and Barneses and McMasters of American history have done their work better than we think. But just in case there are some whose recollection of the Declaration of Independence needs to be refreshed, we have reproduced it in full on this page, and we ask that along with the fireworks and picnics and speeches and flags you include a family reading of this fundamental document of American liberty as a part of your celebration of the Fourth of July this year.

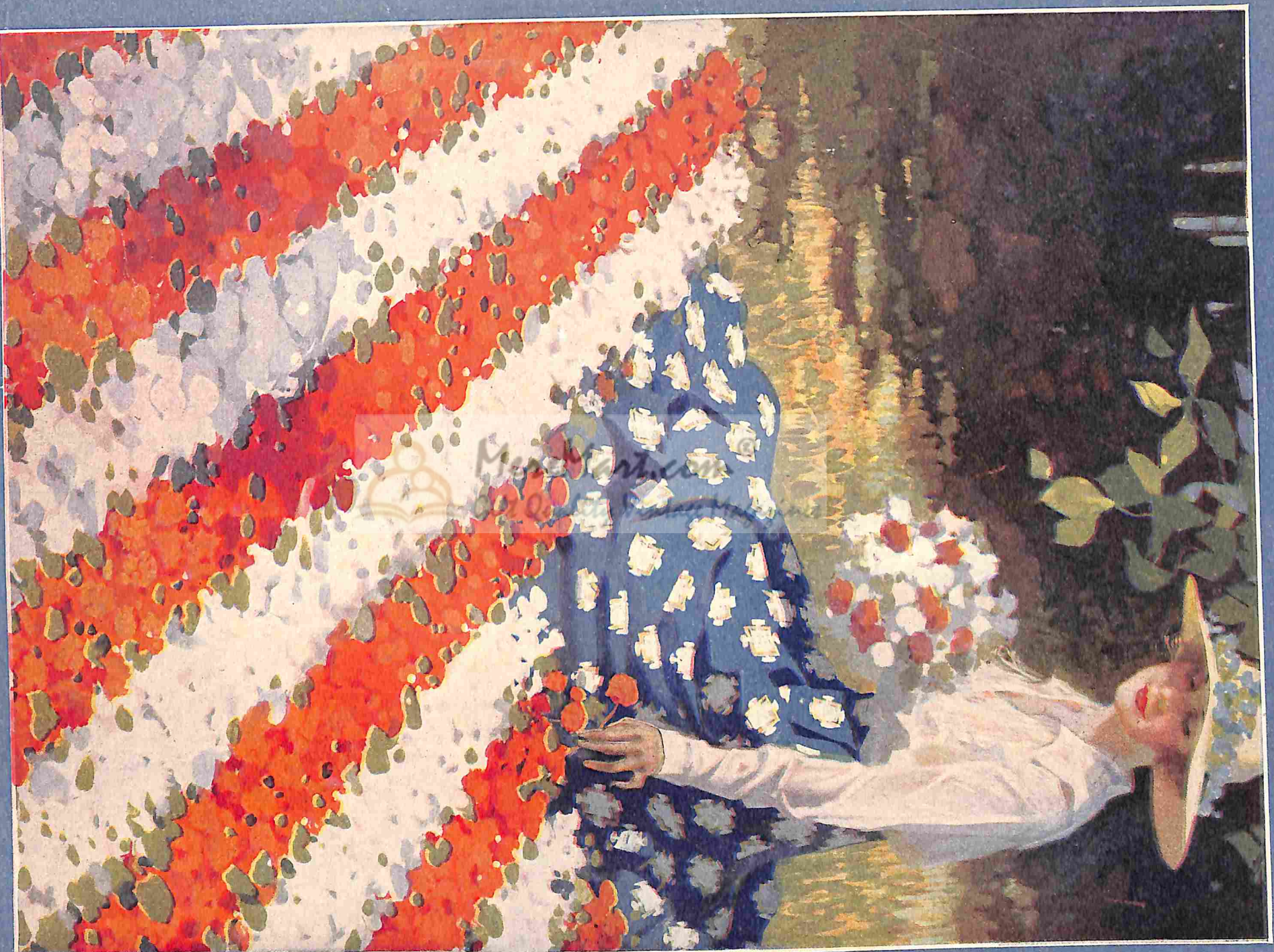
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DOUBTLESS you've wondered why we keep pestering you with questionnaires, why we are continually poking our noses into affairs that are seemingly none of our concern, and why, in spite of the fact we have never seen you, we persist in asking you things you wouldn't tell even to your neighbor next door—especially not to her, perhaps.

The reason is just this: With your co-operation and counsel we are trying to make Woman's World not merely a cut-and-dried piece of quantity production, but a vital, helpful, inspirational factor in the lives of all who read it. We want all of its departments to be definite, practical, purposeful. We want it to be not merely fifty percent or seventy-five percent, but one hundred percent serviceable; and to do this we can't guess or surmise or imagine—we must know what you want, what you like, how you live, work and play.

We are now planning articles and outlining departmental programs for the coming fall and winter months, and to guide us in the purchase of features and the preparation of articles, we are printing two questionnaires in this issue, one on page sixteen and the other on page forty-six, which we wish you would kindly fill out and mail in before July 25. As a reward for this service we will send you free two books from our Cookery Library—one for each questionnaire. The questions are direct and personal, but your replies will be held in strict confidence.

WOMAN'S WORLD



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