

National holidays like national songs are but indices of national life.

The feast of the passover and Miriam's song of deliverance were types of the Israelite life, solemn, self-bounded and intense as became the chosen people of the Lord.

Olympic games with their crowned victors whose names were written on the tablet of armless fame, which is the world's type of beauty were but the epitome of the Greek himself.

The great Roman holiday on which it was ~~unlawful~~<sup>to</sup> do anything except fight a battle was most appropriately the anniversary of the god of war, whose ever open temple was the shrine about which Roman life and Roman empire crystallized.

The German with the songs of fatherland upon his lips and his countenance glowing from the united effects of patriotism and beer is fairly typified by that anniversary which marks the consolidation and establishment of the German Empire. It is the most curious combination of tyranny and equality, of liberty and oppression, of right and wrong, of autocratic brutality and democratic justice that the world has ever seen.

France as it was and is, a Republic born of ages of oppression, a Democracy springing from a seed of blood, a movement to ward right springing out of unendurable wrong, formal culture tinged with latent savagery is fairly exemplified by the fierce-browed, shrill-voiced multitudes who shout the clanging measures of La Marseilles

upon the anniversary which marks the climax of proscription and terror

England with its one idea of abstract sovereignty, of provincial-  
arity, of boastful confidence in itself is magnificently represented  
by its one national holiday and two national anthems. The holiday  
is, most appropriately, the Queen's birthday celebrated not because the  
English people have any special love for king or queen in the con-  
crete, but simply because she represents the sovereignty of the Eng-  
lish people, typifies the glory and perpetuity of the British nation.  
'God save the Queen' is the expression of this feeling in the con-  
crete and rule Britannia in the abstract.

Our own national life has been not less appropriately marked.  
We have had two national songs which became universal in their char-  
acter, were sung by all classes and conditions of our people and on  
all times and occasions, but especially upon our national holiday.

The first of these was a curious bit of self-satirization bor-  
rowed, it is said, from an enemies brain and made the half earnest,  
half mocking type of our national life--Yankee Doodle. It is the  
first and only instance in history of a nation adopting self-ridicule  
as the distinguishing feature of its national anthem, as we are per-  
haps the only people who have made self-ridiculs, the burlesqueing  
of our institutions and life the distinctive feature of our patriotism,  
the characteristic element of our literature, the aim of our education  
and end of our aspiration. To mock at ourselves, to despise our cus-  
toms, manners and institutions of our country, to desire to be thought  
the subjects of another government, to regard whatever is distinctive

and characteristic in our popular development, to wish our life and thought shaped upon a foreign model is the one peculiar and distinctive feature of American patriotism, of American scholarship and of American life. In saying this, however, I wish it to be distinctly understood as omitting and excepting that portion of our American life lying southward of the old time Mason and Dixon line. It is a northern sentiment springing out of New England and going westward with her sons, borne on the notes of Yankee Doodle, finding utterance on every lip that whistles it and is distinguished from all other national lives, past and present, by some curious intermingling of pride and modesty, of boastfulness and ridicule, of self-praise and self-depreciation. To the southward of this line, the general sentiment in regard to this respect is entirely different. At the South Yankee Doodle became universal more with a subtle flavor of ridicule of New England than as a national anthem and the element of self-depreciation never obtained serious foothold there. Whatever may be the defects of the southern character, it is at least entitled to the praise of not desiring to be fashioned on any foreign model. A southern man who goes abroad is known as an American, perhaps distinctively as a southern man, and never has been known to manifest any wish or desire to be thought anything else. He does not ape the manner of the Englishmen nor ~~rejoice~~ rejoice at being taken for a cockney. He goes abroad as Colonel John Smith and comes back without a brevet.

At first solemn, almost devoutful it was a reverent religious recognition of the danger through which the nation had passed and its

miraculous deliverance from evil. The Continentals came, year after year, like the ghosts of dead in the garb consecrated by seven years struggle filled with memories of the day of conflict and enduring gratitude for the deliverance.

By and by, an element of the grotesque crept in. The mocking fiend put his Yankee Doodle in our ears, invented a proper accompaniment of prolific extravaganza. The American eagle when he had pipped his shell and fairly begun to fly began to pipe the strain of discordant boastfulness. Extravagance was hardly sufficient description of the richness of boastful metaphor which characterized the era of our self-glorification. So the South, which unquestionably excelled in this sort of eloquence furnished the name by which it is known since been universally characterized--BUNCOMBE. This was succeeded by a period of awakening. The time in which new ideas had their birth and distinctive forces began to shape themselves and array against each other the pleas set to their influence. The struggle for the freedom of the slave which culminated in the war for separation and gave a new tone ~~to~~ to the "Fourth of July" both of the North and of the South. A tone as earnest as the original religious frenzy by which it was dedicated to liberty. Throughout the country the Fourth of July came to assume a controversial aspect. At the North the orator began to demonstrate that it was not in combination with hell but an indissoluble league with liberty. At the South on the same national occasion was demonstrated over and over again that fact that the existence and liberty of the Republic depended upon the

security and perpetuation of the slave.

This is the genesis of the day we celebrated in the past, what of the present occasion. We are one people in name at least and striving with a certain sincerity to become one in fact. The struggle which is as yet fresh in the memories of those of middle age was too tense and terrible, too fierce and fervid an impression to be passed over and forgotten. The orator of today <sup>that</sup> seeks to awaken ~~enthusiasm~~ enthusiasm by recounting the excellencies, self-sacrifice and devotion of the founders of the Republic, is like he who would glorify the beauty of the moon with the suns flaming orb intervening betwixt our eyes and it. Of this later glory it is not permitted yet to speak. The fear that some dissenting heart may be touched by implied reproach of his acts and motives is no strong that we have resolved forget even as we have long ago forgiven. After eighty-seven years of growth and fruit, since ~~men~~ <sup>it</sup> went forth to plant the seed with tears did Fourth of July reach ~~this~~ <sup>its</sup> grand climacteric on the heights of Gettysburg. Since that day in a constantly increasing degree it has become a somewhat meaningless holiday. Like the Christian Sabbath which commemorates the risen Lord its original purpose has almost been forgotten. It is now the simple holiday, a day for the relaxation for the worn and busy ~~life~~ and of indulgence for the pleasure seekers, and of insignificant merry making by all.