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Independence Day, July 4, 1893

at the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago

Advantage was taken of the favorable circumstances existing at the Exposition to make the celebration of this day the most inspiring ever held. From the sunrise salute until midnight it was filled with stirring incidents and overflowing patriotism, and so varied were the proceedings that their details could be mastered only with difficulty.

The foreign nations also entered into the spirit of the day with decorations, music, and special programs. The principal exercises were held in the morning in the plaza between the Administration Building and the Terminal Station, where a large platform had been erected for speakers and invited guests. Several bands of music and a chorus of two thousand voices, under Choral-Director Silas G. Pratt, were distributed about the *loggias* of Machinery Hall, the Mines Building, and the Terminal Station. General Jackson's sword figured in the program, together with the original Stars and Stripes — the flag of Paul Jones — with its thirteen stripes and twelve stars on a field of blue.



Flowers from Jefferson's tomb adorned the speaker's desk, from which, at the hour of noon, an electric button was to give the signal for the ringing of the Columbian Liberty Bell, which was still in the hands of its founders at Troy, N. Y. The 'city was represented on this occasion by Mayor Harrison, members of the City Council, and other city officials. A monster audience greeted the appearance of the speakers upon the stand.



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Director-General Davis called the throng to order, and, after prayer by the Rev. Andrew J. Canfield, D. D., of Chicago, introduced Vice-President Stevenson as the first speaker. His address was followed by singing, after which Mayor Harrison took up the patriotic theme. At the stroke of noon he seized General Jackson's sword, and, holding it aloft as a signal for the raising of the original Stars and Stripes, called upon the people for three cheers for the old flag and the new.

Up to its place went the little old flag with its dozen stars, while all around it scores of big new flags with forty-four stars on their fields of blue waved a welcome. Cheer after cheer rent the air; the bands struck up The Star-Spangled Banner, and thousands joined in the song. The signal was given to Troy, and the ringing of bells, blowing of whistles, and booming of cannon added to the patriotic uproar.

The Hon. Hampton L. Carson, Mayor of Philadelphia, continued the program with an address on The Old Liberty Bell, and James S. Norton, of Chicago, read the Declaration of Independence, prefacing it with remarks on The Work of the Signers. At the close of this reading a dispatch was received from Troy announcing that at the instant of the closing of the circuit at noon the Columbian Liberty Bell was rung there for the first time for "peace and good will throughout the entire civilized world." While all this was going on in Administration Plaza, a picturesque affair took place among the races and tribes of the Midway Plaisance. About noon a long cavalcade of Bedouins — the Wild East Show — mounted on camels and spirited horses, gayly caparisoned, followed by a procession of Turks having the Star and Crescent mingled with the Stars and Stripes, made its way toward the parade ground at the west end of the Plaisance.

A vigorous pounding of drums and tom-toms announced the approach of a delegation of donkey boys, swordsmen, jugglers, wrestlers, and dancers, as well as bronzed Soudanese from the Cairo Street. Richly robed Chinamen followed them, and then came the Dahomeyans with their wild music. A few North American Indians increased the assortment. Commissioner J. R. Burton, of Kansas, made a short speech of welcome, and the Iowa State band played national airs. At twelve o'clock the Stars and Stripes were unfurled, with a salute from the artillery, and the various nationalities cheered vigorously in a score of tongues, while fifes, drums, tom-toms, and gongs greeted the flag.

In the afternoon appropriate and interesting exercises were held in the Woman's Building and in several of the State buildings. Bands of music played national airs in different parts of the grounds and buildings, gathering around them crowds who, from time to time, took up some well-known refrain, and launches and gondolas filled with singing parties floated around upon the water, carrying with them the inspiration of patriotic song.



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At the Delaware Building occurred the dedication of the Columbian Liberty Bell that State being chosen for the honor as having been the first to ratify the Constitution. The existence of this bell is due to the efforts of William O. McDowell, of Newark, N. J., to whom the idea was suggested by the poem *The New Liberty Bell*, written by Mrs. Maud Morris Wagner, of San Diego, Cal. Every great event, every great leader in the struggle for human freedom, is represented in the metal from which the bell is cast. Relics of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, Bolivar, William Tell, Garibaldi, and many others ; pieces of chains from Siberian mines, the fetters of slaves, articles of gold and silver, and two hundred and fifty thousand pennies contributed by school children, are among the things that went into its composition. The dedication was conducted by Mr. McDowell, who told the story of the bell and its mission, after Mrs. Wagner's daughter had read the poem from which he received his inspiration.

An interesting incident at the Pennsylvania Building was the bringing together of the old Liberty Bell and the Paul Jones flag before a great crowd, who cheered enthusiastically as Mrs. Harriet Stafford, of Martha's Vineyard, Mass., the present owner of the flag, laid it upon the historic bell. The Government Building was crowded all day with visitors, the Colonial Exhibit being the center of attraction.

But the grand climax was reached in the evening during a display of fireworks of unequalled grandeur on land and lake. All the resources of the pyrotechnic art were lavished, and on the lake rode a hundred yachts and launches carrying many-colored lights. In the midst of this appeared the portrait of Washington, and beneath it blazed the words "First in War, first in Peace, first in the Hearts of his countrymen." Another device showed the Spanish coat of arms in red and yellow, with the date "1492" below it, on one hand; and on the other the United States coat of arms in red, white, and blue with the Columbian date "1893."

Finally a globe of light floated across the sky, dropping, as it went along the folds of a flag of fire, with every star and stripe ablaze. Nearly three hundred and twenty-five thousand people passed the gates this day.