

Letters to the Editor.

[To insure insertion, letters should be at this office before noon of Saturday. If they are over two hundred words in length, they should be received by Friday noon.]

PROPOSES NATIONAL MEMORIAL AT TRENTON

Editor Sunday Advertiser:

Dear Sir—It is impossible to find a fit simile for the process now going on among the various races in the United States. It is not like mixing several powders to make one, nor like the making of an amalgam nor yet like the combination of several differing chemicals to get a different one, for in all these the original elements can be recovered. The process we are concerned with is a vital one and so is beyond comparison. The human world is getting smaller, distance is destroyed by electricity and time by thought so that we may never be a more homogeneous people than we are now.

As a country becomes old and rich it grows proud of its history and builds monuments to commemorate incidents and individuals. In the middle ages the present European countries had not organized and hence their art has been perpetuated in cathedrals which represented their religion and not their patriotism. Later on we find tombs, arches, bridges and monuments to perpetuate other ideas. All of these seem to have been built without thought of cost. If the plan of the architect was beautiful it was materialized.

The old countries are like an aristocrat standing in the hall of his castle surrounded by the objects of art which have been collected by his ancestors. We are like the son of a pioneer standing in the door of a log cabin while he watches the walls of his new dwelling rise in the magnificence of marble. We are entering into the period when we should begin to collect for those who will succeed us. In the old countries every place and object which teaches of the past is preserved and marked with fitting memorial. Everything from the monoliths of Stonehenge to the battlefield of Waterloo is remembered and marked. Here we have made a beginning. We have saved our great trees, some of our prehistoric ruins and have marked the notable battle fields of our fraternal war. In Trenton we have been somewhat apathetic. We are surrounded by historic and prehistoric places. Trenton boys have wandered over forgotten fields of battle and picked up stone axes and arrow heads; they have played in the hollows where once the squaw ground the corn and over the paths that led to the river village of the red man. We see these disappearing without an effort to save them and in a few years they will be but a legend of the buried past.

Sometime ago I was driven over a magnificent roadway extending from the city of Mexico three miles to the hill of Chapultepec. On either side stood a stately row of trees and at short intervals there were statues of Mexican men of renown. Twice the road ran around a group of statuary representing a historical incident and ended on the field of a battle which we claim to have won, but which the Mexicans glory in as we do in Bunker Hill. I have since often thought of the public spirit which built this road and wondered if we would ever do like here in New Jersey.

I may seem to wander in this letter, but these thoughts arose during a spell of self communing. I do not suggest what follows, but talk of it as a pleasant subject. Imagine a boulevard extending from the Trenton Battle Monument to the spot on the New Jersey shore where Washington trod the Christmas morning he crossed the Delaware. This boulevard to be one hundred yards wide, lined with trees and bordered with grass and flowers and a strip of green in the middle. Every half mile there should be a chump of trees surrounding a rest house with every accommodation. Statues of our noted men of all the professions should stand at frequent intervals, while at the end of every mile in the centre of the boulevard there should be a group portraying some incident of our war of Independence. Fountains would add to its beauty and the sounds of falling water please the ear. The roadway should be as bright by night as by day, and lights be so placed as to afford extra illumination on days like

the anniversary of the battle, Washington's birthday and the Fourth of July.

Several hundred acres of land should be acquired around the Crossing on both sides of the river and laid out appropriately.

The crowning glory of this work should be a bridge. A bridge has always been one of the favorite methods by which nations expressed their pride. From the earliest times he who built a bridge has been considered a public benefactor, and the Romans could confer no higher title on the Emperor than Pontifex Maximus, or Great Bridge Builder.

Here at Trenton and near it occurred events which will be told in song and story as long as history exists, and here in Trenton lived and worked the Pontifex Maximus of the American Industrial World, so that place and incident suggest a memorial, and what more fitting memorial could there be than a bridge.

It should be of stone, firm and wide and high, overlooking the whole park and defying the worst floods. In its centre, as a crown, should be a heroic statue of Washington. Along the parapets should be statues of revolutionary heroes, and at frequent points, embrasures should be built, platformed to hold benches where the people could sit and develop patriotism in the thought of what had occurred below them. I need not go into further details. To build such a monument is better than even sowing the Sequoias, or setting aside a magnificent country to allow tourists who have the price watch grizzly bears eat out of slop baskets. Maybe our children's children will see this, but in the meantime let us be satisfied with our humble Mall—when we get it.

TRENTONIAN.

April 7, 1909.