WHAT the FOURTH COSTS US

IF the experience of past years is repeated the annual celebration of the signing of the Declaration of Independence this year will cost 200 lives. No more serious results, as far as casualties are concerned, could be expected from a considerable battle. For though the number of dead will be relatively small, the list of wounded will be very large. Probably 20,000 or more will be seriously hurt in one way or another by explosives. Of these more than 100 will lose one or both legs. Nearly 100 boys will receive injuries in the right hand from toy pistols, from which they will die in a lingering and painful manner from lockjaw.

In the palm of the human hand there is a plexus, or network of nerves. When a toy pistol explodes, or shoots backward, as it is always liable to do, the wound inflicted is usually in the palm; there is laceration of the network of nerves aforesaid, and lockjaw is likely to follow.

The estimate of 20,000 wounded does not include the slight-hurt, who will make a much longer list. But taking the figures given, and leaving out of consideration all destruction of property by fire, it would seem that the nation's bill for its Fourth of July celebration is a pretty heavy one.

The property loss by fires due to careless use of explosives, will amount to at least $500,000. Possibly it may run up into the millions, but the estimate here given represents merely an average Fourth of July. People will throw firecrackers into places where they are likely to start conflagration, and skyrockets, which excite such enthusiasm when they go up, have a deplorable way of coming down upon roofs and making mischief.

Then, too, many of the modern kind of fireworks, such as the bombs, which rise 1,000 feet in the air and explode, liberating beautiful showers of varicolored stars, contain considerable quantities of high explosives, and are proportionately dangerous. Only last Fourth of July, it will be remembered, many people were killed and wounded by the accidental setting off of a quantity of such bombs which had been put in readiness for a fireworks exhibition.

Some, probably a dozen, shops that contain large stocks of fireworks will be destroyed by the accidental setting off of the combustibles, incidentally endangering much property in their neighborhood. Few finer and more striking exhibitions in the fireworks line are given on the glorious Fourth than are furnished by such impromptu displays, but they cost a great deal of money.

If grown people are satisfied to risk life and limb in playing with the high explosives contained in many kinds of fireworks, it is nobody's business but theirs. Unfortunately, some of the instruments of celebration placed in the hands of children are loaded with small quantities of similar deadly materials. Naturally, the little ones like best the torpedoes which make the loudest noise, and those are the ones that contain fulminate of mercury (an exceedingly dangerous substance) and sometimes even dynamite.

Just why the police do not take the necessary pains to suppress the sale of such torpedoes nobody can say. To offer them for sale is against the law, but ordinarily the regulation is not enforced, and little Bobby or Johnny walks innocently about the streets on the Fourth of July with enough dynamite in his jacket pocket to injure him seriously, or possibly kill him, if a mischance should set off his package of torpedoes all at once.

Parents are not acquainted sufficiently with the danger that lurks in some kinds of torpedoes. If they were at all aware of it, accidents of the kind would be less frequent, and public opinion would bring about the proper enforcement of the law which forbids the sale of these bombs—for bombs they are, though only small ones. Of course, most torpedoes are entirely harmless; but some of the small ones, round and very hard, about the size of a marble, which go off with a report like a pistol-shot, are in the deadly class, containing as they do fulminate of mercury.

Years ago, as most people will be able to recall, there was a dreadful Fourth of July accident in Philadelphia. A large quantity of torpedoes, of a kind whose sale had been expressly prohibited by local ordinance, was exposed on a street stand, kept by an Italian, on one of the busiest downtown thoroughfares. Exactly what caused it nobody ever knew, but apparently a stone thrown by a boy struck the torpedoes, and all of them went off together. They were loaded with dynamite, and the explosion was tremendous. Seven children were killed, while a number of others were more or less seriously hurt.

A great many of the Fourth of July accidents are caused by children's mischief. A boy will throw a firecracker at a girl, for example, burning her seriously. Then there is the deadly cracker that has failed to explode, and which must be examined and relighted, the consequence being an unexpected report and possibly the loss of an eye. The large crackers, some of which are a foot or more in length, are really dangerous bombs, and should not be put in childish hands. No prudent father would allow his boy to use a toy cannon, with loose gunpowder, which is likely to become ignited with disastrous results. Indeed, the list of killed and wounded would be enormously diminished if parents would take the necessary pains to keep toy pistols, raw gunpowder, and giant firecrackers out of the hands of their children, reserving to themselves also the business of setting off the fireworks in the evening.

If we must have a Fourth of July celebration, let us try to be more sensible about it, and so cut down the number of slain and injured, as well as the serious property loss of bygone Fourths.

Guns and pistols are not suitable playthings for children.

The little boy who picks up his toy gun and playfully says, "I'll shoot you," should be taught that even in play he must not point a weapon at another, for it is in just such ways that respect for life is lessened and involuntary manslaughter is the result.

Thoughtful parents will not give children such toys. It has been the custom for many years to celebrate the Fourth of July with noise and fireworks.

Children did not originate the practice. It is the method shown by their parents, and so each year we have a slaughter of the innocents equal in number to the loss in a great battle, and, as in the days of old, when human sacrifices were laid on the altar, we sacrifice to the nation's glory hundreds of its embryo citizens.

The man who takes his life in his hands and goes to battle for his country's protection gives his life to a worthy cause, but the children whose lives are sacrificed to celebrate the nation's birth have given their lives to little purpose.

Is it not time that parents should think of this subject, and see if they cannot devise other methods of celebrating our national holiday that will not entail such sacrifices of life and property? Is it not time that in an age when peace and arbitration are in the air, and when the great nations of the earth are steadily advancing toward the day when disputes and differences will be settled by arbitration, that we should begin to teach the children higher ideals of patriotism than noise and shooting?

STILL AMONG THE LIVE ONES

Woman's Fear That Husband Had Departed This Life Proved Altogether Unfounded.

"I beg your padon, if I disturb you, sir," she said to the keeper of the morgue, "but my husband has been gone two days, and I fear that he may have been killed on the street and brought here."

"Husband missing, eh?" queried the official. "We may have him in her. What sort of a looking man was he?"

"A short, thick-set man, sir, with side whiskers and two front teeth gone."

"Um. Side whiskers, eh? Two front teeth gone? Was he a man likely to get in front of a cable car?"

"He was, sir. If he thought the car meant to bluff him, he'd stand on the track until he was run over."

"How was he on dodging hacks?"

"He never dodged one in his life. He used to carry half a dozen rocks tied up in a handkerchief, and the hackman who tried to run him down got his head knocked off."

"Been gone two days, eh?"

"Two days and a night, sir, and you don't know how worried I am."

"Yes, I suppose so," absently replied the man. "I wish I could say he was here, and thus relieve your anxiety."

"Then he isn't here?"

"No'm—not unless he shaved off those side whiskers and went to a dentist before he was brought in. I'm sorry to disappoint you, but we are just out of short, thick-set men with side whiskers. One may be brought in any hour, however."

"If not here then, he is still alive?" suggested the woman, as the look of anxiety left her face.

"I should so infer, ma'am—should so infer. In fact, ma'am, I am quite sure your husband is alive and well."

"Thanks, sir—thanks! You haven't seen him?"

"I have, ma'am. Less than half an hour ago he asked me to drink with him in that saloon over there, and from this window you can now see him standing up to the bar, side whiskers and all."

"Thank heaven, and I will go over and take him by the neck, and—and—"

"Glad to be of service to you, ma'am. If I had a short, thick-set man with side whiskers and two front teeth out on a slab inside, I would admit you with pleasure, but as I haven't, you'll have to take up with the live one over there, and make the best of it. Good day, ma'am. Call again if you happen this way, and I may be in better luck."—Philadelphia Record.

Not That Way.

"I heard my husband say the other day there are laws against barkers."

"So there are. The practice is nearly stopped."

"Is it? Just listen to those dogs!"

JUDGED OTHERS BY HIMSELF

Small, Persistent Jibber Imagined Colored Man Had Been Punished in the Customary Way.

There are no negro settlers in the portion of the Ozark Mountains of Arkansas traversed by the St. Paul branch of the St. Louis & San Francisco railroad. Accordingly many children grow to the age when they attend high school before they see a colored man.

Little Johnny had been a resident of Combs, Ark., all his life. He was an adept at fibbing and to break him of the habit his mother painted a little spot on his hand with ink every time she caught him fibbing. The result was that some days he would have several black spots on his hands.

A new railroad is building from Combs south, and some of the grading contractors imported negroes to drive teams. One day Johnnie ran to his mother very excitedly, and exclaimed:

"Mamma, I have seen the biggest liar in the world. His mother must have used a whole bottle of ink on him! Come and see him!"

The mother went to the door and Johnny pointed to a negro driving by with a team of supplies.—Kansas City Star.

Call Me Early.

"Why do you call that drummer the Queen of May?"

"Because he leaves such early calls," explained the hotel clerk.

Thinking of Himself.

Two Irish soldiers stationed in the West Indies were accustomed to bathe daily in a little bay which was generally supposed to be free from sharks. Though on good terms with each other, they were not what might be called fast friends.

One day as they were swimming about 100 yards from the shore, Pat observed Mike making for the land as hard as he could without saying a word. Wondering what was the matter, Pat struck out vigorously after him, and landed at his companion's heels.

"Is there anything wrong wid ye!" inquired Pat, feelingly.

"Nothing—nothing at all," replied the other.

"Thin what did ye make sich a suddint retrate for an' lave me?" continued Pat.

"Bedad,' answered Mike, coolly, "I spied the fin of a big shark about 20 feet ahead, an' I thought while he was playin' wid you it wud give me time to rache the shore!"

Suffering Impressions.

"If inanimate objects could feel, photography would be a cruel business".

"Why so?"

"Just think of some of the faces recorded on sensitive plates."

Their Habit.

"Women can get along very well with a comprehensive ballot."

"Why?"

"Because they are used to folding things of a blanket type."

The Cases of Alice Clement

True Stories of the World's Greatest Woman Sleuth as Told by Herself to Courtney Riley Cooper

The Invisible Clue

(Copyright, by W. G. Chapman.)

Alice Clement was bound for Europe, mission unknown except to herself and the watchers of criminals who wear the police stars of the city of Chicago. And, judging from the queer little smile which Miss Clement gave me as we walked down Fifth avenue, after our meeting, it seemed that the mission was to remain a secret.

"It seems," I said, "that the occasion of your coming to New York ought to be enough to cause you to tell a little of it anyway."

She directed one of those flashing, good humored looks at me.

"Can you remember a time when I ever told anything of a case before I finished it?" she queried.

I was forced to admit that she was right. Miss Clement continued:

"Besides," with a smile, "New York isn't so new to me. I made an arrest here once."

It was then that a crossing jam took our attention from things criminal, and it was not until an hour later, when seated in the moonlight on the top deck of a Coney Island boat, that the conversation drifted back. I had said something about the detective stories of fiction and the wonderful doctors who always are finding criminals through their scientific investigations.

"And yet," said Miss Clement, "there's many a story of fiction that has its counterpart in real life. For instance, that New York arrest I spoke of was an example of what can be done by science. The up-to-date police departments are not so blind to new discoveries as you might think."

As the story started, I could not help admiring the picture before me, the white clad figure with its hat shielding the face from the pearl-like flood of the moon, the flash of eyes now and then as the head turned, the clasped hands—and on beyond the rolling sea, gleaming and swirling in the night light. In the distance the shore slid past in black, ever changing shadows. It was a cool night, and the usual crowd of the boat was absent. Here and there about the deck, however, sat young men and young women conversing in low tones, or sitting silent and looking out to the thin line of the horizon. Far ahead, a lighthouse flashed its warning. The steam of the ship's exhaust mixed incongruously with the music of the boat orchestra. I leaned nearer that I might hear better.

"I can't say that I ever was really assigned to a case where murders or something of the kind have been concerned," Miss Clement had begun, "but it always seems I am just happening along by accident. This New York case (I call it that because the case was finished here) was one of those affairs, though not a murder.

"I was walking down State street, Chicago, one morning when a crowd around a store caused me to stop. The shattered glass and general wreckage within told of some kind of accident. I elbowed my way to the door, and there met one of the men from the central office.

"'What's happened?' I inquired.

"'Safe blowing,' was the answer. 'And it was a real one. The yeggman who did this job must have thought he was a Mount Vesuvius. He not only tore the store to pieces, but he tried to do the same thing to himself.' He pointed to a few spots of blood on the wall, evidently where the safe-blower had been knocked by the explosion and cut his head. 'But just the same,' the detective continued, 'that didn't keep him from cleaning the safe of about $10,000 in money and paper and getting away. And that's what gets me. I can't for the life of me see how he managed to escape.'

"A cursory glance on the outside, however, showed that the matter of escape had been fairly easy. An alley was at the side of the building, and from there, by dark routes through an excavation and an unfinished building, it was easy to reach Wabash avenue and the railroad yards beyond. I have never made it much of a point to spend much time figuring out by what method a man has escaped. It doesn't do much toward finding him. I went back into the store.

"'What do you think of it?' I asked the central office man.

"'It isn't what you'd call the best chance in the world,' was his answer. 'There's not a thing to hang a clue on. The only chance we have is to get track of some of that negotiable paper and trace him that—huh?'

"He had been digging around in the rubbish near the safe, and pulled forth a bundle of papers. That clue was gone. The robber had taken only the money. I looked around the room.

"'At least,' I said, 'we can find out whether he is a negro or a white man. Lend me your knife.'

"I stepped to the wainscoting and chipped off a bit of blood-stained wood. Then I started for a microscopist.

"That night a chance was in my grasp and I was on a Kansas City Flyer, bound for Fort Leavenworth, Kan. And the next afternoon—"

"Why Leavenworth?" I asked. "Had you found out his name?"

Miss Clement's smile flashed in the moonlight.

"Not a trace of it," was the answer. "I was depending on a new friend, Plasmodium Falciparum, to give me that."

"Who?"

"You never met," was the laughing reply. "But as I said, the next afternoon found me in Fort Leavenworth, addressing a man in the blue of the United States army.

"'Yours is the only regiment in from the Philippines since when?' I asked.

"'In a year,' was the answer.

"'Any deserters?'

"'One.'

"'May I see the pictures and any letters that have been intercepted?'

"Of course," explained Miss Clement, "my credentials had been shown. The object of my visit was, of course, as yet a secret, with the exception of the fact that I was looking for a criminal. The letters were shown me. I hurried away, and by the next day I was in Oklahoma City. A sample case of books was under my arm. I found the house I desired, and knocked at the door.

"'Is Miss Sexton in?' I inquired of the girl at the door.

"'I am Miss Sexton,' came the answer.

"'Your name was given me as being interested in books,' I said as I edged past her and into the hall. I did not stop talking then, but manufactured the name of a publisher, a scheme of selling and everything else connected with book agency. My aim was to get the girl in a room and alone. I succeeded in my purpose. Then I locked the door and whirled.

"'I want that night letter!' I demanded.

"The girl blanched.

"'Night letter?' she stammered.

"'From Tom Barton,' I snapped back. I had played a 'hunch' and I saw that I had hit the mark. The woman half rose.

"'I don't know whom you are talking about,' she answered.

"'You don't?' I questioned back. 'You know very well who I am talking about!' I answered. 'You know that he has deserted the United States army, that he now is a fugitive from justice, and that he has wired you to join him. Don't scream or try to get out of this room,' I warned her.

"'I have a revolver, and I will shoot. Until I see otherwise, you are under arrest.' I showed my badge. 'Now give me that night letter!'

"The girl, she was hardly more than that, reeled half way across the parlor and was leaning against the piano for support. Her face was ghastly. Her hands were clasped until the blood distended the wrist veins like blue cords. Her breath came in gasps.

"'Deserted?' she asked vaguely, 'deserted? He told me he was on furlough of a month. We were going to get married, and he got the furlough for our trip.'

"'It will be a much longer furlough than that,' I answered icily. 'You are a good girl, Miss Sexton. I can see that. My coming here will enable you to escape a great deal. I do not desire to cause you any more notoriety than is necessary. But I must insist on your remaining under guard a few days at a hotel. No one will know the difference—providing you give me that night letter. Otherwise, it will be plain jail—and the papers.'

"A long wait and then the girl, half staggering, came toward me a few steps and extended a yellow envelope. I placed it in my pocketbook and wordlessly we left the house. In all my life I never had seen a girl so absolutely crushed. There were no tears. Her grief and surprise were too deep for that. Only the bloodless face, the trembling, blue lips, the eyes which looked almost unseeingly at the world, told of the girl's suffering. On the way to the hotel, where a detective awaited me, I learned her story—not much of one, that of a stenographer, lonely and young, who had met a man in uniform and been fascinated. It wasn't much to hear, but the sincerity of it all, the deadened way in which it was told, cut into my heart.

"'And you knew nothing of him?' I asked.

"'I was lonely,' was her invariable, dull answer; 'he told me lots of things. I believed them.'

"An hour later I opened the telegram, a day message instead of the night letter I had determined upon believing it to be. I read:

"'Meet me Newark, N. J., June 10. Will be married then. Keep thing secret until afterward. Will tell reason when I see you. Tom.'"

There came a pause in the narrative. Miss Clement spent a moment in watching the lovelorn actions of a shop girl and a floorwalker near the railing of the boat. She smiled in amused appreciation at the effort of handholding and then turned her eyes to watch the blinking of the lighthouse. The story began again.

"I went to a telegraph station. My wires were not to Tom, however, but to the office in Chicago. And when, a few days later, I stepped from the train at Newark, I saw near the baggage room the familiar faces of two central office men. I looked in vain for my deserter. He was not in sight. I walked into the station and began to pace the room. Discouragement had flashed upon me. I had taken every precaution, yet there had been chances for failure. I had trusted the girl in her story that she was the only one who knew that Tom had left the fort, in fact, that she was the only girl in the city who knew him at all. And in my haste, I had accepted that story without further investigation. I saw now the mistake that was possible. Had this girl played to disarm me by her expression of deep sorrow? Had there been someone else who had warned him? Had——

"A sudden fear entered my heart. There was only one chance to find out and that was to learn the possibility of a telegram having been delivered to him at the station. I hurried to the bulletin board to see, if possible, if the name of Tom—I knew the last name would be changed—had been put there that day. I crossed the room and then stopped with a shock. Before me stood out the chalk-marked words:

"'Agnes Sexton.'

"I rushed to the telegraph desk and called for the message. Then with trembling hands I tore open the envelope.

"'Have porter show you way to Gramercy Park, New York,' the message ran. 'Will be waiting for you there at northwest corner at midnight. Can't tell reason. Get directions explicitly.'

"It was signed 'Tom' as the other message had been. I reached for a pencil, scribbled my orders on the piece of paper, then dropped it at the feet of one of the central office men as I hurried past. Then I started for New York.

"The great, mournful chimes of the two-story clock in the Metropolitan tower were clanging twelve as I turned from Broadway, down Twentieth street and into Gramercy Square. The streets were deserted, except for a figure huddled against the iron grating of the eighty-year-old park. The song of time, played in its weird, long-sounding tones, rang out over the sleepy old park with its doleful message of

Days and years
Come and go,
Passing on,
Passing on.

"From tenement-lined Third avenue and its opening canyons of slum streets came the drowsy murmur of late night. An L train clattered along, its wheels singing and beating. I looked far down the street, under the street light and perceived the waiting figures of my detectives. It lessened the bumping of my heart to know they were ready. I approached the figure by the grating.

"'Is this Gramercy Park?' I asked, and with a quick glance saw that, according to orders, my men were beginning to move forward. The man had started forward a bit at the right of me, then had returned to his position by the fence. I could not see his face—the important thing. Work was still before me. I repeated my question.

"'Is this Gramercy Park?'

"'Yes,' came the curt answer at last.

"'How do the numbers run?'

"'Around the block.' The man kept his face turned from me. I laughed rather queerly at his answer.

"'I don't quite understand,' I said. 'I'm a stranger here in New York. I don't know anything about the city. Couldn't you tell me which way the numbers run here? Do they run from east to west or from north to south?'

"It was then that the man turned from the fence and with an angry swing of his arm, made a circle of the park.

"'They run that way!' he answered testily. He looked at me. I saw his face. I raised an arm. There was a rush, a short struggle as the cursing, biting, kicking man sought to evade the handcuffs and then Tom Barton was started to the station.

"But Tom Barton was a different type of person from his fiancee. He disregarded every question. He refused, even under threats, to answer anything that was asked of him.

"At last, however, he looked up and with a sneer admitted what we had been questioning him to obtain—the fact that he was a deserter from the United States army. Then the real work began.

"'Where did you get that bruise on your head?' one of the detectives asked.

"'Where do you suppose?' came the insolent query in response. 'I got it working, of course.'

"'Where?'

"'None of your business!'

"'Don't answer me that way!' The detective leaned forward.

"'I'll answer you any way I please,' came the sneering response. 'Why can't you let a fellow be? You've got your fifty dollars reward for getting next to a slipaway, now let me alone. I want to go to sleep.'

"'We want you for something more than deserting,' I said. 'We want you for cracking a safe in Chicago, and whether you confess it or not, we've got the goods on you.'

"The prisoner sneered again.

"'All right,' he said. 'Prove it. I ain't been near Chicago.'

"I smiled happily.

"'Haven't you?' I asked. 'Very well, we'll show that you have. O'Leary, scratch his wrist there and take a sample of his blood.'

"The man looked up.

"'What are you going to do with that?' he asked.

"'Prove our case against you,' was my answer, and he stared at me.

"'What have you got up your sleeve?' he questioned queerly.

"None of your business. Hold out your wrist. Captain, will you send a man to the Bertillon room for a glass microscope slide? I want to put a drop of this man's blood on it.'

"Barton seemed to squirm in his chair. My mysterious actions were affecting him queerly. For a moment he remained silent, watching the operation of placing a small drop of blood on the microscope slide. He seemed worried. He knew we had some sort of information regarding which he knew nothing. He began to ask questions. His caution seemed to leave him. One little admission came unguarded from his lips. Another was added to it. We began to twist his account of his actions. And in an hour he had confessed everything and was willing to go back to Chicago without requisition papers."

Miss Clement turned and looked ahead to where a yellowish glare diffused the sky.

"We're getting near Coney, aren't we?" she asked.

"Yes," I answered, "but that doesn't interest me at all right now. What I want to know is how on earth you found out that the robber of the safe was a deserter from the army."

Miss Clement smiled.

"I told you of Plasmodium Falciparum, didn't I?"

"Yes, but what in the name of Sam Hill is—well, whatever you said."

Again a laugh.

"I'll have to explain it, I guess," the pretty little detective said. "When that spot of blood found in the store was placed under a microscope it showed plasmodium falciparum, or, in other words, the indications of a tropical malarial fever, common to the Philippines. Then, it was a two to one bet that the person was a soldier who recently had returned to the country. I looked up the matter and found that the last regiment to come from the Philippines was stationed at Fort Leavenworth. I figured he would be a deserter, in need of money. After I read the letters that had been intercepted, I was more of this opinion than ever, for I saw he had been intending to get married. You see, his plan was to desert, get a bunch of money, then leave the country. But it didn't work out."

The lights of Coney flared brighter than ever. Miss Clement turned to again watch the tender-hearted shop girl and the lovelorn floorwalker.

"Silly things, aren't they?" she asked.

"THEY RUN THAT WAY," HE ANSWERED, TESTILY.

Perfect Jewel.

Mistress—You have excellent letters of recommendation.

New Cook—Yis mum. Not a fut will Oi shtep out av an body's house until Oi git wan.—Puck.