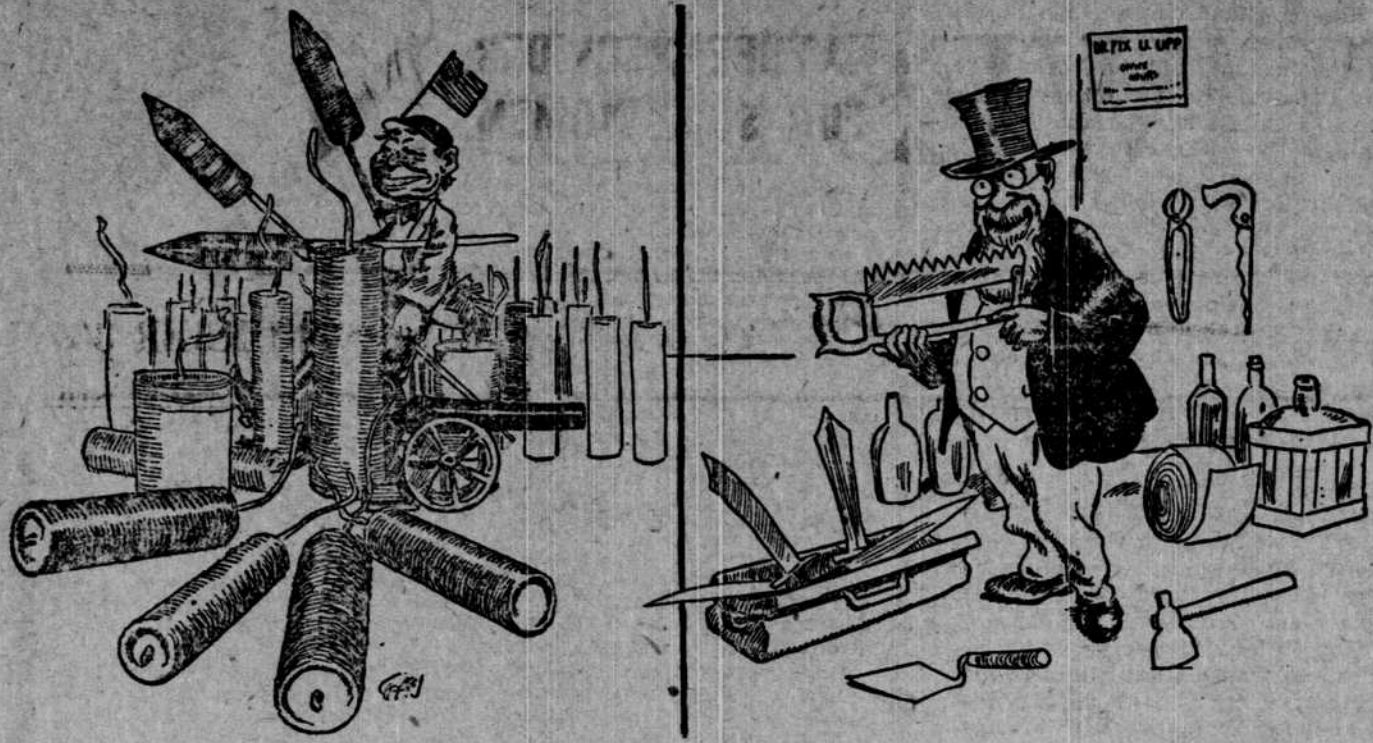


ALL READY



Mickey Finn's Big Fire Cracker

The explosion that wound up the Fourth of July Celebration on Cooney Island.

Two mammoth firecrackers stood in the window of Casey's grocery. They were 12 inches long and proportionately thick.

For a month before the Fourth of July these gigantic indicators of enthusiasm had stood in the window like British soldiers on dress parade, while a predatory spider hung a filmy hammock between them and calmly killed his buzzing victims over two powder mines.

The firecrackers were the admiration and the envy of all the boys in Cooney Island. It was seldom that a youthful nose was not flattened against the window pane in ardent covetousness.

But the price demanded by Casey for the thunderers was prohibitive, so far as the boys were concerned, and there was not one of them patriotic or courageous enough to invest 25 cents in a single ecstatic explosion.

Said Mickey Finn timidly one evening when he had been sent by his mother to get a quarter of a pound of tea and half a pound of pork:

"Mr. Casey, I suppose now, that whin wan o' thim big fellows wint off it would blow the stars out of the sky?" his mind filled with blissful thoughts of mighty explosions.

Casey stopped measuring out a half pint of New Orleans molasses, raised a monitor finger, and replied:

"Mickey, my boy, I'd be afeerd to tell you what would happen if I stood wan o' thim big fellows out on the sidewalk and touched the stem wid the lighted end of a five cent cigar. The noise would be terrible, terrible, my son. 'Twould make your head ring like an anvil, and you would see sparks like fireflies.

"Would it blow the house down?" asked the boy in an awed whisper.

"No, I don't think it would," said Casey. "It might shake the chimney down and break all the glass in the



In Ardent Covetousness.

windys in small pieces, and there would be paper in the streets as would fill an empty barrel o' flour. Oh, but thim big fellows is mighty powerful, Mickey, mighty powerful. They

FIRST MONEY IN CALIFORNIA.

Queer Early Coinage—D. O. Mills issued First Paper Money.

Coins in California till the fall of 1856 were a queer kettle of fish. More than 60 per cent. of the silver and at least 25 per cent. of the gold was foreign.

Most of the other gold coins were private coins. Moffit & Co. got a permit from the government to coin gold. Their coinage was confined to ten and 20 cents and were stamped "Moffit & Co."

We had all kinds of doubloons and similar South and Central American coins. Of the smaller gold coins the French 20-franc piece led all the others.

The English guinea was fairly represented. But it passed for only its face value, while the other gold passed for more. The 20-franc piece, value \$3.75, went at four dollars.

There was a still greater discrepancy in the silver coins. A one-franc piece went for 25 cents, and the East India rupee, value 45 cents, went for

use them in China to kill murderers and robbers. They put wan o' thim big firecrackers bechune the teeth of a murderer and make him light the fuse wid his own hand and blow his own head off. Thim Chinese is mighty cool, Mickey, mighty cool."

This vivid description inflamed Mickey's desire, which was Casey's motive in telling it, for the incident occurred on the eve of the Fourth, and Casey was afraid that the big firecrackers would be carried over the national holiday and remain a loss on his hands. In order to deepen the impression already made upon the boy Casey permitted him to handle one of the twins.

The boy's eyes had widened to their utmost capacity when he was outside the window, but now that he could feel the red jacket his hands trembled with the eagerness of possession and he would have given ten years of his life to own it.

"Take it along wid you, Mickey," said Casey, cajolingly. "Thim crackers were made in Chow Chow, in China, for the Cooney Island trade, and I want to get rid of thim I have on hand before I send another order to Wan Lung, the hyshtin."

"But I have no money," said Mickey sorrowfully. "My father is goin' to give me three bunches of little firecrackers and a pinwheel, but I know he wouldn't buy wan o' thim big firecrackers for me."

"Well," continued Casey, "you come down here to-morrow mornin' and carry in a half ton of coal for me and I'll give you the big cracker."

The next morning Mickey was busy for two hours carrying chestnut coal in a nail keg and dumping it in Casey's cellar. Just after noon, with a smile covered with coal dust and a bosom full of chuckles, he received his prize.

No grass grew under his bare feet as he ran homeward, the precious powder mine clasped to his bosom. Holding the big firecracker aloft as he darted through the kitchen door, he exclaimed:

"Mother, I have it! Ain't it a beauty?"

"Well, I don't see anything about it to be makin' a fuss over," said Mrs. Finn, who, like most mothers, had no love for fireworks. "Now, don't be bringin' it nearer to me, as Mickey ran toward her. "I don't want to be blown into the middle o' next week. 'Tthrow the dirty thing away! I'm afeered o' me life while you have it in your hands! Now, don't be goin' near the stove wid it! Arrah, ye little spalpeen, will ye take it off the stove? Take it off afore ye blow the roof off the house!" and the frightened woman ran into the bedroom and peered through the keyhole.

With the recklessness of boyhood, Mickey exclaimed, as he lit a match and reduced his mother to hysterics by pretending to light the firecracker stem:

"You needn't be afeered, mother. I'll nip it out afore it goes off."

In this simple fashion the afternoon of the Fourth passed away in the Finn household varied by the boy with occasional visits to the neighbors, whom he threw into a panic of fear by pretending to light the big explosive.

Mrs. Murphy and her three children were gathered around the kitchen table when Mickey placed the lighted mammoth in the middle of the table. Two of the boys went head first through the window, while Mrs. Murphy tried to crawl under the kitchen stove.

All this excitement afforded the boy a good deal of delight, but he reserved for the evening the culmination of his joy. He intended to blow his father up as he sat in his chair on the back stoop.

Mickey thought it would be an inspiring sight to witness his father flying across the back yard and plowing up the ground with his nose. In order that he might have an audience appropriate to so great an occasion, Mickey had spread the news among all the boys of the neighborhood, and at nine o'clock 50 boys sat on the fence surrounding the back yard. Mr. Finn, tired of the excitement of the

day, had fallen asleep in his rocking chair on the back stoop, when Mickey lit the stem of the big cracker and placed it carefully under his father's chair.

The moon shone brightly, illuminating the grin on every boyish face. Every ear was strained to catch the faint hissing of the fuse and every eye intent upon the sleeping man.

The fuse burned itself out, and the silence and suspense was deepening.



Had Fallen Asleep.

A minute passed and another, until Mickey could stand the strain no longer. He reached down and lifted the firecracker from beneath the chair.

As he held it up in the moonlight to examine it, a mosquito lit upon his father's nose and the old gentleman awoke. Grabbing the firecracker from his son's hand he arose and holding it aloft, he said:

"Boys, there will be no explosion to-night. I'm sorry to disappoint you. I was afeered that Mickey might do some harrum wid that big cracker, so whin he wasn't lookin' this afternoon I took the powder out of it and filled it wid clay. So, you see that the show is over, and ye may as well go home and go to bed. There'll be no more explosions only what I give Mickey, wid a shingle afore I turn in. Good night to ye all. Come around some other night whin there is somethin' doin'."

FOURTH OF JULY DON'TS.

Don't allow the children to bend over fireworks which will not "go off." They sometimes do it, unexpectedly with unfortunate results to the little meddler.

Don't neglect to send for a physician at once in the case of a serious burn, to prevent a possible scar or worse still, blood poisoning, from ignorant or improper treatment of the wound.

Don't forget to have some remedies for burns at hand. When the skin is not broken by a burn scrape a raw potato, place on a piece of soft linen and use as a poultice. Bicarbonate of soda—the ordinary baking soda—is excellent for burns whether the skin is broken or not. If broken apply the dry soda, if unbroken dampen the soda with water to make a paste and apply to the spot. The pain will be instantly relieved.

Don't leave the windows of a town house open if it is to be left for the day. Stay rockets and sparks may find an entrance.

Good Advice.

Keep the wound open and send for the doctor.

O. Mills & Co. issued their gold notes about 1858. In getting change for an old octagon \$50 gold, often as many as four or five nationalities would be represented in the change.

Greenbacks were never recognized as money; only as a commodity. They were used for buying postage and revenue stamps. All mercantile bill-heads and notes had the special contract enforcement for gold. California even paid the claims of the federal government in gold. And it came in mighty handy to Uncle Sam in 1862 and 1863. The old-style Californian still has an inclination for the yellow stuff.—P. E. Magazine.

Didn't Always Refuse.

"I've tried to discourage Mr. Neville from calling on you," snapped the stern parent, "but the young scamp refuses to be sat upon."

"Why, father, you do him an injustice," indignantly replied the dear girl.—Kansas City Times.

What He Wants.

When a man seeks your advice he generally wants your praise.—Chesterfield.



WITH unfathomed seas to the east, With the cross of St. George to the north, With unpenetrated forests to the west, And the yellow banner of Spain to the south.

Such were the narrow confines of the country, the new-born nation of freemen, over which Old Glory was first unfurled.

When those fifty-six sires of a nation signed that imperishable document at Philadelphia in 1776 they were dreaming of a principle, not of territory.

Little did the comrades of Washington think that the starry banner, then meaningless save to one people, then despised and spat upon by many of the monarchies of Europe, was destined to encircle the world; to spread its protecting folds from ocean to ocean; cross the broad Pacific and cover the islands of that mighty sea, then practically an unexplored waste of waters.

But where flies Old Glory to-day?

Westward the star of empire took its way.

The hardy pioneer with gun and axe penetrated the forests and blazed the trail for the flag of civilization.

He planted his banner on the top of the Alleghenies.

He guided his canoe down the swirling waters and planted it again in the fertile valley of the Mississippi.

Westward, ever westward, marched Old Glory.

Across the broad stream the lilies of France offered defiance for a short time, and then gave way before the advancing power that brooked no opposition.

Beneath its protecting folds he builded his rude cabin.

Beneath it he turned the virgin soil of the prairie.

It floated from the flagstaves of the growing villages.

Under it cross-road settlements grew into cities; schools and churches thrived; industries prospered, and a nation grew strong and great.

Braving every peril, ever westward.

From the top of the lofty summits of the Rockies this agent of civilization looked down upon golden California, and advanced.

From the shores of the broad Pacific waved Old Glory.

To the south the banner of Spain had given way before it; to the north the banner of St. George had been crowded back, and its territory sharply defined; to the southwest Mexico had made way for it. It



floated unchallenged from the flagpoles that stretched from ocean to ocean. To every section of a broad nation it carried its guarantee of freedom.

But where flies Old Glory to-day?

It has given to Hawaii a freedman's rule.

It floats from the flagstaves of the Samoas.

It has displaced the rule of tyranny in the Philippines.

It represents justice and equality in Porto Rico.

From the mastheads of the ships on every sea, in every port, flies Old Glory. It is respected in every land and by every people. To its protecting folds flock the downtrodden and oppressed of all nations, and to all that are worthy it offers a welcoming hand. It represents to-day a world power, greatest in the counsels of nations. A power whose word is unquestioned; whose might has been proven.

But Old Glory has represented more than an expanding nation.

It has created a new hope in the breasts of men.

It has disputed the God-given rights of kings.

It has overthrown the absolutism of Europe.

It has driven Spain from the new world, and founded new nations.

It has dictated equitable terms of peace to nations at war.

Old Glory!

God bless the flag. God keep it right, and strong and powerful in the right.

May its white stars be never soiled by injustice to the weak.

May their blue field be ever as expansive as the sky of heaven.

May its red stripes ever represent the strength of a just cause.

Symbol of a people's freedom, of a nation's power, of its greatness, of its justice, of God-given equality, its meaning is known to the world over.

To-day the sun never—and may it never—sets on Old Glory.

WRIGHT A. PATTERSON.



The Thirst for Knowledge.

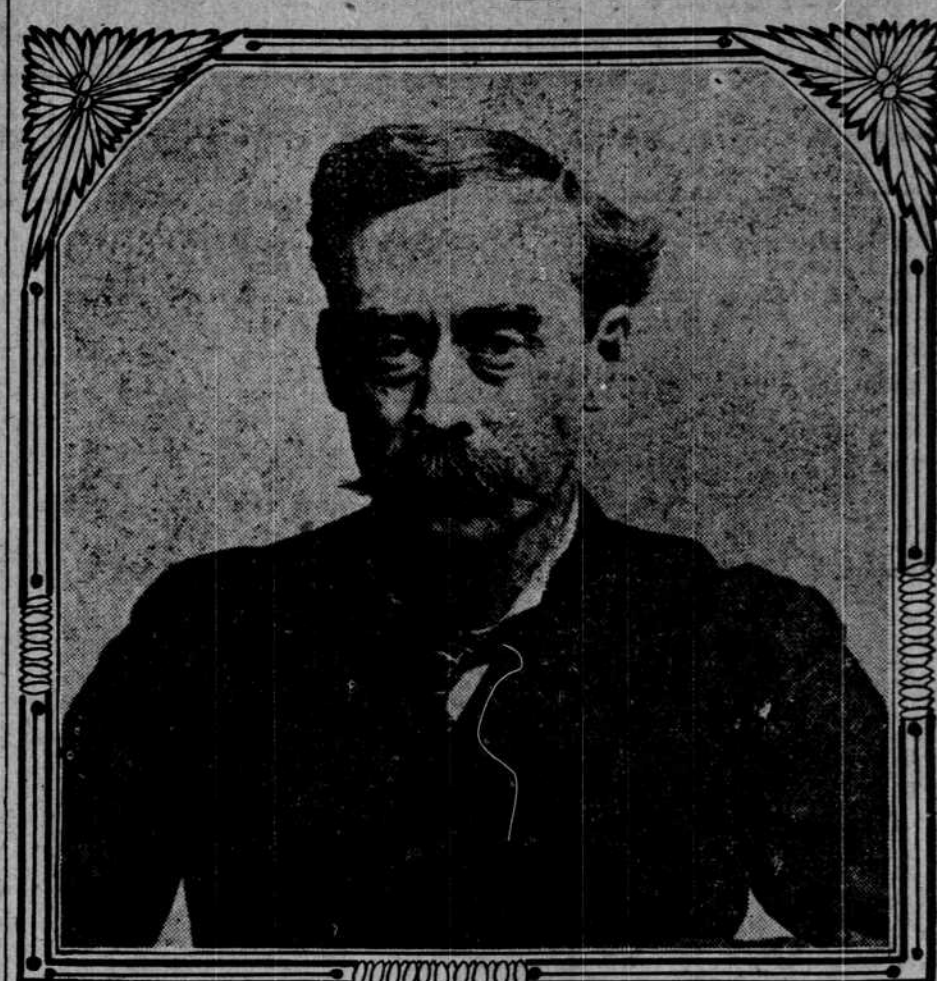
A man who was preparing to become an itinerant vender of literature on the East Side was given this advice by an experienced pushcart pedler.

"Lay in a good supply of works on etiquette," he said. "Get them in all languages. No people are more voracious students of treatises on the art of good behavior than the young people of the East Side. They are ambitious in many ways, and as soon as

they get interested in any phase of higher education they begin to improve their manners. They want to learn what to eat and how to eat it, when to get up and when to sit down, and all the rest of the usages of polite society. Since most of this knowledge is gained from books it pays the pushcart pedler to keep them in stock."

Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us, or we find it not.

PEARY'S POLAR PLANS



COMMANDER R. E. PEARY

Of all the explorers of the arctic

Commander Robert E. Peary has been the most consistent, persistent, and systematic, and thereby has won the universal sympathy of the people of the United States, as well as of other countries, and as he announces his plans and prepares for another advance upon the elusive pole which lies 174 miles beyond the far northernmost point he has been able to reach yet, it finds the public interest even keener than ever. To some degree this may be due to the other expeditions which have started out or are about to start out in quest of the north pole, notably, of course, the Wellman balloon venture, and the question is being asked: "Is the prize to be stolen right from under the nose of the intrepid Peary, after he has tried so bravely four times to gain it for himself and while he is occupied with his fifth expedition?" For an answer we must wait developments, one year, two years, perhaps more.

But one discovery which Peary made on his last expedition gives encouragement for the belief that success will crown his last venture, and that was the finding of the course of drift in the arctic basin. Peary unquestionably is the best equipped man who ever sought the pole. He was bitterly disappointed, indeed, in not having success crown his efforts on his fourth trip. That he went further than man ever went before; that he had to turn back at a time when it seemed that the great triumph was so near, is not enough. Out of that failure he believes he discovered the road to victory.

He does not predict success. He is not of that kind. He knows better than perhaps any other man the tremendous odds that must be overcome, but he banks on the experience he has gained, and if good fortune attends him there is a chance, just a chance, that he will bring back to America a story that will thrill the world and put his name in letters big on history's page.

Few persons realize how minutely Commander Peary looks after the smallest details of the equipment for the sledge journey that marks the final advance across the ice of the Polar basin. From the time he put the Roosevelt against the ice foot on the north coast of Grant land in September, 1905, until he made the actual start across the ice in February, 1906, there was not a waking moment of all the days in that interval that he was not studying the problem and working it out at the same time of just how little he could take across the ice on the sledges of his several parties and sustain their lives and those of the necessary dogs.

He knew the stern necessity of getting the outfit down to the smallest compass and the lightest possible weight. A matter of a few pounds on the sleds would make all the difference in the world at the crucial moment. It might swing the balance between success and failure, life and death. And it was to eliminate just such an overburden that he worked so long. How vital this matter of weight is he shows in his story of the escape across the open lead that stretched its Styx-like width of black water between his party and the solid ice beyond on their enforced retreat from their furthest north last spring.

HE EARNED HIS MONEY.

Extra Quarter Not Too Great Compensation For "Pester."

Mr. Huckins was trying to make over a screen door for the widow Jennings. The day was hot and muggy and she hung over him all day with questions, suggestions and complaints.

"Aren't you getting that too narrow?" asked the widow, hovering over the carpenter in a way suggestive of some large, persistent insect.

"No, ma'am," said Mr. Huckins. "You know a few minutes ago you thought 'twas too wide, and I measured it to show ye."

"Oh, yes," said Mrs. Jennings. "Well, anyway, I believe it'll sag if you don't change the hinge. Just hold it up and see."

Mr. Huckins held the door in place and proved that the hinges were in the right spots, and after that Mrs. Jennings kept silence for a few moments.

"O dear," she said, grasping Mr.

One of his Eskimos discovered that a thin coating of ice had formed across this expanse of water that he believed would support the party. It was that or death, in all probability, and so Peary resolved to try it. With their eyes fixed on the ice before them, ice so thin that it swayed with their weight as they advanced across it, they moved their snowshoes steadily forward, not knowing when the next step might be their last, as it surely would have been if anyone had gone through into the water beneath. When Peary finally reached the solid ice to the southward he echoed the opinion of one of the Eskimos that if any one in the party had been just a little heavier or had they been burdened with a little more weight they never would have made the passage which meant their salvation.

"With the experience I gained in my last voyage," the explorer says, "I am going over precisely the same route that I followed with the Roosevelt. But when I leave the ship for the dash across the Polar basin I am going to strike further to the westward so that the drift of the ice to the eastward, which was one of the most important things I discovered in my last voyage, will carry me directly toward the pole. Heretofore it was the general impression that the ice in the Polar basin drifted to the westward, but we found it was just the reverse of this. By striking off to the west, and then veering around in a quarter circle toward the northeast, I think my course will carry me directly to the pole." Then, he added, as if that dismissed the subject forever, "Then I mean to head directly for the north coast of Greenland, from which it will be only a few miles across the channel to the north shore of Grant land, where the Roosevelt will be in her winter quarters."

In these few words he discussed his plan, a plan that means leaving New York about July 1, taking his real departure from North Sydney ten days later, picking up his Eskimo men, women and children around Melville Bay in another ten days, taking on his last supply of coal at Etah, sailing from that place and dropping all touch with the civilized world at the same time within a month from the time he answers the last farewell "root, toot," of some grimy tugboat in the East river.

After leaving Etah he expects it will take less than a month before he will again berth the Roosevelt against the ice-foot along the northeast coast of Grant land. And then will be before Peary and his crew of 20 men, his Eskimo and his dogs the seven months of constant preparation before the final stage of the final dash across the ice of the Polar basin begins.

In only one respect will his "outfit" for this journey differ from that of his last one, but this is a detail on which he counts not only for making better time, but also to make the Roosevelt even more reliable a ship than she has already proved herself to be. This is the fitting of her engine room with a full "battery" of Scotch boilers in place of the two boilers which gave him so much trouble on his last trip.

High Price for Necklace.

Five thousand pounds were paid at Christie's auction rooms, London, recently, for a necklace. It was composed of 14 emeralds, six large pearls and 80 marquise-shaped brilliants.

Huckins' hand after the short respite, "I'm sure you planned it off so the flies can get in at the top! Please hold it up again and I'll just get a chair and see of a fly could squeeze through. You may have to add a piece."

When it had been proved that not even the smallest and most enterprising fly could find entrance space there was another short respite. After that Mrs. Jennings once more had an alarm over the possibility that the door might stick somewhere.

When at last it was hung and Mr. Huckins was ready to depart, the widow asked him for his bill.

"I don't make out any bills," said Mr. Huckins, wearily, "but I'll tell ye what this work'll cost. If I'd done it under the ordinary circumstances I have to contend with 'twould have been 50 cents, but in this case I'll have to charge ye an extra quarter, ma'am, for pester."—Youth's Companion.

President Fallieres, of France, is exceedingly thrifty. He spends as little as possible of his liberal allowance of \$600,000 per annum.