

### A Unique Celebration

By F. H. LANCASTER.

**A**S LANCE crossed the lawn he was hailed by a chorus of anxious voices: "Come help us, Lance. Please come."

He shrugged his rather heavy shoulders, and came slowly toward the group under the cedars. "What's up?" he asked, lazily throwing himself upon a seat a little apart from the rest, and leaning forward to bend the grass down with his stiff-brimmed straw hat. He did not look at anyone as he put the question, but the young Creole replied: "It's Cedoni."

"I have nothing to do with it," corrected Cedoni, whose vivacity and fun had vanished when Lance approached.

"Ah, but you said it must be something different this year."

"Oh, it's your Fourth of July celebration, is it? The same old cry. You are tired of barbecues and regattas and fish fries and sunstrokes. You expect me to help you with such a conundrum!" Lance spoke with good-natured impatience, but he did not look up. "Why not ignore the Fourth? Not have any celebration at all? That would be quite a novelty for this hot-bed of patriotism." His last words were drowned in a clamor of indignant protests.

"We are going to read the Declaration," insisted the Creole, who was the orator of the town, "but how, and where?"

Lance dropped his hat into the grass and stared at it. He was thinking of a curious dream he had had the night before, and spoke aloud absently: "By torchlight, upon the water." Such being the words he had

"I'll do it," he muttered, "if I live until the Fourth. At any rate," he added, after a pause, "I'll be done with this sickening uncertainty." By which it may be inferred that Lance was not in a very hopeful mood.

He was in a still less hopeful mood when he joined the flounders upon the momentous night. Cedoni was flirting with the orator, who carried her basket, and threatened to grow sentimental. It was a large party, and a gay one; the long line of torches, the flashing waters and laughing voices, shouts of triumph,



CEDONI FELT A STRONG HAND UPON HER ARM.

ejaculations of dismay. Over all the eternal stars brooding peacefully above the trivial toils of man.

Lance splashed along with dogged determination, spearing flounders, and saying nothing. He would say something presently—while the speeches were being made. After they went ashore the orator would be void. He saw no hope of a word with Cedoni until the orator should be called to attend his public duties. Even then she would probably be invited inside the circle of light. But he would see that she did not go. Like all quiet men, when a deed was once determined upon, Lance expected to carry it through. He had not an idea what he would say—only that Cedoni should stay and listen. So it happened that when the grand stand—a bay of shallow water—was reached, and the torch bearers began to circle around the speakers, Cedoni felt a strong hand upon her arm.

"You wish something?" Her tone was distant, as it had been ever since he reproached her for that bit of idle gossip.

"I wanted to speak to you," Lance replied, quietly.

"Well?"

"After the speeches begin."

"You must excuse me. I am to sing the opening song."

"I can't excuse you."

"You must!" But he held her arm firmly and silently, while the circle closed and the song began.

"Do you consider this courteous?" she asked, indignantly.

"I wanted to speak to you," he repeated, quietly.

"Well, speak for—" The notes of "America" swelled out and drowned her words. Hundreds of voices singing under the stars, and the music floated far away over the silent water. It was soul-inspiring, yes, was more than that. Lance leaned over Cedoni.

"I love you, dear." His strong voice was a little husky. Did she hear? She stood by him until the



HE WAS THINKING OF A CURIOUS DREAM HE HAD HAD.

seen in his dream upon the magical leaf at the fountain of Castalia. The party of young folks received them with joyous acclamation.

"Go on, Lance, you have made a grand beginning. Now, when?"

Lance lifted his head and looked at Cedoni: "At midnight, when the clock strikes 12."

"The oracle has spoken," cried the young Creole. "Why look so mystified, my friends? We will have a floundering party on the night of July the third. At midnight we collect around the torches—read the Declaration, make speeches, sing songs—in short, celebrate the glorious Fourth. There will be no smell of burning meat, no din of cannon, no sunstroke. Only dewy coolness of early morn, dancing lights on gleaming waters, poetry, music—"

"Yes," interrupted a practical member, "and after we are through with all that, we can take our flounders on shore and have a fish fry."

"Yes, indeed! And then we could dance on the beach to the music of a fife."

"In our wet clothes. That would be a floundering party, sure enough."

"Nonsense! We would have tents."

"Oh, oh! We might as well have lemons and peanuts."

"No! We'll use the bath houses—"

"But where will the flag come in?"

"Let's print the invitations on flags."

"We could have little flags fastened to our spear staffs."

"Oh, there'll be flags to burn."



AND SO THEY CELEBRATED THE FOURTH.

orator's tones rang out, and then she moved.

"Wait," he said. "Did you hear?"

"Yes," she answered, steadily.

When the second speaker came forward, Lance spoke again, quietly. He was not pleading, only stating a fact. "This suspense is killing me."

Cedoni's spear fell into the water with a splash. She caught the big, unsteady hand in both her own, and kissed it.

Far away was cheering, and torchlight and song, but here upon a log half-sunk in the sand sat two lovers talking of—well, a dream, a fountain and a leaf. And so they celebrated the Fourth. Was the manner unique?—Minneapolis Housekeeper.

**His Idea.**

Teacher—How did the Fourth of July originate?

Tommy—Why, the fireworks people started it, of course.—Chicago Daily News.

### JULY 4, 1776. The Dramatic Moment When the Declaration of Independence Was Signed.

In the Woman's Home Companion Mr. Landon Knight gives a graphic description of the dramatic moment when the Declaration of Independence was signed. He says: "The fourth day of July, 1776, arrives, and every member is in his seat. No, Caesar Rodney, of Delaware, does not answer the roll-call as his name is called. A week before he had gone home to get influence to bear on one of his colleagues who opposed the resolution. The night before Thomas Jefferson and Dr. Franklin had sent post-haste for Rodney to come, if he wished to save the resolution, for his vote would decide it. And now, as the friends of the measure looked upon his empty seat, there is uneasiness, almost consternation. The debate begins, and waxing warmer as the day grows; the noon recess is forgotten; the calm, telling logic of John Adams, the quaint, clear sentences of Dr. Franklin, the impassioned oratory of Henry, are still falling upon attentive ears. Never was such a scene witnessed as that now being enacted here. There is no confusion, no excitement, but the gravity of the occasion rests heavily upon all. Now the hour has arrived. The roll-call has begun. Delaware is reached. 'Caesar Rodney, of Delaware!' calls the clerk. There is a clatter of hofs, a clanging of spurs; the door is thrown open; a man travel-stained and flushed with excitement rushes into the chamber. 'Caesar Rodney, of Delaware!' again calls the clerk, and in ringing tones the reply comes; 'Caesar Rodney votes aye!' The roll-call continues; is finished. The Declaration of Independence is adopted, and the United States of America is born as a nation upon the earth!"

**Before the Fourth.**

Little Willie has ten fingers  
On his hands to-day,  
Ah, what apprehension lingers  
When we should be gay.

For a question grim, uncanny,  
Fills the soul with sorrow;  
Can he hold up just as many  
When we're through the morrow?  
—Washington Star.

**TRYING TO SHIFT THE BLAME.**

Anxious Father—"Do the best you can for him, doctor. That is all I can ask. It is the will of Providence—"

Surgeon—"Don't try to place the responsibility on Providence in this case, Mr. McJones. You bought the toy pistol for the boy yourself.—Chicago Daily Tribune.



First Declaration of Independence.

Not every student of American history is aware that the Declaration of Independence signed at Philadelphia on July 4, 1776, glorious old document that it is, cannot claim to be the first expression by American people of revolt against British rule. The first Declaration of Independence was put forth more than a year before the immortal second, and its birthplace was the little town of Charlotte, Mecklenburg county, N. C. The two Carolinas were settled largely by strenuous folk—refugees from religious persecution in Scotland and France, followers of Knox and Calvin. Covenanters and Huguenots brought with them over sea the sturdy independence and the fearless adherence to principle which had led them to dispute the divine right of kings and uphold to the death the divine right of conscience.—Rheta Childe Dorr, in Woman's Home Companion.

**Up Against the Fourth.**

"No, I do not need any skin plaster," said Johnny's mother to the agent at the door, who was trying to sell her some.

"Say, is it any good if you blow your thumbs off?" asked Johnny, in a hoarse whisper.

"You bet it is, my little man," warbled the agent. "It'll make new ones grow on again in a jiffy."

"Then, ma," urged Johnny, "you'd better get some, 'cause I'm a-goin' to bump up against the Fourth of July awful hard this year."—Chicago Record-Herald.

**His Thoughtful Wife.**

"Did the Fourth pass off satisfactorily with you?"

"Oh, very."

"With so large a family of boys, I didn't know but you might—"

"Of course, of course. There was chance for serious trouble, but we learn by experience, and my wife is very thoughtful and far-seeing. She invited our family physician to dine with us, so all the burns were promptly dressed."—Chicago Evening Post.

**This Tough Old World—** Ted—"Most firms prefer to hire a married man." Ned—"And most girls won't marry you unless you have a job."—Puck.

**Atlanta and Return Via Queen and Crescent Route.**

One fare round trip, plus 25c. Tickets on sale July 7, 8, 9, 10, good returning until July 15th, with privilege of extension until August 15th, on deposit of ticket and payment of 50c at Joint Agency at Atlanta.

The eye of the master will do more work than both of his hands.—Franklin.

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Many a true word is spoken in jest, and many a false statement is made in deadly earnest.—Chicago Journal.

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To be vain of one's rank or place, is to show that one is below it.—Chicago Journal.

**4th July Rates.**

One fare and third round trip, via Queen & Crescent Route. Tickets on sale July 2, 3, 4, good returning until July 8. Ask Ticket Agents for particulars.

A belief that the race is not always to the swift no doubt accounts for the widespread confidence in tips.—Puck.

**Asheville and Return.**

One fare for the round trip, plus 25c, July 22 to 27, via Queen & Crescent Route. Ask Ticket Agent for particulars.

A laugh is worth a hundred groans in any market.—Chicago Journal.

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Worry is a good friend of the undertaker.—Chicago Daily News.

The Chicago & North-Western is the only double track railway between Chicago and the Missouri River.

The heart gets weary, but never gets old.—Shenstone.

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A FREE TRIAL of this great kidney medicine which cured Mr. Boyce will be mailed on application to any part of the United States. Address Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, N. Y. For sale by all druggists, price 50 cents per box.

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