

THE FOURTH

By MYRTA ALICE LITTLE.

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"Snip, snither, crack," went Blackie Boy's pistol, and the post-shot hit the stone wall underneath the blue and yellow target.

"Shiver, shudder, quiver, quake," went Blackie Boy's girl mother, standing at the kitchen window with the heaviest water pail in her hands, self-playing with a vim, because father had forgotten to fill it.

"Good for you, son! Aim like that! See!" boomed Blackie Boy's boy father from the side lines under the apple tree.

Blackie Boy aimed. Then it happened.

Blackie Boy began to yell, then he yelled louder. He flung his pistol into the grapevines, then himself on the ground, and kicked. He screamed! And Blackie Boy was gathered into plump, white arms, and mother's voice and her yellow fluffy hair and the green grass were all around him, while father stood on one foot and growled, like thunder—high up and away.

"What's the matter with the kid? Can't find a place where he's hurt. You got him nervous watching him?"

"His lips that were saying soothing things to Blackie Boy, as the hand searched for the hurt, shut hard. 'If you hadn't insisted on the pistol, Tom!'

"It killed me, too," like never said plump kidded folks," sobbed Blackie Boy.

"Where did it hurt mother's boy?"

"I won't tell you," bawled Blackie Boy, sitting on his fat hands. "You go 'way." Sturdy legs kicked into mother's square chin. "I'm kidded." Then he drew a long breath.

"That's the stuff. Be a man," advised father. "Be a man, Blackie son."

The boy subsided softly.

"Yes, a man?" breathed mother, patting every inch of the round little body. "A nice example you set your son on a holiday and on our fourth wedding anniversary, that ought to be holy to you, taking him away and teaching him to use firearms. The year he came you were—kind, and you've had spells since—and I was free to do as I—liked."

"This is the year of the dependence of Mrs. Black, and of the independence of the U. S. A., the One Hundred and Forty-fourth," mocked Tom Black, Sr. "Heck of an idea being married on the Fourth of July, anyway."

"Or any time," said Blackie's mother crisply. "And now you've lost any pride about talking like this before him. I want my freedom, I tell you, and I'm going to have it, and I'm going to take Blackie Boy with me—now! He's just scared of the naughty pistol. Mother knows."

Father turned on his heel and grumbled himself into the house.

And all the time father knew that lately he had been getting irritable and bossy and unreasonable.

"Making a fourth anniversary cake just the same, is she?"

Down among the yellow daisies mother was saying to a reasonably quiet Blackie Boy, "What made you scream like that? Tell me."

"I won't tell you. I was a man," said Blackie Boy, thrusting his left hand into his blouse. "I won't not show you my hand that's kidded. Is we ain't to have a picnic today, never?"

"Would you like to go away with mother all the time?" whispered the little voice. "And mother could work the typewriter and get lots of money the way she used to and buy a dress for Blackie Boy, and every day we'd have a picnic?"

And all the time Blackie Boy's mother was talking she was thinking how silly and jealous and unreasonable she had been lately.

"Would you like to live with just myself?" asked Blackie Boy's mother.

"I live myself an' I live forever," said Blackie Boy. "An' for two sons I show myself an' I show forever my hat an' I was a man, myself, an' I didn't not cry not much. Come an' live forever."

They found father washing the cooking dishes, with a sheepish expression on his face.

"Ook, favever!" begged Blackie Boy, thrusting out his little left hand. And the fat, pink knuckles were pinker and puffier than usual, where just an ordinary baby handle has had sat down. "I didn't not cry much an' it's all right now. I want two sons," said Blackie Boy. "An' I want to fill my piffle an' a picnic."

"That's it, son," said father cheerfully. "He wants your picnic and he wants my piffle, mother, and I want your cake and—smiles, and you want—well, we all want picnics together. All dependent on the rest of us and we like it. Frost that wedding cake and I'll make a tin pan drum and we'll start all over again. I've been too cross to live."

"Won't you fill that water-pail? It's awfully heavy. And then find his pistol. Of course you wouldn't let him have anything that would hurt him," said mother promptly.

"Sure, I'll fill the pail," said father. "Why didn't you ask me before? Like to have you notice I'm round. And a drum is better than a pistol any day for a little shaver, eh, son?"

"I want favever's piffle an' mavever's 'dwain,'" said Blackie Boy. "An' a picnic!"

And the boy father and the girl mother laughed and gave each other a winking aspect, just like—kids.

CANNING FRUITS WITHOUT SUGAR

Half of Battle Is to Have All Equipment Prepared and in Readiness for Use.

VARIETY ADDED FOR WINTER

Many People Prefer to Can Juices Unsweetened, as Individual Flavors Are Best Preserved—Many Utensils Needed.

Fruits can be successfully canned without sugar, and vegetables require none. So the wise housekeeper is planning to can as much or more than usual this year. Plenty of canned vegetables reduce grocery and doctor's bills and add pleasing variety to the diet in winter. Fruit canned without sweetening can be sweetened when it is used. Fruit juices, too, can be canned without sugar. Indeed, many prefer to can them unsweetened, maintaining that the individual flavors are thereby best preserved. Part of the canned juices can be made into jelly next winter. Making jelly when the weather is cool rather than when the mercury lingers in the 90's appeals to many housewives as a sane and sensible procedure.

Getting Ready.

If one waits until the fruit is half ripe before making any preparation to take care of it, there is loss of time, and the season of that particular product is likely to pass before all the equipment for canning is in readiness.

One of the first steps is to order a canner. If you are planning to use one this summer, a wash boiler or lard can with a false bottom will hold the cans and process them efficiently. The work, however, can be done more easily with one of the commercial types of canners. As the stock is usually low when the canning season is under way, it is well to select the kind you want in advance when there is a choice. The steam-pressure type is usually preferred for general canning, but the water seal and water bath are both popular with those who want a canner which costs less money.

If jars are needed, a supply should be laid in early. The tops of both the old and new jars should be gone over carefully and all the rough edges



With a Knife or Some Similar Instrument Smooth Away Any Sharp Edges on Jar Top.

smoothed down with a knife. There is no danger then that they will cut the rubber. This is something that can be gotten out of the way before the season opens.

Test Rubbers Carefully.

One of the make of rubbers which is to be used should be tested. A good rubber—one that will stand up under the heat which long cooking in the can entails—must possess elasticity enough to allow its being folded and pinched without breaking, say specialists of the United States department of agriculture. Another test is its ability to hold 13 pounds' weight without breaking when this weight is suspended by a hook from the rubber ring.

Whatever type of apparatus is used for processing or sterilizing a number of utensils are needed for properly handling the products. These include five or six good porcelain sauce pans or those of some material that is acid proof, with covers for use in blanching and blanching acid fruits, two tablespoons, one set of measuring spoons, one wire basket or several yards of cheesecloth for use in blanching, six wiping cloths, two hand towels, one duplex fork for lifting hot jars, and several sharp paring knives. Look over your supply and see if you have them in stock.

HONEY USED IN SANDWICHES

It is Satisfactory When Mixed With Cream Cheese—Chopped Nuts May Be Added.

For a change, try honey and cream cheese sandwiches. Mix honey with cream cheese and use as filling for bread or baking powder biscuit sandwiches. Chopped nuts may be added to the honey and cheese if desired.

REDUCE COST OF MANY GARMENTS

Bulletin Teaches Methods of Preserving Life of Various Pieces of Wearing Apparel.

CLEANLINESS IS AID

Eliminate Necessity of Spending Large Sums to Replace Wardrobe by Giving Immediate Attention to Rips and Tears.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Men as well as women can help reduce the high cost of clothing. A little care on the part of the wearer will do much to preserve clothing already on hand, and thus eliminate the necessity of spending large sums frequently to replenish the wardrobe. This is brought out in a recent publication of the United States department of agriculture, Farmers' Bulletin 1688, Selection and Care of Clothing.

Immediate attention to rips, sewing on loosened buttons and hooks, reworking worn buttonholes, and "preventive" darning are recommended as means of prolonging the life of a garment. The latter repair measure consists of reinforcing a worn place with rows of fine stitches or by laying a piece of cloth under it and darning it down with raveling of the material. The heels and toes of stockings and socks especially may be treated this way before a hole is entirely worn through. Shortening sleeves or trousers a little to do away with a worn edge, or putting new cuffs and collar or new trimming on a dress may often add months to the life of a garment.

To keep clothing looking "as good as new" as well as actually preserving and lengthening its life, it is necessary to keep it clean. Brushing with a stiff brush for woolen clothing and with a softer brush for velvet or silky is necessary to remove dust, and spots and stains should be carefully treated with cleaning preparations as soon as possible. In most cases this can be done at home, but it is more economical to have professional cleaners handle very delicate garments, Farmers' Bulletin 861 gives detailed information on the removal of stains from different kinds of textiles.

Pressing Preserves Garments.

Preserving the shape of a garment lengthens its service. Almost anyone can learn to press clothing neatly. Woolen clothing should be covered with a thoroughly dampened cloth and pressed with a moderately hot iron until nearly dry. If the cloth becomes absolutely dry, shine is likely to appear



Spots and Stains in Clothing Can Be Removed at Home.

on the garment. Silk garments should be pressed very carefully; in fact, sometimes hanging a silk dress over a tub of steaming water will remove wrinkles without actual ironing. Washable white silk garments should be washed and rinsed in lukewarm water, wrapped in a towel, and pressed with a warm, not hot, iron. Handled in this way they will not turn yellow.

Shoes, more than many other articles of clothing, need to be thoroughly aired after wearing, to prevent perspiration from rotting the lining. Keeping shoes on shoe trees or stuffed with paper when not in use preserves their original shape, and is especially necessary if the shoes have become wet. Intense heat is likely to crack leather; therefore wet shoes should never be dried under the stove or on a register or radiator.

Cleaning Hats and Gloves.

A hat that is worn day after day needs special care to keep it looking neat. Careful brushing or, in the case of straw hats, wiping with a cloth dipped in denatured alcohol will remove dust and freshen it. A new band on a man's hat may postpone the necessity of buying a new hat for months. Trimmings on women's hats that become loosened by wind or wear should be sewed into place as follows: Thread a long needle with coarse thread or silk of an inconspicuous color. Draw the needle from the wrong side through the hat beside the loosened trimming, leaving 2 or 3 inches of thread on the wrong side; pass the needle up and down around the trimming and back to the wrong side of the hat; pull the thread through, tie the two ends securely and cut them a quarter of an inch beyond the knot.

One method of cleaning kid gloves is to rub the soiled parts with cornmeal, moistened with enough gasoline to keep the meal from scratching the gloves, then dry thoroughly in the air.

The bulletin mentioned treats also of ways of economizing in the selection of clothing, how to test it, the goods, and gives other suggestions of value.

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