

HOW JOHN JACKSON WAS CURED OF BASHFULNESS.

John Jackson was a hard working man of twenty-three. Being the eldest child and only son, he had always remained at home, assisting his father upon the farm. John was much respected by every one in the neighborhood, and many a bright eyed girl had secretly thought that she would like to be Mrs. Jackson. But John was no "ladies man." The fact was, he was bashful. He would rather hoe potatoes all day than undergo the ceremony of an introduction to a young lady. Not that John disliked the dear creatures; far from it. We believe that he, common with all bashful and well meaning men, entertained the very highest respect and admiration for them. And this no doubt was the principle cause of his bashfulness. He felt that they were superior beings, and that he was unworthy to associate with them upon terms of equality. But we cannot stop to moralize.

Nancy Clark was the daughter of a very respectable farmer, whose land adjoined the Jackson farm. Nancy was a pretty, saucy, little witch, and she liked John Jackson. When they were children they attended the same school, and when he was a few years her senior, was usually her champion in the childish disputes that arose, and her companion in coming and going. At last, John became so much of a young man as to be kept from school, as she had been in past years. John discovered, too, he was growing out of shape. His feet and legs appeared very awkward; he did not know what to do with his hands; his face pained him, and taking all in all, he was inclined to think he was not more than half put together.

As novelists say, it was a lovely day in August. The sun was clear, serene, and beautiful, the trees were loaded with golden fruit, and the beautiful birds twittered their songs of love in the branches. Earth (there, we've slid down to earth once more; such lofty flights—they make our head dizzy). We were prepared to say that "earth yielded a bountiful harvest of grass and clover, and honey-suckles, which this noble yeomanry of Chesterville had garnered within their store-houses"—but upon a second thought have concluded to word it thus: "The farmers of Chesterville have done harvesting."

John Jackson's sister had a quilting that afternoon. His father had gone to "Keith's Mills," to get some wheat ground, and left John to repair some tools, to be ready on the morrow, to commence mowing the meadow grass. Suddenly it occurred to John that if he remained about the house that afternoon, he would be called in at tea time and required to do the honors of the table. To avoid this, he quietly shouldered his scythe and stole away to the meadow, half a mile distant, fully resolved that he would not leave there until it was so dark that he could not see to mow, so as to avoid seeing the girls.

The meadow was surrounded on all sides by a thick forest, which effectually shut out what little breeze there might chance to be stirring. The sun poured its rays as though the little meadow was the focus point where the heat was concentrated. John mowed and sweat—sweat and mowed, until he was obliged to sit down and cool off. Then it occurred to John that if he took off his pants, he might be much more comfortable. There could be no impropriety in it for he was entirely concealed from observation, and there was not the slightest reason to suppose that he could be seen by any person.

So John stripped off, and with no cover save his linen—commonly called a shirt—he resumed his work. He was just congratulating himself upon the good time he had made from meeting the girls, when he chanced to disturb a huge black snake, a genuine twister, with a white ring around its neck.

John was no coward, but he was mortally afraid of a snake. "Self preservation" was the first "passage" that flashed across his mind, and "I'll take care of the body" was the next. Dropping his scythe and springing around like a top, he was ready to strike a 2.40 gait, when at that moment the snake was near enough to hook his crooked teeth into John's shirt just above the hem. With a tremendous spring he started off with the speed of a locomotive. His first jump took the snake clear of the ground, and as he stole a hasty glance over his shoulder, he was horrified to see the reptile securely fastened to the extremity of his garment, while the rapidity with which he rushed forward, kept the serpent extended at an angle of ninety degrees with his body.

Here was a quandry. If he stopped, the snake would coil about his body, and squeeze him to death; if he continued the race he must fall from sheer exhaustion. On he flew, scarce daring to think how this dreadful race was to end. Instinctively he had taken the direction of home; a feeling of security came over him. Suddenly flashed across his mind the true state of affairs—his father gone—the quilting, and, worse than all, the girls! The next moment he felt the body of the cold clammy monster in contact with bare legs, his tail creeping around them in a sort of cozening way, as by way of tickling John upon the knees.

This was too much for human endurance. With a yell, such as man never uttered, save in mortal terror, poor John set forward at break-neck speed, and once more had the pleasure of seeing the snake resume his horizontal position, somewhat after the tail of a comet.

On, on they flew! John forgot the quilting,

forgot the girls, forgot everything but the snake.

His active exercise (he paid particular attention to his running), together with the excessive heat, had brought on the nose-bleed, and as he ran, ears erect and head thrown back, his chin, throat and shirt bosom were stained with the flowing stream.

His first shriek had started the quilters, and forth they rushed, wondering if some Indian was not prowling about. By this time, John was within a few rods of the barn, still running at the top of his speed, his head turned so that he might keep one eye on the snake and with the other observe what course he must take. The friendly barn now concealed him from the sight of the girls. He knew the girls were in the yard, having caught a glimpse of them as they rushed from the house. A few more bounds and he would be in their midst. For a moment modesty overcame fear, and he halted. The snake, evidently pleased with his rapid transportation, manifested his gratitude by attempting to enfold the legs of our hero within his embrace.

With an explosive "ouch!" and urged forward by "circumstances over which he had no control," poor John bounded on. The next moment he was in full view of the girls, and as he turned the corner of the barn the snake came round with a whiz, somewhat after the fashion of a coach whip.

Having reached the barn-yard, to his dismay, he found the bars up. But time was too precious to be wasted in letting down bars. Gathering all his strength, he bounded into the air, snake ditto; and as he alighted on the other side, his snakeship's tail cracked across the upper bar, snapping like an Indian cracker.

Again John set forward, now utterly regardless of the girls, for the extra tickle from the snake's tail as he leaped the bars, banished all his bashfulness and modesty, and again he had the pleasure of finding the snake in a straight line, drawing steadily at the hem of his solitary garment.

The house now became the centre of attraction, and around it he revolved with the speed of thought. Four times, in each revolution, as he turned the corner, his snakeship came round with a whiz that was quite refreshing.

While describing the third circle, as he came near the group of wonder-struck girls, without removing his gaze from the snake, he managed to cry out—

"Call a man!"

The next moment he had whished out of sight, and as quick as thought reappeared at the other end of the house—

"Call a man!"

Away he whirled again, turning the corner so rapidly what the whiz of the snake sounded half-way between a low whistle and the repeated pronunciation of double-o.

Before either of the girls had stirred from their tracks, he had performed another revolution—

"Call a man!"

Away he flew once more, but his strength was rapidly failing. Nancy Clark was the first to recover her presence of mind, and seizing a hoop-pole, she took her station near the corner of the house, and as John reappeared, brought it down upon the snake with a force that broke his back and his hold upon John's neither garment at the same time.

John rushed into the house and to his room, and at tea-time appeared in his best Sunday suit, but little the worse for the race, and to all appearances entirely cured of his bashfulness. That night he walked home with Nancy Clark. The next New-Year they were married; and now, whenever John feels inclined to laugh at his wife's hoops, or any other peculiarity, she has only to say, "Call a man," and he instantly sobers down.

AN IRISHMAN'S MISTAKE—A gentleman while taking a drive through one of our country towns, accompanied by his Irish servant, had the misfortune to have his vehicle smashed up and himself and companion thrown violently to the ground, by his horse running away. The gentleman was somewhat injured but not seriously. His principal loss was that of his wig, which had been shaken off; and on picking himself up he found Pat in a much worse condition, holding his hand to his head with the blood trickling through his fingers, and holding his master's wig in his other hand, which he was surveying with the utmost alarm and horror.

"Well, Pat," said his master, "are you much hurt?"

"Hurt is it? Ah, master dear, don't you see the top of me head in me hand?"

Pat in his terror and confusion had mistaken his master's head-piece for his own natural scalp, and regarded his last hour as arrived.

SKATISTICAL.—Upon the indulgence of this now fashionable pastime, the *Journal of Health* is especially particular. "If the thermometer is below thirty," it says, "and the wind is blowing, no lady or child should be skating." We are not so clear about this. If the lady is "below thirty," and of graceful figure, let her skate, no matter how the mercury descends. If she is the reverse—let her slide!

DID NOT LIKE THE SERMON.—A little boy, after listening to a sermon on being born again, returned home much afflicted, and said to his mother, "I did not like the sermon, ma, and I don't want to be born over again, for who knows but what I might be a gal."

A "Good Joke" on The Professor.

The Fort Monroe correspondent of the Philadelphia *Inquirer* tells the following joke on Professor Fletcher, Superintendent of Public Instruction in Indiana.

The other day Miles J. Fletcher, Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Indiana, was wandering around on the beach, trying to "kill time," while awaiting the arrival of his brother from Richmond, Virginia. Suddenly he came upon a place on the beach where the contrabands had been digging gravel out of the pits, to be subsequently used in preparing roads. The wagons had all been loaded and hauled off, and the contrabands had seated themselves out of sight in the gravel, studiously pondering primers and spelling books. One of the more learned was acting as monitor.

"L. O. G.," says one.

"Well, what does that spell?" asks the monitor.

"Dunno," answered Cuffee.

"Dat spells log—log ob wood, you know!" rejoined the monitor triumphantly.

After getting along through the column of words with various success, one little contraband sang out:

"B, E, A, R, what do dat spell, honey?"

This was a stumper for all hands, and the class had unanimously determined to "skip" it, when Fletcher came forward, much to their surprise, and said: "That spells bear."

"What's dat Mas'r?" asked one of the boldest of the flock.

"Why, it's a great ugly, black animal that lives in the woods yonder."

"Hit! hit! De gemman means a wild bease—a bar!"

And they all laughed so heartily over Fletcher's bad pronunciation that he had to beat a hasty retreat in order to get out of hearing of the gravel pit contrabands.

Origin of a Popular Phrase.

Many years ago the good farmers in my neighborhood began to be sorely annoyed by the mysterious disappearance of pigs, turkeys, chickens, and portable property in general. These losses began just about the time when one Joab Strong took up his abode in the vicinity. Putting this and that together, it was inferred that Joab knew more about the matter than an honest man should. A committee was formed to interrogate him, and he was one moonlight night taken into the woods for that purpose. He stoutly denied all knowledge of the matter, whereupon he was laid, face downward, over a log, in a position for further proceedings.

"Now, Joab," asked the chairman, balancing a supple twig in his hand, "can't you really tell us anything about Mr. Brown's turkey?"

"I told you I didn't know nothin' about it?"

Down came the rod, once, twice, six times.

"Hold there!" cried Joab. "I remember now. I seen him a roostin' in the cherry-tree, and he went home with me."

"Very well, Mr. Strong. Now about Mr. Smith's pig?"

"Don't know nothin' about it. Didn't know he had any pigs."

The reminder was applied, as before, and at the sixth blow Joab's recollection was aroused.

"Oh, y-s! I was a-g-in' along by there, and the pig he followed me home, and got eat up."

And so on through five "counts" of the indictment, the last of which related to chickens.

"Well, yes," said the culprit, at the usual point, "I did take them chickens—and mighty poor ones they was too—and—and—you needn't flog any more. I know what you're goin' to ask about next. It's Major Green's corn. I did steal it. I own the corn. It's in my house now, and the Major can have it if he wants it."

The joke of the matter was that Major Green did not know that he had lost any corn, and the committee had finished their examination when Joab owned up, without being asked.

JESSIE FREMONT AND OLD MR. BLAIR.—Mrs. Jesse Benton Fremont, while on her visit to Washington to ferret out the origin of the hostility which had manifested itself towards her husband; had an interview with the President, during which Mr. Blair Sr., father of the Postmaster General, and Frank P. Blair were present.

Mr. Blair turned to Mrs. Fremont and said: "Mrs. Fremont, allow me to say to you that, in my judgment, madam, your proper place is at the head of your husband's household at St. Louis, and this intermeddling with the affairs of the State is, to say the least of it, in very bad taste on your part, and, in conclusion, I wish you to understand that here is where we make men and unmake them."

To which Mrs. Fremont instantly replied: "Mr. Blair, permit me to say to you that I have seen some men of your making, and if they are the best you can do I will advise you to quit the business."

RHYMING.—An eminent mathematician—a professor of the University College—being challenged to find a rhyme to "Timbuctoo," promptly replied with the following irreverent verse:

"If I were a cassawary,
On the sands of Timbuctoo,
I would eat a missionary,
Skin and bones, and hymn-book too!"

The New Picture for the Capitol.

The picture which Leutze is painting for the Capitol at Washington, is not as the itemizers have had it, for the Rotunda, but is a commission which he has received in accordance with and illustration of a plan for the decoration of the Capitol which he has presented to Gen. Meigs, and which has received his approval. The space which is to receive the picture is one of four black walls, above the stair-cases leading to the galleries, each twenty by thirty feet. Mr. Leutze's plan is substantially to fill these four walls with illustrations of the American spirit and the development of the nation; the one he is executing taking for its subject Emigration; then will follow historical scenes and landscapes in a consistent series, filling the walls and rotunda, and removing to a gallery the pictures now in the Rotunda, which are rather gathery pictures, where they are anything but decorative works such as the general plan and use of the building demands. The minor spaces will be filled with less important views, groups, etc., with arabesques showing the natural history of the United States.

The picture represents the summit of a pass through the Rocky Mountains, at the right a wild desolate valley from which the emigrant train is toiling up to the ridge, whence the prospect of the great western plain opens to the eye, lying in a golden haze, with glimpses of rivers winding away out of sight. Some horsemen urge their horses eagerly up to the dividing ridge and the younger members of the party climb the rocks, shouting and waving their hats in enthusiasm. The sun is setting and the rosy light falls on the snowy summits of a distant peak which forms the climax of the composition, and divides the land of toil from that of promise.

In the border, set in an arabesque, composed of the flora and fauna of the Rocky Mountains, are several smaller designs, with the motto of the picture of "Westward the star of empire holds its way," overhead. Underneath is a view of the Golden Gate, with the harbor of San Francisco looking inland, and in the upper corners, the wise men of the East at the left, and Hercules clearing the passage between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. Along the sides are the expedition for the golden fleece, the return of the spies from Canaan, the overwhelming of Pharaoh's host, Columbus at his studies, the raven bringing food, the dove returning to the ark, and at the lower borders portraits of Boone and Clark.

For this work, with its pendants, Leutze will receive \$20,000. It is to be executed on the wall itself, in the water-glass process.

"The American Confederacy."

The following views of Elkanah Watson, of Revolutionary fame, on the American Confederacy, are taken from the second edition, on page 232, of a volume entitled "Men and Times of the Revolution; or, Memoirs of Elkanah Watson—including his Journals of Travel in Europe and America, from the year 1774 to 1842, and his Correspondence with Public Men, and Reminiscences and Incidents of the American Revolution;" edited by his son, Winslow C. Watson:

I fear we shall realize in our confederated system the inconveniences and weakness of the Dutch experience under their ill-modeled Government, which, whilst it seems to be grounded on the basis of a scrupulous jealousy of power, in its operations exhibits the most grinding despotism. During the external pressure of a common enemy, our temporary Government answered all the purposes for which it was organized; but now that right is removed, every State may draw into itself and, like the sensitive-plant, shrink from the representative body of the Union. Our Confederacy embraces many of the defects, without the coercive power and energetic independence of the Dutch Government.

God only knows what will be the end; but I dread to look forward, from a deep conviction that we cannot long be bound together by the feeble ties which now unite the States. State will soon contend with State; hatred and alienation will ensue; and perhaps the whole continent is destined to be deluged in the mutual slaughter of Americans, whilst yet smoking with the blood of our foes. And finally, we shall become a prey to some power of Europe, or some audacious Cromwell will step forth to impose despotic laws and more than kingly protection. I cannot, I will not indulge in these gloomy apprehensions; but, I will rather hope that the lofty anticipations of an admiring world will not so soon be blasted, and that the Providence who conducted us, with so much glory, through the Revolution, will combine the wisdom of the nation to devise a form of government that will bless this and future generations.

GREATNESS.—The great man is he who hath nothing to fear and nothing to hope from another. It is he who, while he demonstrates the iniquity of the law, and is able to correct them, obeys them peaceably. It is he who looks on the ambitious both as weak and fraudulent. It is he who hath no disposition for being or for appearing different from what he is.

DIAGENES.

WHY HE WOULD NOT DANCE.—"Why don't you dance?" blithely inquired an eminent functionary of a leading Senator at a recent social festivity in Washington.

"I never dance in a besieged city," was the quick and stern reply.