

CIRCUS JACK

By Stanley Edwards Johnson

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ONE morning long before the great shows took to the rails McAlpine's Combined Colossal Hippodrome and Consumption of Wonders was expected to pass through Trescott. The youngest generation of this village—that is to say, all that part of it that could move on two legs—had been anticipating this event for fully three weeks. The majority of the barns and sheds in the vicinity had proclaimed the allurement of spangled bareback riders, roaring lions, snarling tigers, daring equestrians and trapeze performers, elephants, monkeys and women who stood on tiptoes on the backs of swift horses and passed unscathed through hoops of fire.

All this had been seen and admired by Jacky Hopkins and Matilda Vinton, besides a score of others. Jacky was ten years old, and Matilda was four years his senior. According to the juvenile gossip of the village, they were "jest gone on each other."

The passing of the circus gave rise to picturesque ambitions in the young hearts of Trescott. The career of that patron saint of New Hampshire, Daniel Webster, faded into insignificance in comparison with the attainments of the heroism and heroism pictured in rainbow colors. Such youthful yearnings for fame are familiar to all who have not forgotten that they were once young and are generally of brief duration.

"I think, Jacky, my pa an' ma are madder than the madder, 'cause they won't let me go ter the circus tomorrow," said Matilda, "but you can just bet I'm a goner!"

Jacky's little blue eyes widened in surprise. Scarcely a day passed that Tilda's dynamic nature did not send thrills of wonder up and down his diminutive spine.

"Why, Tilda, you wouldn't run off down ter Woodbine all alone, would you?"

"'Course I would, Jacky—that is, if I jest had the money ter get into the circus with. An' I wanner jine it, too; I wanner jine the circus."

Little Jacky gasped in amazement. "You jine the circus, Tilda Vinton? You couldn't do nothin', Tilda. Why, what was you thinkin' o' doin'?"

"Oh, I jest know I could! Jest let me git dressed up as them wamin' be an'—an' sleep in oil sheets, an' jest bet I could do anythin'. You know, Jacky Hopkins, I can do lots o' things that you can't. You couldn't git on the ridgepole o' pa's barn an' walk across it jest as if it was a tight rope. An' I've shinned up that big pine back o' your house, an' you didn't git up but half way. An' I jumped forty feet from the upper hayrack in our barn down onto the hay, an' you didn't dast try. Tain't 'cause you ain't smart, only I'm madder ter be in a circus."

She put her arm about the little fellow's waist, with all the superiority of her fourteen summers. Jacky was impressed. Visions of the wonderful exploits he had seen Tilda perform place the advent of the circus posters round before him. There wasn't a boy in the village who could do what Tilda had done, and he was the only one who had frankly admired her, while the others had hidden their chagrin by calling her tomboy and other names which only delighted her with their unintentional flattery.

Now she had stimulated his boyish fancy, and he believed she was right. She was the greatest living wonder to him, and he longed to help her.

"Guess you'd do, Tilda, arter you'd been trained," Jacky admitted.

"An' it's real mean ter think that I can't be what I'm madder ter be. How 'd you s'pose anybody was ever able ter be anythin' unless they folks let 'em try?"

"I never thought o' goin' down ter Woodbine, an' I know my folks wouldn't let me. But, then, I couldn't do anythin'. Now, with you, Tilda, it's different. You can do things, an' your folks had orter let you."

"Well, I'm jest a goner ter, somehow; that's all."

And Tilda resolved to jine the circus. The really unfortunate part about Matilda was that she generally put through all she made up her juvenile mind to do, and still, somehow, often times she was equally firm in not doing what she did not want to.

Their delicious speculation on the future was interrupted by the imperative summons of Jacky's mother.

"There's your ma a callin'!" Matilda sneered. "She's allus coddlin' you. You'll never grow up if you don't git outen her way. Arter I've jined the circus I'll git a chance fer you ter sell lemonade."

"Oh, good, Tilda! I'd do jest anythin' ter go with you! An' don't forget ter be up by 4 o'clock tomorrow so ter see the circus go through."

It was a long time before Jacky went to sleep that night. He was haunted with the mingled desire to help his "git" to fulfill her ambition and the temptation to contribute thereto by endowing her with all his worldly wealth, just \$2.47, which he had made "plummin'."

Jacky had an account in the bank, and after the berry season each summer, when he had purchased a pair of shoes to wear in the winter to school, a necessity he dispensed with in the summer, he put the rest in the bank. He was allowed to keep the money in his possession, but once it got into the bank it was never allowed to come out. But this sum seemed great wealth to the little man. He wanted it to start Tilda on her life work, but somehow he could not quite justify his conscience to it.

Perhaps his dreams contributed in no small way to his final decision, for he saw his beloved Tilda performing all the various feats advertised in the great show. When he waked, he sprang out of bed with all his boyish eagerness to see the show go by. The cages were all closed and the wonders hidden from view, but it all seemed real.

Tilda was up before him. The great wagons had not begun to pass, and the stream of Trescott youth was wending its way toward the upper village by Cold Stream curve to meet the caravan.

Tilda followed far behind, their arms encircling each other, absorbed in a discussion of Tilda's great future.

"I think you jest orter go, Tilda," Jacky declared, with solemn earnestness.

"Oh, I'm so glad, Jacky, that you approve, for I shouldn't want ter do anything ag'in your wishes, but I'm jest goin' ter, somehow."

"Got any money?"

"Naw, I hain't, but I'll get it somehow."

"Take this." And Jacky shyly held out his hand, palm down.

"Why, Jacky Hopkins!" exclaimed the delighted Tilda. "If you ain't the best feller thet ever lived! Now I'm fixed!"

"But you mustn't ever tell on me."

"No, Jacky, never. But what'll your ma do when she finds out? She keeps 'count o' all you earn, mean'things!"

"But she need not know till fall. By that time, Tilda, you'll be great!" Jacky's eyes fairly glistened at the thought.

When the enraptured Tilda had feasted her heart on the wonderful feats of the bareback riders and trapeze performers, she was more convinced than ever that she was "made ter jine the circus." After the show was over she asked to see "the man thet bosses the show." The attendant smiled and humored her whim.

The manager was also in a contented state of mind and punctuated Tilda's enthusiastic account of her exploits with gutfaus both loud and hearty.

"Waal, leetle gyrl," he said, with a perceptible southern accent, "Ah kinder reckon you would amount ter suthin' in your ter be given a chance. You seem purty peart. We'll try you—give you some trainin' an' plenty o' work ter do—but you kyant exactly jine this ere show. We'll be a new combination when we git over the river, about forty miles in the interior. Now, you must remember you hain't anything ter do with McAlpine's Combination. Will you?"

Tilda was ready to do anything, and she soon found that she had to do everything. No one seemed to be able to find time to give her any training, but she did have something to eat and a place to sleep. Each night when she closed herself to sleep her last thought was of little Jacky.

The little prisoner of the caravan as the years rolled on found herself doing the things she had fondly dreamed of in her childish ambitions under a high sounding name, but sometimes in her sleeping dreams she saw the green hills and wandered over the fields with little Jacky, and always when she waked the tears would come to her eyes.

When Jacky became a man, he did what a great many enterprising New Englanders had been doing for four generations—he went west "cause farmin' pays out there." But his heart told him that it was because he wanted to be where "that Hopkins boy" was never heard of.

He not only succeeded, but he also won a new sobriquet. He was known over more than seven states as "Circus Jack."

Yet he never revealed the real cause of his interest in the circus world, and the cowboys supposed it was his weakness.

Circus Jack had been known to go as far as 500 miles to see a circus, and at last he became known as the most generous patron of the trade, and the fraternity of the ring blessed him and wished there were more like him. In time he came to be the personal friend of many of the greatest artists and gained the reputation of knowing more about the inside of a circus than any man west of the Mississippi river.

It was also noted by those who occasionally went with him that his greatest interest was always in the gayly dressed women who rode the horses, jumped through the hoops and swung and leaped among the trapezes. He often sought their acquaintance and seemed to be very earnest when in conversation with them.

Twenty years had passed and were growing nearer to thirty. In the meantime "Mile. Celestine, the world's equestrienne and trapezienne, the wonder and admiration of two continents," had passed her zenith, for the days of a circus rider, even when full of glory, are few.

The two greatest circuses in the country had bid high against each other to secure her services. In the midst of her exciting career she would occasionally look for her old life, but such yearning was only momentary.

Both unknown to herself and to Circus Jack the pair had many times been under the same canvas together, which was not surprising, for there was but little in Mile. Celestine to suggest the willow Matilda Vinton of Trescott.

But now Mile. Celestine earned a small salary on the strength of her former fame. She could do only a few simple feats, and even in these she often came near disaster. What was to become of her in later years was a question.

The combination of which Mile. Celestine was the chief attraction was wending its way across the Texas plains, where the cowboys went away disgusted that they had been faked by the show. Besides walking across the tent on a tight rope, Mile. Celestine did none of those things which were accorded to her in her former days. The circus Jacky had heard of was not the circus of her youth, but it was still the circus of her youth.

It was hard for the little fellow to hold up his head during the next few days. "That Hopkins boy" became quite as much a part of the history of the town of Trescott as Tilda herself. The world looked very solemn to Jacky, but it was positively frightful when the truth became known to him.

It seemed that the circus had a novel way of escaping creditors, which involved an entire change of name at stated periods. This generally happened when it moved from one state to another. So McAlpine's Combined Colossal Hippodrome and Consumption of Wonders emerged when it crossed the Connecticut river into Vermont as Fontaine's Equine Aggregation and Grand Galaxy of Harvels.

The circus people said they had nothing whatever to do with McAlpine's show, which was true as far as their bills went, and they knew nothing of such a person as Tilda.

The months grew and the year ended.

Jacky was growing tatter and sorer. This sad episode in his life had left a deep impression, and then one by one the years were added, and all hope of ever knowing the fate of Tilda vanished from the hearts of Trescott, all except one.

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be seized with a sudden excitement. He went to the ringmaster and in a commanding manner said: "I want you to stop this. It is an outrage to let that woman go on. She's sick, man."

His words were greeted with applause. "It's Circus Jack!" the crowd shouted.

When the ringmaster was about to eject him forcibly from the place when Mile. Celestine, turning to take her return journey on the rope, suddenly swayed. She seemed to have forgotten her position, and her gaze was fastened on the scene before her. Then, fairly shrieking the words "Jacky Hopkins! Oh!" she fell fainting into the net.

Many years have passed since Tilda Vinton, formerly the celebrated Mile. Celestine, returned to the old farm in Trescott as Mrs. Jacky Hopkins.

Another Jacky takes up the attention of that happy household, but as his adoring mother looks into his deep blue eyes her own grow misty with the pictures of other days, and she is thankful that some men are faithful to their childhood sweethearts.

In 1855 Liszt went on a tour in the French provinces. He arrived at the little town of L— to give a concert, as announced. But the inhabitants appeared to take but little interest in musical matters, for when the musician appeared on the platform he found himself face to face with an audience numbering exactly seven persons. Liszt stepped very calmly to the front, and with a respectful bow to the array of empty benches, he delivered himself as follows:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I feel extremely flattered by your presence here this evening, but this room is not at all suitable; the air is literally stifling. Will you be good enough to accompany me to a hotel, where I will have a room conveyed? We shall be quite comfortable there, and I will go through the whole of my programme."

The offer was unanimously accepted, and Liszt treated his guests not only to a splendid concert, but an excellent supper into the bargain. Next day, when the illustration of the circus appeared to give his second concert, the hall was not large enough to contain the crowd which claimed admittance.

Appetite and Hunger.

"Most persons do not discriminate between hunger and appetite," said a doctor of long experience. "Appetite is what makes a man drink or smoke and what makes most men and women eat. Many go through life never knowing what hunger really is. I often fast sixty hours and never feel the worse for it. A friend of mine, a physician in Brooklyn, goes without food sixteen days at a stretch and keeps up his work meanwhile. These are the illustrations of a man who contracts a disease from lack of food. Most of them do become diseased through the effort to take care of too much food. They are all in better tone after a fast. Another thing, hunger is felt only in the mouth and throat. That gone feeling that many complain of is not hunger; that is a form of disease. If persons would eat only when they were hungry and only as much as hunger, not appetite, called for—well, we doctors would have to fast."—New York Press.

The Greatest Man.

It would be a difficult task, if not an impossible one, to persuade any half dozen men casually brought together into unanimity of opinion concerning the greatest man who ever lived. Most of them would agree no doubt with Lord Brougham that Julius Caesar was "the greatest man of ancient times," but how many of the six would accept Professor Gardiner's estimate of Cromwell as "the greatest Englishman of all times?" Each of them, we may be reasonably sure, would accept Shakespeare as the greatest poet, yet Lord Lytton once spoke of Milton as "the greatest poet of our country." And where will he be found, two men out of Scotland to agree with Charles Mackay when he says of Burns that he was "the greatest poet—next perhaps to King David of the Jews—whom any age has produced?"—Leslie's Weekly.

Portsmouth Harbor.

There has existed a harbor at Portsmouth, England, resorted to by fighting ships from the most ancient times in our history. The Romans undoubtedly used it when they had their stronghold at Portchester, and they appear to have named it Portus Magnus, or the Great Port. The footsteps of the Roman provincials and of the Saxons and Normans may be traced, but how many of the six would accept Professor Gardiner's estimate of Cromwell as "the greatest Englishman of all times?" Each of them, we may be reasonably sure, would accept Shakespeare as the greatest poet, yet Lord Lytton once spoke of Milton as "the greatest poet of our country." And where will he be found, two men out of Scotland to agree with Charles Mackay when he says of Burns that he was "the greatest poet—next perhaps to King David of the Jews—whom any age has produced?"—Leslie's Weekly.

Practical Inquiry.

The town council of a thriving burg in the west of Scotland recently acquired a piano for their town hall and appointed three of their number to inspect and report on the purchase. The councilors were not musical experts, but one—a joiner—bending down and applying his eye to the several corners of the instrument, remarked, "I'm no judge of music, but I'll warrant ye a' the boards are plumb."

No Satisfying Her.

"Women are hard to understand." "Think so?" "Yes; I told her she carried her age well and she was offended." "You don't say?" "Yes; and then I told her she didn't carry it well, and she wouldn't speak."—Philadelphia Record.

Never Failing.

Sister—What is the best way to retain a man's love? Brother—Don't return it.—Chicago News.

A woman does not begin to command until she has promised to obey.—Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

It has been discovered that the building in Richmond, Va., where Poe edited the Southern Literary Messenger is still in existence, and it is proposed to place a suitable commemorative tablet on its walls.

NEW SHORT STORIES

The Paris Interviewer.

The Paris reporter boasts that he is imbued with the American spirit. That is, when he is sent out to get an interview he gets it. Sometimes he sees his man, but the latter "has nothing to say." Then the reporter makes him say it, and the article appears as an "interview." Here is an interview with J. Pierpont Morgan translated literally from the Echo de Paris, one of whose principal men went to see him at the Hotel Ritz recently: "I have been able to seize M. Morgan as he was on the point of vanishing up the elevator shaft. I said to the great money manipulator, 'Sir, I shall permit myself to put to you several queries about your trip to Paris, your secret designs and—' 'Hein! Quoi!' exclaimed the illustrious trust disciple. He makes believe not to hear, but in his depths he reflects; then, with a strong accent and a fierce expression, the renowned railroad king says to me: 'I will not speak. I shall not speak, no, not one word!' Then I: 'But you are conscious, sir, of the numerous comments your visit arouses. Are any of these true?' Then the famous Wall street dictator: 'I have naught to say; no, not one word, even so small as that.' He clicks his thumb nail backward upon his teeth. His face is purple with brutal will. He goes toward the elevator, always escorted with our vigorous questions. Then I: 'But will you not say if you intend to merge the Compagnie Transatlantique with the other—' Then the busy monopolizer of industries replies: 'You will not make me speak one word, not one small ejaculation shall I make pass my lips!' And, with a bound, the feared billionaire and Napoleon of stock exchanges disappears."

Pat and the Parrot.

At a little dinner not long ago a wager was laid that Marshall P. Wilder, the entertainer, could not tell fifty parrot stories in succession. He did it without turning a feather, and so many of them were new that the man who came away and told about it could remember only one.

It was of the parrot which escaped through a window and perched in a tree. The owner's efforts to capture it.

The Coroner and the Bottle.

The following little scene at an inquest upon the body of a murdered man is reported by a correspondent of the Anglo-Russian from Astrakhan: The coroner dictating to his clerk: "On the table was found a bottle. No; stop for a moment. We must ascertain its contents." The coroner, tasting the liquid, dictates: "The bottle contained English gin. Perhaps not; I am not sure; taste it yourself." The clerk, having done so, replies, "I think it is simply strong vodka." The coroner, tossing off another glass: "No, really, it tastes like gin." The clerk, tasting the liquor again, "I still think it is only vodka."

The bottle having gradually become empty, the coroner proceeded to dictate in a decisive tone: "Write: An empty bottle was found on the table, and all measures taken to ascertain what it contained were of no use."

Josiah Wedgwood's Work.

Josiah Wedgwood's work deserves collecting for special reasons. It is an English art, invented and perfected by a native of England. The designs used for its decoration were made by the best native artists of his time. It was made of English clay, by native craftsmen, without state aid or subsidy, without foreign inspiration. All nations acknowledge his lifelong services to the world's ceramic industry. As his epitaph truly records, "He converted a rude and inconsiderable manufacture into an elegant art and an important part of national commerce."

His countrymen are advised to collect good specimens of his work while it is possible to do so. A time may come when they may find it difficult to purchase at any moderate price. Greater Britain and English speaking America are already competing. Wedgwood ware has grace of form and charming color, and it dally grows in the estimation of its possessors.

The blue examples have been called "cold," but the same objection might be applied to the Venus of Milo. The Chinese—no mean authorities upon ceramics—poetically call one tint of blue on their porcelain "blue after rain." Wedgwood blue is a pure color, but never tires and reminds one of the celestial blue where the skylark soars.—Connaisseur.

Napoleon as a Scientist.

The seat in the class of mechanics of the Institute made vacant by the flight of Carnot was filled in 1797 by the election of a young artillery officer, Napoleon Bonaparte, just returned from his Italian campaign covered with glory. The first consul paid much favorable attention to the institute, and it continues to this day very much as it left his hands in the new constitution which he gave it in 1802.

He exhibited his admiration for the pure sciences and his dislike to the speculative sciences, philosophy and ethics by the expansion of the convention's first class and the entire suppression of the second class, thus creating four classes—sciences physiques et mathematiques, la langue et la litterature francaises, histoire et litterature sciences and beaux arts. It was Louis XVIII, who, in 1816, restored the old names of the academies to the four classes of Napoleon.

The Way He Ghosted.

Two buses were traveling down Regent street in close proximity when the conductor of the foremost one took off his lodge and dangled it in the air, to the obvious annoyance of the rival driver.

"What did you do that for?" asked a passenger.

"Why," said the conductor, pointing a derisive thumb at the infuriated driver, "is father was 'ung.'"—London Tit-Bits.

Wifely Appreciation.

"There's one thing I will say about Charley," said young Mrs. Torkins; "he has a lovely disposition even if he doesn't always display it at home."

"How do you know?"

"I heard some of his Wall street friends talking about him. They say he is a perfect lamb."

Three hundred million feet of logs were cut on the Penobscot river last season. This is the largest harvest ever known, and nearly one-half of it is for the manufacture of paper.

An Impression.

"Now, I have an impression in my head," said the teacher. "Can any of you tell me what an impression is?"

"Yes, I can," replied a little fellow at the foot of the class. "An impression is a dent in a soft spot."

Congress would prepare a drama for the stage in a week or ten days, though four or five times this period was spent in revision.

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A PIONEER MERCHANT

Bright's Disease and Diabetes
Are Positively Curable.

Adolph Wexler, the well known pioneer of 909 Green street, San Francisco, one of the founders of the California Cracker Company, interviewed December 11, 1901:

Q—Will you permit us to refer to you as one of those cured of diabetes by the Fulton Compound?

A—You may. It ought to be known. I have held a great many hard to convince them.

Q—How long before you began to improve?

A—I took hold slowly—it must have been several months.

Q—How long before you were fully restored?

A—About a year.

Q—Can you recall any of your troubles?

A—One was a Mrs. D., a friend of mine in the country. Her trouble was Bright's Disease, She, too, recovered.

Q—A lady friend in Windsor, Sonoma County, was swollen with dropsy, and I sent her the Fulton Compound, and she was completely restored.

Q—You are the only one who has cured the curability of Bright's Disease and Diabetes?

A—Cure all those who will take these Outcomes for a sufficient length of time.

Medical works agree that Bright's Disease and Diabetes are incurable. 75 per cent are positively recovered under the Fulton Compound. (Common forms of kidney complaint and Rheumatism, other but the second dozen.) Price, \$1 for the Bright's Disease and \$1.50 for the Diabetic Compound. John J. Fulton Co., 431 Montgomery street, San Francisco, sole dispensers. Free trials made for patients. Descriptive pamphlet sent free.

THE FEMINE MIND.

Some Men Think They Fathom It, but They Are Mistaken.

A man can very seldom tell what is passing in a woman's mind. He talks with another man, and he can follow his processes; he gets his point of view; he can read between the lines; he can make a shrewd guess as to how he came to say that or why he refrained from saying the other, says the Watchman.

But a woman's mental processes are not those of a man. Her mental machinery is geared differently. You hear what she tells you. You can make inferences from it. They will be wrong because you do not know how she comes to say what she did say, you do not have the clue. Try to guess what she will say next, and you will find that they are all at sea.

The man who says that he understands woman is himself a woman. No man can understand a woman. He may love her. There may exist between his soul and hers that indefinable and ecstatic sympathy which is the sweetest thing on earth, but he does not understand her.

Her mental operation, her ways of thought, her point of view, will always be as inscrutable to him as the mental processes of an angel. Whether woman understand each other is not quite certain. A greater part of the delight that men find in the companionship of women arises from their inscrutability. You cannot measure or exhaust them. Their charming inconsequence, as it seems to you, will never cease to puzzle you, and every fresh conversation reveals a novelty of attitude or opinion.

Making It Plain.

A writer in the Lancet, says the Chicago Record-Herald, generously sets himself the task of giving valuable information as to the amount of food one should eat. He proceeds to make the matter plain to the masses by saying:

"If you desire to know how much you ought to eat per diem, you must first determine whether you are temporarily anabolic or katabolic. Then, taking into account your age, sex, size, the amount of exercise you get and the temperature of the atmosphere, you should calculate the amount of food necessary to maintain the minimum weight of the body consistent with the best health of which you are capable."

Hereafter there should be no excuse whatever for overeating or under-eating.

The Discovery of Florida.

Juan Ponce de Leon, sailing from Porto Rico in search of new land, discovered Florida on March 27, 1512. He landed near St. Augustine, planted the cross and took possession in the name of the Spanish monarch. In 1763 a treaty ending east and west Florida to Great Britain, in exchange for Havana and the western part of Cuba, was ratified. In 1781 part of Florida was ceded to Spain, and in 1783 Great Britain ceded east and west Florida to Spain. On Feb. 22, 1819, east and west Florida were ceded to the United States by treaty and purchase, Spain receiving \$5,000,000.

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"There's one thing I will say about Charley," said young Mrs. Torkins; "he has a lovely disposition even if he doesn't always display it at home."

"How do you know?"

"I heard some of his Wall street friends talking about him. They say he is a perfect lamb."

Three hundred million feet of logs were cut on the Penobscot river last season. This is the largest harvest ever known, and nearly one-half of it is for the manufacture of paper.

An Impression.

"Now, I have an impression in my head," said the teacher. "Can any of you tell me what an impression is?"

"Yes, I can," replied a little fellow at the foot of the class. "An impression is a dent in a soft spot."

Congress would prepare a drama for the stage in a week or ten days, though four or five times this period was spent in revision.