

## THE PATRIOT.

This is my country's natal morn. My heart with capture thrills. I've bought a gun for little John, the kind that sometimes kills. And Susie has a pistol, too. She'll burn herself, I fear. But what's the difference if she does? It's only once a year; That I in patriotism lack it never shall be said. The baby has some crackers now that might blow off his head. They're somewhat dangerous; they're filled with dynamite, I hear. But shoot them off, my darling child; 'tis only once a year. I've heard that rockets have been known to put out children's eyes. Of course in every childish sport some danger lurking lies. We'll have to take our chance of that—they mustn't stand too near—For we must celebrate the Fourth; 'tis only once a year. So, though the baby's blown to bits and Johnny's lost his sight, Though Susie's hair is all burnt off by time that it is night, I'll sing "My country, 'tis of thee," in accents loud and clear, For I have kept the glorious Fourth which comes but once a year. —Lippincott's.

## The Flag of District Seven

Naturally it was dark and still about District School Number Seven; why not, when the eight day clock on the wall inside marked nine forty-five p.m., and was ticking on toward ten as fast as it could go. "Time for all honest folks to be in bed," the Doctor's grandfather would have told him. The Doctor was supposed to have gone there an hour and a half before.

But the Doctor had a matter on hand which he felt required caution and the shades of night; therefore he and Jiminy crept stealthily out from their respective homes, met where the road forked, and stole across lots, taking advantage of every bush and clump of weeds, though it was as dark as the Doctor's pocket. At last they were crouching close against the southern wall of the brick school house.

Said the Doctor in a stage whisper: "This here shutter isn't really shut! I stuck a wad of paper in the hinge, and Miss Colwell pulled like forty trying to hoot it. It's the only window where the lock doesn't catch. Now, I'll boost you up, and then you can haul me."

"No, sirree," said Jiminy promptly; "I'll boost and you haul."

"But you're the heaviest," urged the Doctor. "It's easier to boost than to haul."

"I don't care. I don't go in there first. You're the fellow that's doing this. I just come along for company."

"You're an old 'fraid cat."

"Fraid cat yourself."

"Well, here—boost away," said the Doctor, and up he went. It was dark outside, but as he sat astride the window sill somehow it looked a good deal darker within.

"Give me the lantern." It was unlighted, but the speaker was well provided with matches. "Now, catch hold, quick!" He reached his arms out of the window, making a heroic effort to conquer the queer, creepy feeling that Something might reach out of that awful blackness behind and catch hold of him.

"It won't need two of us to go up into the loft," was whispered from below. "You just light the lantern and put it on the window-sill, and I'll wait here till you come down. Ouch—quit!"

For the Doctor came down then and there, landing squarely on top of him, and though Jiminy might weigh a few pounds more, everybody knows that momentum counts for more than weight. The Doctor had momentum to spare.

"Say, are you comin' along like a white man, after promising and promising so I wouldn't ask any other fellow?" Say, are you—say you, Jiminy Neebles?"

"Yep! Get off'n me." The dark schoolhouse was a possible danger. The Doctor a positive one. Jiminy went in first that time; but he speedily jerked the Doctor in after him, and the latter was daring and reckless enough to close the shutter before he struck a match.

The first beat its head, the second sputtered and went out, the third flared and did the same. By the time the tiny flame threw glimmering shadows of themselves upon the ceiling, both conspirators were in a quiver.

"There's nothing and nobody here," said Jiminy, looking fearfully about him.

"Who said there was?" bravely scoffed the Doctor. "Now for the step ladder."

It stood in the closet where the girls hung their hats and cloaks. The two brought it out, somewhat hindered in their progress, not only because the ladder was heavy, but because they seemed to feel obliged to carry the lantern with them wherever they went. When the ladder was at last firmly planted under the trap door leading to the loft, the Doctor, with an air of being nonchalantly willing to share the honors of the expedition, inquired: "Well, who goes up?"

"You," Jiminy replied with promptness, basely unmoved by ambition for

ship. The Doctor gave a contemptuous snort.

"All right. I'll take the lantern with me then." He snatched it from the desk where it stood, and was half way to the ceiling before Jiminy got his mouth open to remonstrate. The Doctor shoved the trap aside, swung the lantern slowly about his head as he took a comprehensive survey, then set it down, and drew himself up. The instant he cleared the opening Jiminy's head popped through it, his legs swiftly following.

The loft was the store room for discarded books and wrecks of furniture, piled about in disorderly fashion. On a box near the trap lay the object of their quest; a package carefully wrapped in burlap and brown paper. As the Doctor laid hands on it, Jiminy snatched the lantern and dived down the ladder. He thought he saw something stir back in among the piles of books. It might be a rat, it might be—almost anything. At the foot of the ladder he cried, "Hurry up!" The Doctor was just emerging from the trap, and although not anxious to linger, he took time to drop his burden carefully on Jiminy's upturned face. It pleased him to hear Jiminy sneeze, gag, and try to spit out the dust.

But his smile only lasted until he had untied the package, when it changed to a prolonged stare, accompanied by a melancholy whistle. "He's got it after all, Jiminy," he said; "he's gone and got it after all."

"You've got the wrong bundle." The Doctor shook his head in somber and assured negative. "There wasn't any other; there never has been. And how do you suppose these got up there if he didn't put 'em there to cheat?" He held up an object that threw Jiminy back in convulsions of mirth.

"Breeches—his old work breeches! Oh, Moses—and we've been thinking it was the flag! Oh, sposin' we'd tried to run them up to-morrow morning when the folks were all here!" And Jiminy rolled on a desk quite helpless.

The Doctor did not laugh. He regarded the garment with his chin resting on his hands, while a perplexed frown drew his brows together. "That's what he was up to. Let's see; this is how he said it: 'We've got to have your flag for the Fourth.' Not 'May we have it?' civil like. But 'We've got to have it.' And I tells him: 'Our flag's going up here on the morning of the Fourth of July, because here's where it belongs,' says I. Give you a treat all round for the use of it," says he. "No, sir," says I, "ice cream, cake and lemonade," says he. "No, sir," says I; "maybe you can have it in the afternoon, for you did give a couple of dollars toward getting it, but we gave the most and it's ours." "All right; keep your old flag," says he, but I knew by the twinkle in his eyes that he was bound to get it somehow. If we didn't hide it away from him, but I didn't expect he'd be after it before to-night. I've been up here 'most every day, and it looked all right. Just his smartness to stick his old breeches there and make us think 'twas safe till we started to run it up; I say it's mean of him if he is my uncle!"

"Never you mind what I'm going to do with it." Jiminy referred to the bundle from which the Doctor had never relaxed his hold.

"Never you mind what I'm going to do with it." The Doctor extinguished the lantern by a sudden sweep of his arm, took a few steps forward and turned to say impressively:

"If you are going with me, Jiminy Neebles, you've got to promise 'dead and double, honest injun, cross your heart, that you'll never open your head about what we do. Harry Trickey'll be fit to mop up the earth with us if he finds out."

"Who's going to open his head?" demanded Jiminy, and the Doctor was satisfied. Jiminy had his faults, but he was a boy of his word.

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Had the assistant foreman of the Amadan Fire brigade been less busily engaged the night and dawn of July third and fourth, he might have noticed that in the outer ring of faintest light cast by the bonfire in front of the smithy, he sometimes cast three shadows instead of one; that wherever he went he was as closely watched and followed as ever any foredoomed captive of Sleuth or Sherlock Holmes. One of the shadows, with hands in pockets, yawned cavernously and often, but it stumbled doggedly in the tracks of the other, that, armed with persistence, an unlighted lantern and a bundle, never for one instant faltered in the pursuit.

Having begun the celebration of the Fourth early, and intending to continue it late, Mr. Trickey sought his couch an hour or so before dawn, and slept long past the breakfast hour of the rest of the family. In truth he did not waken until half the villagers were mirthfully cognizant of what was announced by him by a shout under his window.

Trickey, Harry Trickey, come down and salute the flag! Trickey, Trickey, Trickey! come and see what's happened to your flag!"

"What is it—what's up?" the assistant foreman asked, rubbing his heavy eyes. He was answered by adjurations to come to the park and see for himself.

Long before he reached the green, however, an amazingly transformed standard fluttered into view. The bifurcated garment he had folded carefully into the wrappings of District Seven's flag, chuckling meanwhile at the discomfiture of a certain "big-headed kid" nephew, kicked gayly at him from the top of the flagpole.

"The little cuss!" muttered Trickey, recognizing at once the fine hand of the Doctor. And when he reached the foot of the flag staff, and the laughing crowd pointed out the halibards, fastened on the top of a tall tree where only some one, lighter of weight but as daring as himself, could have tied them, he muttered again with a reluctant grin. "The little cuss!"

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"Jiminy," he said, pounding the desk he sat on with his fist, "we'll have our flag on our own flagstaff if we have to chop theirs down. Now, you listen. He and Nick Fielding and Joe Strayer and a lot of the other fireboys'll stay up till midnight to blow off the anvil—you know they always do. Then they keep up a racket for a while, run up the flag and go home for a nap. When they go home for a nap this time, Jiminy, we'll jerk our flag down in a hurry."

"Moses! we'll have to hang round and watch them all night."

"Who's carin'? I'd never stay ten nights if I had Harry Trickey keep our flag on his old pole."

"I don't believe we can haul it down by ourselves."

"Pshaw, it's just like pulling it down here, only the ropes are long."

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Particularly dear to the heart of the Doctor was District Seven's new flag. He had been the originator of the plan to purchase it, the most persistent beggar of contributions, and despite rooted objections to manual labor, had even dug and delved to add to the fund. Therefore he felt a special proprietary right in the banner.

After a suitable pause, he rejoined: "I don't care if the rest of 'em are willing. You fellows gave two dollars. Course you'll be responsible for any damage."

"Of course," assented his uncle, by this time in a broad grin. The Doctor's

face remained unmoved. He thrust his hands into his pockets and strolled away to join the admiring Jiminy. "Don't gawk so," he muttered, in a fierce, admonitory whisper.

**BARK BOOKS OF SAVAGES.**

**Sumatra Island Cannibals Have Literature Strictly Medical.**

Cannibals—especially those of the island of Sumatra, whose primitive and only article of clothing has given to our language the familiar term "Sumatra wrapper"—have a bad reputation as feeders, and are generally classed as low-down savages. Yet as the London Lancet says, it is only fair to these despised people to point out that they possess literature, and that their literature is medical. Doubtless they have cook books, also, which will make mighty interesting reading when deciphered.

The Battak manuscripts, of which there are a few specimens in the Marsden Library at King's College (University of London), are curious examples of the most primitive form of book. In his classic work on Sumatra, published in 1811, William Marsden thus refers to this literature of the cannibals: "Their books are composed of the inner bark of a certain tree cut into long slips and folded in squares. Their contents are little known to us. The writing of most of those in my possession is mixed with uncouth representation of scolopendra and other noxious animals and frequent diagrams which imply their being works of astrology and divination."

M. Claine, reporting in 1892 on a Battak manuscript, of which the late Dr. G. W. Leitner reproduced a copy in photogravure in the Imperial Asiatic Quarterly Review (1892), describes it as referring to some plague. The book was submitted to Pundit Janardhan, an eminent Vaidik physician of Lahore. The writer of this article was at the same time busily employed in unearthing the Battak manuscripts in the Marsden Library at King's. These, with Capt. Cook's original diaries and other treasures of price, were soon found in a large box, which had never been lost, but which had suffered neglect owing to its very obscurity. In no long time the learned Pundit doctor of Lahore replied in the pages of Dr. Leitner's Review.

Medical scientists in England had been possessed by the idea that the Battak bark books contained a definite admiration of the theories of Pasteur. The little twiddles, painted in some black pigment on the bark, were held to be what were then called "germs." Dr. Janardhan entirely confirmed this theory, but he pointed out that the Battak illustrations were borrowed from ancient Hindi books, from which the Battak cannibals copied with an infinite neatness: "Whatever people may choose to say about the discovery of bacilli and microbes as a new thing (in 1892) in medical science, it is quite evident that the principle of this discovery was many ages ago given in the Sanskrit books of medicine, and the details, elaborated and tabulated, can be produced to prove this statement."

But the Sanskrit illustrations in question really refer to worms, not to germs. In India diseases are often traced to a "kita" or worm, and the Battak pictures really depict a number of these.

**GIBSON'S HISTORY OF ROME.**

**Conceded by Scholars to Be the Greatest Historical Work.**

Although the idea was conceived when Gibson was 27, he was 31 before he set himself seriously at work to study his material. At 36 he began the composition, and he was 39 when in February, 1776, the first quarto volume was published. The history had an immediate success. "My book," he wrote, "was on every table and almost on every toilet; the historian was crowned by the taste or fashion of the day." The first edition was exhausted in a few days, a second was printed in 1776 and next year a third. The second and third volumes, which ended the history of the western empire, were published in 1781, and seven years later the three volumes devoted to the eastern empire saw the light. The last sentence of the work, written in the summer house at Lansdowne, is: "It was among the ruins of the capital that I first conceived the idea of a work which has amused and exercised near twenty years of my life, and which, however inadequate to my own wishes, I finally deliver to the curiosity and candor of the public."

This is a brief account of one of the greatest historical works, if indeed it is not the greatest ever written, says James Ford Rhodes in Scribner's. Let us imagine an assemblage of English, German and American historical scholars called upon to answer the question: Who is the greatest modern historian? No doubt can exist that Gibson would have a large majority of the voices; and I think a like meeting of French and Italian scholars would endorse the verdict. "Gibson's work will never be excelled," declared Niebuhr. "That great master of us all," said Freeman, "whose immortal tale none of us can hope to displace." Bury, the latest editor of Gibbon, who has actually criticized and carefully weighed "The Daily Decline and Fall," concludes "that Gibbon is beyond date in many details. But in the main things he is still our master, above and beyond date." His work wins plaudits from those who believe that history in its highest form should be literature and from those who hold that it should be nothing more than a scientific narrative.

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