Orange County Observer.

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OVERLOOKED.

He would not look well in a novel;
If wouldn't be praised in a play.
He hasn't neither palace nor hovel;
He's only a man of to-day.
He could'nt do much with a sabre,
If carnage and riot were rife;
He merely can suffer and labor—
A hero of everyday life.

He isn't delightfully daring;
He isn't a maiden's ideal,
To love and devotion declaring—
A hero of ballads and steel.
For merely a man who is fighting
The battle of civilized times—
A ballad that's withering, blighting,
Unsung in the troubadour's rhymes.

His smile is a ruse to keep hidden
From those to his heart ever dear
The phantoms that greet him unbidden,
The future he's tempted to fear;
His life is a constant endeavor
To keep their eyes turned to the light,
To seem to be happy whatever
The prospect of darkening night.

He's really but one of the many,
Determined and patient and bold,
Whose struggle's as noble as any
By poet or novelist told.
And later, when Time writes the story
Of those who've been valiant in strife,
A page will be due to the glory
Of heroes of everyday life.

E. F., in the Chicago Evening Post.

BLACK JOHNSON, THE SCOUT.

A TALE OF THE TEXAS FRONTIER.

TEXAS was my home in my early days, and at the time I am writing about I was engaged many years ago, in connection with an old friend, in stocking a sheep farm in Harrison County, and was on my way west to purchase a large flock of an old Mexican settler, with whom I had been in correspondence.

I journeyed along pleasantly enough till, on reaching a settlement on the upper Brazos, I was somewhat disturbed by the report of a hunting party of Kioways, who had followed the buffaloes into the range, through which my trail would lead me, my destination being the old "Spanish colony" on the Leon.

It was then I was forcibly reminded of stories I had heard of the prowess of a famous hunter called Black Johnson, who had often wiped out scores of enemies, single-handed, and who was the most terrible man in all that region of terrible men. It occurred to me that just then would be a good time to fall in with Black Johnson, and have him for a traveling companion. But I had to push on alone.

I had passed the buffalo range in safety, and there was not an Indian, I supposed, within leagues of me, when one evening, being encamped on the narrow strip of timber skirting a small spring brook, my horse broke from his tether, and escaped from me into the open prairie. This made it necessary for me to leave my shelter in pursuit of him. I hadn't gone far when I heard a distant whoop, and, scanning the wide plain, perceived five horsemen riding at a fast gallop toward me, and was startled at the discovery of their being Indians.

I lost no time in reaching the spot where I had left my rifle and pistols, and immediately proceeded to take such hasty measures for defense as I could. Where I had made my bivouac the stream formed a small curve, and ran deep between its banks. I instantly availed myself of this fortunate lay of the ground, and, snatching up my weapons, took my position behind the bank, which reached above my breast, and awaited the approach of the savages. It was not long before they were upon me. But ere they had discovered my position I had bridled my trusty rifle, and dropped the foremost Indian from his saddle. Seeing this, the other painted imps, letting fly a volley of arrows, dismounted from their beasts, and filling the little grove with mad yells, charged upon me.

I had now nothing but my two single-barreled pistols remaining, and no time to reload my rifle. But as the savages rushed toward me I gave them a shot from one of my pistols, and snatching up my rifle again, as if it contained a charge, leveled it at them. This ruse checked them for an instant, and they sought the cover of the small growth, from which they directed their guns upon my shelter, waiting only for a sight of my head to fire.

Twice I drew their shots by the old artifice I had somewhere read of, of resting my hat upon the end of my rifle. But the cunning savages soon detected the cheat, and pressed closer and closer upon me. They were extremely wary in their movements, and were careful not to expose any part of their painted carcasses to my aim. It was at this point of the fight that I withdrew my empty rifle, and was hastily charging it, while my empty pistol was deposited at hand upon the bank, when I heard a cautious and stealthy tread along the bottom of the brook in my rear.

So startled was I at this unexpected addition to my enemies, that in my agitation I let the powder fall from the palm of my hand to the ground. I knew that four Indians were still in front of me in the thicket, for they could not have reached the stream unperceived by me. Nearer and quicker approached the steps behind me, and I now was about to leap upon the bank, and, giving all up for lost, throw myself upon the fire of the savages in front. I had sprung upon a rotted log for that purpose, when a powerful grasp was laid upon my shoulder, and I was borne to the ground.

Before I could perceive my new assailant a voice whispered in my ear, "Keep down, stranger, or them varmints'll make daylight shine through yer brain pan. I reckon you and I'll be good for them red cusses!"

And before I could recover from this sudden surprise the new-comer raised a long, double-barrelled rifle and fired twice in quick succession, and I knew from the mingled yells of rage and pain that followed that each shot had taken effect.

The next instant the stranger leaped past me up the bank, and was engaged in a hand-to-hand struggle with the remaining two savages. He made short work of it, for before I could reach the spot he had them at his feet, and was in the act of stripping their paint-bedaubed scalps from their skulls. This done, he turned to the wounded savages he had shot from beneath the bank and served them in the same way, and then made a finish of them with his knife.

"I reckon, stranger, that 'ere other scalp of right belongs to you," said he, as he pointed his dripping blade toward the body of the savage I had dispatched before his opportune arrival.

"Are there any more of the varmints about?" inquired my rescuer, as he deliberately proceeded to wipe out and recharge his rifle. "Here's one, two, three, four, five on 'em; is that all?"

"Yes," said I; "there were but five of them. And now, my friend, I must thank you for your timely aid, without which I am sure I should not be among the living."

"What would you thank me for, stranger? Why, it's my bis'ness to kill the red varmints. I've followed it all my life, and I reckon I'd rather do it than eat any time. Cuss 'em! they wiped out my poor father and my only sister, and I owes 'em a grudge all their scalps can't satisfy. I seed the varmints making a dash for the bottom here, and I knowed they wan't arter no good. I reckoned they'd scented you out—for I'd diskivered yer trail two days ago—and I knowed a lone traveler'd be sure to draw the varmints out, and so I followed arter yer."

I had now leisure to take a survey of my preserver. He was a singular looking individual, about middle-aged, with a tall, muscular person, which was clothed in a well-greased and shiny suit of buckskin that had evidently seen much rough service. About his waist was a broad leathern belt, in which were a couple of heavy cavalry pistols, a keen, long-handled hatchet, and the scabbard of the heavy bowie-knife he had just been using so skilfully. These, with his long two-barrelled rifle, constituted a very efficient armament for one person to carry continually about him. To one unaccustomed to them they would prove a rather heavy burden. But the stranger appeared not the least incommoded by them, and moved with all the lightness and grace of a young Indian warrior beneath his quiver of arrows.

In place of a hat the stranger wore on his head a sort of turban, made from folds of a piece of figured calico, which, confining his sandy locks upon the top of his head, brought his bold and rather handsome features into strong relief. But the most attractive features about his face were a pair of large, prominent gray eyes that seemed to take in every object about him at a single glance. In their calm, yet penetrating gaze I can compare them to nothing but the eye of a half-domesticated eagle. Such was the appearance of this man, as with one foot resting upon the breast of the savage he had last scalped he was leisurely recharging his weapons.

"I reckon, stranger," commenced my new companion, as he returned the last pistol to his belt, "yer'd better gather up yer traps and jine me at my camp to-night; and in the morning we can ride in company—that is to say as if 'twould be agreeable to you."

I assured him that nothing would give me greater satisfaction.

"But," said I, "perhaps our trails don't run in the same direction."

"Where mought yer be bound?"

"To the Spanish colony," I answered.

"Ah, that's fortunate! My trail runs through the same settlement. So we'll catch that runaway nag of yourn, and put out to my camp. It's but a little way up to this same creek bottom."

In another half hour we had arrived at his camp, and after a relishing supper of "thump" and marrow bones I spread my blanket, and was soon forgetful of the exciting incident of the day. Whether my companion slept or not I cannot say, for when I awoke at dawn he was already about, having changed the feeding-place of the horses, and prepared a fragrant roast of buffalo fish for an early breakfast. Partaking of the repast, we were soon on our way to the Leon, the belts of timber which skirted the river being plainly visible from the swells of the prairie as we rode along.

I found my fellow-traveler, though not very loquacious, a very sensible and pleasant companion. He was familiar with every foot of the ground over which we traveled, and said that he had camped on every water-course, river and spring branch between the Red River, of Louisana and Mexico. But in all his conversation he never used an egotistical remark. His modesty was remarkable, and, beyond what he had said of killing Indians after the skirmish at my camp, he made no reference to his ever before being engaged in a fight.

The sun had scarcely passed the meridian when we came in sight of the settlement of the old Spanish colony, and my companion pointed out to me, in the edge of the river bottom, the thatched roofed rancho of Don Pancho Diego, the Mexican with whom I had contracted for a thousand head of yearling ewes. Soon we had passed the extensive corrals, in which large flocks of sheep were nightly driven, and rode up to the low porch of the Mexican's dwelling. No persons were moving about, and it was evident the occupants were enjoying their post-prandial siesta.

"Good-evening, friends!" shouted my companion; and his voice aroused a pack of shaggy shepherd dogs, who, gathering from the numerous outbuildings, quickly called the peons and their master to the door.

"Down, down, dogs!" cried an old leather-clad Mexican, as he kicked the noisy animals from his path, and approached us, still rubbing the sleep from his eyes.

"Ah, it is you, my good friend, Don Thomas?" said the old man, grasping the hand of my companion who had not yet dismounted, covering it with kisses, and expressing the utmost delight at seeing him.

While the Mexican still clung to the Texan's hand an old matron rushed from the house, and with a cry of unbounded joy seized upon my friend's other hand, and hugging his leg, gave vent to the most extravagant expressions of satisfaction. Nor were they satisfied with this demonstrative welcome, for when the Texan at length released himself from their embraces long enough to dismount, they again renewed the charge, and throwing themselves upon his neck, almost smothered him with their warm salutes.

After these transports were over the Texan introduced me to the Mexican, and informed him that I was the Harrison County gentleman who had been in correspondence with him in relation to purchasing a flock of sheep. I also received a kindly welcome, and, peons taking our animals, we were led into the house.

"Ah, Don Thomas!" exclaimed the old lady, after we had been seated, "we are so happy to see you again."

And then both she and her husband, speaking together, commenced a long story, how the Texan had saved their lives a few years before, when their rancho had been attacked by a thieving band of Comanches. According to their account, he, with a small party of rangers, had performed wonders of valor, for, coming upon the settlement after the savages had already set fire to many of the ranches, he attacked more than ten times his own numbers, and slaying more than half of them, saved the lives of the entire settlement, since which the Indians had not ventured to return.

During this recital I observed my companion sat uneasily in his chair, and seemed impatient of his own praises.

"Tut, tut, my good friends, you lay it on too thick!" said he, as they concluded their earnest talk. "Yer see, stranger, I and some of the boys happened along here a few years ago, when we discovered a party of redskins plundering the ranches, and what could we do but drive 'em off, that's all. To be sure it was a pretty warm fight, and some of the boys got hurt, but after all 'twa'n't nothing to brag on."

"And he saved my life yesterday," said I to the Mexicans; and then I repeated the occurrence of the previous day, adding that I had not even yet heard the name of my preserver.

"You cannot have been long in Texas," said Don Pancho, "if you have not heard the name of Thomas Johnson, usually called Black Johnson. Then let me introduce you, gentlemen."

"Black Johnson," I repeated. "O yes, I have indeed heard his name before." And then came freshly to mind the anecdotes I had heard of this brave Texan.

"Solomon, I fear you are forgetting me," said a bright eyed girl to her lover the other day. "Yes, Sue," said slow Sol, excusing himself. "I have been for getting you these two years."

HORTICULTURE

Orchard Manuring.

So much mischief can be done by applying manures of the wrong kind in orchards that I doubt if we do not lose more by manuring than by neglecting to manure. Fruit trees do not require at any time barnyard manures, or their equivalent. What they require is a supply of inorganic food. You can do no better for apple trees than to supply them with coal ashes in which there is a liberal admixture of wood ashes; the wood ashes furnish the fertilizer. If you can get a supply of old mortar you have just the thing you need. A mixture of lime and salt, when so mixed as to leave no free salt, is excellent for all fruit trees. All such manures should be applied as a top-dressing. A peach or plum orchard needs nothing better than swamp muck or earth from the woods, with a slight addition of phosphate and potash.

If barnyard manure is applied at any time, it should be thoroughly decomposed and applied as a top-dressing. Such manure, if placed about the roots, when planting a pear or apple tree, will kill it. Grapes, of course, want phosphates and potash. They will also respond to a free application of liquid manures during their periods of rest, both in winter and in mid-summer. All the tall-growing berries, of the bramble sort, will use a large amount of organic manure. But be careful about dressing your raspberries with rank undecomposed barnyard manure. The probability is at any time you will develop a fungoid disease that you cannot easily master. If you use barnyard manure in raspberries it should be thoroughly comminuted with the soil as a compost. In fact, I prefer to compost every manure before it is placed on my gardens. Equally important as the manure is the mulching of our fruit trees and bushes of all sorts.—E. P. Powell, in New England Homestead.

Methods of Tree Planting.

A bulletin just issued by the Nebraska station tells of some joint experiments by Professor Fred. W. Card, of that station, and Professor H. C. Irish, of the St. Louis Botanical Gardens, to test the relative merits of top pruning and no top pruning, root pruning and no root pruning; fall planting and spring planting; deep holes and shallow holes, etc., in tree planting.

It will be noticed that the close root pruning at times of setting, so successfully practiced by the noted Galveston horticulturist, H. M. Stringfellow, on the Texas coast, was a failure in Nebraska.

These experiments both at Lincoln and St. Louis, show that planters are right in believing that fall planted trees may make some root growth in the autumn, succeeding planting, and in the spring before the leaves start. Professor Card draws the following conclusions from all these tests, for the conditions prevailing in Eastern Nebraska:

1. Two-year limbed trees are eminently satisfactory and desirable for ordinary planting, but with good care even one-year old trees may give good results and gain on older trees planted at the same time.

2. Whether it will pay to dig large, deep holes and fill them up with surface soil, in which to plant the tree, is a question worthy of consideration, but, so far as these experiments are concerned, is as yet unanswered.

3. The more healthy roots left on a tree at planting time the better is likely to be the growth. Making a fresh, clean cut at the ends of the roots when planting appears to afford no advantage, provided the root is sound when cut in the nursery. Trees planted with no root pruning now average decidedly larger than those which had the roots shortened.

4. Cutting back the tops severely at planting time is a mistake. Trees left entirely unpruned, or with the branches shortened about one-half, are thus far much in advance of those pruned to a cane or grown as a whip in the nursery.

5. Fall planted trees may make a small amount of growth before winter and in early spring before leaf growth begins.

Filipinos Used Spanish Gunners.

After the capture of Caloocan, Philippine Islands, by the American troops, a Spaniard, who had been a prisoner there, came to the Americans, holding up his hands, and said that the Filipinos had offered to release the Spaniards, especially the artillerymen, if they would undertake to fight against the Americans at $4 a day. Most of the Spaniards refused, and even those who accepted the offer did so in the hope of effecting an escape.—New York Tribune.

If two tuning forks of the same pitch are placed facing each other, the one sounding, the other silent, in a few seconds the silent one will be giving out a distinctly audible note.

HOUSEHOLD AFFAIRS.

How to Hang Pictures Straight.

Landlords are in despair once more, for it is now the proper thing to drive small nails in the walls and hang pictures thereon. The old-time wires and chains are entirely out of date, and the means of keeping pictures to the walls must not be visible to the eye. Two tacks are usually used, one at either end of the frame. In this way the pictures cannot be easily disarranged and will hang straight and true.

Makes a Pretty Tablecloth.

Denim tablecloth contributed a pretty effect to a luncheon recently. It was made with the light side uppermost, the dark side being turned up around the cloth as a deep hem, which was featherstitched down. The centrepiece, dish and plate dollies were all of Mexican drawn work, showing with excellent effect over the light blue cover. A pretty set of old blue willow ware was used for the luncheon service. When one does not own a polished table, or when it is not in good order, the denim cloth is a valuable possession.

Royal Road to Housecleaning.

Now comes the time of year when the housekeeper wishes that there were some royal road to housecleaning. Every member of the family dreads the spring upheaval—when carpets are up, windows open, dust flying, everything in confusion, and the entire premises smell of soapsuds. Then meals are unappetizingly plain, and hastily eaten, for mother has no time to give to the preparation of dainty dishes. And the worst of it all is that this same mother is very likely to overwork herself to such an extent that, when the house is once more in a state of order, she is laid up with illness produced of physical and nervous exhaustion.

One housekeeper has discovered that there is what she calls a royal road to housecleaning, and it lies in the simple device of taking one room at a time. First of all, she attacks the attic, and gives one day to going through trunks, etc., and setting the place in order. Next, the cellar receives attention, and she hires a man for one day to perform the heavy and dirty part of the work. This is done before the other portions of the house are cleaned, as cleaning the furnace, removing ashes, etc., necessarily cause dust to rise to the upper floors. Then one room at a time is cleaned, and this is done in such an unostentatious way that the men of the family hardly know that the process is going on. The room that is undergoing a transformation is thoroughly completed, the carpets relaid and pictures rehung, before another apartment has so much as a chair removed from it. Our housekeeper has also adopted the plan of taking her housecleaning in a leisurely way, and not attempting to get it all done in a given space of time. She begins early in the season, and, if pressed with other work, cleans only one or two rooms a week. This method is so much pleasanter for all concerned than the old-fashioned system of much-dreaded housecleaning, that over-wrought housewives might find their work simplified if they should adopt this woman's plan.—Harper's Bazar.

Recipes.

Scotch Broth Without Meat—Soak four ounces of barley in a quart of cold water over night. In the morning drain, put in soup kettle with one onion, one turnip, one carrot sliced; add a few green tops of celery, half a green pepper minced and four tablespoonfuls of oatmeal. When done add two tablespoonfuls salt. Strain and serve.

Kidney Pudding—Skin three sheeps' kidneys and chop them together with three ounces of suet until very fine. Put them in a basin, add one-half pint of bread crumbs, one beaten egg, one teacupful of milk, one teaspoonful of minced parsley, and season with pepper and salt. Stir the mixture well, pour it into a buttered dish, cover and steam for one hour.

Fried Frog Legs—Use only the hind legs of the frogs. After washing in warm water soak well, then place them in cold vinegar and salt and let them remain two hours, then throw into scalding water and remove the skin. Wipe them dry and mix with flour, and fry either in butter or olive oil. When brown sprinkle a little salt and pepper. Garnish with cress or parsley.

Apple Tart Meringue—Pare, slice and stew eight tart juicy apples, sweeten to taste, flavor with grated nutmeg, and rub through a sieve. Line a pudding dish with pie crust and bake, then fill the crust with the apple, and cover the top with a meringue made of the beaten whites of three eggs and three tablespoonfuls of powdered sugar. Return to the oven and brown slightly. Serve cold.

Hoe Cakes—Into one and one-third cupfuls of cornmeal mix one level teaspoonful of salt and one rounded teaspoonful of baking powder. Beat the yolks of two eggs until light, add one cupful of sweet milk and pour over the meal. Beat well together and then add the beaten whites of the eggs. Put a tablespoonful of lard into the frying pan, drop in the batter by spoonfuls and brown on both sides.

NOT FOR COOKING'S SAKE.

Our Mattie is a lady,
But she never learned to bake;
She never cared for cooking
Just alone for cooking's sake.
So she never cooked at all,
Lest a bit of butter fall
On her dainty garments white,
Or her shoes so high and tight;
For she never cared to bake,
Just alone for cooking's sake.

Our Mattie has a lover,
And she fell in love, you see;
She thought his face as handsome
As a face could ever be.
But he chanced, one sunny day,
Just in idle mood to say
(When her finger she had burned,
And the fact he some way learned,
Though she had not tried to bake
For her own or other's sake,)

That she in baking burned it;
And he kissed the finger twice.
And Mattie thought she never
Knew a remedy so nice.
But the cunning fellow said
"You've been baking cake or bread,
And there's naught I love to eat
Like a home-made cake, my sweet.
But she had not cared to bake,
Just alone for cooking's sake.

"Of course I am not hinting,
Just to try your tempting cake;
But I like the home-made cooking,
Cooked especially for my sake.
I have heard my mother say
That there was no other way
For a home to be complete,
And I know you think so, sweet."
But alas! she would not bake,
Even for a lover's sake.

Our Mattie is a lady,
But she weeps sometimes alone,
And grieves that little wrinkles
From her eyes have outward grown;
For she did know, you see,
That a wife a cook must be,
And the man has wed a girl,
Though with less of frill and curl,
That can fry and boil and bake—
Loves to cook for cooking's sake.

—Fannie Fullerton, in What to Eat.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

We pity the man with a mother-in-law,
That he needs it may be true;
But it might be well to think of his wife,
For she may have one, too.

"I didn't see the widow at the funeral." "No; her gown fitted so badly that she couldn't restrain her grief enough to be present."

Miss Fondart—"Jack, what do they mean when they speak of a first-water diamond?" Jack—"One that's never been soaked."—Jewelers' Weekly.

This year should be a bargain
For reasons you'll divine;
It looks like 1900
Marked down to '99.

—Chicago Record.

Daughter—"Here is Bigg, Stocke & Co.'s great store. Let's go in." Mother—"No, no! No matter what we ask for, they will be sure to have it."—New York Weekly.

"Certainly you won't pretend that going to the church sewing-circle every meeting makes a woman good!" "No, but it keeps her from being talked about."—Detroit Journal.

"Then you regard marriage as a civil contract?" asked the Sweet Young Thing. "No," answered the Savage Bachelor, "it's rather a contraction of civility."—Indianapolis Journal.

Dressmaker—"So you are not satisfied with the dress, madam. I fear, then, I shall have no more of your work?" Customer—"No, but I'll recommend you to my friends."—Melbourne (Australia) Weekly Times.

Friend—"The gossips have formulated a regular indictment against your character. They say you were a terrible flirt while abroad. Do you plead guilty?" American Girl—"Y-e-s, to three counts."—New York Weekly.

Jones—"Dear me! You say you often lay down the law to your wife. How do you go about it?" Bones—"Why, all you need is firmness! I usually go into my study, lock the door, and do it over the transom."—Puck.

"I want you to give me your candid opinion of my new book. My own opinion is that it is a good one," wrote a new author to an editor. To whom the editor replied: "Yes, it has a beautiful cover and lovely gilt edge."—Atlanta Constitution.

His Attorney—"You'd better plead guilty. Your punishment would be merely a nominal fine." Prisoner—"That's all right; I'd rather run the risk of going to jail than to stand up before everybody and acknowledge I stole a bicycle the make of 1894."

He took it very philosophically. In the course of time men became philosophical even in love affairs. "So you have decided that you cannot marry me," he said. "Sir!" she replied, "I have decided nothing of the kind. I can marry you to-morrow if I wish. I could have married you any day in the last six months, as you well know. What I have decided is that you cannot marry me."—Chicago Evening Post.

Giants in Those Days.

During the investigation the other day of the mounds in Pokago Township, Cass County, Mich., the bones of perhaps 100 persons were found in the center of one mound and under these, separated from his companions, were the bones of a man who in life must have been fully nine feet tall, occupying a sitting position, with his feet under him. A number of copper bodkins or pins, from two to three inches in length, were found, and also pins made from the bones of a wolf. There were numerous copper hatchets, two-edged and sharp, one of which was wrapped in a linen cloth resembling in texture those of to-day.—Grand Rapids Democrat.