

## JOHN BULL'S COLONIES

MANY OF THEM WERE FORCED ON HIM AGAINST HIS WILL.

Now Great and Prosperous Colonies Which Fly the British Flag.

It is surprising how much of John Bull's vast Empire has been literally forced on him against his will—how much of it has received with grumbling protests instead of hearty thanks. Singapore is far and away John's most valued possession in the Far East. It has been called a Gibraltar and a Liverpool combined, and its possession has given the British the unquestioned dominance of the Malay Straits.

In 1819, Singapore, which is now a magnificent port, with innumerable warehouses filled with priceless merchandise, and a big harbor crowded with shipping, was a swampy island, which nobody thought of any value. Nobody, that is, except Sir Stamford Raffles, a brilliant Colonial Governor, who had forced his way to the front by sheer merit.

A SMART MAN RECALLED IN DISGRACE.

Raffles, with unerring instinct, saw what the swampy island might become. He was at the time governor of Bencoolen, in Sumatra, and, through his instigation, Singapore was bought from the Malay Sultan of Johor for £13,500. This was altogether too enterprising a "deal" to please stolid John Bull—or his Government of the day.

Sir Stamford Raffles was practically recalled in disgrace, and the Government would have handed Singapore back to the Sultan had they dared. But public opinion compelled them to keep it. How many millions the island is worth now nobody could say.

The whole of the Straits Settlements were practically forced on John Bull. He didn't want to be bothered with the Malays or their islands. But his enterprising sons went out there and took possession on their own account. One Englishman, Sir James Brooke, had himself made Rajah of Sarawak, a Malay State, without waiting to ask for permission from the Home authorities; and when he requested to be taken, along with his newly-acquired kingdom, under the protection of the British flag, his request was acceded to only in the most grudging spirit.

JOHN BULL GROWLED AT GIBRALTAR

John didn't have any notion of taking Gibraltar for himself. A wonderful son of his, named Admiral Sir George Rooke, returning home from a more or less unsuccessful cruise, made a sudden, unexpected swoop on the rock on his own account, and took it from a weak Spanish garrison before they knew that he was really there, so to say. At first John Bull growled and didn't see what good the key of the Mediterranean was going to be to him.

John Bull personally—always, of course, as typified by his Government—had very little to do with the founding of his Indian Empire. In the early days he declined to send official representatives to India, but allowed a body of private merchants, who banded themselves together as the East India Company, to try their luck in the great Asiatic Empire. At first the company were satisfied with strips of land on which to build their factories and warehouses, and leave to trade with the natives.

It was the French Government who first aimed at a European Indian Empire, and sent two brilliant adventurers, Dupleix and Lally, to see if they could win

It. Then it was that the company began to fight, not at first with any idea of making conquests, but simply to save themselves from being swept into the sea by their French rivals.

THE COMPANY THAT RULED INDIA.

Afterwards, however, they began to wonder if they couldn't turn the tables by turning the French out, and wars with the Hindoo rajahs followed. John wasn't best pleased when news reached him that one of his wandering sons had laid the foundations of the British Empire in India by winning the great battle of Plassey. The old gentleman saw a vision of more responsibility for him, and grumbled, as usual.

The first great conquests in India were made by soldiers who were, strictly speaking, not John Bull's at all. They were made by troops enlisted and paid by the company, and it was "John Company," as the sepoys called it, which gave Clive his first commission. The company ruled in India for a hundred years before the British Government took over the task.

The Chartered Company forced a big track of Africa on John Bull. He had no wish to grab it himself, and would have kicked on with calm indifference while vast tracks of South Africa were being annexed by the Germans and the Boers. But the Chartered Company, with Cecil Rhodes as its soul,

MADE WAR ON LOBENGULA, and conquered Matabeleland and checked the Boer and German advance. Had John not held his sons in check and frowned on them when they wanted to be enterprising, the German Empire in South-West Africa would probably never have been founded, because that part of the world would have been painted British red before the subjects of the Kaiser got near it.

John Bull certainly grabbed Canada and Australia on his own initiative. But as to New Zealand, it is not owing to John himself that "God's own country" belongs to him to-day. Captain Cook paid his first visit to the island in 1770—the same year, by the way, which saw Wolfe take Quebec, but for generations John Bull would have nothing to do with it. It was left alone for any nation who fancied it to take it.

As late as 1814 obstinate "J. B." as good as told the missionaries who went to New Zealand to try to convert the Maoris that the risk they ran by so doing was entirely their own concern, and he wouldn't be responsible for what happened to them. Later on the New Zealand Land Company was formed to take the first steps toward changing the beautiful island into a British colony. John Bull was quite annoyed. He didn't want New Zealand. He did everything he could—that is, the Home Government of the day did—to discourage the new company and throw obstacles in its way.

FRENCH NEARLY GOT NEW ZEALAND

It was not until nearly eighty years after its discovery by Captain Cook that John gave a sulky consent to his flag being formally run up over New Zealand. Even then he only consented because he was informed that if he didn't the white settlers would make things unpleasant. A little more delay on his part, and the floating over Wellington and a French Governor being sitting in the seat of the late "King Dick" Seddon.

It is entirely John Bull's own fault that the whole of the island of New Guinea, which is nearly three times as large as Great Britain, does not belong to him. New Guinea was actually in full possession of John in 1793; but he was indifferent to it, and left it lying unguarded and unclaimed in the sea.

The Dutch took part of it, and the Germans looked longingly on the rest. And, as New Guinea is very close to Queensland, the people of the latter colony

were uneasy at the prospect of having German and Dutch neighbors so near to their shores.

WE WOULDN'T HAVE NEW GUINEA.

Time after time the Queenslanders implored John Bull to step in and take possession of New Guinea. He wouldn't do it. He let the foreigners take bit after bit of it. Finally, in 1883, Sir Thomas McIlwraith, the Prime Minister of Queensland, was driven to desperation, and, resolutely taking action into his own hands, gave instructions for the annexation of New Guinea.

John Bull was actually very bad tempered over this. He at first refused absolutely to allow the annexation. If the Queenslanders had not stood resolutely by their Prime Minister, he would probably have insisted on the portion of the island which had been secured being forthwith abandoned.

In the end, however, he growlingly consented to keep what his sons in Queensland had forced on him as a present. All through his own fault, instead of being proprietor of the whole of New Guinea, John Bull owns something less than a quarter of it.

This article does not by any means exhaust the list of colonies which have been forced on John Bull's acceptance. But it should be sufficient to prove that, whatever his sons may have done on their own account in the grabbing line, the old gentleman is not himself quite such a greedy grabber as certain of his enemies allege.—Pearson's Weekly.

## WHEN GIRLS PROPOSE

THEY SOMETIMES MAKE QUEER CHOICES.

Results of Refusal Are Often Disastrous—Curious Case of Feminine Infatuation.

While maiden ladies of uncertain age are facetiously said to await with eagerness the advent of a leap year, it is seldom one hears of a proposal being made by a woman, either in a leap or any other year.

And in the only instance which is known to have taken place last leap year the incident had a very tragic sequel. In 1904 it was reported that a beautiful Austrian girl had taken advantage of the privilege.

It was at a ball in Vienna, where she became so infatuated with a partner that she then and there invited him to become her partner for life. Her proposal being most ungalantly rejected, she was so mortified that she went home and committed suicide.

It may be that the paucity of feminine proposals is directly due to the fact that leap year is the only year in which they are considered permissible. At any rate, in most cases in which offers of marriage have been made by members of the sex which usually receives them the "leap" has been made with supreme indifference as to the year.

For example, the lady who boldly offered her hand and heart to Earl Stowe, brother of Lord Eldon, did not pause to reflect as to the year. His lordship was an Admiralty judge, and once had to try a son of the Marchioness of Sligo for leaping some naval men to desert to his yacht in the Mediterranean.

While the judge was lecturing the delinquent the marchioness, who was in court, was much impressed by the sound advice he was giving. Indeed, it impressed her so much that she immediately wrote out a proposal of marriage,

## Gathering Foesies



JACK and Jill went up the hill On a bright spring morning; But they had no pail to fill, — I must give you warning.

Just one reason they should roam— Don't you see they're bringing home A bouquet for mother?

which the usher obligingly handed up to the bench. With admirable promptitude, the judicial luminary accepted the proposal on the spot, the lady's bold move being thus justified.

MAY AND DECEMBER.

The same happy result did not attend a similar offer made less than a decade ago by a young lady belonging to one of the most noble families of Rome. She was Signorina Maria Cokoma, and, though only in her twentieth year, had been the recipient of several proposals in London a short time before.

Each and all of these she firmly refused, and on returning to Rome accompanied her friends by presenting herself to M. Guillaume, the famous octogenarian sculptor, and begging him to marry her. Like the sensible man he was, Guillaume did his best to convince her that no happiness could result from the union of May and December.

In this, however, he utterly failed, the fair proposer becoming greatly distressed, and, indeed, quite inconsolable. She declared herself to all intents and purposes a widow, and arrayed herself in sombre mourning garb, which she vowed she would never lay aside until a change came over her, and she could realize the wish of her heart.

This young lady was one of the most beautiful girls in the Italian capital, and apparently also one of the most whimsical.

It is interesting to recall that the late Baron de Lesseps enjoyed a like novel experience in his declining years. When an old man of seventy he was proposed to by a damsel of 17, around whom was the glamour of a most romantic descent. This fair creature was the great-granddaughter of a woman of rare beauty, who was picked up when a babe on the battle-

## Legend of the Envious Fisherman

NO NEED was there for Job's discontentment. As a fisherman he was always lucky in his catches; he owned a pretty little home; his wife was devoted to him, and his three little daughters loved him dearly; he had even laid by a goodly sum of money for a "nest egg."



JOB RECEIVES THE BAIT

ride by on a magnificent stallion, or the wealthy usurer would go by on the other side of the street, or there would pass any one perhaps of more fortunate station or circumstances than he, Job would be smitten with envy from a great rock, a sudden tug came on his line, Job pulled vigorously. The next instant, to his astonishment, he jerked from the water a comical little elf.

The dwarf, without a moment's hesitation, drew from his jerkin a sack. He deposited this at the feet of the fisherman, saying, as he did so: "Job, every time you reel into this bag you will find a solid coin. Gather together all the coins you desire until sundown. After that time I warn you not to touch the sack."

Without more ado the elf vanished. Coin after coin Job took from the bag. Working with feverish excitement, golden mountains lay all around him when he began to notice that the sun was about to set.

"I suppose I'd better stop now," said he to himself. But just then he happened to observe the great towers of the neighboring castle, and the ambition came to him to be ever so much wealthier than his lord. So he proceeded to bring forth more coins.

All at once the sun, which had been fast sinking, disappeared—and with it vanished bag, gold and all.

"'Twas the elf's warning!" moaned Job. Then he awoke, for, you see, it was only a dream. But it was a dream that set Job to thinking about avariciousness and envy. And as he grumbled home, although he was without a single fish to show for the afternoon, it was in a perfectly contented frame of mind. Never afterward was Job discontented with his lot.

the footpath just outside the house of the man she loved.

In her pockets were several letters addressed to him, and before committing suicide she had thrown into his garden her pocketbook, containing banknotes, bonds and other securities, comprising her estate, together with her last will and testament. By the last named she had made this cold, unimpressible mortal her sole heir.

Feminine infatuation is sometimes utterly inexplicable.

BAD WAY TO FLATTER.

"Yes, ma'am, the convict was saying, 'I'm here jist for tryin' to flatter a rich man.'"

"The idea!" exclaimed the prison visitor.

"Yes, ma'am, I jist tried to imitate his signature on a cheque."

Girls who make it their business to look for husbands are apt to find them, but they seldom boast of their finds in later years.

## MUGGSY'S CIGAR KILLS THE PARROT, BUT HE WINS OUT JUST THE SAME

