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*JOCK BROON'S PATENT UMBRELLA.*

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JOCK BROON was a neglected genius of an inventive turn of mind, who believed in himself, and had ideas. Jock was a born genius, as his mother declared, and had suggested improvements on the rockers of his cradle as soon as he could articulate speech. Before he had grown up to manhood Jock had invented a whole lot of crack ideas, which the stupidity of the public, unfortunately for themselves, would neither acknowledge nor adopt. Jock regretted this, but hopefully wrocht awa' at his inventions, until his mither's back-room was as full of plans, sectional views, drawings, and mechanical models as a town's museum.

"Man, Jock," said his mither yae day, "if ye could only manage to invent something usefu' your fortune wad be made. Try your talents on something domestic—an improvement in the way o' dress, for instance. There's lots o' room for improvements there."

Thus encouraged, Jock set to, and invented a machine for stamping the buttons on bachelor's shirts without the trouble o' shooin' them on wi' thread; the poor married men, as Jock observed, seldom having shirts to shoo buttons on. The bachelor part of the population, however, fatally blind to their own interests, never took up Jock's brilliant idea.

Nothing daunted, however, Jock next tried his hand on what he loftily styled a "New Patent Combination Umbrella-Hat." The hat in dry weather looked an ordinary one; but, when rain came down, by touching a small elastic spring, out flopped a broad waterfall rim, which completely covered and protected face, back, and shoulders.

This was an original idea. The first day Jock tested it he was chased for his life down the Gleska Gallowgate by

a howling mob of boys, and half-a-dozen of frenzied policemen as an escaped lunatic. By running twice round King William's statue, however, he slipped his pursuers, and finally escaped up yin o' the dark stairs o' the Tontine Close. Concluding, therefore, that this last "idea" was a trifle in advance of the age, Jock philosophically dropped the Umbrella-Hat notion, and wisely thought of something else.

Weel, yae stormy nicht, shortly afterwards, in comes Jock's mither wi' her auld umbrella blawn outside-in, and a look o' distress on her face calculated to draw tears o' sympathy frae a tailor's goose.

"Man, Jock," she said, "could ye no steep yer brains a bit, an' invent a new umbrella that wad be storm-proof as well as rain-proof, an' wadna be liable to be blawn outside-in?"

"Oo, ay, easy," said Jock, and there and then he fell to, and completed in three weeks a grand new "Patent Storm-Proof Umbrella," of most capacious size, and which was as full of ribs, and stays, and patent snap-fastenings as it could stick. When completed, Jock warranted his new hurricane umbrella to successfully withstand forty pounds o' win' to the square inch, outside or inside!

Having the courage of his convictions, Jock, on the first wild stormy day, set out to test his new 76-ribbed storm-proof umbrella, and the result was picturesque in the extreme.

It was raining sma' burns, an' blawin' like perfect mad, when Jock triumphantly set out, and he hadn't proceeded six yards till he knew his invention to be a great and unqualified success. Twa-three times terrific gusts o' wind caught the wide-spread umbrella right under, and nearly lifted the inventor off his twa feet, but Jock held firmly on, and the umbrella, to his great satisfaction, remained unreversed, and was apparently quite irreversible. Neither wind nor hail could succeed in even shaking it. Nothing, in fact,

short of a tumble-down chimney-can, or an overset street wall, was at all likely to affect its stability in the slightest degree.

"It's a grand success," thought Jock, as he ploughed his way along, "my fortune's made at last," when, on turning the corner of a street a terrible gust of wind caught him from behind, and Jock, holding bravely on, was dragged along the street at a break-neck pace, his great invention dragging him after it with extraordinary velocity.

"Help! help!" shouted Jock, as he flew past a Highland policeman like a visible telegram.

The astonished Bobby dashed after the flying apparition. So, also, did a butcher's dog, which succeeded, after a stiff chase, in pinning Jock by the coat-tail. Jock, however, held firmly on, so did the wind, so did the butcher's dog, and so, also, did the patent umbrella.

In three seconds more Jock was caught clean up off his feet, somewhat to his own surprise, with the butcher's dog clinging to his nether garments. When about a story high, Jock's coat-tail tore clean away, and down came the butcher's dog, with the same in his mouth.

Thus lightened, Jock continued his aerial flight, a graphic illustration of the irreversibility of his grand new "Patent Storm-Proof Umbrella."

Careering over the house-tops, Jock and his umbrella at length descended in an adjacent street. Elated beyond measure with the success of his idea, but not particularly anxious to further test its value, Jock flopped down his umbrella, stuck it under his arm, and having fixed up his remaining coat-tail under his waistcoat, he took his way down the street, and was presently met by the alarmed Highland constable, who was hurrying excitedly up.

"Did you'll teuk notice off and opserve a thief of an umbrella runnin' awa' wi' a man an' a dowg?" frenziedly asked the constable.

“ I did,” said Jock, “ they’re awa’—they’re awa’—they’re awa’——”

“ They’re awa’ whaur? Speak! Tell her!”

“ They’re awa’ wi’ the win’—north by north!” said Jock. “ They’re beyond the Campsie hills by this time, but if ye tak’ the first express train to Perth, ye’ll maybe catch them on the way.” Thus relieved of the constable’s presence, Jock strode loftily home, and has since made a gift of his patent umbrella to the Corporation o’ Camlachie.

In justice to Jock’s genius, however, his faculty of invention is not yet exhausted. He is bringing out at the present time a grand new extra-powerful telescope for bringing into view a policeman when he’s wanted! If Jock succeeds in this great novelty, he will have done the public a real service, and will have the honour of having satisfactorily solved one of the most incomprehensible problems of the age.