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SHORTY MAHAN'S PASSING

By T. BLAIR EATON
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It is very obvious, of course, that his first name was not Shorty; but, what is not so obvious, his last name was not Mahan. The name the rector pronounced when he stood before the font with the wriggling infant in his arms was Jefferson Douglass Jerrold. They were a fine old family, the Jerrolds, with an abundance of heirloom silver, faded ancestral portraits, one of them a Copley, and enough family pride to sink a ship.

When Jefferson Douglass had grown into a short, thick set youth, with sandy red hair and a mobile face, which effectually concealed his thoughts and emotions, the family council set about to choose a career for him which would do credit to the silver, the portraits and the family pride. His father's mind was divided between medicine and the law. His mother made her gentle arguments for the ministry. Jefferson Douglass went to college with his mobile face as inscrutable as ever, but with firm determination to choose his own career.

The exact moment when he decided what that career should be was that October afternoon when Michael Ryan, athletic trainer and ex-middleweight, rose proudly from the floor of the gymnasium and rubbed the point of his jaw in a dazed fashion. Before him, unfastening the boxing gloves which incased his hands, stood a short, thick set young man with sandy red hair and an impassive face. Ryan pulled off his own gloves and, extended his hand, which the other shook gravely.

"If I could hit like that," said Ryan, "I wouldn't be here. Man, I could make a wonder of you in a year's time."
That was why Jefferson Douglass cut short his course at college, where, to tell the truth, he was not succeeding tremendously along prescribed lines, and, in a stormy interview at home, announced his intention to seek his fortune in the world in his own way and by his own efforts. How those efforts were to be directed he neglected to state, but when the identity of Shorty Mahan, the newly arrived stel-



"IF YOU'LL PERMIT ME," HE SAID, "I'LL GET THE KITTEN."

lar attraction in the lightweight class, was finally forced upon his unwilling family and their suspicious fear became bitter truth his father swore roundly, and his mother looked long at the ancestral portraits, especially the Copley, and wept.
For three years Shorty Mahan enjoyed a series of brilliant ring victories, which made his name a household word in the sporting world and added very materially to the foundation of his fortune. Then it was announced that the fight between Mahan and Billy Devine of the Pacific coast for the lightweight championship of the world had finally been arranged to be pulled off in a well known sporting club in the east; that the purse had been put up, the articles of agreement signed by both men and the forfeits posted.

Just two weeks after this announcement Shorty Mahan, with his trainers, his sparring partner, his rubbers and his bull terrier, took up his abode in a little cottage on the shore of Freshwater lake, prepared for the monotonous three months of training which was to fit him for the fight of his life.

Freshwater lake was a charming bit of water but half a mile from Thornton village and a scant ten miles from the club where the fight would take place. Shorty Mahan upon his arrival looked the place over, grinned his delight and entered upon his training with a vengeance.

The trouble began one May evening just at sunset as Mahan and Jim Delaney, his sparring partner, were returning from a ten mile run along the country roads. They had reached the village and were jogging easily along the elm lined streets when Mahan noticed a young woman standing beneath a cherry tree and calling in tones of coaxing anxiety to an Angora kitten which sulked among the branches at the top of the tree. He stopped short and turned into the yard.

"If you'll permit me," he said, doffing his cap, "I'll get the kitten for you."
"Oh, if you would be so good," said the girl, flushing becomingly.

In another moment Shorty Mahan's red head was among the topmost branches, and then, with the kitten in his arms, he slid deftly to the ground.

"Gee!" said Delaney when Shorty joined him outside the fence. "Pretty nifty, wasn't she?"
Shorty wheeled on him suddenly.

"Jim," he said shortly, "that was a lady. Remember it, if you please." And then he cut out a pace for the training quarters which landed Delaney there perspiring and well nigh blown.
Delaney remembered afterward that it was directly after the kitten affair that Mahan began to behave rather strangely. He insisted on taking his daily run quite alone. He found or invented numerous errands which took him to the village, and he went there alone also. Every Sunday night precisely at 7, he slipped off for a quiet walk by himself, so he said.

The weeks went past, and the time of the fight approached. Instead of increasing interest in his training Shorty's zeal showed unmistakable signs of flagging. Delaney begged and the trainer threatened, but Shorty Mahan could be neither wheeled nor driven. The fight was to take place on a Wednesday evening. The Sunday evening preceding it Delaney and Dawson quietly shadowed Shorty when he set out from the cottage. They followed him to the little church and stood before the uncurtained windows of the vestry. Shorty entered and took a seat well down in front, and even as they watched a hymn was started, in which they could recognize Shorty's home-made bass. Dawson, who was the head trainer, gasped.

"Member the kitten I told you about?" Delaney whispered. "Well, I've found out that the girl was the parson's daughter."

"Humph!" Dawson grunted, and they started back.
When Shorty returned to quarters Delaney was waiting for him.
"Now, about this prayer meeting business, Shorty," Dawson began. Shorty's eyes flashed fire.

"If you fellows have been shadowing me there's likely to be a rough house here," he said. He stood glaring about him for a moment, then turned on his heel and went to bed.
There have been many vague theories advanced and many absurd stories circulated as to why the Mahan-Devine fight never took place. Some will tell you Shorty Mahan was terror stricken at the last moment. Others affirm he was paid a liberal sum to forfeit the fight to Devine. The real reason, set forth in a letter by Shorty himself, is in the possession of Jim Delaney. It came the morning of the fight:

"Dear Jim—it's all off. You know I have often said that if I was ever defeated I'd never fight again. Well, I lost this fight before it began. Clean knockout—by a woman too. We were married last night beneath the tree where I caught the kitten. I'm out of it for good, Jim."

And that is why Shorty Mahan faded from the eyes of an admiring public and also why Jefferson Douglass Jerrold is custodian of the family pride, the silver and the ancestral portraits, one of which is a Copley.

A Slight Misconception.
Under the subtle influence of the new world the foreigner becomes a good citizen, willing to do his duty by town and state and to extend it in time of need to his adopted country. But he does not always grasp the entire political scheme. Angelo, a newly naturalized Italian citizen, lived, says the Brooklyn Eagle, in one of a row of neat little cottages built by a man of philanthropic nature in a factory town.

The cottages had pretty front yards that faced on a street as nicely kept as a parkway. Before each gate was an ornamental hitching post. One evening when on a rent collecting tour the philanthropic landlord found one of the posts torn up and thrown into the street. Angelo lived in the house to which the post belonged.

"Angelo," said the landlord, "how came that post to be torn up?"
"Me teara him up," Angelo answered. "Me no wanta de pole. He costa too mucha mon." And, turning to his wife, Angelo commanded, "Bringa de little paper."
Obedient Mrs. Angelo brought the paper, which turned out to be a poll tax notice.

"Looka disa," said Angelo, passing the notice to his landlord. "Dey make me pay de doll' for de pole. De pole he no good to me—me hava no horse. Me no paya de doll'. Me diga de pole up and 'frow him away."

Embarrassment of Seats.
I live in one of the suburbs, and the train on which I ride to the city is generally crowded. The other day, however, an extra car was put on, and when I got aboard there were many vacant seats. I noticed when I sat down that every man who got aboard the train looked around as if he didn't know just where to sit. One old fellow in particular attracted my attention. He first took a seat near the door. Then he got up and started toward the middle of the car, but finally, after a good deal of hesitating, he went back and seated himself near the place he had decided upon first. Still he wasn't satisfied. He looked at the vacant seats around him and several times seemed to be inclined to change over to one of them. Now I have seen this man hundreds of times scramble upon the cars when they were well filled and rush for the first seat he could get, but never before had I seen him exhibit so much uneasiness and dissatisfaction. When the car is crowded he is glad to find room to sit down anywhere. At such times he doesn't stop to see whether the vacant seat is at the end or in the center or on the right or left side. He just takes it and is tickled at his luck.

The more a man gets the more he wants and the less he is satisfied with what he has.—Chicago Record-Herald.

Newton's Blue.

It is well known that under the action of gravity the water composing such a thin shell as a soap bubble tends to run down on all sides, so that the walls of the bubble grow thin at the top and thicken toward the bottom. After a time the bubble becomes so thin at the top that further flow of water from this point can hardly take place, and finally the bubble bursts. But before this last stage is reached a degree of thinness in the walls of the bubble is attained which causes it to glow with brilliant iridescent colors. Newton noticed that on top of the thin bubble illuminated by white sky light a black spot is formed. With increase of thickness downward from this point on all sides, a red band next appears; then a blue one; then again red and blue, red and blue, and so on, the colors showing more extremes of red and purple in the higher orders. This blue band which first expands outward from the black spot at the top and descends slowly with the subsidence of the water Newton called the "blue of the first order," and, although somewhat dingy, he judged it to be of the same tint as the blue of the sky.—T. J. J. See in Atlantic.

Inquisitive Birds.

Of the birds undoubtedly the blue jays have the most inquisitiveness. And they are the most noisy in expressing it, although crows will hold a close second place, if not fully the equal. How the jays screeched and whistled and called—a confusion of all the sounds of jaydom—near my home! More than a dozen darted into a small evergreen tree on the lawn. People came from several houses in the vicinity, all curious to know what was the matter with the birds. It seemed to be a "want to know" on both sides. The jays had discovered a cat walking meekly along by the fence in the low shrubbery near and under the spruce tree. There was no nest in the vicinity, and so far as could be ascertained, the cat had not attacked the jays. But what a pandemonium of jay sargon over one meek looking, quiet cat! The jays outdid themselves and called out nearly all the occupants of the many houses on that street.

To Restore Leather Bindings.

To restore the leather bindings of books wash them first very lightly and carefully with clean warm water in which a tiny piece of soda has been dissolved, in order to free the leather from grease; then wash with clear water to remove the soda, and dry. Dissolve a bit of gum arabic the size of a small bean in a teaspoonful of water and beat it up with a teaspoonful of the white of an egg. With a bit of sponge go lightly over the leather with this glair and let it dry.
Should the glair froth up on the leather, as it is very likely to do if there is much tool work on the book, dab it until it subsides with the palm of the hand or with the sponge squeezed as dry as possible.

Her Husband's Male Friends.

One of the most complicated duties of a wife is the shuffling off of her husband's male friends, says the Ladies' Field. Fifty per cent can go at once, for half a man's bachelor associates are, according to his wife, not fit for polite society, either because they have no manners or because they wear the wrong sort of collars. Ten per cent she may genuinely dislike, or possibly they may not take to her. Some of the rest are on the borderland of toleration, but most of them have a knack of dropping off by slow degrees. Possibly this is the inward and spiritual meaning of the farewell bachelors' dinner most intending bridegrooms give, though they never realize it at the time.

The Lion Didn't Roar.

It is related that Pinnow, the faithful servant and personal valet of Prince Bismarck, once trod on his master's gouty foot. Instead of swearing at him or even declaring he was a clumsy fool, Bismarck, noticing that Pinnow himself was frightened, said: "Consider yourself honored. No other person, my dear Pinnow, not even the kaiser himself, would have been suffered to tread on my corns."

Something Was.
Rivers was smoking a cheap cigar. "Seems to me," said Brooks, "I smell something like cloth burning." But Rivers was game.

He touched the lighted end of his cigar to his shirt sleeve. "No wonder," he said, exhibiting the burned spot.

A Strict Grammarian.
"You think a great deal of your husband, don't you?" said the visiting relative.
"You have the wrong preposition," answered Mr. Meekton's wife, with the cold tones of the superior woman. "I think for him."

More to the Point.
Hicks—I suppose you heard that our house was robbed?
Wicks—Yes. I understand the way the thieves ransacked the place simply beggared description.

Hicks—Not only that, but it very nearly beggared me.

As Wasps Do.
Jinks—I'll never get into an argument with him again. He's entirely too bitter.
Winks—Is he really?
Jinks—Oh, a regular wasp.
Winks—I see. He always carries his point.

Stopped Gambling.
Blunt—I hear Blones has stopped gambling.
Front—That's true. I bet him \$100 this morning that he couldn't stop, and he took me up.

What to Eat With the Fingers.

A man who has forgotten to get married and is consequently obliged to dine about town in various restaurants says that he can readily pick out persons not accustomed to dining away from home from their inexperience in using their fingers. At table d'hote places especially things are served as courses which are expected to be eaten with the fingers. No idea as to what is right can be obtained from the waiters, for it is the custom to put cutlery enough for the entire meal on the table with the soup.

Olives should be eaten with the fingers, though many of the uninitiated try to split them with a fork. Asparagus should be eaten with the fingers. That is why the cook does not throw sauce over the root ends. Green corn should be eaten with the fingers and not scraped from the cob with a knife. Spaghetti should be eaten with a fork and a crust of bread. In Italian restaurants a man who cuts his spaghetti into small pieces with a knife, as he would salad, is looked upon as a rank outsider.

The Peanut.

The home of the peanut, or ground pea (also often called pindar and goober), is believed to be Brazil, although it very soon spread to Africa, China, Japan and India and was recognized as a valuable agricultural product in these countries long before it was cultivated on a large scale in its native soil, which was not until the year 1870. In the old world, however, it has always been planted and harvested for the sake of the oil that it yields. This is said to rival olive oil in quality and to be used for the same purposes. The nuts raised in the east are far richer in oil than the American varieties. The most popular of the American peanuts is the "Virginia running variety." The pod and nut of the Virginia variety are twice as large as those of the North Carolina or African peanut. The Spanish nuts, usually sold only after being shelled and salted, are still smaller, but of excellent flavor. Tennessee has two varieties, called the white and the red, the kernels of the latter having a dark red skin.

Dee's Magic Mirror.

There are several accounts of the manner in which the famous gunpowder plot of 1605 was discovered, but among the students of occult science the belief is that its timely discovery was made by Dr. John Dee by means of a magic mirror. Proof of how general this belief was at one time is given by the fact that in some editions of the Common Prayer Book, published in the eighteenth century, is to be found an engraving inserted before the service for Nov. 5 depicting a circular mirror on a stand in which is the reflection of the houses of parliament by night and a person carrying a dark lantern. On the left side are two men in the costume of the reign of King James looking into the mirror. On the right side at the top the eye of Providence throws a ray on to the mirror. Beneath are legs and hoofs, as if evil spirits were making their exit.

A Good Place to Avoid.

In the northern Shan states, on the border of Burma, there is a tribe called the Wild Was. These people propitiate with human skulls the demons whom they worship. Outside every village in their country there are many posts, all in one line, decked with human skulls. A niche is cut in the back of each post, with a ledge on which the skull can rest and grin through a hole in front of it. Every village has a dozen and some as many as a hundred of these head posts. Fresh skulls are in special request at harvest time and are purchased for large sums, those of distinguished visitors being particularly desired.

She Shut.

A story is told of Count Schouvaloff, a former Russian ambassador to England. He greatly admired Englishwomen and was heartily annoyed when he offended any one of them. While he was in London he learned English, and, having heard one famous English beauty say "Shut up!" to another, he imagined it to be a phrase of polite agreement, such as "Say no more." In this sense he himself addressed it to an illustrious lady the next night at dinner, to the lady's consternation, and his own when later he discovered his mistake.

Played an Organ.

The little daughter of a well known New York musician was much chagrined the other day by the ingenuous remark of a "new friend." Said the little girl proudly:
"My father is an organist."
"And does he have a monkey?" was the prompt rejoinder.

Novelty Excited Curiosity.

Owl-talight—I had an awful time thinking up an excuse to give my wife when I got home from the club last night.
Lushman—Did she demand one?
Owl-talight—Of course. I got home so early that it piqued her curiosity.—Exchange.

A Parallel.

An old farmer said to his sons: "Boys, don't you wait for somethin' to turn up. You might jest as well go and sit down on a stone in the middle of a meadow with a pail 'twixt your legs and wait for a cow to back up to you to be milked."

Worth Striving For.
She—And you don't think there is a chance in the world of our living through our lives without a quarrel?
He—There is always a fighting chance, dear.

Insubordination has ruined many a man's chances in life.—Schoolmaster.

Poisons.

Snake poison would kill the strongest man if the smallest possible drop of it were injected into his veins or laid on a cut finger or chapped lip. But the smallest child might drink a teaspoonful—probably a glassful—without suffering the least injury. The same is true of most of the poisons savages inject into their arrows, and you can suck the dangerous wound with impunity.

Arsenic eaters become so accustomed to the use of this drug that one of them could eat as much of it in a week as would kill a troop of cavalry, horses and all. If a man took a dose of lunar caustic and his wife a dose of hydrochloric acid they would be subjects for a coroner's inquest in a very short time. But if either the man or the woman took both doses together the result would hardly be different from that of taking so much strawberries and cream. If two men each took a small quantity of hemlock one might drop dead, if he had a fatty heart, and the other feel only a slight inconvenience, if his heart was all right.

Noses.

One of the most brilliant essays on nasology is the one which classes noses not by origin, but by mentality. The aquiline nose, for example, is the sign of goodness, amiability and weakness. By that nose Louis XVI. was led to the guillotine. Let us have commiseration for the nose that is very slightly prominent. It is the muzzle of a sheep and belongs to people who are easily deceived. Distrust the nose with the medium part elongated. That elongation marks the extent of desires and the insatiability of appetites. Look out also for the ferret nose, with its sharp point, always on the scent for secrets. It is the nose of the inquisitor. The devil-may-care nose is slightly turned up at the end. It denotes a character without firmness. But when you see a nose that rises from the depths of the orbits and stands out in bold relief take off your hat. You are in the presence of the nose of a thinker.

Brain Work and Longevity.

In a lecture on longevity delivered before the Royal College of Physicians Sir Hermann Weber, himself an octogenarian, gave official support to the doctrine that brain work does not kill, but rather the reverse. A few of his instances were Sophocles, Plato, Galen, Cicero, Moltke, Bismarck, Mommsen and Gladstone, to whom we might add Hobbes, Carlyle, Spencer and Kelvin. The facts are that brain work increases the supply of blood to the nerve cells and promotes their nutrition and health. Mosso, an Italian, laid a man on a delicately balanced table and showed that the head end sank whenever the subject did a mental sum or any other brain work. The increased weight of his head was due to the life giving blood. The truth is that brain work, as such, never killed anybody.—London Chronicle.

Fence and Bones.

A writer in a London newspaper says: "The other day I heard an Englishman defending our system of coinage on the ground that we are the only nation on earth who can say that the system is bone of our bone. For there are 240 bones in the body and 240 years in the pound; there are 120 bones in the head and trunk and 120 in the limbs and 120 pieces in half a sovereign; each limb contains 30 bones, and a half crown contains 30 pieces; in the spinal column there are 24 bones and in a florin 24 pieces, and we have 12 ribs on each side, so as we have 12 pieces in every shilling. See how the proportions of the skeleton of our commerce conform to nature's teaching. No wonder it is vigorous."

The Candle Nut.

The candle nut is a native of the Pacific islands, and the name is derived from the fact that the kernels are so full of oil that when dried they are stuck on reeds and used as candles. The people of Hawaii, after having roasted these nuts and removed the shells, reduce the kernels to a paste, which is flavored with pepper and salt and is said to be a most appetizing dish. The husk of the nut and the gum which exudes from the tree have medicinal values, while the burned shell of the nut is used to make an indelible ink with which tattooing is done.

Fixing It Out.

"Did the old lady give you anything when you took her trunk upstairs without knockin' the lid off?" inquired the first porter.
"No, but she thanked me kindly."
"Well, kind words will never die," returned the first porter.
"Neither will they buy groceries."

Disposing of Papa.

"I always contend, sir," said the girl's father meaningly, "that young men should be in bed before 10:30 each night."
"Yes?" replied the young man who was calling on the girl. "I hope you set that good example yourself, sir."

Unusual.

Old Chum—What made you decide to marry her?
Newly Married—Because during our long acquaintance she never once sent me a sofa pillow.

The Sophisticated Wife.
Mr. Newrich (in city)—Married, pass them beans.
Mrs. Newrich—Don't be absurd, Frank. Them's salted ammon.

The difference between salary and wages is precisely the difference between accepting a position and getting a job.—Detroit Free Press.

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