

The Girl Who Refused to Dance With Me

By THOMAS R. DEAN

When I was a little boy I used to hear a great deal about the family "halcyon days," as we called them. My father had been both wealthy and prominent, but first his wealth disappeared, and then he died. My mother was anxious to maintain something of our social standing, but found it very difficult to do so on her very limited income. Nevertheless she was determined to bring us up as ladies and gentlemen, and about the only way to refine and polish us, outside of home instruction, was to send us to a dancing school.

The scholars were divided into sets and there was one set—the children of rich parents, many of whom came to the lessons in carriages, attended by their maids. They did not mingle with the other scholars, who came to consider them as something above themselves, too fine and beautiful to touch. But I, having often heard my mother say that we had never associated except with the best, saw no reason why I should take an inferior position.

There was one very pretty little girl among this exclusive set whom I worshipped from a distance. It was the rule of the school—not enforced that any girl must dance with any boy who asked her. One afternoon, when the subject of my boyish admiration happened to be left without a partner, I went up to her and made the bow which was considered an invitation to dance. She sat perfectly still. In other words, she declined my invitation.

This was the first rejection I had ever experienced, and it pierced me to the heart. Had I been since had cause to consider it a blessing, for it opened my eyes to the fact that there was a position for me to win in the world, and I resolved to win it. My "will come," I said to myself, when I shall live the life my father and mother led in their "halcyon days." I must be successful, and to be successful I must think and act for myself.

I grew up separate and apart from this little girl, but for a time I kept track of her. I learned that her father had made a large fortune out of a patent medicine. Since my own father had been a prominent professional man, I felt the injustice of this child of a patent medicine proprietor snubbing the son of a lawyer and statesman. Nevertheless when I saw her smiling about beside her mother in a limousine driven by a liveried servant, I felt that she had the advantage of me, and I renewed my vow that the advantage should one day be blotted out.

When I was seventeen I had earned and saved enough money to keep me a year in college, and after that I taught night school and won scholarships to carry me through. Upon graduation I studied law and settled in a small but rapidly growing place where there was no great competition and soon sprang into a fine practice.

I had reached a point where there was no difficulty in resuming the social position my family had occupied in the "halcyon days," and, being still comparatively young and a wealthy bachelor, I was somewhat courted by the girls of my society. Most of them were intent on winning for themselves an establishment before the day of youth passed from them. But I knew their tricks and their manners and had no use for them.

Instead of seeking a partner for life to spend my money in a luxurious life I was making love to my stenographer. She was a woman nearly my age and a very intelligent and patient person, whose appearance denoted that she had seen better days. Nevertheless there was that which drew me to her, though I could not tell exactly what it was. One day I asked her something about herself. She told me that she had been born in the same city that I was born in and that her father had lost in speculation a large fortune he had made in a patent medicine.

"What need to go further? As I looked into her face I saw what I had not seen before, traces of the features of the little girl who had a score of years before refused to dance with me. And here she was, passing into splendor, dependent upon a plentiful salary that I paid her for doing my drudgery.

The day of vengeance had come, and I resolved to quaff the cup of my desire. But I kept my counsel. Not a word did I speak to call up in her memory the boy she had snubbed. And this was my revenge. I doubled her salary. She was much astonished. Then I told her that she was working hard and employed an assistant for her. Her astonishment was increased to wonder.

One afternoon I kept her taking my dictation till all others had left the office, then said to her: "Did you not attend Mr. B's dancing school at R. when you were a little girl?" "Yes," she replied.

"Do you remember refusing to dance with a boy one afternoon who asked you?" "Yes."

"But you did. I am that boy." I spoke the words calmly and waited for her to impress her teeth. "And now I propose to pay off that debt." I give you a choice between paying my service and— I paused. She looked frightened.

"What?" "What's the matter?" "I'm not afraid of you."

A Place For All Things.

Willoughby was nervously watching the time, and as the minutes passed and it became evident that the train could not by any possibility reach its destination on time he turned violently to the porter and began angrily: "Of all the damned old beasts of junk this side of the earthquake belt this railroad of yours is without any exception the—"

"Excuse me, boss," said the porter, with a courteous wave of his whisk broom toward the rear end of the train, "but dere's an observation car on de end ob dese yere train, sah, an' if Ab might take de libbly ob makin' a suggestion, sah, you might ob back dere, sah, an' make de observations now rish in yo' midst. De presence ob ladies in dese yere cars, sah, is mah excuse fo' makin' de suggestion."

Whereupon Willoughby retired to the rear platform and strewed his observations along the track with such effect that one of the ties was seen to be smoking long after the train had passed it.—Harper's.

Rivalry In Prayer. Turkish dignitaries comport themselves toward European representatives now otherwise than some of their former did. Sir Henry Layard tells an amusing encounter between Charles Alison, then chief interpreter at the British embassy, and the grand vizier, to whom Sir Stratford (Lanning had sent him on important business. In the middle of a discussion the Turkish rose from his seat and said his prayers on a carpet spread by an attendant, concluding with the curse on all Christians very emphatically uttered, and going through the motion of spitting over his right and left shoulders in all directions. Alison was equal to the occasion. Presently he, too, left off business to pray in a corner, doing it in Turkish and invoking curses on all followers of Islam. To the scandalized Pasha he explained that Christians also had their religious duties, and he had no doubt the formal curses of their prayers meant as little as the Moslem's.

The Kind of Eggs He Wanted. A New York business man has a very delicate boy who is fond of eggs. Now, the father is suspicious of any eggs found within city limits. To his great gratification, therefore, he not long ago discovered what seemed to him an honest marketman. "Can you furnish me with fresh eggs?" demanded the business man. "Yes, sir."

"Perfectly fresh?" "Perfectly." "Laid the same day?" "The marketman seemed a bit doubtful as to this. "I could hardly guarantee a large quantity that way," said he.

"They must be perfectly fresh," added the father, "they must be three in number, they must be laid the day they are laid at my door, and they must be one hen's eggs."—Lippincott's.

Racial Differences as to Humor. The comparative seriousness of the English and French races is illustrated by their mental attitude toward their respective instruments of capital execution. Sometimes during the Christmas season in Paris little crowds may be seen gathered in the streets around a toy which seems to amuse them very much. This is a miniature guillotine in complete imitation of the real thing, and it is caused by the men who are vending it to decapitate a manikin or lend to the great delight of the crowds. The guillotine is not a new toy in France. During the reign of terror little copper guillotines were worn as charms, and during the last century delicate women in the cities of France wore the same strange ornaments.

So far as known, the English speaking race has never converted its guillows into a toy.—Boston Post.

Conventionality of Speech. Nothing is easier than to fall into conventionalities of speech, and nothing so impoverishes conversation. A generation ago it was customary to thank a person for a service rendered. Now we thank him "very much," although the service be no more than picking up a pencil. Also it is "awfully good" of him to hold the door open for us or to give up his seat in a car for another. A story is said to be published in the name of "Oh, this is lovely!" At least, it is said that we may never be the party of the second part in "How's your mother?" "Noblely thanks!"—Lippincott's.

The Charles Dickens Train. A friend of mine who has been connected with the London and Northwestern railway for over forty years was traveling to London on the "Charles Dickens" train. Before starting he strolled up the platform as usual to have a look at the engine. "Well, driver," he said, "how much of the original engine have you there today?" "Praps the whistle, sir," said the driver.—Manchester Guardian.

Floral Scandal. "You can't paint the lily," declared the rose. "Maybe not," responded the aster. "But have you noticed?" "Noticed what?" "The lily pads!"—Washington Herold.

Proving His Point. Sillious—What is the age of discretion? Cynicus—There isn't any. I know a man over seventy who married his fourth wife the other day.—Philadelphia Record.

In the Waiting Room

By M. QUAD

A woman arrived the other forenoon from the east with seven children in tow, and almost the same hour a man reached the same depot from the north with five offspring of various ages and sizes. She was a widow and he a widower, and the children had not been whipped more than once around before there was a sort of mutual sympathy that begot admiration and then friendship. One of the widow's boys offered one of the widower's girls a bite of his fried cake, which was accepted in a spirit of tenderness, and a ten-year-old girl belonging to the man made up to the two-year-old belonging to the woman.

The widower smiled as he saw these things and presently winked at the depot policeman, who was strolling around and took him aside to say: "Them children seem to take to each other?"

"Yes." "I reckon that gal's mother is a widder-woman?" "Shouldn't wonder." "And with seven young uns to care for she'd be willin' to marry again?" "I should say so. Widower, ain't you?" "I am, and these are my five innocents, as you might call 'em."

"Seven and five are twelve," mused the officer as he looked over at the widow. "She used to be when I went to school." "Well?" "If there's no law agin it I'm goin' over and ask that woman if I'm the man to make her heart palpitate."

"No law at all, go right ahead. We aim to please our patrons."

The man drew a long breath, braced up and sauntered over to the woman and asked: "Madam, am I wrong in believin' that you are a widow?" "I have been a widow fourteen months to-day," she answered.

"Great Scott! But it's just fourteen months to-day since my Hanmer died. Which way be you goin'?" "To Illinois." "That's just where I am goin' too. Did you promise your husband never to marry again?"

"No." "And I didn't promise my wife either. Fact is, I believe I shall unite as soon as I find some good woman." "And my children need a father's care," she sighed as she pulled little John Henry off the window sill and bumped him into a seat.

The man got up and walked around the waiting room and took a closer look at the children. Then he returned and said: "I suppose you're got a few hundred dollars, belong to some church, can wash and bake and mend, and are of mild and forgiving disposition?" "Yes, that's me."

"Well, I'm kinder religious, even tempered and am worth \$2,000. I'm sort of struck on you. There's something about your eyes that reminds me of Hanmer." "And you look like Alonzo around the month?" she stighed.

"Sure your Alonzo is dead, are you?" queried the man after getting a drink of water for one of her children. "Oh, my, yes! And how about your departed?"

"Safe as a woodchuck in his hole. Good woman she was, but she will have to stay right where she is." Then he bent over and whispered something about Chicago and getting married, and she nodded her head. He gathered his children under his wing, took them into a corner and solemnly and impressively observed: "Children, I'm goin' to get married to that woman over there and give me a new mother. If any of you is salons in the palace at Christinia. The goin' to kick and boogie about it be-chairs." "Get out of there," cried Olaf, before the train goes. Henry, you are the oldest. Are you goin' to declare you'll run away or commit suicide?"

A Famous Hanner.

By F. A. MITCHEL

The feats of Ernest Hemmer in the middle of the last century make the pedestrian feats of the present day look insignificant. He was a man who first came under notice by running from Paris to Moscow, a distance of 1,700 miles, in thirteen days and eight hours. In 1839 he ran through Central Asia from Calcutta to Constantinople, bearing dispatches for the East India company. The distance is 5,615 miles, and he accomplished it in fifty-nine days, one-third of the time taken by the swiftest caravan. A favorite employment for him was as the messenger extraordinary of sovereigns. He ran from country to country, bearing letters and dispatches of the highest importance, and always bearing mounted couriers watched against him. He never walked. Invariably he took the direct route to his destination, climbing mountains, swimming rivers and gulling himself through forests in a way known only to himself. His food was a small quantity of raspberry sirup.—Pearson's Weekly.

Who Invented Bonds? No one knows who invented bonds, but whoever he was he was one of the great benefactors of the human race. He made it possible for great loans, aggregating perhaps hundreds of millions of dollars, to be split up into bonds that could be sold to individual investors all over the world. Financially the money to finance the needs of nations, to found great new industries and to open up vast tracts of territory. We may read in the newspapers that \$100,000,000 has been loaned to Japan by an international banking syndicate, but at the same time comes the announcement of a \$100,000,000 bond issue, the obligation of the Japanese government, secured perhaps by customs revenues and offered to investors in the financial capitals of three or four nations. The \$100,000,000 as a matter of fact has not been loaned by the bankers; it is loaned by the people.—S. W. Straus in National Magazine.

The Terrible Test. "Darling," cried the young man as he sank at the maiden's feet, "I would do anything to prove my love for you!" "That's what every man says when he wants to win a girl," answered the young lady harshly.

"Can't I move you?" panted the desperate Romeo. "Prove me. Put me to the test. Test me, I pray you." "I wonder," whispered the lady softly to herself, while a blush mantled her pale cheeks. Then suddenly bending over the almost swooning youth who crouched at her feet she exclaimed: "Will you put me to the test?"

"Ah!" The youth sprang to his feet, exultant, triumphant, and cried aloud to the maiden at his side: "Your test? Your test?"

"To marry some other girl," murmured the sweet young thing as she glided backward through the velvet curtains into the bedroom.—Baltimore American.

An Ugly Weapon. When bovers and fighters came together in the old days of Greece they wore upon their hands the cestus, which was in itself a terrible adjunct to any fighter. But there was something else that to the cestus a deadlier weapon, consisting of a three pronged fork of bronze, known as the myrmex. Classical literature has frequent references to the myrmex, which is described as the deadliest weapon of the ancient pugilist. The right hand was swathed in tough hide, bound in place with thongs and supplemented by small knobs of lead or iron. This was the cestus, to which was added the myrmex. Combats in those days were much more brutal and dangerous than those of the modern prize ring. It is easily seen that a single blow of the myrmex might cause death or permanent injury.

King Haakon's Hopeful. One day Prince Olaf had a little play to mate with him in one of the private salons in the palace at Christiania. The visitor climbed into one of the arm chairs. "Get out of there," cried Olaf, before the train goes. "That's my father's name!" King Haakon hastened across the room to comfort the little visitor, who looked so scared, and in order to reassure him he picked him up and sat him on his knee. At this young Prince Olaf became much more enraged. With a stamp of his foot he expostulated, "Get out of there, I tell you, that is my mother's name!"—T. P.'s Weekly.

When We Would All Be Missionaries. A well known agnostic was present at one of Henry Ward Beecher's lectures, and after the address the man presented one of his daughters—a beautiful girl—to Mr. Beecher, saying, "Mr. Beecher, here is a girl who, according to your ideas, is a heathen." "Well, my dear," said Mr. Beecher, "if all heathens were as pretty as you are we would all become missionaries!"—Ladies Home Journal.

He Was a Born. The young man sat and sat 2nd and talked. About 11.30 he sang, "Love, You Goin' Away." The young lady showed interest for the first time since 8:30. "When do you start?" she inquired.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

All Alike. Visitor (in a country village)—Well, it's a simple thing to elect a man sure. Choose the cleverest man. Villager—There isn't one unfortunately.—Meggendorfer Blatter.

Knowledge and timber shouldn't be much used till they are seasoned.—Holmes.

A SEA MONSTER

By F. A. MITCHEL

Three-quarters of a century ago, while piracy had lost its vitality, it had not become extinct. All ships at that time were sailers, and pirates were usually long, low, narrow vessels, with rakish masts, and their character could often be discerned by the merchant vessels they preyed upon.

One misty morning a Malay pirate was lying at anchor near the coast of Japan when sounds were heard indicating the near presence of a ship. Then came a stentorian voice, "All hands forward to raise anchor!" The pirates did not know what that meant, but they did not understand English, and they listened for something that would indicate the nature of the neighboring vessel, which they could not see for the fog. Presently they heard a snorting that was unfamiliar to them, and a stirring of waters as if a whale were beating them with his tail. Smoke, mingled with the mist, floated toward them.

The pirates wondered at all this, and the more superstitious among them hearing the snorting and the lashing of the waters, thought they were near some sea monster which, like the dragon of old, vomited fire and smoke. But the pirate captain, hearing the familiar sound of a turning capstan, knew that a ship was near him, and if she were not a man-of-war he determined to make a prize of her. So he ordered his anchor hauled up in order to be ready to give chase the moment the fog lifted.

But the fog was in no hurry to lift. Nevertheless the lieutenant or what ever she was, continued to snort and swirl her tail, the sounds slowly receding. The pirate not willing to let her go without a better knowledge of her character, decided to follow. Since there was no breeze a boat, was lowered—a lawyer attached to it and the ship, and she was pulled along in the wake of the monster which threw back its waters with her tail, with which she seemed to be propelling herself.

Presently the fog thinned, and the pirates could discern a dim body ahead of them, vomiting smoke. "She's a mountain of a swan!" exclaimed one. "She's paddling with her web feet that take the place of sails." "Whoever heard of a swan breathing smoke?" queried another, turning pale. "Or squawking chug, chug, chug," chug?" said another.

By this time there was some wind, which blew the fog with it, and though it did not render the form of the monster plainer, the captain, who had more courage than his crew, ordered sails hoisted that he might get nearer. He succeeded in approaching her stern, but the current of water she kicked back with her feet was stronger there. Her snorting sounded louder, and the terrified crew protested so strongly against getting any nearer that the captain was obliged to drop back to a safer position.

"Suppose she should turn and blow fire at us?" exclaimed one. "She would burn us to ashes!" "Or if she should come beside us and close one of her wings over us she would send us to the bottom."

At that moment the smoke from the monster ahead, veering, enveloped the pirate. Most of the crew fell on their knees, and the others, running to the malyards, let down the sails. The captain swore at them for cowardice, but his own features indicated fear. They dropped behind the mammoth swan her chugging sounded more faintly and at last they lost her altogether.

Half an hour passed, during which the pirate captain served a double dose of drug to infuse courage into his men. For he had heard voices and the turning of the capstan, and since danger far is much less terrible than danger near he had recovered and regained the belief that the sea griffin was in reality a ship. Then suddenly the fog lifted, and there on the starboard quarter was a ship. Her masts were puny things, not capable of carrying sails to give her a headway of the knots. But she didn't look like a ship any of them had ever seen. She had no sails set, and yet she moved. Indeed a white line of foam extended astern from midship and it appeared to the pirates at once that she was paddling with feet, not seen because they were under water. She was moving on a course that would take her directly across the pirate's bow, and the captain of the latter gave orders to hoist all sail and stand to ward her.

The order was obeyed by the crew, which had been urged by the drug, and it looked as if she would be an easy prey, when suddenly from a column amidships poured forth a thick smoke that changed the situation. The pirate crew looked on with horror. "It comes from her back!" cried a sailor, agast. "There's fire in her belly!" exclaimed another.

Then, right where that belly was supposed to be, there burst a glare that sent every pirate to his knees, praying to his God or his gods not to let the fire paddles destroy him. But the captain seized the tiller to keep his ship on her course, vowing that he was ready to fight Satan himself and would make him walk the plank. But the wind fell, and the paddleship went on, her speed not a whit decreased, and he had the mortification to see her pass away unharmed.

The monster was the first ship driven by steam in the eastern hemisphere.

Cream Puff Cure.

By F. A. MITCHEL

A young woman teacher in a school was overcome by a sudden attack of illness the other day. She dismissed the class, telling the boys she felt too ill to continue, but hoped to be quite well by the next day. The teacher rested her head on her arms and sat at her desk a few minutes waiting for strength to start on the journey homeward. She was only dully conscious of what was going on about her and did not notice a group of the ragged youngsters gathered by the door in deep consultation.

In a little while she heard some one softly say, "Teacher?" and looked up. It was the raggedest boy of the lot, and he was holding out a paper bag full of something. "What is it, Jimmie?" she asked. "Somethin' t' eat," replied Jimmie. "But I'm not hungry."

"Yes, you are," insisted the ragged philanthropist, winking at her gravely. "Nobody's sick except when they're hungry. We took up a c'lection an' got these cream-puffs for you. Eat 'em quick, ma'am, an' you'll feel better."—Philadelphia Star.

The Silence Wager. Once a Brahman and his wife quarreled acutely over three kot fish. Each wanted to eat two and leave the third for the other. The husband argued that he had fetched them from the bazaar, the wife that she had cooked them. Neither would give way. Then said the Brahman: "Let us go to bed, and see who speaks first. Whichever of us does will have to take the one kot fish." This agreed, they lay down, supperless, and passed the night, the dawn, the morning, in utter silence. The neighbors, alarmed, went in to see if they were dead. They shook them and pulled them about. Still no sound. Then three of them made the funeral pyre, placed the Brahman upon it and applied the torch. Next they lifted up the Brahman to lay her beside her husband. At that moment the flames reached the body of the Brahman. Unable to keep quiet any longer, he jumped up, crying, "Brahman, I'll eat the one!" "Then I'll eat the other two," she promptly replied.—Bangall Household-Tales.

Some Indian Precepts. Ernest Thompson Seton's "The Book of Woodcraft and Indian Lore" contains the teachings of the Indian Chief Wabasha I, from which we quote the following: "In the day of his strength no man is fat. Fat is good in a beast, but in a man it is disease and comes only of an evil life.

"No man will eat three times each sun if he would keep his body strong and his mind unclouded. "Batho every sun in cold water and one sun in seven eat the sweet lodge. "When your time comes to die sing your death song and die pleasantly, not like the white men; whose hearts are ever filled with the fear of death, so when their time comes they weep and wail and pray for a little more time so they may live their lives over again in a different manner."

Almost Epigrammatic. This overheard conversation appeals to the weary one as nearly epigrammatic. The young people on the seat ahead of us in the homeward bound car the other night talked it out so loud that we couldn't help hearing it and jotting down a few notes on it. "So," said the girl, "he said he knew me when I was a little girl!" "He didn't say anything of the sort," contradicted the man.

"You said he did." "I didn't." "Why, then, what did you say?" "I said he said he knew you when he was a boy."

That put such a wet blanket on the conversation that we were able to read our sporting extra uninterrupted for the next several blocks.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Bits From Shakespeare. Users of everyday catchwords are constantly quoting that ubiquitous person, Shakespeare. "Dead as a door nail," "long and short of it," "getting even," "tag rag," "birds of a feather," "hant's-hant," "mum," "accarsrow," "solid," "milk-sop," "log-headed," "bag and baggage," "a mere song," "dancing attendance," "send him packing," "kill with kindness," "give and take," "an eyesore," "ho hoo!" and "the man in the moon," are all his.

Impertinence. "I was born on the 29th of February." "Remarkable." "Yes, there are few men who have that distinction." "Very true, have you ever done anything else unusual?"—Chicago Record-Herald.

Cynical. The old-fashioned woman who used to get up at 5 a. m. to celebrate wash day now has a daughter who has an awful time getting the stuff together in time to give it to the laundry driver when he calls at 2 p. m.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Didn't Know Horse Talk. "Wanted, a man who can speak French and who understands horses," reads an advertisement. One of the applicants writes: "Oh, yes; I can speak se Francals, but I know not what 'langue' se 'ores speak."—London Standard.

Talk of Money. It is true that money talks, but its vocabulary is limited to "goddy" and one or two other phrases.—Philadelphia Ledger.