John Henry

and the Orphan Skates

By GEORGE V. HOBART

My Uncle Owen of Kentucky had died and left me seven horses and a heap of trouble. Murf Higgenbottom, his old trainer, had brought the skates to me, and I was getting ready to race them without letting on to the family. Gee, but I was having a hard time of it!

During the following week I spent most of my time at the training quarters, and it wasn't long before the colts would nose around my pockets for the lumps of sugar I brought them.

The ponies soon tumbled to the fact that I was their meal ticket.

The things Murf knew about horseflesh were scandalous. He had the racing business tied up in a knot in his handkerchief. Murf was one of those gamey little men that wouldn't take a dare from any nag that ever chewed a halter.

"That there little light bay filly with the fo' white feet for mine!" he observed sententiously, after the seven had been tried out thoroughly.

"Make mine the same, Murf," I answered; "she's all the goods, for sure."

"Whoa, little girl, steady! Yo' Uncle Owen would delight in that parcel of hossflesh, suh; have you' all procu'd a name?" he asked.

"Call her Peaches," I answered quickly.

"Peaches!" Murf repeated.

"Sure as you live," I said; "we'll name her for the best girl that ever took a hurdle like me for a husband. Here's to Peaches! may she always have a place at the table when Fortune passes the cream!"

"I drink to yo' health, suh, and to Peaches!" Murf said, drawing a flask of his beloved Bourbon from his pocket and tipping it slightly; "this here youngster promises well, and no Kaintucky hoss evah yet broke a promise to me, suh!"

I gave all the money I possessed to Murf and told him to go ahead and see the thing through to a finish.

"Aw, Get Use to Yourself," the Spuds Lad Muttered.

"You have full authority, Murf," I said, "and all the money I can raise without resorting to the use of dizzy-drops. If you win out, the glory will be yours."

"Yo' Uncle Owen considered yo' all big Casino on the eastern tracks, suh; it is my duty to prove it, seeing that it ain't possible now to convince yo' Uncle Owen othahwise," he answered, slowly, and that settled it.

"I've been watching that black one yonder, Murf!" I said, pointing to little sad-eyes, the laziest looking skate in the string.

"Yes!" Murf answered, questioningly.

"I christen that one Shoemaker," I said.

"Shoemaker!" Murf echoed.

"Shoemaker," I continued, "because he'll be near the last all his life."

I didn't get a smile from Murf, so I got mad and went home.

The next morning while in the sitting room reading the papers I heard an argument started on the veranda, and looking out I beheld a weazened-face kid, not much larger than Tacks, holding a free-for-all with Uncle Peter.

"Does Mr. John Henry live here?" the visitor asked.

"He does," Uncle Peter replied, somewhat shortly; "what do you want with him?"

"I want him to gi'me de gaze!" the youth answered.

"To give you what?" Uncle Peter asked.

"De look-over, see! I'm for him if he warms to me on the peep!"

Uncle Peter was too mystified to speak.

To tell the honest, I was a bit to the daze myself. I'm considered a fairly wise guy on the figure of speech proposition, but that kid had me whimpering.

"Haven't you made a mistake in the house?" the old gentleman finally inquired.

"Aw, choke up! choke up!" the stranger advised. "What do you t'ink I am—a wax works? My nut ain't no empty shell, see! I've got a bunch of machinery behind my map for to steer me straight, and I ain't making no bum starts! Put me wise to de real captain, willʼe?"

"Have you something to sell?" Uncle Peter asked, suddenly struck with the idea that the stranger might be a peddler.

"Aw, say, Foxy Gran', ring de tinkler on yourself!" he answered, scornfully; "I ain't out doing no lecture for a living. Me t'roat is too busy to talk to you—pass my name up to de Main Squash, will'e?"

"What is your name?" Uncle Peter inquired.

"Spuds!" came the answer.

"Bless my soul!" Uncle Peter cried, in astonishment; "what a remarkable name; did you say Spuds?"

"I said Spuds, didn't I?" was the somewhat sharp rejoinder. "What do you want to call me, Percival?"

"I don't want to call you anything, you impertinent young rascal!" Uncle Peter said, hotly. "I'll call the dog presently."

"Don't you call no bow-wow on me or I'll bite him," the irrepressible Spuds retorted. "Say! what is dis, a chin-chin to a show down? Can't youse bow yourself out and chase de Boss Carpenter to me?"

Clara J., attracted by the loud tones, strolled over from the garden to see what was doing, and as for me, I was enjoying the affair too much to break it up by butting it.

"You wish to see somebody?" Clara J. asked, sweetly.

"Yes, lady," the youth answered, dragging a reluctant lid from his toppiece and shuffling nervously from one foot to another. "I was trying to cook up a chance to hand a line of talk to de Main Stake, but old Santa Claus gave me de ice."

Clara J. looked at Uncle Peter in astonishment, and he scowled silently at the intruder.

"Come now, young man, state your business, or be off!" the old gentleman commanded.

"Aw, get used to yourself," the Spuds lad muttered. "I don't do no sneak till I pull off a meeting with the High Card, and dat goes, see!"

"Don't you know the name of the party you wish to see?" Clara J. inquired.

"Sure I do," Spuds responded; "it's Mr. John Henry."

"Oh!" she said; "he'll be here presently, I'm sure. Who sent you?"

"Mr. Murf," Spuds answered, whereupon I jumped quickly to my feet. The affair had assumed a serious turn.

"Mr. Murf," she repeated, just as I stepped out.

"That's the infernal bandit who was here the other day," thundered Uncle Peter. "I'm black and blue all over from thinking about him. Drive this person off the premises; very likely he's crazy, too!"

"Easy," I whispered; "this is Murf's valet, no doubt."

"Valet!" snorted the old gentleman; "keeper, you mean. I must say, John, that I don't admire your selection of friends; when they aren't foolish, they are idiotic!" and with this he flew in the house.

"This is the gentleman you wished to see," I heard Clara J. saying to the caller as I turned.

"Mr. Murf sent me down to tell youse, sir, dat de little goil is doin' fine!" was the first upper-cut I got from Spuds.

"Poor Murf!" I said to Clara J.; "isn't it wonderful how he can make people believe that there isn't any furniture broken in his garret. This young man, no doubt, is under the impression that—"

"Say!" Spuds broke in, "Mr. Murf is willing to let mo wear the colors if you'll give him the ticket for me to ride, see!"

Then like a flash it dawned upon me. Spuds—the jockey! Murf had sent him up to me for a final look-over. Clara J. must not be permitted to suspect—what ho!

"Go back to Mr. Murf," I said quickly to Spuds, "and tell him he's on!"

Spuds let one yell out of him and started to do a series of joyous cart-wheels all over the lawn.

"What in the world does it all mean?" Clara J. asked.

"The ticket," I explained; "didn't you hear him say ticket? Poor old Murf is tired of the east and wants to go home. For dear Uncle Owen's sake I must buy Murf's railroad ticket; don't you think so?"

"Good, generous John!" she answered, kissing me, and I felt as manly as a chair with one leg off.

"Hasn't that annoying person gone yet?" demanded Uncle Peter, appearing in the doorway suddenly.

"Aw, choke up! choke up, Bill Bailey, and de cozy corner for yours!" the young scoundrel got back; then to me, "Say, you're aces wit' me, Mr. Henry, and I'll grab dat wire foist if ever de little goil goes out, or spoil me map, see!"

With a wild yell of delight Spuds danced off in the direction of the training quarters, and just then Tacks rushed breathlessly around the corner.

"See that kid," Tacks gasped; "I saw him yesterday down the road about two miles on the finest little horse you ever see, and the crazy man that was here the other day was with him, but I wasn't frightened!"

"Then your friend, Murf, really has a horse," Clara J. said, slowly and with signs of a gathering storm.

"He has," I answered: "but I did it for old time's sake. It cost me only a few dollars to rent the horse from

"No Kaintucky Hoss Evah Yet Broke a Promise to Me, Suh!"

a livery stable, and you can't imagine how it soothes and comforts poor old Murf!"

"Forgive me, John!" Clara J. said, almost tearfully, and again she kissed me.

I felt that I was beginning to show the first faint symptoms of being a liar!

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MAKING A BAD MAN GOOD

Cutting of Eye Muscle the Only Thing Necessary to Complete the Transformation.

"I go over to Blackwell's island to visit the penitentiary at intervals," said the oculist. "There I once found a man with a cross eye that would have been funny if it had not been so pitiful. When he tried to look at an object the eye would jump from its hiding place until he could focus it sufficiently to make out what the object was.

"I was sure that I could cure him, but he swore that I shouldn't touch him. I talked to him about the operation, and tried to reason with him. As a result of my argument he said finally, with great violence: 'I'll kill you; I'll do it if you try to cut my eye.'

"But I was persuaded that the poor fellow was sick; that at heart he was a good man—in spite of his sullieness, in spite of his quarrelsome habit with his companions, and for the moment overlooking the fact that he had been imprisoned for petty larceny.

"So, while several men held him, and he struggled hard, I performed the operation on his eye. But he told me over and over again while this was going on—for I used no anesthetic, that being against our practice when the patient is opposed to an operation—that he would kill me when he got a chance. In the course of a week his eye had healed, and his desire to kill had left him. He gave me no word of gratitude, but I knew he was not the same man. He asked to be allowed to help me in the operating room—that was his way of saying 'thank you'—and his request was granted.

"I never had so capable an assistant. Everything that I wanted was always there. His watchful eyes saw to that. But he did not talk, he was at my elbow, anticipating my wants, but silent.

"He soon got his discharge from the penitentiary, and he asked me one day if I would give him a letter of recommendation. I said yes, first, then recollecting that he had been imprisoned for stealing, I said: 'No, man, I can't do that, but I'll tell you what I'll do—go and look for a job, and if they ask for a reference tell them to come to see me.'

"Not long after this there was a ring at my telephone, and I heard an Irish voice at the other end saying: 'There's a fellow here gives you as reference—I employ teamsters—what about him—is he all right?'

"'Come and see me, and I'll tell you about him,' I said.

"'Well, what's the matter—is there anything wrong with 'im?'

"'I'd like to talk to you about him. I'll come and see you if you can't come and see me,' I answered.

"But he decided he would come to me. It was a little unusual, perhaps, and possibly he was interested. The upshot was that my cross-eyed man was employed. Later he was made head teamster.

"A bad man changed to a good man by the cutting of an eye muscle. It seems strange, doesn't it?—but it's true."—New York Times.

Beauty Treatments.

"Bill" Snyder, the famous head keeper of the New York Zoo, was describing to a reporter the 20-gallon oil baths that he gave the elephants in the autumn, when the harsh beasts begin to chap their hides.

"These oil baths improve the elephants' looks," he said. "The elephants know it, too. The females especially know it. They take to these beauty treatments the same as women."

The head keeper chuckled sardonically.

"Women, though, go a step too far," he said. "A young man from the lion house told me that at a ball the other night he said to his hostess:

"'Who is that pretty little blonde eating lobster salad, ma'am?'

"'Why, don't you know her?' his hostess cried. 'She's the pretty little brunette you flirted with last week!'"

The Onlooker

by WILBUR D. NESBIT

The Song of Things

The daylight and darkness are a song;
The clouds that fleck the summer skies with white,
The stars that gleam above us all night long,
Are symbols of the song of love and light.
And deeper chords there are, and harmonies
The which no mortal thought has ever found
Because they are eternal ecstacies
Too marvel-sweet to be blurred into sound.

Beyond the pulsing cadence of the breeze,
Beyond the throbbing monotone of rain,
The lilt of bird songs and the hum of bees,
There surges up a vast, unfathomed strain
Which we might hear all faintly in the night
When all the world has left us quite alone,
Or when in awe we stand upon some height—
Yet never is that song completely known.

Aye, times we sense it when we feel the thrill
Of looking o'er the meadowlands in spring,
Or when the snow makes of the tree-crowned hill
An ivoried stillness—then the shadows sing
As do the sun-kissed fields, and distant haze,
And all things—all the sky and sea and land;
It is the song of all the nights and days
That we may hear, but may not understand.

The daylight and the darkness are a song,
And all the unknown heights and depths of space
Where myriad systems whirl and wheel and throng,
Each fleck of star-dust in its given place—
All these, with blades of grass, and orchard bloom,
And gale-tossed snows, and winding flowered ways,
And great sea billows, and the rose perfume,
All blend into the song of nights and days.

Expert Statement.

"Elijah," says the judge to the defendant, "you have had a fair trial The prosecuting attorney has shown by circumstantial evidence that cannot be gainsaid that you were in Mr Brown's chicken coop on the night that his hens disappeared, and your own attorney, in his speech, has practically admitted that the theory of the prosecution is true. Have you anything to say before the court pronounces its decision?"

"Jedge," says Elijah, rising politely, "all I's got to say is dis. I don't know much about de law, but I does know heahsay evumdence isn't good, an' all dese lawyehs says is heahsay. I oughter know, foh I uz de only man in dat chicken coop dat night, an' I's denied it raight erlong."

Biff!

"A new and novel idea for an afternoon affair?" asks Mrs. Justgottit of Mrs. Peddygreigh. "O, I can suggest a very clever plan. Let us have a spring housecleaning party. Let us invite all our set and have them don aprons and take mops and brooms and dusters, and clean the house!"

The suggestion is hailed gladly by the others of the 400, whereat the originator of dinners to monkeys and doll parties and similar joyous affairs jealously remarks:

"And Mrs. Justgottit will be the very one to take charge of such a function, won't she?"

Vincentized Mother Goose.

There was an automatic man
Who lived an automatic life,
He pressed an automatic suit
And won an automatic wife.

And in his automatic way
Her buttons he was wont to bless;
"Why don't you go and get, I say,
An automatic buttoning dress?"

One Among a Million.

"With all due respect to the wives of others," says the man with the shiny nose and the dimpled chin, "I must say that my wife is the greatest woman in the world."

"That is a splendid way for a man to talk, and it does you honor," says the man with the missing buttons on his vest.

"Well, when I am mowing the lawn my wife doesn't stand at the window and call to me to tell me where I am leaving uncut ridges."

Modern Methods.

Having taken the butter from the churn, the thrifty housewife works it into shape, and, to the surprise of her guest, begins adding coloring matter to it.

"Why, surely you are not going to adulterate such splendid butter as that!" cries the guest.

"I have to. I've got to make this butter resemble the best brands of oleomargarine or it will never sell at all."

Wilbur D. Nesbit

USE FOR THE NEWSPAPER

Story That Contains a Moral It Might Be Well to Keep in Memory.

A little King Charles dog, a pet in a family where he had been the playmate of a little boy, slipped through an open door some time ago and disappeared. Servants and the children of the house searched everywhere, asked questions at all places where it was thought possible the dog might be in hiding, but to no avail, and the animal was finally given up for lost and there was deep mourning in the nursery. One day recently the woman who owned the dog met a neighbor at a florist's shop, who had on a leash a dog strangely like the lost pet, and asked where he came from. "Why, he ran into our house a few days ago and we don't know where he belongs.' The dog knew his old mistress and was quickly surrendered. 'You might have had him sooner, had you advertised," said one woman. "And you could have found the owner sooner had you advertised," said the other—and the newspaper man who heard the story added the moral.

CURED HER BABY OF ECZEMA

"I can't tell in words how happy the word 'Cuticura' sounds to me, for it cured my baby of itching, torturing eczema. It first came when she was between three and four weeks old, appearing on her head. I used everything imaginable and had one doctor's bill after another, but nothing cured it. Then the eczema broke out so badly behind her ear that I really thought her ear would come off. For months I doctored it but to no avail. Then it began at her nose and her eyes were nothing but sores. I had to keep her in a dark room for two weeks. The doctor did no good, so I stopped him coming.

"For about two weeks I had used Cuticura Soap for her every day, then I got a box of Cuticura Ointment and began to use that. In a week there was a marked improvement. In all I used two cakes of Cuticura Soap and one box of Cuticura Ointment and my baby was cured of the sores. This was last November; now her hair is growing out nicely and she has not a scar on her. I can not praise Cuticura enough, I can take my child anywhere and people are amazed to see her without a sore. From the time she was four weeks old until she was three years she was never without the terrible eruption, but now, thanks to Cuticura, I have a well child." (Signed) Mrs. H. E. Householder, 2004 Wilhelm St., Baltimore, Md., May 10, 1910.

No Need to Be Good.

A little Shaker Heights girl surprised her parents last week by refusing to be scared into being good. "It's no use telling me Santa Claus won't come, or that the angels will write it down in their book if I'm naughty, mamma," she said. "I might as well tell you that they think up in heaven that I'm dead."

"But why should they think that, dear?"

"Because, I haven't said my prayers for two weeks."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

His Labor-Saving Device.

"I have discovered a great labor-saving device."

"I always said you were a genius. What is it?"

"I'm going to marry Miss Bullion, the heiress."

Give Defiance Starch a fair trial—try it for both hot and cold starching, and if you don't think you do better work, in less time and at smaller cost, return it and your grocer will give you back your money.

Cause Enough.

"What's the bearded lady so mad about?" inquired the armless wonder.

"Somebody sent her a catalogue of a safety razor factory," said the living skeleton.—Chicago Tribune.

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Mrs. Cod—Yes; he will be in short specs very soon.—Harper's Bazar.

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It is better to be a dark horse than a black sheep.

The very best advice: take Garfield Tea whenever a laxative is needed.

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The greatest cause of worry on ironing day can be removed by using Defiance Starch, which will not stick to the iron. Sold everywhere, 16 oz. for 10c.

Not for Mortal Understanding.

What fond mother has not, at some time, said: "My child, you are much too young to ever understand; you will find out when you get older all you wish to know will be explained." And how many of us are still waiting for the reason, for some one to explain—are we still too young? Perhaps we are, and again, perhaps we are not—perhaps it never shall be explained to us; there are things wrapped in voiceless mystery.

Runs on the Bank of England.

Even the Bank of England has not been entirely free from runs nor from the necessity of saving itself by strategy. In 1745, for instance, it was forced to employ agents to present notes, which were paid as slowly as possible in sixpences, the cash being immediately brought in by another door and paid in again, while anxious holders of notes vainly tried to secure attention. In 1825, too, only the accidental discovery of 700,000 £1 notes saved the bank from stopping payment.—London Chronicle.

How Fat Proved It.

An Irishman was once serving in a regiment in India. Not liking the climate, Pat tried to evolve a trick by which he could get home. Accordingly he went to the doctor and told him his eyesight was bad. The doctor looked at him for a while and then said:

"How can you prove to me that your eyesight is bad?"

Pat looked about the room and at last said: "Well, doctor, do ye see that nail on the wall?"

"Yes," replied the doctor.

"Well," then replied Pat, "I can't."—Chicago Tribune.

Some tombstone inscriptions are too good to be true.

Garfield Tea purifies the blood and eradicates rheumatism. It is made of Herbs.

Had His Uses.

"You don't make very good music with that instrument," said the innocent bystander to the man behind the bass drum as the band ceased to play.

"No," admitted the drum-pounder; "but I drown a heap of bad."

Plain as Day.

A man recently visited the art museum in Chicago and wandered about looking at the paintings with more or less interest. He finally stopped in front of a portrait which showed a man sitting in a high-backed chair. There was a small white card on the picture, reading:

"A portrait of E. H. Smith, by himself."

The man read the card and then chuckled to himself.

"What fools these city folks are!" he said. "Anybody who looks at that picture would know Smith's by himself. There ain't anyone else in the picture."—Chicago Tribune.

COLDS

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THE ONE REMEDY so good that its makers are not afraid to print its every ingredient on each outside bottle-wrapper and attest to the truthfulness of the same under oath.

It is sold by medicine dealers everywhere, and any dealer who hasn't it can get it. Don't take a substitute of unknown composition for this medicine of KNOWN COMPOSITION. No counterfeit is as good as the genuine and the druggist who says something else is "just as good as Dr. Pierce's" is either mistaken or is trying to deceive you for his own selfish benefit. Such a man is not to be trusted. He is trifling with your most priceless possession—your health—may be your life itself. *See that you get what you ask for.*

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