

Jolts from "John L."

By John L. Sullivan

MANY PEOPLE SIZED ME UP AT LONG RANGE AS A MAN ABANDONED TO PUTTING AWAY HUGE QUANTITIES OF BOOZE



Attempt to Break Up a \$10-a-Plate Banquet in Boston—Will History Repeat for Charley Mitchell—Jeff and Fitz Get Big Heavy-Weight Records on Small Performances. Fighters Who Have Gone to Pieces When Their Vanity Is Hurt—"One-Eyed" Connolly and the Evil Eye.

WHEN I returned to Boston from my tour of England a tug loaded with friends met the steamer down the bay. There was a banquet at one of the hotels that night and more than 50 sports paid \$10 each to get their legs under the table. Some of my friends wept with joy when I landed on the steamer.

Some joker tried to spoil the reception. He sent a bogus telegram to one of the leaders of the party just before the tug started down the harbor. The bogus telegram read something like this:

"John L. arrested in secret just before steamer sailed. Now in jail, charged with being in a plot to blow up the House of Parliament."

The man who received this bogus dispatch has since died, so I'll cut out his name. He was a joker himself and he kept the "news" to himself, got off the boat and let the rest of the party go on what he thought would be a wild goose chase. He turned the cablegram over to a paper in Boston, and the paper got ready a special edition with the "news." It never got out, though, as I landed on good United States mud before the edition was put out.

By the way, that English tour of mine was badly mismanaged by the Canadian gent who had charge of things. A little horse-sense mixed into the arrangements and there would have been a barrel of money in it. As it was, there was consid-

But Fitz hasn't killed anybody in the heavy-weight class. Peter Maher had Fitz down and out in the second round of their first fight, and the Cornishman was saved by Joe Choynski, who was in Fitz's corner and sneaked over to the timekeeper and pulled the gong to end the round a quarter of a minute too soon. Then Choynski jumped back to Fitz's corner, jabbed pins in him to wake him up and got him in shape to continue. But that fight belonged to the Irishman. In their second meeting, in Mexico, Fitz won by hitting Maher when Maher was breaking clean after a clinch. That wasn't fair, but it went.

It is upon records of this kind that the two great men, Jeffries and Fitzsimmons, nail their fame and are so chesty that they pooh-pooh yours truly of the boards. All the same, I am

death of a child and disappointment. The actual fighting didn't undermine his health. The defeats by Young Corbett set him back and these and other bits of hard luck and his idea that the troubles weren't good swimmers and could be drowned in drink spoiled him. I think you'll see Terry come back, if he catches himself in time.

freckled fighter went to Carson City the widow made a nice pile betting on him. George Dixon actually ran out of the country when he got his. Peddler Palmer put Billy Plimmer out of the game and almost into a daffy-house. Solly Smith drove Johnny Griffin to drink after the defeat out West. Jim Hall never recovered his conceit after



erable British gold collected on the tour. But if he had had P. T. Barnum or some other good advertiser to handle the preliminaries we could have reduced the Bank of England to a 16 to 1 basis, sure.

Will History Repeat for Charley Mitchell? I am gradually edging toward the Pacific Coast, where I intend to hold forth for some time to come, unless I go on to Alaska. Several pressing invitations have come to me to go up to the Klondike country, where juicy purses are to be hung up by the miners, and if some of the beefy bruisers will agree to meet me there the entertainment would be satisfactory all around.

At present writing there seems to be a fair chance that Charley Mitchell will meet me in a ring on the coast somewhere, and if he does and I am able to catch him I hope to convince him that he escaped a knockout when we met in France years ago. This meeting, if it comes off, will make a good many people think that the clocks are going backward. Here's a brief report of the fight between myself and Mitchell, written by one of the fairest men that ever lived, John Boyle O'Reilly, in a book he printed soon after the battle.

"The men fought near Chantilly, France, on March 10, 1888, for £500 and the championship of the world. The rules were those of the London prize ring, and these rules enabled the inferior man to escape, and might easily have made him the victor. The fight lasted three hours and eleven minutes, in which time thirty-nine regular rounds and four or five irregular rounds were fought. After five or six rounds, during which he was knocked down literally every time he stood up, Mitchell adopted a system of running away and falling to escape blows. A cold rain was falling on the fighters and Sullivan became chilled, and in the thirty-fifth round Sullivan had a fit of the ague. He was overtrained; he had hurt his right hand; he was too heavy to plough through the mud after his running adversary, whom he could not catch; so he agreed to end the contest as a draw."

If Charley can't run as well now as he could then you can guess where he'll get off at when I get him again at arm's length.

Some Big Reputations on Small Performances. I don't want to do any knocking, and I believe that Jeff should have credit for all he has done, but he has made his record wallowing Fitzsimmons and some second-raters. Fitz, of course, never belonged in the heavy-weight class, and all honor to him for what he did in it. He put Corbett out, but Corbett never had any punch. The gentleman boxer put it over me by copying Mitchell's game.

getting the American public to do a little sizing up, and the notion is growing that the man who in his time met all comers, crossing the ocean to find more opponents and for a dozen years held the belt against the world and is still ready to fight, ought to have a look-in on these paper champions. I'll make Jeffries meet me before many months or I'll make him retire from the ring, as sure as my name's John L. Sullivan.

Fighters Go to Pieces When Vanity Is Punctured. The report that Terry McGovern has gone to pieces has raised the yell. "There's the result of prizefighting." But it isn't. Terry didn't break down because of fighting, but because of the

I've seen many fighters go to pieces in my time, but most of them went under because their vanity was punctured by defeat and it drove them to drink. But the troubles they collected couldn't be charged to fighting, but to their refusal to keep in condition to fight. Had Terry stayed in the ring and kept in condition he'd be all right. I could name fifty fighters who went to pieces when they couldn't have the public's cheers as an everyday filler. Jack Dempsey died of heart-break after Fitz got him in New Orleans. He left a legacy to his wife, however, to be sure, and bet that Fitz could whip any man in the world within twenty pounds of his weight, and when the

Fitz's No. 2 argument.

A lot of this breaking down of pugilists after defeat is because the big bag of conceit they carry has been punctured and they can't get along without the jolly and handshakes they fed on when they were on top. I managed to keep my head through good and bad luck and there'll be no songs written about my broken heart. I never felt further from the broken-heart stage of the game than I do this minute. Woof!

One-Eyed Connolly and the Evil Eye. A man told me not long ago that he thought I had been under the influence of the "evil eye" since the time I made a kick at "One-Eyed" Connolly. A lot of funny things are pushed up to me as I circle around the country and this is the latest.

"That's why you lost to Corbett," said the man who gives the "evil eye" information, "and for no other reason under the sun, for everybody knows you had no license to lose."

"One-Eyed" Connolly was an old time fighter who had gone by, but he managed to attend all the big fights in all parts of the country by jumping freights instead of taking Pullmans. When I fought Burke, Connolly was one of his seconds and before the fight "One-Eyed" came to me to apologize for being behind Burke. I made a kick at Connolly and that was all there was to it, but for years at least one man has believed that there was an "evil eye" hoodoo at work on me.

"One-Eyed" Connolly was for years almost as much of an attraction at the big fights as the fighters. He managed to make wonderful jumps across the continent on freight cars, and he was always admitted to the ringside because of his nerve and his record, and not because he paid admission. One of his eyes was glass, and whenever there was trouble brewing he'd put the glass eye in his

mouth until the clouds had rolled by. I guess a glass eye didn't have much to do with my case. It was glasses of a different shape.

I Told You So About Chop Suey Fighting. What I said about the jiu jitsu fake came true, but not quite in the way I expected. Before Congress had a chance to blow in money for a professor of this chop suey science at West Point one of the yellow experts was sent up to be tried out. Cadet Charles Daly, a lad from my town of Boston, broke the Jap's hold and fired him over his head. This settled it, and Congress doesn't have to waste any money in this new way. The old way is good enough. But I'd like to have seen Daly try some plain punching on the Jap, along with the wrestling. That would have made a more complete job of it and left no room for doubt. I'll guarantee to make any Jap expert forget his Emperor if he'll stand in front of me. He will be welcome to any grip or tackle he can get on me after I have given him a Yankee wallop or two.

HE LOOKED LIKE A SARDINE, NOT ONLY WAS HIS BODY DRIPPING WITH OIL BUT AROUND HIS STOMACH AND WAIST WERE YARDS OF RED CLOTH

I don't think the Japs can stand the gaff any way you take them. They're going to fall with the Russians, even if it does look all to the good with them now. A yellow man hasn't the staying power that a white man has, and a yellow race can't stand out against a white race. I'll put my money on the white man against all other colors—yellow, red or black—and in a fight to a finish the white man has got to win. The Japs are fighting for their Emperor, who may be a nice sort of a gent all right, but the white man fights for his country, and that's the kind of an inducement that will tell in the end.

A Frenchman tried to get the \$1000 I hung up everywhere on my grand tour in 1883 in Victoria, B. C. This was the funniest fight I ever had. When we struck Victoria first came the Mayor of the city, asking if it was a real \$1000 bill I put up to any man who could stay four rounds. He was convinced by giving him the money to hold. This gave official standing to my deft, and the town was opened up for us.

The Mayor got on to my nerves from the first. He was a sawed-off Irishman, so small I could have tucked him in one of my pockets, but so big feeling that he couldn't rest. He was also more British than the English, and I got away from him as soon as I could.

But to return to the parley-voe chap. He was a boxer with considerable of a local reputation, and he needed the \$1000 bad. At the theater that night when I was undressing to enter the ring we got a whiff from the dressing-room where the Frenchman was making ready. It reminded me of the South Boston flats when the dead fish were lying thick about. One of my company made an excuse to get into the Frenchman's dressing-room and he reported that the aspirant for the prize was being rubbed down with fish oil.

Visions of a Man Who Was Knocked Out. The oil idea was a new one for me and I asked my pal to explain it.

"Why," said he, "the Frenchman's seconds say they have oiled him so your clouts will just slide off, so as not to hurt, and that is how he's going to stay the four rounds and get the money."

When the French champion came on the stage he got me going right away. He looked like a sardine. Not only was his body dripping with oil, but around his stomach and waist were yards of red cloth. Whether the red cloth was intended to represent the British flag or to keep him from getting hurt, I didn't ask.

I suppose that every man in the house, with a few exceptions outside of my party, expected that my opponent would surely stay the four rounds. They had two guesses coming, though, even if a bunch of them did buy a lot of liquor for me during the day in the hope that I'd be at my worst in the evening. I knocked my man down three times in the first round. The third time he went down he stayed down for half an hour, dead to the world. He sent for me when he came to, and in the course of our conversation I asked him how it felt to go to sleep so suddenly.

"When you hit me one time, I think I see one French soldier. When you hit me tree time, I think I see one whole French army," he said.

Then, wiping the oil and cold sweat out of his eyes, he looked at my hands and slowly shaking his head said: "Oh, oh! Me can break wood fences with my fists, but you can break stone walls with yours."

Refuses to Drink the Queen's Health. Next night a banquet was given to Edward Hanlan, the oarsman, who was passing through on the way to Australia, where he was to row one of his greatest matches. The little Mayor, when he passed back the \$1000 (he hated awfully to let it get out of town) invited me to the banquet. I went and took along Mike Gillespie.

Everything went slick as a whistle at the banquet until it was along toward the end of things. Then the little Mayor got up and proposed that everybody stand and drink the health of the Queen. I hadn't been brought up to seeing Irishmen drinking to the health of English monarchs, and, anyway, that little Mayor did rasp my nerves. Gillespie was polite enough to get on his feet, but I reached for his collar and jerked him back into his seat. "You must stick to Uncle Sam, Mike," I said to him.

"Is it possible that any of our guests refuse to stand and drink to the health of her most gracious Majesty?" the little Mayor piped

said I, "that when the Governor of North Carolina meets the Governor of South Carolina, one says to the other, 'It's a long time between a certain line of refreshments.' Now, it would give me a great deal of pleasure to see this historic remark made to apply, and I will take it as an honor if you will allow me to provide the stage setting."

The two Governors exchanged grins and then one of them said:

"Mr. Sullivan, it doesn't seem right, but the fact is that neither of us ever indulges in the manner you suggest. Perhaps it is an unpatriotic thing and savors of disloyalty to what is supposed to be an institution of our States, but we must ask you to excuse us."

Here was a case I'd hardly believe if I hadn't seen and heard just what I've written. This goes to show how a silly remark, often repeated, has given a lot of good men reputations as drinkers they didn't deserve.

Never Drank Much, Nothing at all Now. The foregoing is something like my own case. For years it has been the fashion for all kinds of people who never saw me to size me up at long range as a man abandoned to putting away huge quantities of red rum. So many people believe the newspaper paragraphs about me and rum that the impression sticks in a lot of crops that I am down and out—because I am three years older than Fitz, but because I have been pickled in alcohol for twenty years. Here's the straight tip: If I had put away one-hundredth part of the booze charged against me, I'd be in a wooden ulster or an insane asylum.

A game like mine has big appetites for frame hit. But my long suit has been eating, not drinking. To-day I'll back myself against any man living as an eater, but as for drinking, I'm done with it. If I can get in front of some of the headliners of the heavy-weight class, I'll show the American public how little there is in these yarns as to drinking. A few clouts placed right by me will do more than anything I can say to offset these stories. Almost every kind of a bad habit, except cigarette smoking, has been charged against me, but I'm not guilty, as the record has it.

To all men I say: Cut out the rum. Chop it quick. There's nothing to it but come-backs. I never got so far into it that I couldn't stop it and let it entirely alone, as I'm doing to-day, and where I intend to stay until my time comes to get back into the ring where I belong. Then I'll show them and do things to those who are trying to blow out the gas on me.

"The Queen can go to," said I. "When it comes to drinking, perhaps I can do my share, but I haven't learned to drink that way and I never will." I took Gillespie by the collar, which I had held all the while, and we got out before murder was done us.

Some of my party thought I had done a very impolite thing, especially after we had been shown over a British warship and had other attentions, but I thought the whole thing a dodge by that sawed-off Mayor to do me one way if he couldn't another.

Meets the Governors of North and South Carolina.

Some years ago, while on my way South, I met up with a lot of Confederate veterans at a railroad station in South Carolina. They were returning home from a reunion, and a big bunch of them got around me on the platform to see what I looked like.

"We've seen Yankee fighters down here before and although they were good fighters, we weren't as glad to see them as we are to see you," one tall scrapper of the gray said to me.

"I'm sorry that my style of fighting wasn't the only kind that was done between the North and the South," I answered.

"It would shore have been healthier all round," he replied.

As we were swapping chaff the crowd opened to let in two fine looking gentlemen. They were made known to me as the Governor of North Carolina and the Governor of South Carolina. They said some mighty nice things and gave me a hearty welcome to their part of the country.

"I have always heard, gentlemen,"