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## PREFATORY NOTE.



HAVING read the proof sheets of this volume, I can with confidence recommend it to amateurs, together with the assistance of a good teacher. It is a plain outspoken work. and supplies st long-felt want.

BAT MULLINS.

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.



In the following pages no attempt has been made to start new theories or to give any advice, as regards the art itself which was unknown to boxers of a previous generation.

The Author's aim is rather to put the beginner in the right way of learning and to emphasize, with as little repetition as possible, the necessity of paying careful attention to certain points of vital importance, without due regard for which it is not easy to make much progress in the science

An effort has also been made to avoid those ambiguities which are apt to creep into writing on technical subjects.

With one exception, the larger illustrations have been reproduced by Messrs. Waterlow from photographs taken by the London Stereoscopic Company.

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# BOXING.



## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

ONE of the chief arguments brought forward by opponents of the Boxers' Art is that it tends to make men quarrelsome ; another is that the effect is brutalizing; a third that it is dangerous ; and a fourth, that it is of no practical value.

These objections apply more or less to very many sports and pastimes; but it seems that the advantages, as far as boxing is concerned, so very much outweigh the drawbacks that no Englishman should condemn this healthy exercise, which calls forth to such a marked extent those two great national qualities—pluck and endurance. Many an English boy, by nature inclined to be soft and effeminate, has been completely changed by hearing of deeds of daring. His mind has been seized by a desire to emulate some unusual effort of activity or courage, and to improve the strength and endurance of his own body. The child's moral tone has undergone a change for the better—has received a fillip in the right direction—and he may grow into a good, sturdy, upstanding Britisher, able to lead a charge in battle, or defend himself by personal effort when occasion demands.

When he reaches man's estate, too, he begins to realize more forcibly the advantages of temperance, and the exercise of all his best faculties in any particular work he may be engaged upon.

From apparently insignificant circumstances, great results often follow, and, if from the mere hearing of some fight, or great competition, in which extraordinary prowess has been exhibited, a boy is led to make an attempt to approximate to that prowess, surely something has been gained, for does not every attempt to improve the physical tone by the exercise of self denial also help to elevate the moral standard?

With regard, then, to the first objection. One certainly may stumble across a quarrelsome person who happens also to be a boxer, but it's the nature of the beast. He would have been just as disagreeable and cantankerous if he had never set eyes on the gloves. As a rule, men who have boxed a great deal—and this applies chiefly to boxers of the first rank—hesitate before “getting into a row.” And for a very good reason too. Who better judges than they of what a really good punch on the jaw means? They know exactly how much damage an unlucky hit may do, and that it is utterly impossible to be quite certain of success; especially in street lights, where allies may be lurking handy, with half a brick ready to throw at them. As I decline to believe that even the pluckiest man or “sturdiest varlet” *enjoys* getting knocked about, I can only infer that a true knowledge of boxing, whilst it should inspire confidence, also instils prudence, and therefore prevents many foolish and useless squabbles. But this, after all, is only inference ; to be practical, let me say that it has never fallen to my lot to meet, either amongst professionals or amateurs, a really good performer who

was prone to pick a quarrel unnecessarily. In every case the best men have been quiet, inoffensive, and well conducted.

Passing on to objection No. 2, most people will agree that, when compared with cock-fighting, badger-baiting, and similar old English sports, boxing, and even prize-fighting, are innocent amusements. In experiments on the dumb creation, the human being enjoys sport at the expense of an animal whose opinion on the subject cannot be taken, but, in sparring, two free agents, who have weighed the *pros* and *cons*, stand up in a ring and each does his best to defeat the other with his natural weapons. There is no compulsion, accidents are rare, and there is seldom any ill-feeling shown even in the hardest contested fights, for both combatants are too much engrossed with their work to have time to bear malice. Of course, in the case of the prize-ring the punishment inflicted is often severe, but the men themselves choose to risk it, and no one is compelled to witness it. It is, however, illegal in this country, and principals, seconds, and bystanders all enjoy an appreciable risk of being arrested.

It is quite possible to become a first-class amateur even without the questionable luxury of seeing two fellows smashing themselves to jellies, so never think it necessary to attend such performances. Patience and cheerfulness are so essential to success in boxing that I doubt if much room is left for brutality.

Next we come to the danger incidental to boxing. In all athletic exercises, and indeed in all held sports, there is an appreciable amount of risk, from the risk of spraining the ankle at lawn tennis to that alluded to by the German Professor, who, when told by a British Nimrod, a mighty slayer of Bengal tigers, that the "element of danger" was

*the* exciting thing in sport, said, with gusto, “Ach zo, then you should shoodt mit mir, the oder tay I shooded my bruder-in-law in the stomach!”

In ordinary boxing there is the chance of a black eye, which may be awkward, if one is dining out; but dangerous and permanent injuries are extremely rare—far more rare than they are in football, hunting, or shooting. No one wishes this to degenerate into a spoon-feeding age, in which every one is taken so much care of that he acquires a false estimate of his own value and importance in the world. What we want is a continuance of that self-reliance which made our men stand firm at Waterloo, and hold out in the trenches before Sebastopol, where, clothed in brown paper, and fed on garbage, they upheld the honour of their country, without a thought of wavering on account of their own discomforts. To improve and cherish this national self-reliance, individual trouble and struggles are necessary. When small dangers have been faced without flinching, greater ones come easier, and all I can say is, that if our sons are to be wrapped up in cotton wool for fear of getting their precious persons injured, or losing a little blood, the sooner we throw up the national sponge the better.

The final objection is one which is only advanced by inferior boxers, or by those who are entirely ignorant of the subject, and possibly opportunities may occur in the following pages of convincing those who have been badly taught, or who have not had the patience to learn the alphabet of the art, that a sound knowledge of correct principles may make them formidable antagonists if they will only study those principles and bring them into practice.

## CHAPTER II.

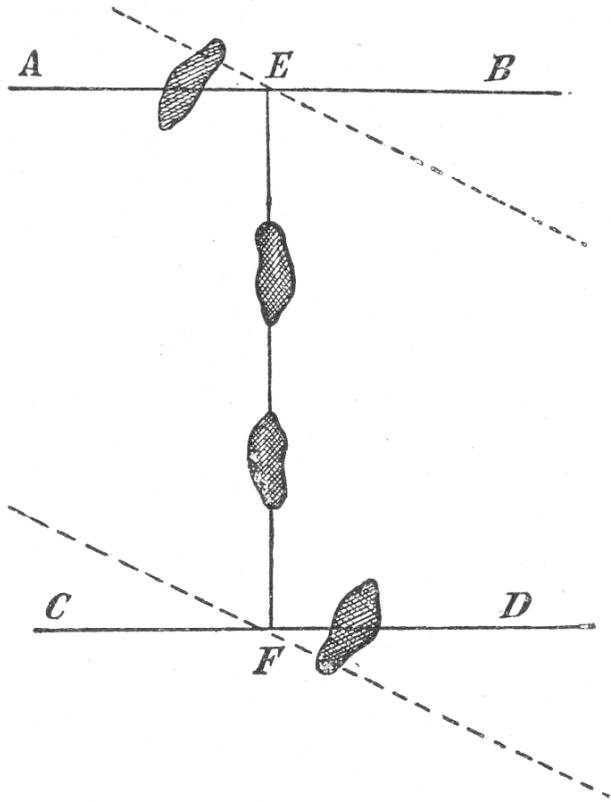
## POSITION.

IN boxing, as in rowing, fencing, and other branches of athletics, you must start with a strong regard for "good form," for rest assured that unless you do so you will waste your energies, and possibly contract in a month a host of faults which a year's good work may not eradicate. An easy position, in which every advantage is taken of height, and which allows of rapid advance or retreat, is of the utmost importance, and it is proposed in this chapter to give an idea of how the legs, arms, head, and body should be situated when facing your man, and not engaged in hitting or guarding; for upon this question of position hangs the success or failure of much you may attempt in the aggressive or defensive line.

As a man must stand upon his feet before he can fight with any advantage, I shall commence this little essay on fisticuffs with a few words on the general position of the legs.

1. Suppose, then, that you are facing a man, and that you both spar in the usual way, *i.e.* with the left foot and hand in advance of the right. Chalk two parallel lines,  $AB$  and  $CD$ , on the boards about five or six feet apart, and then draw another line  $EF$  at right angles to these, as shown in the accompanying diagram. Then place your left foot on this line, which is at right angles to the parallel lines, with the toe pointing straight in the direction of your opponent. The right foot should be about 15 to 18 inches to the rear of the left foot, and inclined to the line on which that foot is,  $M$  an angle of  $30^\circ$  to  $45^\circ$  and about 6 or 8 inches to the

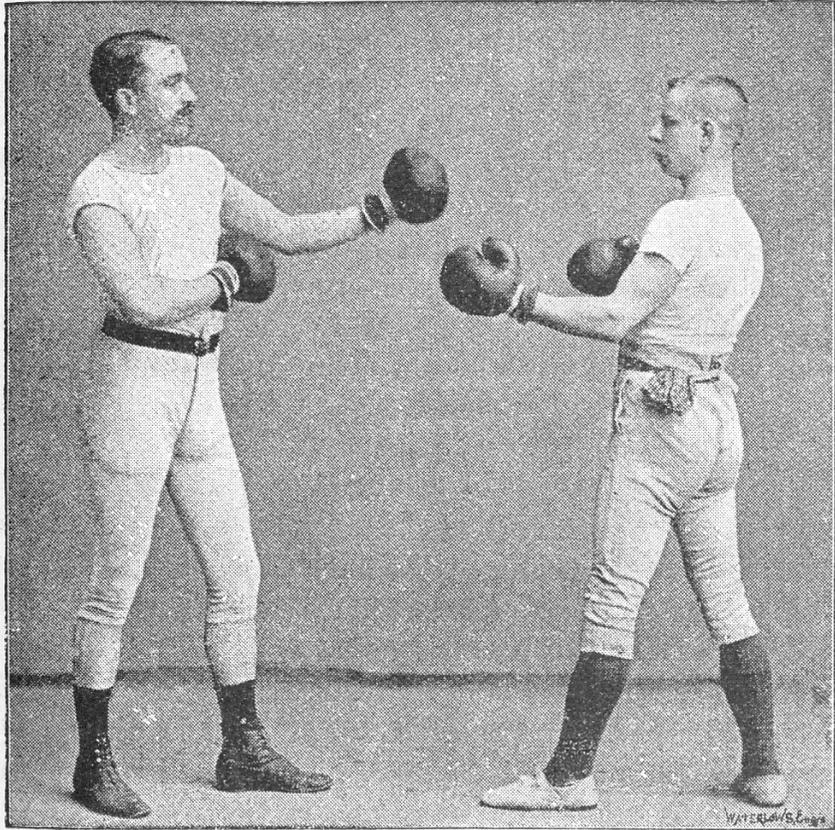
right of that line. These figures vary slightly according to the height of the individual, but they would be correct for a man of say 5 ft. 10 in., and may be taken as about the right thing for any one not very short or very tall. With the feet so placed a very substantial base is formed. Do not bend the knees, and remember that the more you spread



your legs the shorter you become, and consequently the shorter your reach, and the shorter your advance and retreat. Never listen to those who tell you to bend your knees and sink down; you will have to bend your knees quite enough when hitting out, advancing, and retreating; so don't indulge in any meaningless postures—especially

when they tend to fatigue you, and so give the enemy an advantage.

The reason for keeping the left foot quite straight on the line and pointing directly towards your adversary's face is that, when you hit out, the blow goes straight ; whereas. if



POSITION.

the toe be turned in, ever so little, the tendency is always to hit across, and so miss your mark altogether. In the course of the following pages it may be necessary to allude again to this point, for it is extremely important.

Having secured a correct position for the feet and legs,

remember that the weight of your body should be *equally balanced on both legs*, so that you are ready for either advance or retreat at the shortest notice. If you are not thus evenly poised, and have, say, half as much weight again on your right leg as you have on the left, you will, if you want to advance, have all the effort of shifting three-quarters of your weight suddenly instead of only half.

Some good boxers stand very square and others very much on the slant, so as to present quite a side view to their opponents. The former may have certain advantages as regards rapid exchanges and bringing the right to bear quickly, and the latter possibly score points by getting their left somewhat nearer their opponent's face ; but I am inclined to recommend a medium inclination of the shoulders as indicated by the dotted line in the diagram. To make my meaning clearer. Imagine a plane intersecting the plane of the paper at right angles, and in the direction of the dotted line, which is at an angle of about sixty degrees to the line on which your left foot rests. This intersecting plane should about coincide with the flat of your back, and you will be standing as nearly as possible right for easy deliveries with either hand.

2. Let your head be in its normal position—neither thrust forward to stop the blows, nor thrown back so as to bring an undue portion of weight on the right foot—and always keep the eyes fixed on those of the enemy. When you have a man's eye, you have his whole body, and can quite well see what he is doing with his hands and feet without shifting your gaze for a second.

3. The left arm should work freely and easily, and without any rigidity of muscle, in a plane at right angles to the ground, and as nearly as possible following the direction of your left toe. The hand should never drop below the belt,

nor should it rise far above the level of your shoulder, unless when you are boxing with a much taller man, in which case both your hands will have to be rather higher. The arm should be well away from the body, whilst the forearm should slightly incline upwards, with the back of the hand inclined towards the ground, at an angle of about  $70^\circ$ , and the knuckles well pointing towards the adversary's face. Remember, too, that the wrist must not be bent, but that the back of the hand and the forearm should be in the same straight line; if this is not attended to, you may sprain your wrist badly. The hand should not be clenched tightly, *except at the moment when the blow is taking effect*, as anything like rigidity is fatiguing and inimical to speed. Keep your left hand, then, slowly working with a sort of circular motion in the direction above indicated, and let it be always ready, without the slightest drawing back of the elbow, to hit out at any moment.

There has always existed some diversity of opinion as regards the movement of the left hand when not engaged in actual hitting.

Some men keep the hand almost stationary with respect to the rest of the body, whilst others prefer a sort of twisting, wriggling movement of both wrist and elbow. My own idea is that the hand and forearm should, for effective hitting, be regarded as one piece—all motion being communicated through the shoulder and elbow joints—and that they should, as hinted above, move in a plane at right angles to the ground, with the hand following a point on the circumference of an imaginary circle, of about a foot in diameter, which is constantly rolling either in the direction of or away from the opponent. Many first-rate exponents of the noble art have used this kind of action, so one feels no hesitation in recommending it. It is, moreover, far less

fatiguing to keep up this slow cycloidal action than to hold the arm out with no movement at all.

Whatever you do, bear in mind the enormous importance of not "showing" your hit, *i.e.*, *Your hand should be ready to shoot out from any position of the point on the imaginary circle without giving the opponent the slightest hint by drawing back the forearm ever so little.* The value of this advice will be more appreciated after a perusal of the next chapter, which treats of straight hitting.

The right arm, which is generally used more for guarding than hitting, should be laid easily over the mark, *i.e.* over the pit of the stomach, just above the belt, where a severe blow may do so much damage. Do not place it there with the view of warding off a blow by means of the boxing-glove, but with the determination of stopping it with the muscles of the forearm, which should be *in actual contact with the body*. This hand, like the left, should never, if possible, be allowed to drop below the belt, and the forearm should incline slightly upwards towards the left breast, with the "thick" of the arm well across the body, ever ready to guard the mark. The reasons for never allowing either of the hands to drop below the waist are these: the lower your hands are, the more exposed you leave both your head and body, and the greater the space they have to travel before they are again in the most favourable positions for either guarding or hitting.

The above remarks may serve, with the help of the illustrations, to indicate what the position of the boxer should be when he is in a comparatively passive state; but before concluding the chapter it may be well to say a few words on advance and retreat, which appear to be not inappropriate under the head of position. In advancing, step out straight along the line with your left foot in the direction of your

opponent for a distance of eighteen inches or two feet, and immediately follow this up with the right foot for *the same distance*, so that your feet should be exactly in the same relative position as when you started the advance, and with the weight of the body, as before, equally divided between them. Supposing, then, that you are following a man round the ring, the advances should always be made in this way—with longer or shorter steps according to the requirements of the case—for nothing can be more prejudicial to good work than a shambling shuffling scramble, in which you very likely trip yourself up with your own feet.

Retreating is similarly effected, only the operation is exactly reversed. The right foot is withdrawn the required distance to the rear, and the left foot is also drawn backwards for the same distance, with the toe still accurately pointed towards the adversary. Except in rare instances, *both feet should not be off the ground at the same time* ; you may occasionally have to jump back to avoid a rush, but remember that, should you happen to be hit at the moment of your jump, the chances are you will be knocked down. Therefore, generally speaking, have one foot at least firmly planted on the ground. It is a good plan to practice advancing and retreating before or after your bath in the morning, and especially if you can do so before a looking-glass, when you will be able to observe that your left foot is straight, and the position of the body and hands are not thrown out by the rapid change of ground.

## CHAPTER III.

## STRAIGHT HITTING.

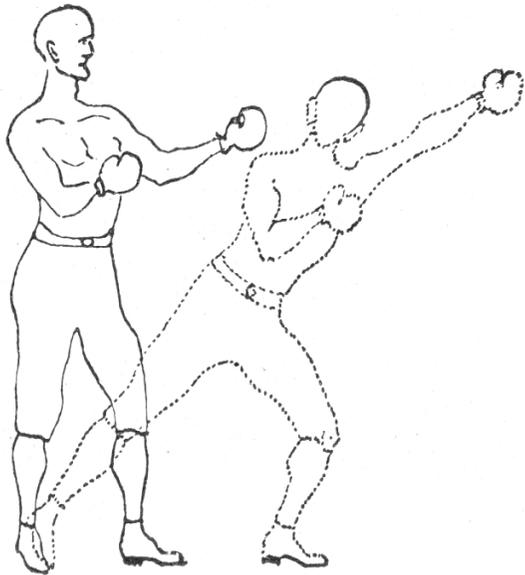
AFTER mastering the general position, the next thing is to learn how to deliver a blow with the greatest possible effect. The natural tendency is to hit round. Put any two men together, who have never heard of correct principles, and tell them to double their lists and “go for” one another. The chances are that very few of their blows will reach home, and that they will damage the surroundings more than each other. Euclid has a strange definition of a straight line, which he described as one which “lies evenly between its extreme points;” a better or, at all events, a more telling definition appears to be this: “A straight line is the shortest distance between any two points;” and if you never lose sight of the fact that either of your lists can reach the opponent in the shortest space of time by the shortest distance—which is a straight line—you will in time overcome the unfortunate but very natural habit of hitting round. There is only one case in which hitting should not be, strictly speaking, *straight*, and that is when the contracted-arm hit, which will be dealt with in a future chapter, is made use of; and even then the actual line travelled by the hand should be as nearly as possible straight.

In the previous chapter, mention has been made of the necessity of allowing the joints to be loose and free, and now that we arrive at the question of leading off the reasons for this advice become more obvious. In the lead off, say at your adversary’s head, you raise the left foot slightly and advance it swiftly along the line in the direction of the enemy for a couple of feet or so, simultaneously hitting out

with your left hand quite straight at his head, and without any previous indication of the movement, and without any drawing back of the arm.

In this forward longe the weight of the body should be thrown into the hit with a spring off the right foot, which, however, should not leave the ground, and remember that—though I use the word “simultaneously”—the hit should have reached its destination a fractional part of a second before the left foot touches the ground. Now if before making the lead off, you are standing rigidly—like a fellow exhibiting his muscles at a penny show—it will take a slight but appreciable space of time to unbend those muscles and tendons before the hit can be made. If, on the other hand, all the joints and muscles are pliant and loose, you can instantly direct their action and no time is lost, besides

which there is so much more “kick” in a hit of this kind. Speed is everything. A powerful dray-horse will give a heavy pushing sort of kick, which may bruise one and curl one up in a heap, but a race-horse will let out a slasher, which will break the largest bone in one’s body. These examples are given because they



serve to illustrate the hit of a rigid though possibly strong man, and that of a free, easy hitter, possessed of less actual physical power, but greater speed.

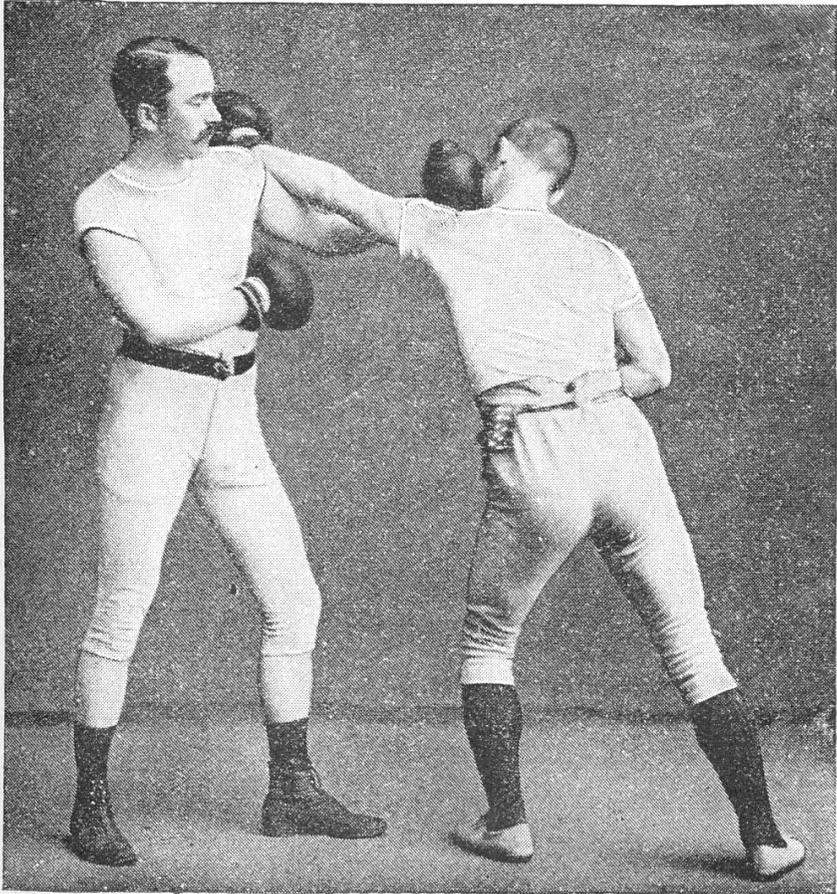
The cut on page 13 may serve to give some idea of how the lead off should be managed. The plain outline gives the boxer in the ordinary position when facing his man, and the dotted line shows his position when actually delivering the blow.

Very great attention and practice should be devoted to this lead off with the left. It is of no use trying to do too much all at once, and if you give a considerable time to thoroughly mastering this straight hitting with the left hand, your chances of ultimate success as a bruiser are greatly increased. The art of putting in this hit perfectly straight, with great rapidity, and following it up with the whole weight of the body is not acquired by many, but you must use every effort to approximate as nearly as possible to that perfection which is reached by so few. Putting aside the question of "lucky" (unlucky for the other party) hits, it is instructive to note in the annals of the prize-ring what a number of fights have been won by this straight left. Many and many have been, as it were, snatched from the fire by an apparently beaten man, who still retained enough sense and strength to keep jobbing away with the left. Without going further back, the Sayers and Heenan fight is a good enough example of what may be done with a good left hand.

It is an excellent plan to practise this lead off before a looking-glass, and you will then readily observe what a strong tendency there is to hit across, and you will also notice how tremendously any turning in of the left foot increases that tendency.

Men who might become really good boxers are often spoiled by trying to learn too much all at once. I strongly recommend working with the left for some time before doing any hitting with the right. In taking the lesson, keep try-

ing the straight leads with the left, using the right solely for guarding purposes, until you begin to hit straight *naturally* and easily. If hard up for an opponent, hang a

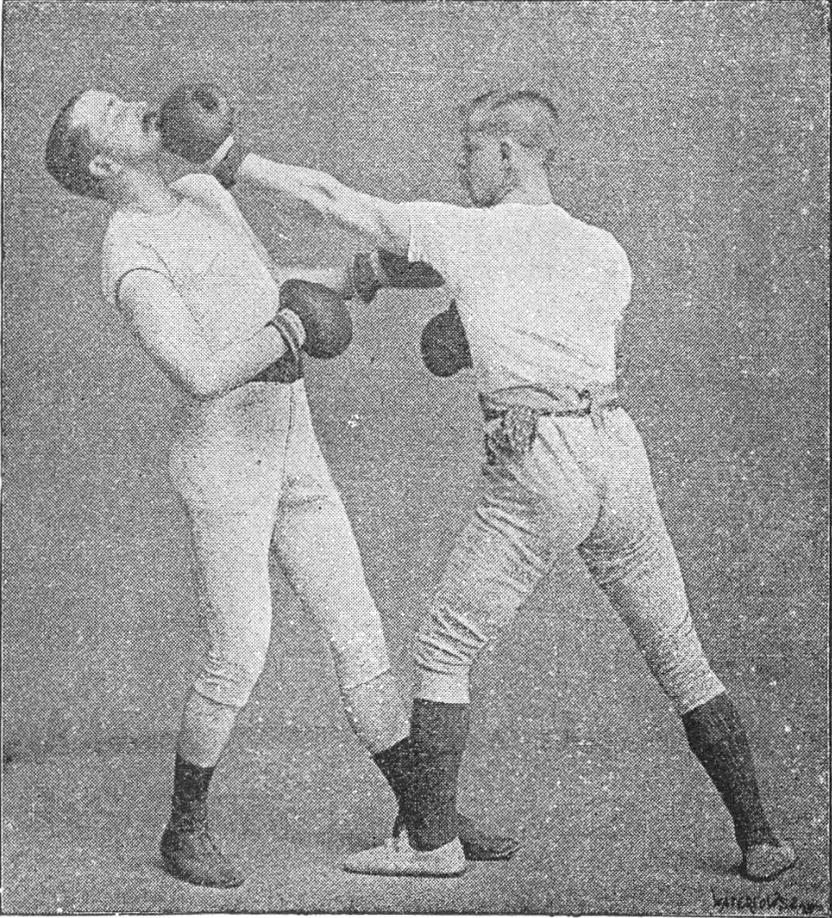


LEAD OFF WITH TOE TURNED IN.

WRONG—HIT PULLED ACROSS.

football from the ceiling, so that it hangs freely in the place which would be occupied by the head of a man of your own height, and keep hitting out at this as straight and as hard as you can.

Avoid anything like chopping, *i.e.* using your forearm as if it were the handle and your fist the head of a hammer. The chopping hit has no power or weight in it, and you only bruise your forearm, near the wrist, against your



LEAD OFF WITH TOE STRAIGHT.

RIGHT—HIT GETS WELL HOME.

opponent's; besides which it is a type of the "round hitting," and as such, for reasons explained above, must take longer to reach its destination than the straight hit. It is often well to be ready with a second blow with the

left, so that, if you are by chance a bit short in the lead off you may advance your right foot a few inches and then step in with a second straight left-hander.

Very frequently, too, this double hit may stop a man who is following you up after your lead off, only, in this latter case, you will not have to advance; indeed you may actually feign getting back, but instead of doing so stop short and hit out again. In running up points at a competition, a third or fourth hit of this kind may be practised with advantage, and it is astonishing how often this course takes the adversary by surprise.

When leading off and doing your best to thoroughly extend yourself there will be a chance of *overreaching*, and this, though it may perhaps be termed a fault in the right direction, should be carefully avoided—since it leaves you in an awkward overstrained attitude from which there is a difficulty in recovery. Try therefore to ascertain exactly the extent to which you can reach by making full use of (1) your step out; (2) the length of your arm; and (3) the width of your shoulder, at the same time retaining the power of getting back with ease the very instant the blow has been delivered. In the rough sketch which accompanies this chapter it will be observed that the figure included in the dotted lines is much more sideways towards the opponent than the figure in position—thus utilizing the width of shoulder between the left arm and the neck. When one finds a tall man who with his long arms and ditto step seems unable to reach out, the reason nearly always is that he fails to make proper use of his width of shoulder, and consequently loses six or eight inches in his length of reach.

There is a method of meeting a man when he leads off at your head with his left by dodging your head to the right,

and catching him in the ribs, with your left shoulder well squared for the occasion. This is not much to be commended, though it punishes your opponent considerably if it comes off—it is hardly "boxing," and your left short ribs are rather exposed to a visitation from the adversary's right. Nevertheless, if a man is rushing in very frequently, it may perhaps be occasionally tried for a change, only be careful you don't duck right on to his blow, and so increase its severity.

#### CHAPTER IV.

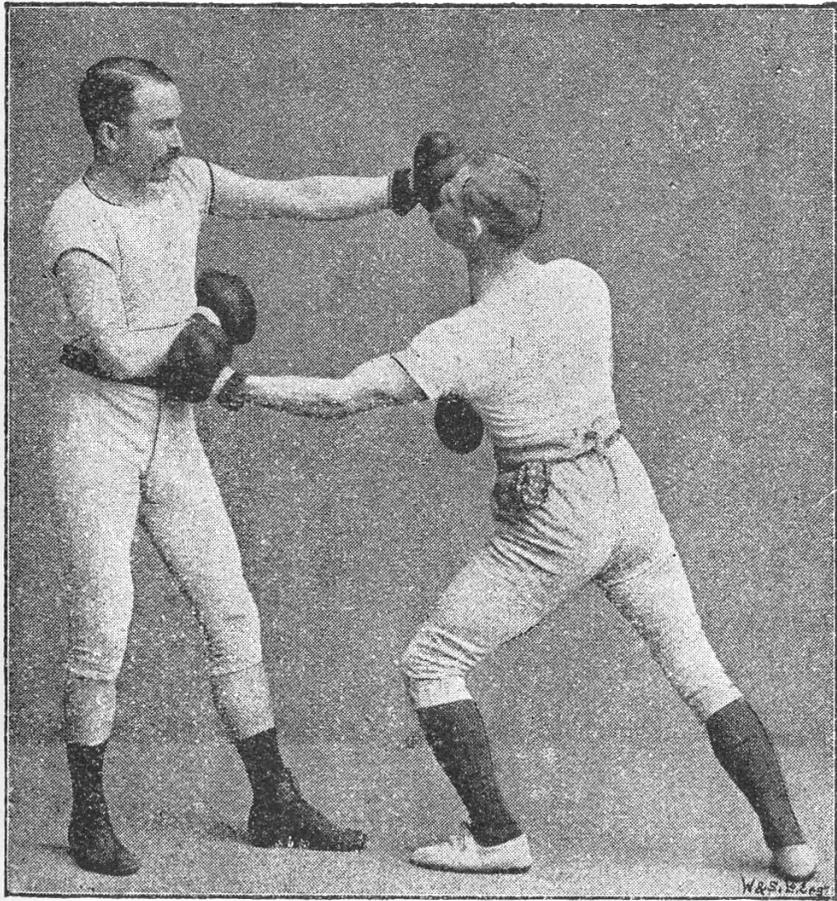
##### GUARDING AND "SLIPPING."

How to protect yourself from the blows of your opponent with the least amount of exertion to yourself is the next point to be considered. With the elbows held well in, and *never stuck out akimbo*, you will always be more ready to hit out straight, and to guard with both left and right. More especially is this the case with the right arm, which should, generally speaking, be quite in contact with your body when guarding body blows. If your arm is ever so little away from the body you may get a nasty jar and suffer from the effect of the blow almost as much as if you had not guarded at all.

First, let us consider the best defence for left-handed blows at the body, which, though they may sometimes be avoided by retreating, should nearly always be guarded by the right arm placed firmly across the mark, and well touching the body—the muscles of the abdomen being at the same time contracted, and the region of the "mark" well "tucked under" the ribs so to speak.

*Body blows* with the left are not much to be feared *except*

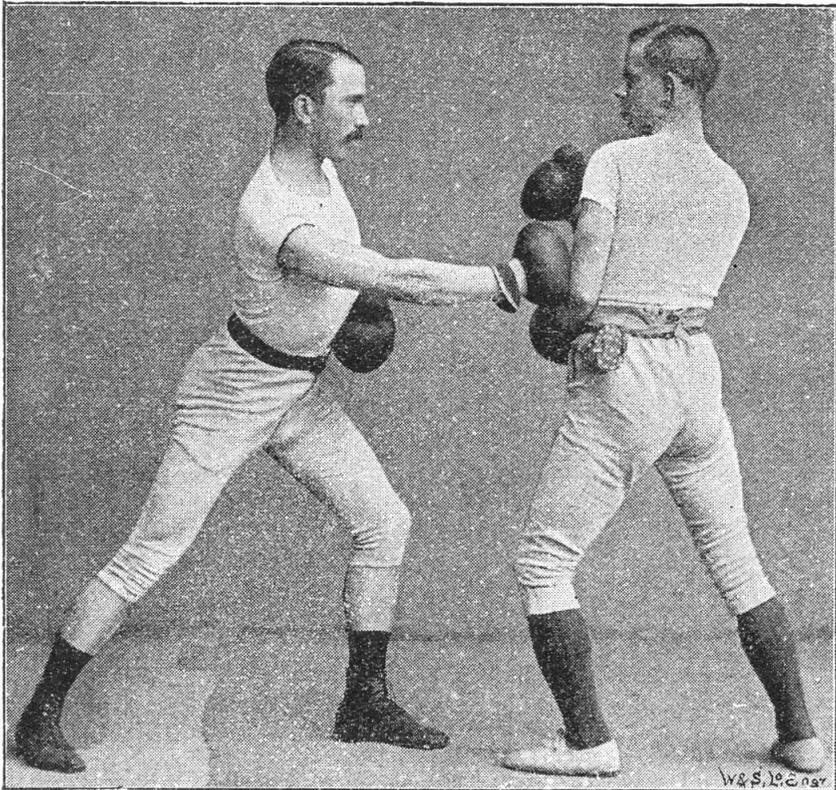
*on the mark*, since the right side is furthest away from your adversary, and he cannot well reach the right short ribs with his left hand. But on the mark he always has a hit with his left, and you should learn to guard this, even at the



GUARD FOR LEFT-HAND HIT AT MARK.

expense of your head, since a really hard body hit which gets well home on the mark may do more to terminate a round, or indeed a fight, than half a dozen flush hits in the face. Do not think that I am making light of guarding

the head; I am merely calling attention to the fact that it is of greater importance to guard the mark than to guard the head; for the head should be got out of the way by dodging, which cannot be so easily effected in the case of the body.



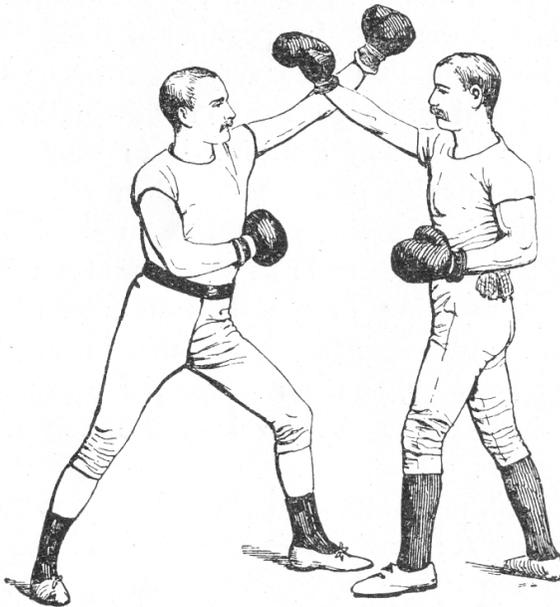
RIGHT-HANDED BODY BLOW AND GUARD.

In treating of body hits with the right, the question is vastly different and, in a sense, more complicated. From your position, the left side is very much exposed to the adversary, and when you lead off with your left he has

the chance of a right-hander at your left side or short ribs with his right, and this is certainly one of the hardest blows to guard properly. You must not think of guarding it with your right hand or with the boxing glove (as many do), but must endeavour to drop your left elbow close down to the side, so as to receive the blow on the arm somewhere near the elbow, stepping, at the same time, to the right, so as to break the force of the hit. In speaking of body hits generally, it must be noted that they very often occur as second or third hits, and when engaged in "in-fighting," and that, then, the best way of guarding is to have the arms as close to the sides as possible, for then you not only have a better chance of saving yourself from the half round body hits which may be made at you, but also a far better opportunity of reaching, in the shortest time, your adversary's head or body. Remember, too, that in guarding right-handed body blows, you must avoid, if possible, dropping the left hand below the level of the belt for reasons previously given.

As before mentioned, more attention should in a general way be paid to *getting the head out of the way of the blow* than to actually warding it off; but, at the same time, you should be always able and ready to guard. To guard the left-handed blow at the head, raise the right arm in a nearly straight position in front of you till your wrist is about on the level of your forehead, your opponent's left arm will then glance along your forearm, and you will save the concussion which is so likely to ensue, if you bend and raise your elbow, besides which, the elevation of the elbow often leads to having your own forearm hit into your face. There is another most important reason for so guarding in this "weaving" style—you are much more ready at any moment to hit out than you could be if your elbows were bent

when raised to the level of your shoulders. If you lightly throw your right arm forward and upward in the manner indicated, you will be able to guard the left-hand lead off at the head, and this guard should often be used when actually leading off yourself with the left—*i.e.* simultaneously with the lead off you should guard the head with this right-handed



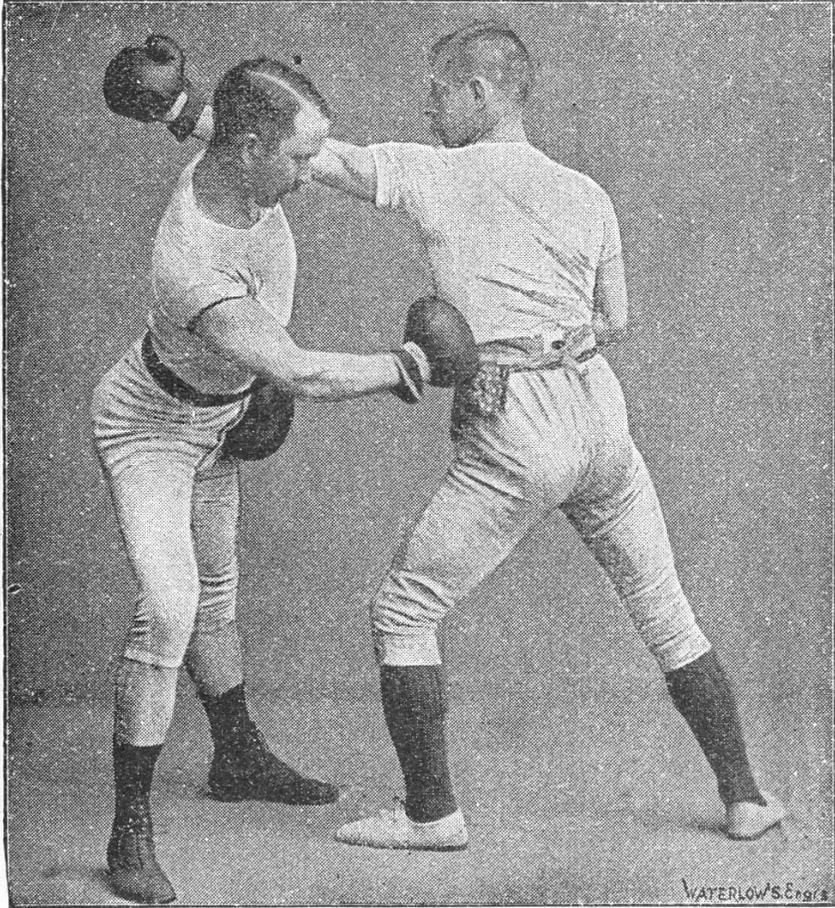
GUARD FOR LEFT-HAND BLOW AT HEAD.

weaving guard. Avoid anything approaching the "arms - akimbo style."

The guard with the left arm may be similarly executed ; but I should as a rule recommend getting the head out of the way, and so avoiding the blow. When a man leads at you with the left, and this is especially the case

when he rushes at you with a determination to improve you off the face of the earth, a good plan is to duck your head to the right, at the same time stepping about eighteen inches to the right with your right foot. His left hand will then pass over your left shoulder, and you may be able to put in an effective hit with your left either on his body or face—try the former for preference. This method of avoiding a blow is called the "side step," or "slipping," and it is far better to trust to this when opposed by a larger and heavier

man, who bores you on to the ropes and tries to smother you, than to attempt the ordinary guarding. Slipping is equally effective when boxing with a man who stands "right foot first" He leads off with his right, and



THE "SIDE-STEP."

you duck to the left and come in either with your right on his body or head, or with your left on the right side of his head, his right hand passing over your right shoulder.

If not "timing," or "cross-counterering,"—particulars of

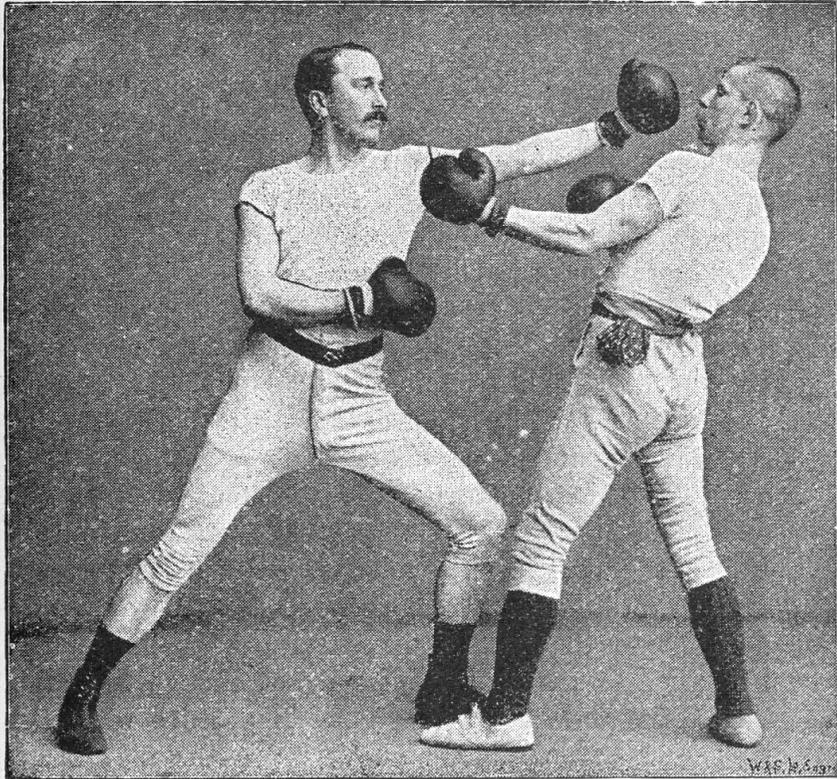
which will be given in future chapters—it is a good plan to retreat, and then, the instant your opponent has delivered his blow, which will (should you have retreated sufficiently) fall short, step in and hit either with the right at the body or the left at the face.

Another way is to duck forward and come in on the body; but remember that, in executing this manœuvre, you run the chance of the “upper-cut,” of which more anon, or a “short-arm hit” on either side of the head. In dealing with the head, it may not be out of place to mention that flush hits on the forehead, where the bone is thick and strong, usually injure the hitter more than the hittee—the jaw and the temple are the only really dangerous places as far as the head is concerned, and, though of course the stars and stripes seen after a visitation of the nasal organ are by no means pleasant, a man is seldom knocked out of time by hits straight on the upper portion of the face.

Though so important to practise the head guards with both arms, it is even of more importance to make sure of your body guards. Therefore study carefully getting the head out of danger ; at first the efforts to do this will involve a good deal of hard work, for you will overdo the necessary and find it very exhausting, but after a time you will begin to feel what is wanted, and will know exactly the amount of effort required to throw back your head or move it on one side, or retreat, so as to avoid the blow by an inch or two, and, remember, the more accurately you can hit this off the nearer you will be for your next attack.

A miss is as good as a mile, and if your opponent miss you only by a quarter of an inch you can go at him with all the greater ease from not having placed too great a distance between yourself and him. But do not, in learning, run these little delicacies too line ; for great experience and accuracy of

eye are needed before you can well judge of how far a man really can reach out. Every useless expenditure of force is a direct loss to you, so that the more science teaches you to minimize the amount of running about and dodging, the



GETTING OUT OF REACH.

more power you will retain. Every unnecessary step is a clear loss to you and- gain to the adversary. The amount of "go" in you on any particular occasion is a measured quantity, neither to be increased or diminished, and, though you may manage to pull off a terrific hit when every one

thought you a beaten man, still this is only a part of the conserved energy of your system, and the unexpected blow you were fortunately able to deliver might have been a better one, had you spared yourself unnecessary running about early in the fight.

Never waste an ounce of strength, and never dodge or hit unless both are likely to succeed and are made with a definite purpose. The cork-like activity of the immortal Mr. Pickwick's cabby was all so much wasted energy, and whenever you chance to get in front of a man who dances about, wags his head, and generally assumes the pretentious "fighting man" style, look at him, enjoy his antics, but please don't copy him. Maintain your own stolid good form, follow him at your own pace. Don't run after him, as that is pumping work, but simply wait till such a time as you can get near enough to deal with him. Then, when within hitting distance, do not be guided *to much* by his actions, make up your own mind as to the best plan of attack and carry it into effect.

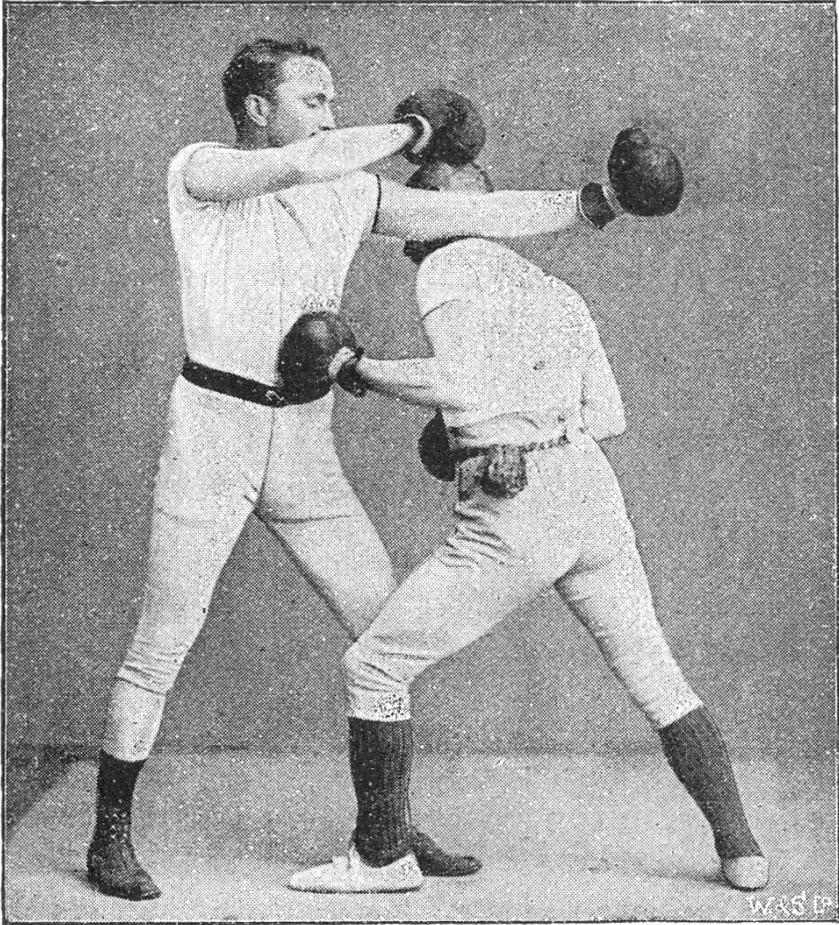
The chief reason why many fairly good men are all at sea when they meet a strong, rough natural fighter is this; they know just enough to make them feel awkward when they are opposed to something new, and not enough to enable them to carry into effect and apply in practice what they have but imperfectly learned. Very possibly they blame the theory instead of their own want of polish.

A Cambridge freshman once entered the boxing establishment of a distinguished professor, and said, "Mr. So-and-So, there's a town and gown row on to-morrow night, so please give me a lesson, as I want to knock the townsmen about." Of course in this case the aspiring hero was a complete novice, and there would have been precious little theory or anything else about his grand doings with the Cantabrigian

roughs. One afternoon's lesson would have been sufficient to destroy any little natural powers of fighting he might have possessed, and to render him an easy prey to some small boy. So the professor of the noble art of "self-defiance of man" gave good advice, and the aspirant to street-row honours abstained from giving or receiving punishment, and remained wisely in his rooms.

This may appear a digression from the subject, but I have introduced it to show that a fairly good boxer should not be dismayed at finding himself beaten by one of inferior science to himself, and that a man who knows absolutely nothing would be acting wisely, if he wants to fight *at once*, not to interfere with his natural instincts. For success, a long apprenticeship is needful, and then, as in the case of swimming, the whole thing comes as a sort of second nature. It need hardly be mentioned that, having used the side step, or "slipping," you should, as soon as possible, again turn to your left and face your man in the ordinary position. "Slipping" is particularly effective with a rusher, as there is always a chance of his stumbling over your left foot, which for a moment remains across his path. Ducking, which consists of slightly lowering the body and throwing the head forward or on one side, should be frequently practised, especially when boxing with a larger or stronger man, as it opens up excellent opportunities for hitting. The hit and the duck should be almost simultaneous. The side step, slipping, and ducking all have the same object, *i.e.* the avoidance of a blow without guarding; the first and last affording excellent chances of returning a hit with interest. In my opinion it is preferable to use these methods of avoiding head hits, and to reserve the actual guards as much as possible for the protection of the body. A slight distinction may be made between the side step and slipping.

The former may be used as a means of avoiding attack, and at the same time opening up an attack yourself, as suggested above ; whilst the latter is rather a more extensive movement,



DUCK TO THE RIGHT, WITH BODY HIT.

designed to get you out of a serious difficulty, and when hard pressed on the ropes or in an awkward corner.

Slipping must be executed with great rapidity, as your opponent's game will probably be to follow you up and, if he turns sharply to the left and advances quickly after

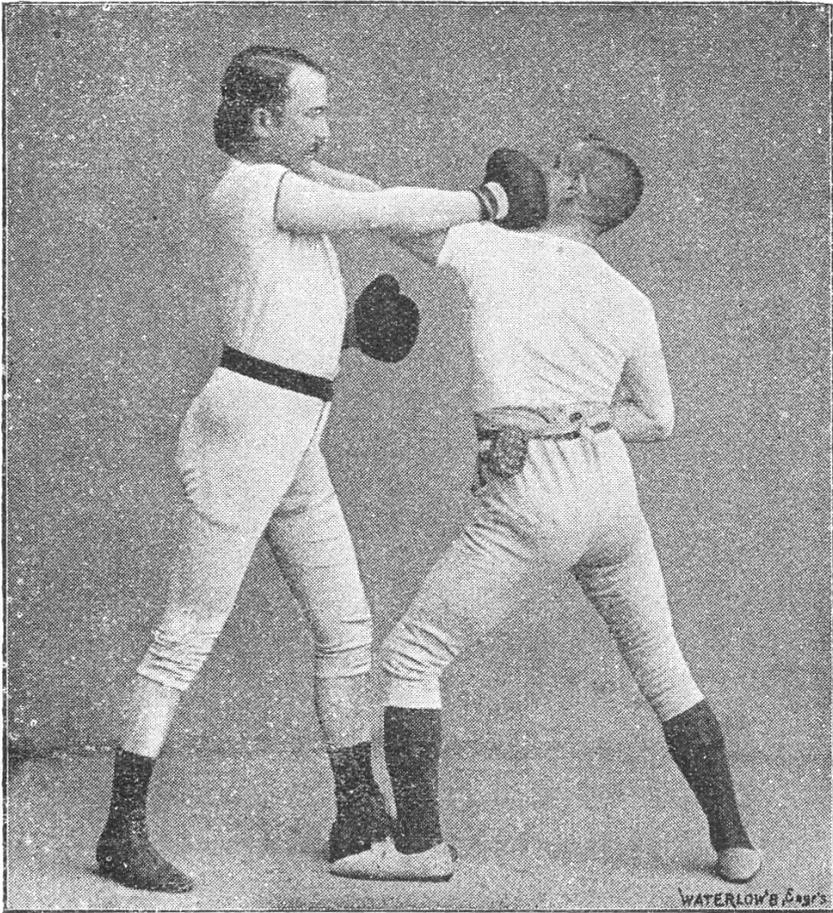
you, he may have a good hit at your left ribs, which are bound to be exposed to advances from his right hand. If therefore, you have made up your mind to merely avoid his hit by the side step, do so, and instantly follow it up by attacking his left ribs with your right, if, on the other hand, you find it necessary to make a complete retreat, let that retreat be a good one, *i.e.* get *well* away, and then turn sharply to your left and face your opponent in the usual manner. Vary your defence as much as possible, so as to leave your antagonist in doubt as to whether you are going to guard, duck, or slip, in order to avoid his blow.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE "CROSS-COUNTER."

THE cross-counter is delivered as follows:—When your opponent leads off with his left at your head, you step in and hit out with your right over his shoulder, catching him on the left side of the head or on the point of the jaw. In delivering this hit, which is a very severe one when it comes off properly, the right hand should be turned half round, as it is easier then to send the blow home. It is not by any means an easy hit to pull off, since you are apt to catch your opponent's left shoulder instead of his face, and you are rather open to a quick return with his right hand. When you think the adversary is going to cross-counter you with his right, either hit out straight at his head with your left before he steps in ; or, get your head well down and forward, so that the ear is almost touching the inside of your left shoulder or arm, and this will protect the point of your jaw and the left side of the head. Of course, in this

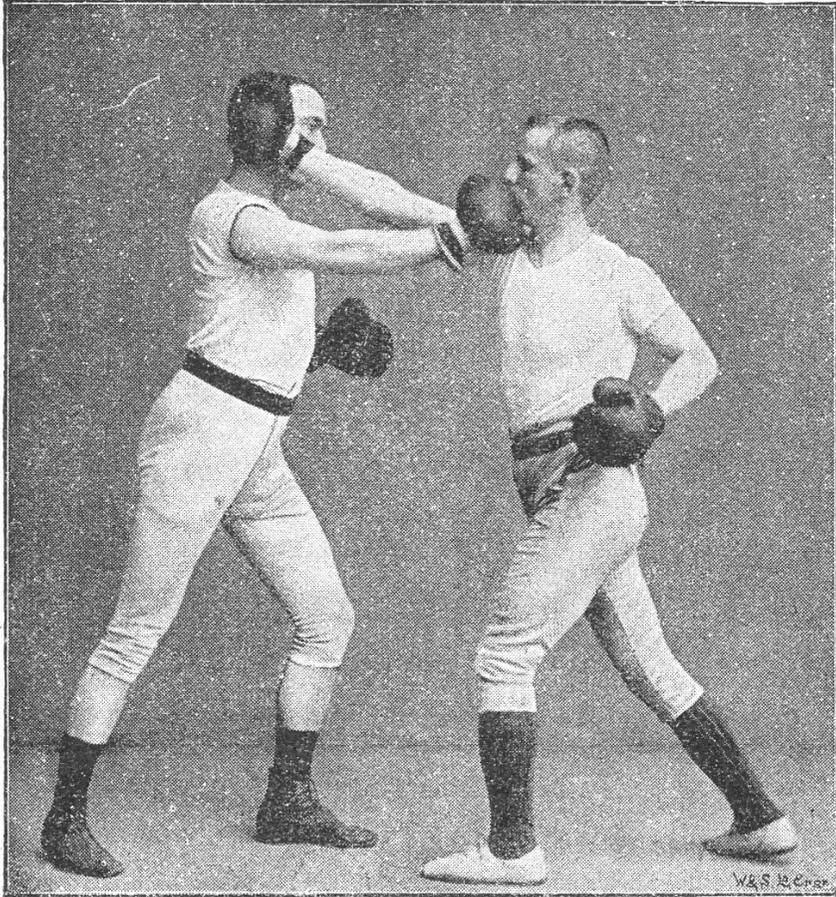
method of avoiding at cross-counter, there must be a certain chance of coming in for an upper cut from the adversary's left, and this you must be on the look-out for. This hit is also effected when the adversary's left hand has passed



THE "CROSS-COUNTER."

over your *right* shoulder, and, in this case, it will be readily understood that your right hand has a shorter distance to travel. This is regarded by many as the true form of cross-counter, though a chance of a hit is more often opened up

when the opponent's hand has passed over your left shoulder, as shown in the illustration. If boxing with a man who frequently uses the cross-counter, it is a good plan to draw



DRAW FOR "CROSS-COUNTER."

him on by a feint with your left, and then, just as he is giving his favourite hit, duck to the left and bring in your right on his face, following this up with your left on his right short ribs.

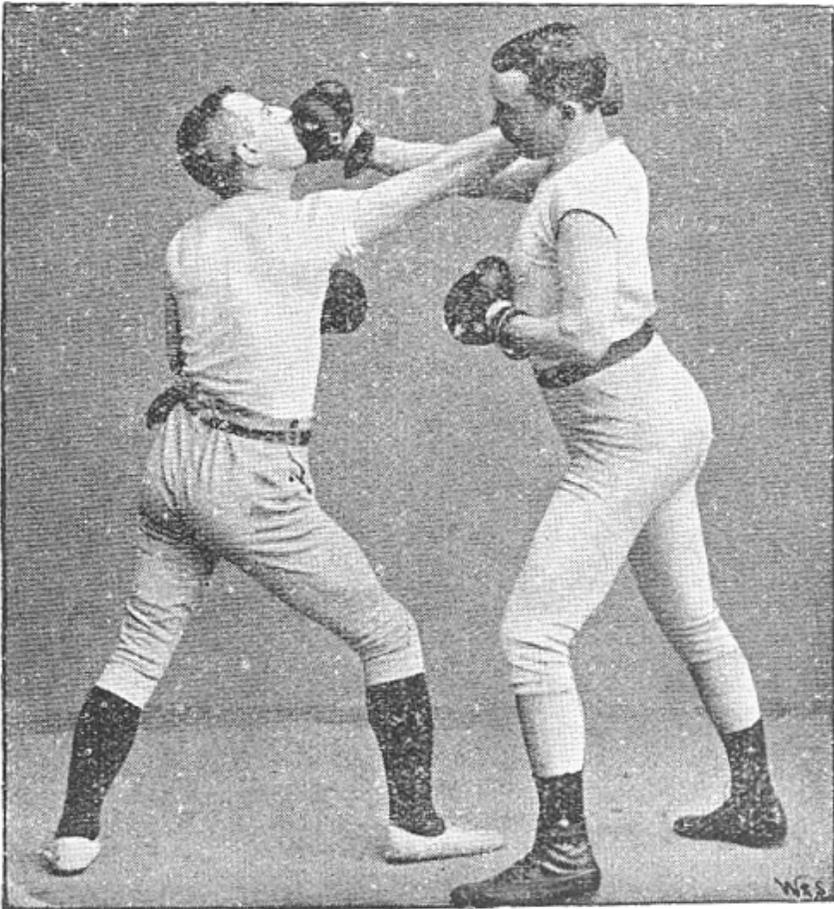
## CHAPTER VI.

## RIGHT-HANDED BOXERS.

YOU will sometimes come across a man who stands with his right foot and hand in advance instead of the left. At first this is apt to confuse, but do not on any account alter your position; for, if you do so, you will immediately place yourself in an unaccustomed attitude, whilst the adversary is at home in his position. In any case he must have an appreciable advantage, since he is always meeting left-handed men, whilst your encounters with right-handed men are few and far between, and you are thus bound to be handicapped. Let no opportunity of sparring with a right-handed man pass; for as often as not in an actual row your opponent goes at you with a crushing right-hander, hoping to polish you off with a single blow.

In commencing to spar with a right-handed man, it is better to wait for his lead off with the right, then step smartly to your left, letting his blow pass over your right shoulder and bringing in your left on the right side of his head; or, if he be a taller man, step to the left, ducking slightly at the same time, and bring in your right on the mark, and then, if he does not get out of reach, you may follow this up with the left on the right side of his head, or with your left contracted arm on his right short ribs. By leaving him to lead off you have a better chance of taking his measure as to speed, etc.; but if he is loth to commence hostilities, I would suggest the duck to the left and lead at his mark with your right, for it is a great point gained, if you can pull off a really good body blow to start with, and this particular hit can often be very effectively followed up by a second hit with the right in the face.

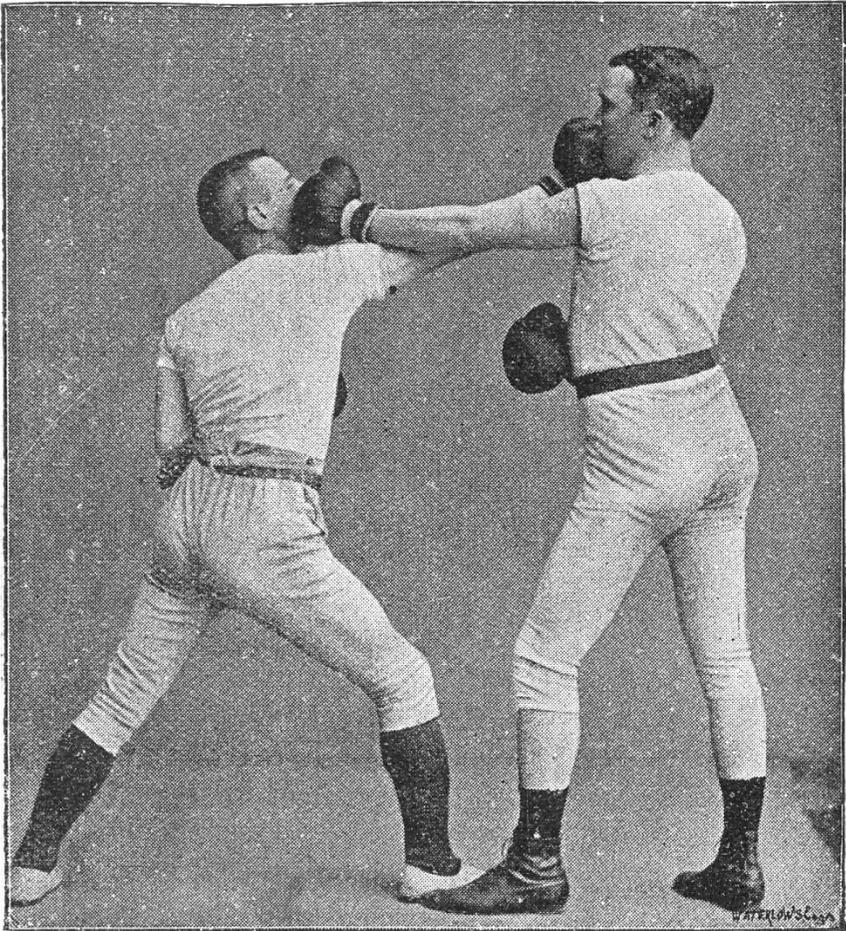
Keep working to your left with a right-handed boxer, as, by this means, you will most readily avoid right-hand leads. Should he lend off with his left, say at your body, in will be better for you to go at his face with your right on the chance



STEP TO THE LEFT, FOR MAN STANDING RIGHT FOOT FIRST.

of getting your hit home before his—and in this case your left will be well in position to guard hits from his right—or you may guard your mark with your right arm, simultaneously hitting out at his head with your left. If however,

he leads off at your head with his left, your best plan will be to step to the right and put in your left on his mark, or you may guard in the ordinary way with your right and return with your left. You must always be on the look-out



“CROSS-COUNTER” WITH LEFT, MAN STANDING RIGHT-FOOT FIRST.

for his right when he leads with the left, for his following up right-hand hit is a nasty one to guard. When opposed to a man who stands right foot first, your cross-counter will be effected with your left hand, as he leads off with his right.

As before said, it is at first very confusing: your left seems always getting mixed up with his right, and you feel generally “out of it” so to speak, and this demonstrates the advisability of never letting slip a chance of a good set-to with a right-handed boxer.

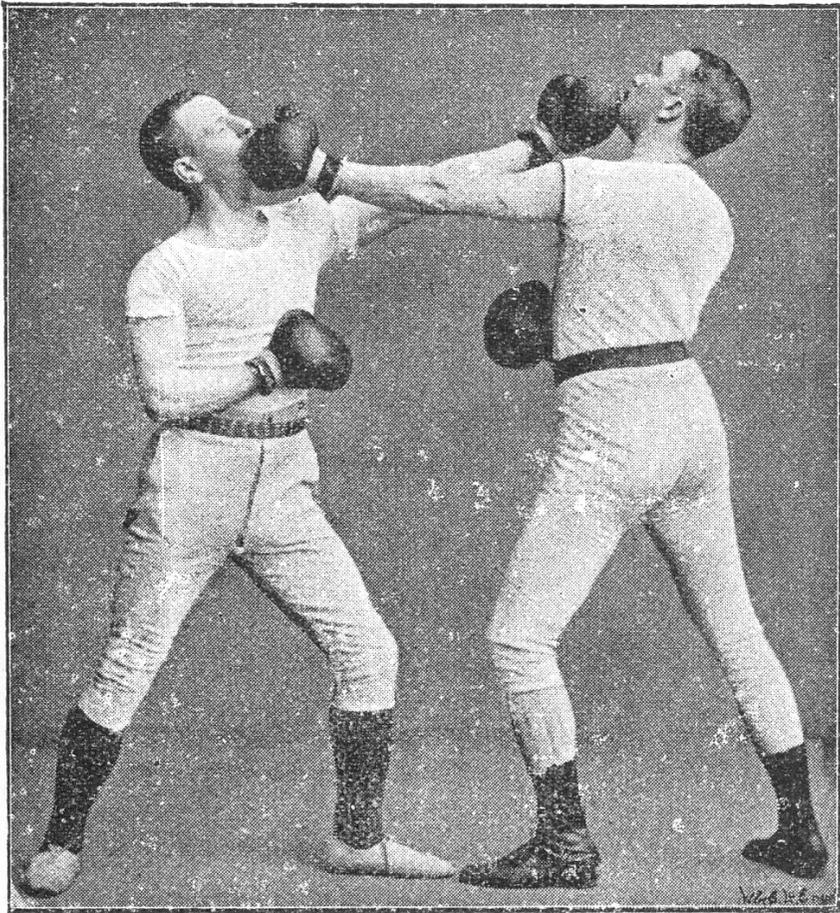
## CHAPTER VII.

### “TIMING” OR COUNTERING

THERE is nothing in the art which requires greater accuracy of eye, and knowledge of reach and speed, than this very delicate operation of timing. You somehow find out, partly by intuition and partly through the experience of a round or two, what sort of speed your opponent possesses, and you also take his measure as to reach. If you ascertain that you are slightly quicker and possess a longer reach, then watch carefully for the slightest movement on his part, and the very instant you perceive such movement, hit out bang at his head with your left. You will reach him first and the blow will be the more severe to him as he meets it in his effort to reach you. In this case make no attempt at guarding, it is unnecessary, keep your right well in reserve for his ribs or for a cross-counter, should he try a second hit before retreating. You can seldom properly “time” a man with the cross-counter *to start with*, it is generally after he has led off with his left, and his left is well past your head that your right comes in on his left ear or the point of the jaw, and, for preference, let it be the latter.

The above applies when you possess the advantage both in speed and length of reach. Next suppose that you are only better in rapidity ; then, *ceteris paribus*, you should still pursue the same tactics, for always remember that the

smallest fraction of st second determines who shall be the recipient of the "kick" in a hit. At the same time, in this case, you will do well to throw up your guard as you hit, or, in my opinion, better still, dodge your head smartly to the



THE "COUNTER"—BOTH MEN HITTING SIMULTANEOUSLY.

right at the moment of delivering the blow. You will thus, in the latter case, still have your right arm over your mark in case the enemy should have fainted at your head, and,

should he really have gone at your head, you will be better prepared, when his left has passed harmlessly over your left shoulder, to put in a good hit on his jaw or else to visit his left short ribs with a well-tucked-in punch.

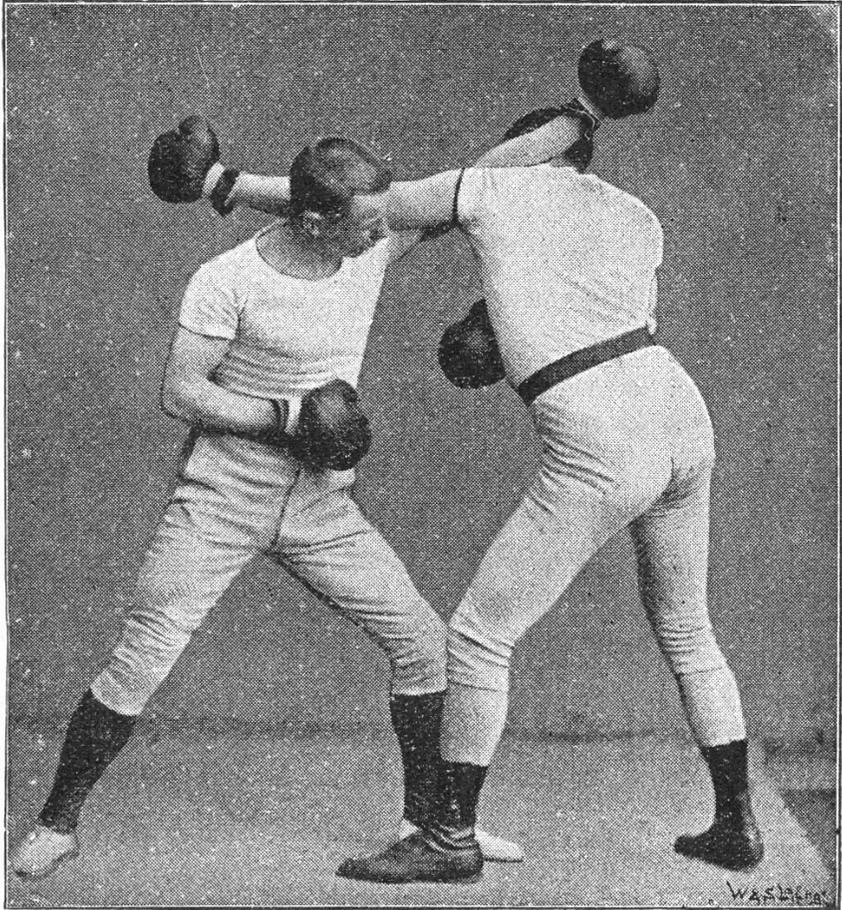
Don't try "timing" if you are both about equal in speed, but you may occasionally do so if you are a little better in the matter of reach. I say don't try timing where there is not much to choose between yourself and your opponent, because, if you do so, a slogging match of no great interest is likely to be the result.

What are you to do when your opponent is superior in speed, but about equal to you in reach? It is a much harder matter to answer this question, for relative weight, strength, and condition must have a great deal to say in respect to the tactics to be employed ; though, as a general rule, I have no hesitation in saying that you should act on the defensive, for, when you hit, the other man hits and, as previously shown, reaches you first. Better try to make the best use of your guard and look out for a favourable opportunity for popping in two or three good ones and then get away.

If two men are equally matched as regards size, weight, and experience, and one possesses the superiority in speed whilst the other has a better reach, I should certainly back the quicker man : supposing of course that both have mastered the rudiments, and can hit equally straight.

Depend upon it a *very* quick man, and therefore a good timer, even if he only weighs eleven stone, is a nasty customer to tackle. You don't know what to do with him, for the very instant you are on the point of pulling off something grand out pops his left, bang on your nose, with all the weight of his body to back it up. His head is never where you want it to be, and if by chance you get well home on his body it is probably at the expense of a rapid return on

your short ribs or side of the head. The delicacy of judgment which can be brought into play in the very practical work of timing can only be appreciated by an old hand, and, whilst on this portion of the subject, let me warn beginners



THE "COUNTER"—BOTH MEN HITTING AND DUCKING TO THE  
RIGHT

not to be discouraged at finding themselves constantly stopping at good timer's left with their faces. They should go on trying to improve their speed and straight hitting, never

for a moment losing sight of the definition of a straight line; but let them avoid boxing with very inferior performers, or with those extremely objectionable superior ones who try to “show off,” and really damage them and discourage them from learning.

Always try to get the best man you know to take you on now and again, if he is strong in the art, he will probably be merciful, and will, if he is a good fellow, try to give you the best advice in preference to rattling your ivories and making you see stars and stripes. But, having thus secured the assistance of a good professional or a clever amateur, when you are taking the lesson from him never be tempted to rush at him in a shabby attempt to knock him out. Should you do so, he will probably retreat two or three times in order to save you, and then when you repeat the experiment he will, as likely as not, time you, and put a stop to such liberties. Remember that you are taking a lesson, and be considerate to one who is trying to help you along, and who may experience much difficulty in preventing you from punishing yourself

I remember, many years ago, a big strong man presented himself at my old teacher’s rooms, and asked for a lesson. He was duly put in position and told to lead off with his left. Instead of doing this, he stepped in on the professor, who was standing easily and never suspecting treachery, and caught him a terrific smasher with the right, nearly bowling him over. The gentleman, who was nominally taking the lesson, had brought in with him several friends, who were to see him polish off my old instructor, and these said gentlemen applauded mightily at what they thought was a very clever piece of boxing. The same thing happened again, but with this difference, that the professor guarded the blow and, finding that everything he said was *intentionally* disregarded,

pulled himself together and both timed and cross-countered the sham learner to such an extent that he went away sorrowful, and with a consciousness that his friends' exalted opinion of him as a high fistic authority had gone down to zero.

Now, had this person said he wanted a "free" or "loose" spar, all would have been well ; there would have been no deception, and the professional would have let him down easily; but he came in ostensibly for a lesson, and then played the shabby trick above narrated. It is at least comforting to reflect that if a doubt existed about the colours under which he sailed into the room, there was no doubt about the headache with which he left it.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### FEINTING.

IT goes without saying that the less your adversary knows of your intentions, and the more you can see through his designs the better chance you will have. The object of the feint is to give the opponent a false impression of your tactics, and thus obtain an opening for attack at an unguarded point. In a former page I have alluded to the importance of never taking your eyes off those of your opponent. In feinting, one is occasionally advised to look at the part one is *not* going to hit at :—*e.g.* to drop the eyes to the mark if one is really going to hit at the head. The idea is that the enemy will think you are going to hit at the place you are looking at and will leave his head unguarded. He will do nothing of the kind if he knows what he is about, but the instant you take your eyes off his he will hit out straight at your head. Banish all ideas of

obtaining advantages by shifty practices like these. They are erroneous and will only get you into trouble. With your eyes straight on the face of your man you see *him*. All his details, hands, body, and feet, are well in your range



FEINT AT THE MARK WITH LEFT

of vision, just as are the various events happening in a street down which you may be walking, though your eyes may be fixed on a particular building, horse, or cart.

Feints may be divided into single and double. The

single feint being effected with one hand only, and the double being that in which both hands are called into play, as when you feint with the left and come in with the right, or *visè versa*.

Of the single feints the most useful is that at the mark. To bring it off you must be sure to get your head well out of the way; therefore duck sharply to the right, make as though you were going to send in a good left-handed punch just above the belt, then suddenly raise your hand and come in on the face. This is a most punishing hit, for it comes upwards with great force and may catch a man just under the chin or in the throat. Indeed, from the position induced by the feint and the spring you can get from your right leg, there is always a chance of knocking a man clean off his legs with this hit ; though, if righting with bare fists, you may get your knuckles rather cut about by his teeth.

Then there is the feint at the body with the right, which should be similarly carried out, only you must duck to the left instead of to the right.

With what I have termed single feints it is not very effective to feint at the head and come in on the body, and this manœuvre should only be resorted to as a draw, or means of leading your opponent to do something which you can immediately turn to your advantage. For example, you feint at his head with your left and he tries a counter with his left. You have played for this counter, and, expecting it, duck sharply to the right and come in with your left on his mark. These methods of drawing a man on are useful when you have an opponent who is very loth to lead off and leaves most of the attacking to you.

Of the double feints the best is perhaps that at the head with the left, duck to the right, and come in with the right hand on the left short ribs ; another is, feint at the short

ribs with the right, and come in on the face with the left; both of these are good serviceable feints.

Though these artifices are so useful, it is undesirable for beginners to think about or practise them, for, if they do, they may contract an undecided or shaky style. The first thing to learn is a good straightforward, leading-off manner of boxing, in which the attack is crisp and clear and the defence skilful. If you *commence* with feints, it will be a case of the cart before the horse, and you may quite possibly develop a poor peddling style of fighting, in which you begin by letting others see the uncertain state of your mind and end by really not being able to formulate a definite plan of attack.

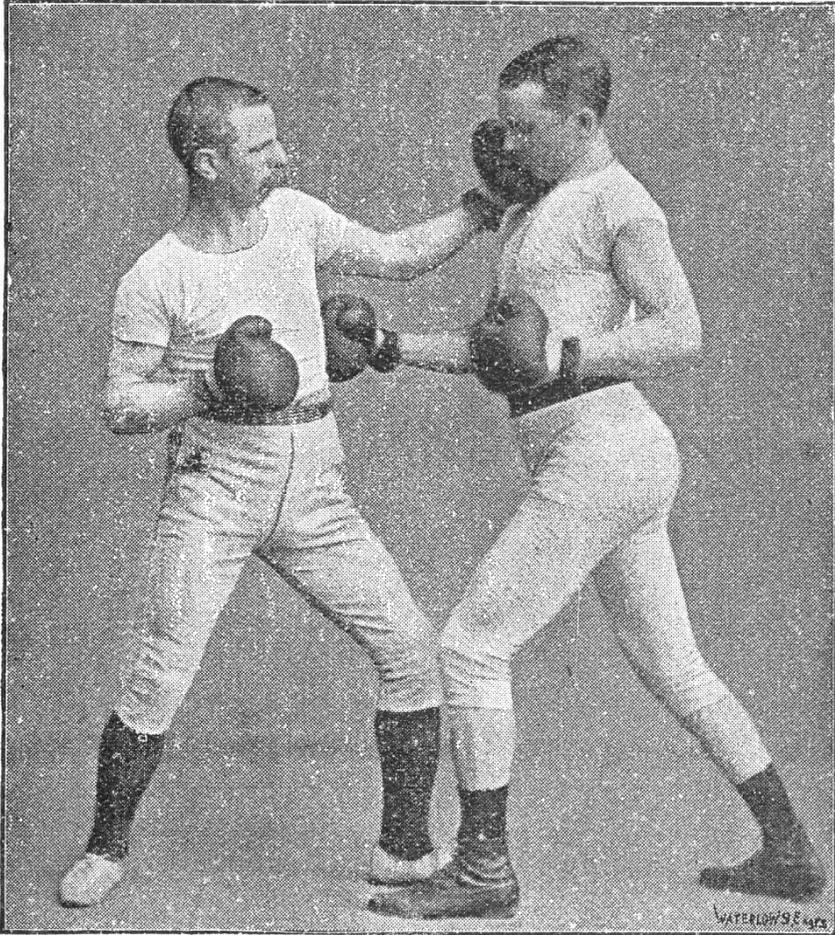
## CHAPTER IX.

"IN-FIGHTING." THE "CONTRACTED ARM," "UPPER-CUT," AND "CROSS-BUTTOCK."

WITH straight leads, counters and cross-counters, the weight of the body is thrown into the blow far more than it is in the class of hits we are about to consider. As before hinted, a hit should never be swung round or delivered with a bent arm, except when at very close quarters, and then the arm, and forearm should be at right angles to one another in order to bring in the greatest possible mechanical advantage. This "contracted-arm" hit depends really to a greater extent on the strength of the muscles than on the weight of the body, and, though it cannot pretend to the importance of the straight hit, it is of the greatest use at very close quarters—indeed, it is the only one you can make use of at "in-fighting."

There is another half-arm hit, called the "hook-hit," in

which the elbow is not so much bent as it is with the real "contracted-arm;" but there is little power in it, and, though it may reach a man at a greater distance than the contracted-arm hit, it is very little better than a magnified



THE "CONTRACTED-ARM" HIT.

box on the ears when it does come off. Then there is this great disadvantage about the "hook-hit:" you run a considerable chance of breaking your arm or disabling it against your opponent's elbow or shoulder, and, in any case,

you lay yourself very much open to a cross-counter: so it is far better to stick to quite straight hitting when at any sort of a distance, and to bringing in the "contracted-arm" or "upper-cut" when you come to close quarters.

Though you should *never* make use of the "hook-hit" yourself, it is as well to know how to deal with a man who believes in it, and tries it on against you.

From the partial bend of the arm it is physically impossible for this hit to extend as far as a straight hit, and, to avoid it, you should either counter your opponent with left or right, as the case may be, or, better still, take a *short* step back, and then, when he has swung round with the impetus of his blow, step in and cross-counter him.

If this retreat and advance is neatly executed, a very pretty knock-down blow often results—for the adversary cannot avoid imparting a twist to his body and thus laying himself delightfully open to a hit on the jaw or side of the head. I have seen a man who was trying the hook-hit twisted round like a top by this defence. He hit as hard as he could, and the momentum engendered being instantly followed up by the cross-counter caused him to gyrate twice and then sit down on the floor with a suddenness which surprised even his antagonist.

When an opponent rushes in and you have avoided him, either by stepping aside or by getting your head out of the way, it is often a good plan to step in and deliver the right hand contracted-arm hit, either under his left arm just above the belt, or, if he has very much overreached himself, you may possibly pull off the "kidney-hit," which is occasionally very effective. It does not often succeed; but if you have to deal with a rusher who also hits round with his left, it is on the cards that you will often see as much of his back as you do of his manly bosom, therefore, as the

kidneys are situated close to the spine, at the roots of the shorter ribs, it will be well to give him a good punch with the right in the region indicated.

Again you may, with a rusher, especially if he is taller



THE "UPPER-CUT."

than you are and comes in pretty straight, stoop slightly, and, when he is at very close quarters, give him the contracted-arm on the mark with your left, and then follow this up immediately with your right, also contracted-arm, on his

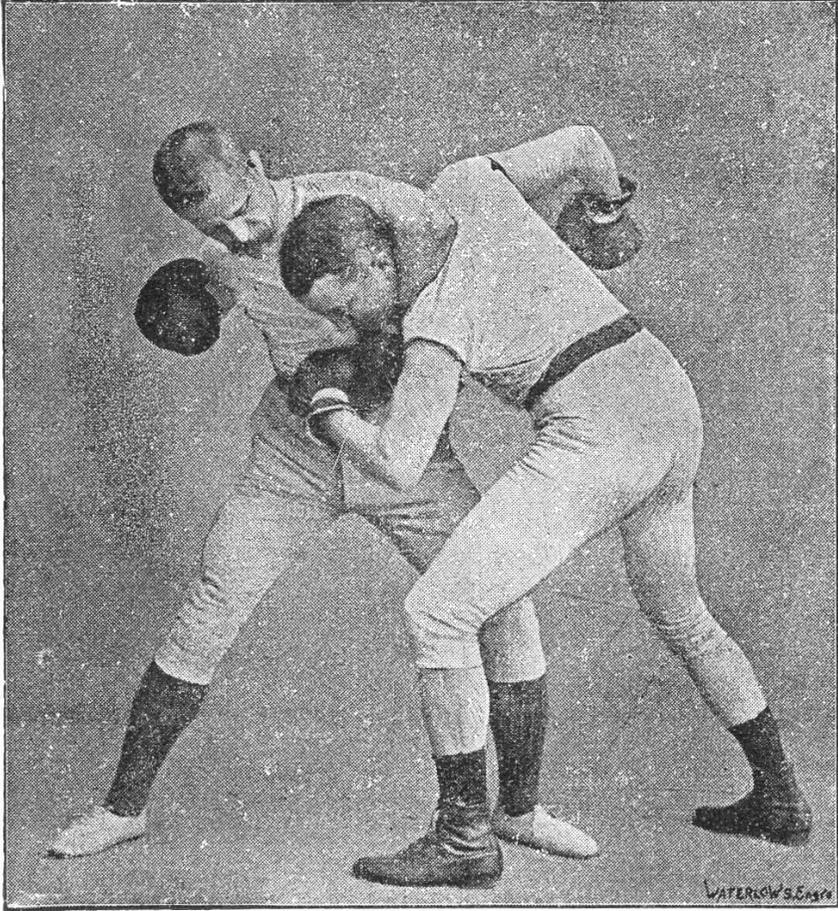
left short ribs. Directly you have broken away, remember to go back at once to the old position, and be ready to bang out straight with the left.

So far, under this heading, we have only considered the short-arm hit delivered in a half-round horizontal position. The upper-cut is delivered much in the same way, but vertically upward and with perhaps rather more of a swing in it—a hit intended exclusively for your opponent's face when he comes at you with his head rather down, or when he is ducking to avoid your left. This is often a good useful hit, *when it comes off*, but it is astonishing how many upper-cuts expend themselves in the air, and, when this is the case, they leave one's body rather exposed to a man who is quick at bringing in a body blow. It is a hit to practise carefully; it is so difficult to calculate: in my experience, one generally hits too soon, and the blow is wasted before the opponent's head is within reach.

"In-fighting" generally resolves itself into a wrestling match, or one man gets the other's head in chancery, and then there is room for a fine display of contracted-arm work. When your head is in chancery, immediately begin to work your left and right contracted-arms alternately on the adversary's mark and short ribs. He has only one hand to punch with, the other being engaged in holding your head. It is two to one on you in number of hits, and the hand you are using on his mark partly protects your face. You can make him very sore with this double hitting, but, personally, I should use the back throw whenever it came to a case of head in chancery.

Though "in-fighting" is so apt to degenerate into a rough sort of wrestling match, it should be practised very carefully, on account of its great utility in actual fights. For example, supposing a rough fellow gets your head

Lightly under his left arm, all you have to do is to put your right arm over his left shoulder with the hand well across his face or under his chin—at the same time making sure to have your right leg well behind him—then you can pull



HEAD IN CHANCERY

his head back sharply and throw him on his back. This, to my mind, is far the best stop for all cases of head in chancery. Needless to say it applies equally well when a man gets your head under his right arm; you then bring

your left arm over his right shoulder, *making sure to have your left leg well behind him*, pull his head back with your left hand, and throw him over your left leg on to the back of his head. You can vary either of these stops by hitting

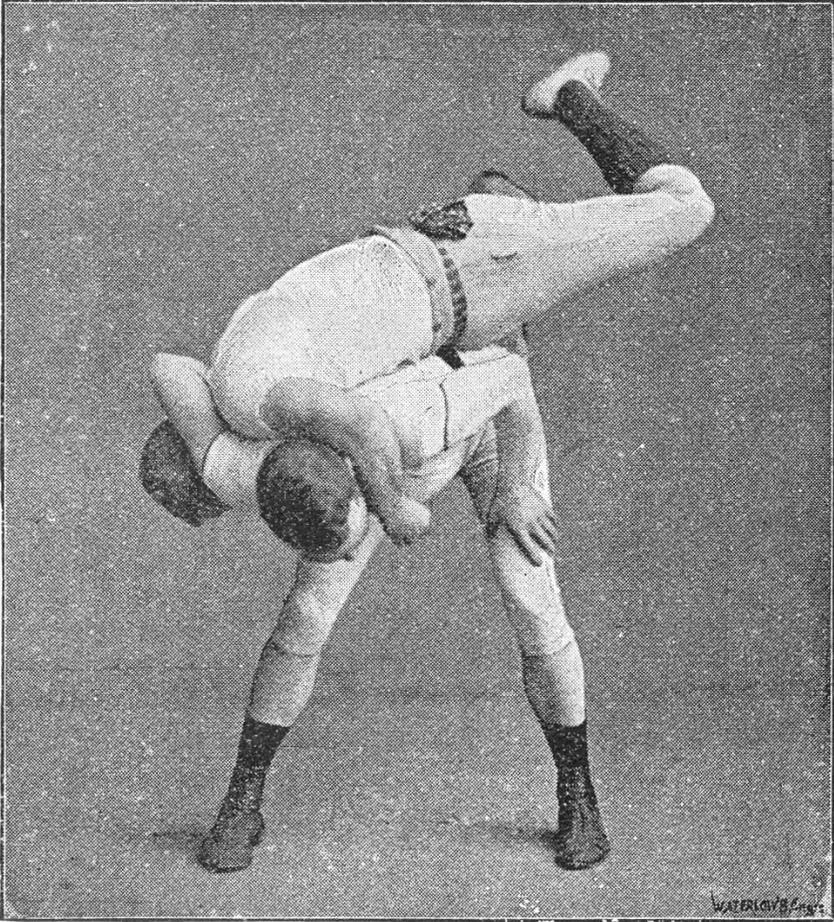


THE BACK FALL

him with the tree hand on the face or mark just before he falls.

With the “cross-buttock,” which arises immediately out of the head-in-chancery, your opponent swings you across

his hips, throws you in a sort of heap upon the ground, and then falls upon you. It is a most dangerous throw, and the stop above referred to should be instantly resorted to. Catches and throws are not supposed to be used in "boxing



THE "CROSS-BUTTOCK."

proper," but it is necessary to know something about them. since they are always likely to occur in actual practice.

In the "back-heel," which may be as dangerous a throw as the cross-buttock, we recognize a more complete form of

wrestling, and it often comes out of a left-hand lead off when your left has passed over the opponents *right* shoulder. He then holds your left in that position with his right hand, and getting his left forearm well under your chin forces your head back, at the same time drawing your left leg sharply back with his left heel, which strikes the back part of your leg just behind the knee. If this is done quickly,



THE "BACK-HEEL."



STOP FOR "BACK-HEEL."

and your opponent throws the weight of his body into the sort of *push* he ought to give, it will cause you a bad fall on your back, probably the back of your head. The best stop for it is to step well back with your right leg, and so increase the stability of your position. If you can do this quick enough to avoid being thrown, lose no time in getting your left leg from behind his, at the same time trying to give him the

contracted-arm with your right on the left side of his head. Remember that when once he has succeeded in getting a firm grip of your left arm and in throwing your head back your position is not a comfortable one, and you cannot make an effective hit until you have got out of the hold he has on you.

## CHAPTER X.

### “A ROUGH AND TUMBLE.”

As a beginner, it will be better if you seldom or never spar “free.” A good coach, who will constantly keep you up to your position, and from whom you learn a fresh wrinkle each time you box with him, is invaluable. If possible, go on with him for a year or so—varying the work with occasional spars with other *good* boxers—and then, when your eye possesses some nicety in the matter of judging distance, and your hitting and defensive powers are really showing improvement, you may take a few turns with rough natural fighters such as may be found in country villages.

Young farmers, labourers, etc. are often delighted to oblige in this direction, and will generally put on the mittens and go in at you with gusto, and then a rare opportunity will be opened for countering and timing. At first the blood-thirsty onslaughts may flurry you a bit, but never mind ; if the rushes are terrific, retreat slowly at first, acting entirely on the defensive and weaving off the blows as they are showered down. Rustics invariably hit down and swing their arms round like the sails of a windmill, hoping, after each miss, to catch you on the next downward swoop. Having learned to guard well in the weaving style, the chances are you won't be much damaged, and the blows will glance off your

forearms without jarring. And then when your burly antagonist gets a bit puffed by his rushes and superfluous evolutions, you may make a bit of a stand and try your hand at timing. It may not all come off as you expect and wish, and you may get a black eye or so, but that does not matter much, as you will have tried conclusions with a rough natural fighter, such as you may any day meet in the streets, and the experience is worth paying for.

Whatever you do, however, don't go in for *too many* of these "rough and tumble" people till you are really pretty good, and know fairly well the extent of your own capabilities. If you do so, and get badly knocked about, it may sicken you of boxing for ever. Two or three goes of this kind in the course of the year will be amply sufficient. As soon as the rustic has been polished off, or has polished you off go back to your scientific work and continue the study of those theories which, founded on correct mechanical principles, cannot fail to lead you on the right road to practical success. Think out plans of attack and defence before turning in at night, dream of them if you can, and then try to put them in practice in the morning. Fight with your brains, keep a cheerful heart, and, if your limbs are strong and quick, you ought not to despair of doing well as a boxer.

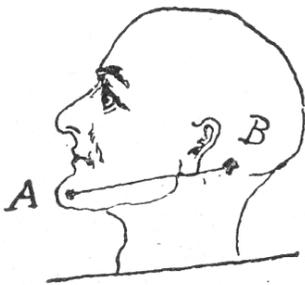
## CHAPTER XI.

### DANGEROUS HITS.

PUTTING aside those minor accidents, such as sprained ankle, sprained wrist, dislocated thumb, broken nose or black eye—all of which may occasionally happen—it may be well to shortly refer to those few hits which may be termed *dangerous*, from their liability to suddenly terminate a bout

or fight. Injuries on the stakes, or the sudden snapping of a tendon or muscle, or a bad sprained ankle may incapacitate a man, but I am now alluding only to those actual hits which, when they get well home on certain parts of the person, are liable to do considerable injury. As the history of the prize-ring shows, a good man has frequently been knocked out by one considerably inferior to himself, who has chanced to pull off one of the hits to which I allude. It is just the "off chance," and might not occur again, if the same men boxed or fought together for the rest of their lives. Very distressing to the backers of the "Crack" to see him laid low by the unlucky hit, very depressing to the top sawyer himself; but good judges discriminate and, recognizing the fact that the disaster is a mere chance facer from fortune, don't hesitate to back their man again, just as if he had never suffered the defeat.

I suppose more men have been knocked out of time by hits on the point of the jaw than by all the other hits put together. When this hit is delivered on either side of the chin and a little upwards a very severe shock is communicated to the head and base of the brain, and the reason



for this is that the distance between the point of application of the blow and the pivot on which the head works is considerable. In the accompanying outline drawing, if *a* represents the point of application of the blow, and *b* the point where the cervical vertebra joins the head, it will be at once seen that the line *A B* represents at considerable lever—longer and more powerful the nearer you take the point *A* to the point of the jaw—and that at sideways hit would tend to twist the head round more or less violently,

according to the force of the blow and the point of application.

The “pint o’ the jaw hit” is a horrid head-jerking affair, compared with which a flush hit on the nose, with all its concomitant stars and stripes, is a mere fleabite. Even a moderate infliction of this terrible hit is sufficiently punishing to make you feel uncertain whether you are twisting round the surroundings, or the surroundings are twisting round you, or whether both are not waltzing away together; but a severe visitation, if it does not break the jaw, is likely to produce an absence of interest in subsequent proceedings, or a complete forgetfulness of all immediate and pressing engagements. When this blow is delivered upwards, and straight under the chin, it often knocks a man clean off his legs, and he either falls flat on his back, or the back of his head may be the first part of his person to touch the ground. With the naked fist, a blow on the throat is often apt to be dangerous, but it is not much to be feared when the boxing-gloves are on, unless in the case of a very long-necked man.

Next in order of merit comes the hit on the “mark,” or pit of the stomach, exactly in the centre of the body and just under where the ribs divide. This little point, which is only the size of half-a-crown, is extremely sensitive, and being well above the belt, it is the mark to go for. Very many persons have been killed on the spot by a comparatively slight blow in this delicate region, and when it is considered that prostration—more or less severe—always follows these hits when they really get “home,” it is at once evident that to guard the mark well is a matter of the most vital necessity, and that is why I have, in a former chapter., rather enlarged upon the importance of guarding body blows. All round the body, just above the belt, one may

get severely punished, but nowhere so severely as on the mark, though what is called the “kidney-hit” sometimes produces terrible suffering. The kidneys are situated close to the spine, one on each side, and close also to the shortest ribs of all, and sometimes, when an opponent is slipping away and presenting his side too much, you may be able to deliver this hit. With the boxing glove it does not often hurt much, but with the naked fist it has been known to produce hæmorrhage of the kidneys and other painful and distressing results.

Lastly, we come to blows on the sides of the head; but these are comparatively rare and do not often do much harm when the gloves are on ; but the bones on the temples are very thin and weak, and men have had their skulls fractured by heavy blows on the sides of the head. As a matter of fact, though, when we hear of such a man being knocked down in the street and taken off to the hospital, suffering from concussion of the brain or fractured skull, the concussion or fracture has in nine cases out of ten been caused by contact with the pavement or curb-stone, and not by the hit, except in so far as it was the immediate cause of the fall.

There are, then, four “weak points,” viz. the point of the jaw, the “mark,” the short ribs and kidneys, and the temples. The first two are the most important, but think of them *all*, and, whilst doing your best to protect your own “weak points,” use every effort to visit your opponent on *his*, *i.e.* on occasions when boxing free—a practice you should not too often indulge in when beginning to acquire the rudiments.

## CHAPTER XII.

A STREET FIGHT, AND "LA SAVATE."

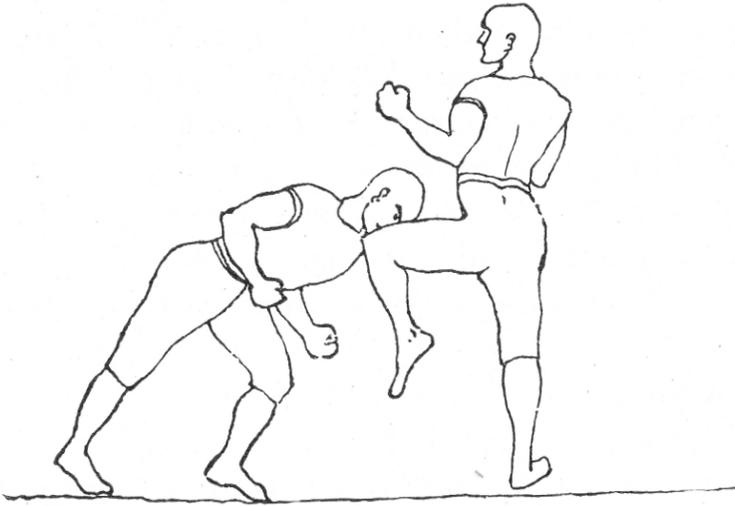
"Beware  
Of entrance to a quarrel : but, being in,  
Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee."

IT has fallen to the lot of many most inoffensive people to have to put up their fists through no fault of their own, either in an ordinary street fight, at an election, when party feeling runs high, or when attacked by a burly ruffian in a dark lane. As a rule, one has an umbrella or stick in one's hand, and with a knowledge of fencing or single stick a good deal of execution may be done with either. But on the supposition that no such accessories are handy, a few remarks may not be amiss if they help to give some idea as to the best way for an unarmed man to tackle an ordinary street rough.

When in a row of this kind, do not forget any of the fundamental principles, but remember, at the same time, that you probably won't have a fair boxer to deal with, nor even a good old British rustic, but a tough, sturdy rough from the slums—a fellow who will take *any* advantage of you, from kicking you in the stomach (this he is pretty sure to try on) with very thick hobnailed boots to stamping on your face with the same should you unluckily slip down.

When such a man is about to go for you, stand very evenly on both feet and rather more sideways than in ordinary ring-fighting, and be ready to sharply lift your left leg from the ground with the toe turned slightly in. If kicking was his game, you receive the kick somewhere on the outside of your leg; if butting with his head—another favourite

trick of the rough—you may pick him off in the face with your knee. Whatever his intention may have been, the very moment the attack is over you must do your *very best* to completely disable him in the shortest possible time; for he won't spare you, and accomplices may be lurking hard by. Don't hit a rough in the mouth if you can help it. I once had my right hand cut to pieces and poisoned in this way, and, though my assailant's "ivories" suffered, it was almost as detrimental to my own knuckles. Bring in your hardest contracted-arm on the side of his jaw, as near the



chin as possible, or on the temple, where the skull is thin and weak. Never get his head in chancery, but, should he get yours, try the back throw, spoken of in the chapter on "In-fighting."

The side-step and slipping may be invaluable if dealing with dangerous assailants; but do not forget that they can often kick very high, and frequently, when you think they are retreating, they will kick out suddenly, with a sort of sideways kick, either at your face or body.

This reminds me of *la savate*, a style of boxing we don't

think much of in these islands, but which is a good deal practised in France. In one of the first French dictionaries, we come across the following definition of *la savate*, which is described as :—"Espèce de gymnastique qui a pour objet de passer la jambe à celui qu'on attaque ou par qui on est attaqué, et qui consiste à appliquer entre le mollet et la cheville de son adversaire un coup de pied qui lui fait perdre l'équilibre."

But this is by no means all. In this style of French boxing you are allowed to use your feet, hands, and head—the latter for butting purposes—on any portion of your adversary, from the crown of the head to the sole of his foot. No "below the belt" restrictions hamper you, and the French *savateurs* claim that a combination of British boxing and the *savate* should constitute the real art of self-defence, and that our restricted method of fighting should be called the "fistic art" simply.

So highly do the French esteem their "knockabout" style, that they believe a good *savateur* is a match for any four ordinary men, and more than a match for any British boxer who can be brought forward.

Without wishing to underrate the merits of the French style, one cannot help feeling that a good many of the statements made concerning it must be taken *cum grano*.

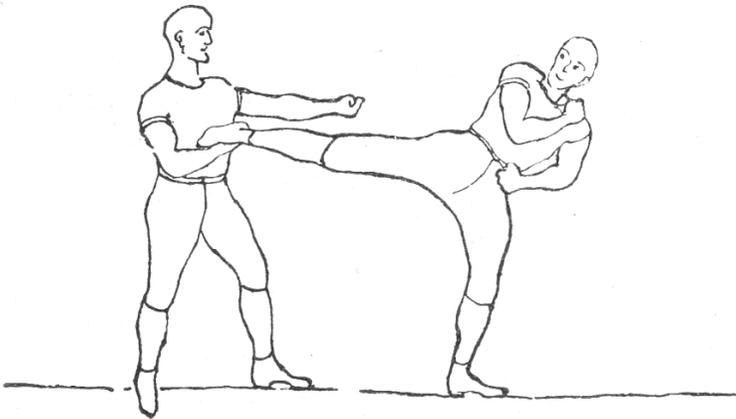
It is not easy to get anyone in England who can give proper instruction; but, if possible, secure the services of a friendly "Jaques Bonhomme" who is *au fait* with *la boxe* as practised in his country. N.B.—Make him promise not to kick out all your front teeth as a "lead off."

My own humble opinion is that the *savate* is not very much use when opposed to really first-rate boxing, but when the nail-shod rough springs it on you unawares it is apt to do much damage. Be extremely careful how you approach

one of these heavily booted gentry *when he is lying on his back*, for, if not quite insensible, he is certain to kick at your face if you stoop down, or the lower parts of your body if you remain erect, and, in either case, he may take a good deal of the "fight" out of you, if he does not altogether disable you.

I have drawn a couple of rough outlines to indicate the manner of delivering two of the most important *savate* hits.

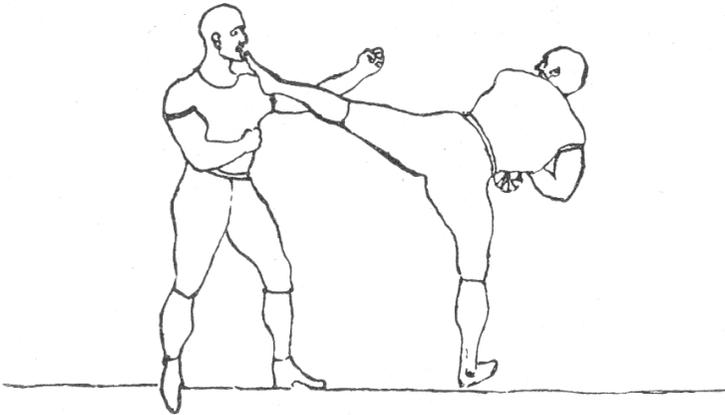
On no account allow sentiment to interfere in dealing with a cowardly pest of society, who can only be regarded



as a terror and danger to women and children, and a cumberer of the earth. If you should be lucky enough to stun one of these fellows, and wish to capture him, immediately throw him on his face, kneel on the small of his back, and tie his hands behind him with his own necktie or braces. Be sure to tie well and tightly, and then, when he comes to, make him get up and walk him off to justice. Keep near him, holding by one arm; should he kick or struggle, you can throw him on his face again, for when his hands are tied you are master of the situation. The above is only in case you wish to make the capture, and think

you can do so without too much risk of accomplices, it is far better, however, when you have stunned your man, to get away as quickly as possible, and inform some friendly policeman or other custodian of the peace of what has happened.

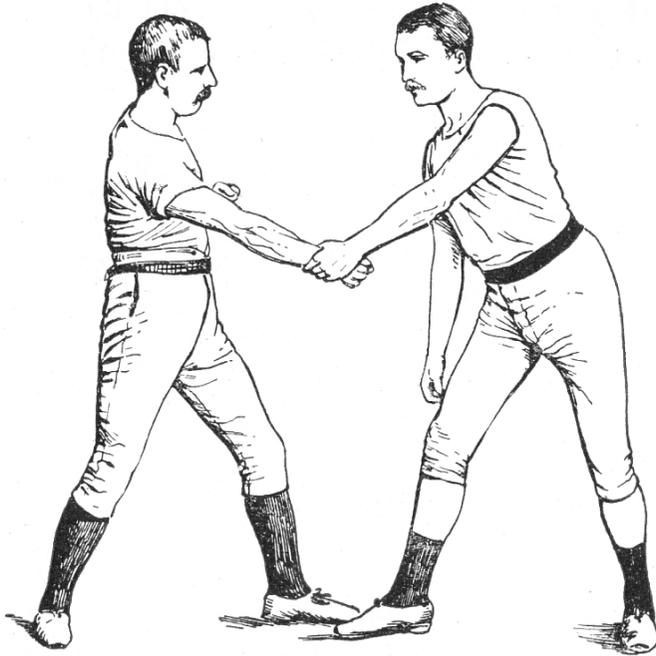
All this only applies when you are attacked by a single individual. Always avoid an attack by a number of roughs, even at the cost of having to show them a clean pair of heels. If you *cannot* escape, single out the biggest and strongest, and get the first blow if you can—often, if the



champion is knocked down *at starting*, all the others run off or slink away like whipped curs. Roughs cannot often run very well, and it is not cowardly to escape, by the best means nature has afforded you, from the horrible fate of being kicked to death by half a dozen heavy pairs of boots. It would really be almost your duty to run away, and you could not be compared to the soldier who, when told by his commanding officer that if he ran away he would be called a coward, said, "I would rather be called a coward for the rest of my life, than be a corpse for five minutes!"

There is a growing habit amongst roughs of using knives,

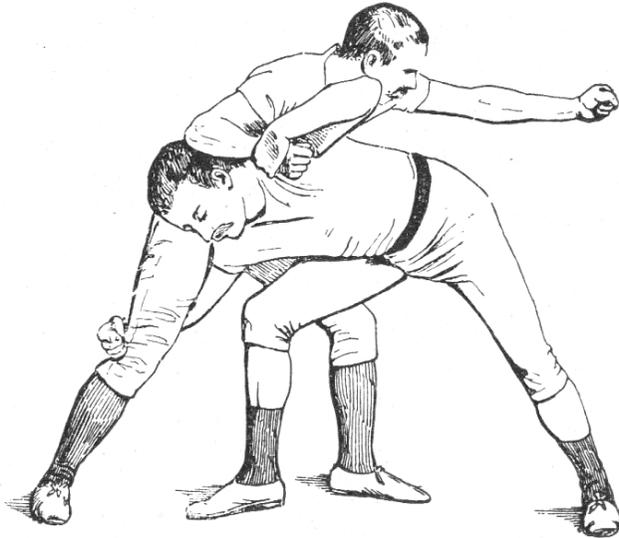
and it is sad to see this un-English method of settling disputes, etc., gaining such ground in this country. If a man attacks you thus armed, you must get hold of his knife-hand at any cost, and then it will be a question of strength, in which wrestling would stand you in good stead; and if you can get him down you will be quite justified in hitting him, whilst on the ground, with half a brick, a stone—or doing *anything* in short—to completely incapacitate him. Senti-



ment and line feeling should be absolutely *nowhere* with the “knifer.” Similarly with the horrid pest who whips out a six-shooter ; stoop down instantly, *as low as you can, and go for his revolver-hand*. His shot may then pass over your back, or, at any rate, may not wound you mortally, and you will have a chance of directing the remaining bullets to billets outside your frame—if possible, of course, accelerate the demise of your cowardly assailant by turning the muzzle of the pistol towards him, for the revolver-man, like the

knifer, is entitled to no quarter and no consideration whatever.

A good knowledge of wrestling is of course invaluable, and I should advise every boxer to learn a few catches and throws, *not* for use in the ring, be it observed, but to serve in a possible encounter in the streets. Whilst on this question of throws, it may be advisable to mention a catch which certainly never has been practised (and let us hope never will be!) in the ring. When at close quarters, you seize the enemy's right hand with your left, at the same



time pulling him towards you; simultaneously you duck forward and put your right arm between his legs, catching him round the right thigh. Then, if you have given a good pull, you have him clean off his legs in a helpless position across your shoulders, and you can then throw him on to his head from a decent height. It is partly to avoid this most dangerous catch and throw that I have recommended a sharp lifting of the left knee whenever a man rushes in head down. It must be remembered, however, that the instant the attack is over, the knee must go down again,

otherwise your assailant will try a catch and throw by seizing your left leg—this raising of the knee is quite a sudden movement as a defence against kicking and butting, both of which methods of attack are familiar to the common rough.\*

As regards the ring and ordinary competitions, be careful to remember that you must not hit or catch a man anywhere below the belt.



Those of my readers who wish to study wrestling may be referred to Mr. Walter Armstrong's work on the subject, in which the various styles are described. As before hinted, it is important to understand and practise this branch of the art of self-defence.

\* The above-mentioned catch is only given here as an example of what the boxer may come across any day. It is also very nice to know how to do it yourself, in case at any time you may want to remove an objectionable person from your house into the street. A small man can carry off a man of fifteen stone in this way.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## BAD EXAMPLES.

THROUGH copying others we are so often led into bad habits, that it may be well to collect under one heading a few of the more striking and contagious of the tricks which tend to damage the boxer's good form.

Though constantly on the alert for the faintest sign of attack, and ever watchful of your opponent's movements, do not let any tactics he may adopt cause you to forget position and correct principles. Do not copy him, if you see that his style is bad, whilst you are convinced, from the teaching of the best masters, that your own is good. For example, if the adversary begins prancing about, and trying to be very artful by wagging his head from side to side, rather become quieter in your movements in proportion as he increases the vigour of his unnecessary and wearying antics. It is peculiarly easy to pick up tricks and bad habits in boxing, and in this connection it may be well to say that you should never do anything contrary to good fighting principles, even in the lightest friendly spar. This shows, too, how important it is to get your first ideas from a good man.

One often sees men guarding with the glove instead of with the arm; it is a great mistake, for when you have really to use your fists these pads will be absent. The gloves are merely accessories to enable men to practise righting without damaging one another; they are the buffers to save an opponent's face and ribs, but not shields to protect your own person. The gloves, therefore, should be as small as possible, consistent with a thorough covering to the

knuckles. I once knew a little man who had such enormous gloves that, when he held them up, one could only see his feet and legs, and the only thing to do was to hit out bang at where one knew his head ought to be, and, as this generally produced a temporary separation of the featherbeds in which his hands were cased—a sort of rift in the clouds—there was some chance of getting at him. There should be no knobs or uneven surfaces in your gloves, and the harder they are—they should be tightly stuffed with the best horse-hair—the better. The softer a glove is the easier the knuckles are felt through it.\*

A bad and very easily acquired habit is that of turning the back and slinking out of reach. It is often done ; and you may see men who ought to know better turn completely round and sneak away to the right. The direction of retreat is correct enough, since it avoids the adversary's left, but the manner of it is entirely wrong. When slipping, or using the side-step, do not get too far round, as it is impossible to protect the side-ribs, and difficult to guard the side of the head. In short, you should never be so far turned away from your opponent as not to be able to see what he is doing.

Another bad fault is that of constantly showing the right with a sort of imaginary feint. By imaginary I mean a sort of shuffling, uncertain movement of the hand—aimless, and ending in nothing. You may have to spar for an opening, but that is quite a different thing from the imaginary feinting to which I allude. As soon as your mind is made up, proceed to carry your plan into effect, since, by so doing, you will quicker arrive at what your opponent is made of

\* You cannot use better gloves than the "Champion," manufactured by Frank Bryan, 38, Charterhouse Square; they are made of the best leather, and the arrangement of the padding is first-rate.

and can better gauge his intentions than would be possible by using shuffling tactics, which may in the end permanently injure the determined character of your boxing.

Yet another bad habit, which is soon copied, is that of allowing both arms to swing down by the sides. It is usually a fault of carelessness. The hands should rarely be seen below the belt. Of course they will sometimes drop below for a second, but remember that the nearer your fists are to your opponent the shorter the time in which they can reach him.

Should your adversary spring about the ring like a tiger—both feet off the ground at once—don't copy him, he is exhausting himself ; and if you want to knock him down an opportunity is very likely to occur when you may catch him on the hop, so to speak, just in the middle of one of his springs, and then over he will go like a ninepin. As there are exceptions to all rules, there is one to this. When pressed very hard and suddenly, you may be compelled to spring back to avoid punishment ; but, as a golden rule, never let both your feet be off the ground at the same moment, for it is dangerous to be without some solid foundation at the moment of the assault.

The man, too, who stamps violently is not to be copied. It is a mere trick which, on boards, sometimes strikes terror into the heart of a beginner. Your feet will get quite warm enough without knocking them about on the hard floor or ground and shaking the joints of your legs. When the stamper stamps, you *hit*.

Dropping the eyes, or turning them away, is a very bad fault indeed, and should be most carefully avoided. The very moment a man looks away, hit out bang at him somewhere.

Avoid hitting with the inside of the glove. It is most

unfair at close quarters to take a hit with the padded part of the glove and return it with the inside of the hand. This kind of hitting should disqualify in a competition.

The flip-flap style is also to be discountenanced. It is when, in leading off you open your hand and, hitting rather down, you flip your opponent on the head or shoulder over his guard. These hits, of course, give an extra reach, and, since it is only the soft end of the glove which comes home, they ought never to be counted in a competition, though, from their utter harmlessness, they need not disqualify. It often happens that the man who "flip-flaps" at a distance hits with the inside of the hand when at close quarters.

Endeavour, as far as possible, to keep the mouth shut when actually sparring, and never let the tongue get between the teeth, for, if you do so, there is a chance of having it very severely bitten if your opponent happens to hit you ever so slightly on the chin. In the intervals between the rounds it is a good plan to open the mouth and take in as much air as possible by good deep inspirations.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### COMPARATIVE MERIT.

UNTIL you have actually seen two men spar together several times it is very hard to form a correct judgment of how they stand relatively to each other. Of four boxers, A, B, C, and D, A beats B, B defeats C, C knocks D out of time. Now it might, perhaps, seem, on the *a fortiori* principle, that A would have no difficulty in getting the better of D. This, however, by no means follows as a matter of course ; and D may quite possibly find little difficulty in vanquishing A.

The reason is that D may possess some particular quality which makes him the very worst man for A to get at, though B or C, inferior men, may be able to tackle him. When we therefore hear of some very great fighting man with a tremendous reputation—*famâ super athera notus*—whose claret has never been tapped, and who can knock any one out of time in three rounds or so, we can never feel quite sure that some humble individual does not exist with the exact qualifications and requirements for reaching the giant.

The credulity of a very considerable portion of the public, with respect to what these highly-reported-in-the-press gentlemen can do, is marvellous. The simple faith in a gushing paragraph magnifies the hero double his size in imagination, and when at last he gets his head punched like any decent human being, the fall of the Milo from his lofty pedestal causes a stare of blank amazement. One sometimes hears such stuff as this : “He likes punishment,” and then, almost in the same breath, “No one has ever touched him”! The hearers are left to work out the problem of how any man can either like or dislike punishment if he has never experienced it. This frothy kind of rubbish does no good to the noble art, and rather reminds one of the showman at the fair, “Walk up, walk up, gents, and see the little wonder, wot fought a hundred and fifty rounds with his heart a-hanging outside of his ribs !”

It is, of course, hopeless to expect to turn out anything very grand with poor materials. A “woodeney,” stiff man, with rigid muscles *never* becomes a loose quick hitter, and therefore, though practice will improve him, he can never make a first-rate boxer, any more than a leek can be transformed by cultivation into a rose, or a carthorse be trained to win the Derby. There are really three general requisites—speed, strength, and endurance. The first two are born

in a man; they are eminently natural, though capable of improvement or the reverse. The latter may owe so much to the trainer's art that it must be looked upon as more artificial than either of the others. Be this as it may, not much can be done without a combination of the three. Very big men often possess the strength, but lack both speed and endurance. Little men may have both speed and endurance ; but of what value are these advantages if your light-weight is so weak that he cannot "hit a print in a pat of butter?" The judicious blend is the thing, and it is more often found in middle-weights than in heavies or lights.

As I have before hinted, you should always make use of your height. It is a great advantage to stand over your opponent, so never "stoop to conquer." Speaking generally, it is, perhaps, better for you to box "up hill" as a rule, *i.e.* to accustom yourself to spar with bigger men than you are yourself. It is more fatiguing, both on account of the higher position of your hands and the amount of extra running about you may have to do to avoid being cornered. At the same time, nothing can possibly be worse than to get out of the way of tackling shorter men. If you neglect the shorter ones, you will one day find some sturdy little fellow, good at "in-fighting," visiting your ribs with horrible pertinacity, and you may, from the habit of doing nothing but long leads off, experience extreme difficulty in keeping him at a distance when he is bent on coming to close quarters. Occasionally, too, you come across a short man with an extraordinarily long arm, wide shoulder, and consequent length of reach—such a man as Professor Bat Mullins, the longest-armed short fighting-man we have in this country, and one who is at the same time a most punishing hitter, when he likes.

Take, therefore, plenty of practice with good men of all heights and weights, and particularly note that when fighting a shorter man than yourself you should be more "pulled together," so to speak. Your left elbow should be lower and nearer your side, so as to guard contracted-arm hits with his right. If your opponent is a good deal shorter, but at the same time very strong, like Mr. Bat, and an opportunity for getting his head in chancery presents itself I should say without hesitation, "let that opportunity slide." For, as soon as ever you have his head well tucked under one arm, and have started a sort of pump-handle action on his face with the other hand, it's a thousand pounds to a penny that he will instantly use both hands alternately on your mark and short ribs, probably with such good effect that you will let go his head with greater joy than you took possession of it. After all, and in any circumstances, the head-in-chancery trick is not worth much (except as a means of establishing a funk in the heart of a duffer), for one is always liable to the treatment indicated above, and it is very hard to avoid the back throw spoken of in Chapter IX.

Therefore, instead of taking your short man's head in chancery, administer a good upper-cut or contracted-arm hit and get away, remembering next time to use your best endeavours to prevent his coming to such close quarters. It is part of a short man's tactics to try to induce in-fighting, for then his body-blows are most effective. In drawing comparisons, it must be observed that, although height is an unquestionable advantage, a well-knit, and at the same time free-hitting, small man is often very superior to a long, shambling tall one, even though the latter may be able to hit straight. The reason is this : the shorter man, if he can escape a few of the counters and stops of his long-reaching

antagonist, frequently gets in and administers more punishment by a few very hard and well "tucked in" body-blows than his adversary can deal out in the same number of long straight leads.

## CHAPTER XV.

### INSTRUCTION.

WHILST on the lower rung of the ladder, avoid as much as possible boxing with inferior men, from whom you can learn nothing but faults. Try to get at the style of Jem Mace, than whom a better or more scientific boxer never stepped into the ring, and if possible take lessons from some first-rate professor, such as Ned Donnelly or Bat Mullins. Amongst the light-weights, George Roberts is a boxer whose style is good, and he can teach without knocking his pupils too much about. At Cambridge, George N. Jackson is a first-class man to learn from, and he has taught some very good boxers, amongst them Mr. Tom Milvain, who is a thorough *fighting* amateur of the good old school.

. When out of reach of professional aid, get hold of the best amateurs you can, and with the help of sound general rules and a steady adherence to correct principles you should be able to advance somewhat in the noble art, always remembering, however, that an hour's really good practical instruction is worth a week's study of books. For example, a first-rate teacher will demonstrate the theory of position and straight hitting, which I have endeavoured to explain in Chapters II. and III., with such force that you will no longer remain in any doubt, and will not rest till you have made a handsome effort to master the question practically.

Do not let me give the impression of underrating the value of scientific theory in any branch of sport. A common expression one hears every day is this: "Oh, that's right enough in theory, but it's wrong in practice." This cannot be. The practical failure merely shows that something has been left out in the theory. In other words, if a theory is correct, the practice following on that theory should also be correct. Never be discouraged, therefore, when you hear of men with a slight knowledge of boxing having been beaten by unscientific men. The fault lies not with the science, but with the indifferent exponents of the science. There is not a single rule in correct boxing which will not bear the strictest investigation by the theories of mechanics. It may be said that all this is self-evident, and outside the scope of this little treatise ; but one hears occasionally such drivelling bosh talked about boxing by those who are either totally ignorant, or by members of that numerous class to whom a little knowledge has proved, if not actually dangerous, at least misleading, that it has seemed necessary to devote a few lines to the matter.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### TRAINING.

RECENT years have witnessed many improvements, but few subjects have made more rapid advances and are now better understood than the art of dieting and generally training a man for any particular muscular effort. Formerly, whether the question was one of preparing for rowing, running, or fighting, our forefathers stuffed the victim with raw beefsteaks, morning, noon, and night, until the very sight of meat was loathed and abhorred. Sweating was

resorted to, and rightly, though in many instances it rather weakened than otherwise, in consequence of the unwholesome diet failing to properly assimilate. The refinement of the art of training was not then understood; all were treated too much alike, and there was but little consideration for age, temperament, and general habit of body. "You are in training, and therefore must eat this food after your mornings run of two or three miles." All this has now changed, and, though the subject is well understood, it may not be out of place to give a few general hints on this very important question. Training is requisite for all sports, though it varies much according to the kind of exercise you are training for. For instance, the training for boxing and rowing is very similar, but quite a different *régime* is necessary to get a man fit for the cinder-path.

In all preparation for hard exercise, a thoroughly healthy skin action is essential. The sweat-glands must be kept well at work as they relieve the kidneys, and dross is eliminated which would otherwise cumber the system. This action may be produced by what may be termed artificial means, such as the Turkish bath, or by natural exercise; and the latter is, of course, far preferable, since the muscles and the circulation are both benefited thereby. Still, the bath may often be resorted to with beneficial results, only, however, where it is enjoyed and *does not produce lassitude*. These remarks are very general ; and I will now proceed to deal entirely with boxing training.

The younger a man is the easier it is, as a rule, to get him into good condition. At eighteen, the muscles are hardly set, the frame has yet to grow, and the habits are not formed as they are when thirty is passed, and there is consequently less trouble in dealing with the subject. When a man approaches the forties, you must deal tenderly

with him, and not knock off his glass of port or his cigar with brutal abruptness, for if you do so you will at once make him uncomfortable, and destroy his peace of mind, rob him of his rest, and do damage which it may take long to repair. An old 'un—by this I mean any man between thirty-five and forty-five, and without disrespect for the many strong active men of mature years—must be dealt with gradually. A boy will get to the pink of perfection in a fortnight, but three months may be needed to bring a man of forty to A1 condition. The first thing to do is to discover all you can of his constitution, and then to ascertain how he is in the habit of living ; how much he usually eats and drinks, and the amount of exercise he normally takes. Next insist on a slight increase in his daily exercise, whatever that may be. Walking is the best, with a dose of Indian clubs in the morning and afternoon. Keep him at his boxing three or four times a week, and never let him fatigue himself. After a week or two begin to slowly knock off his stimulants. If a quart of beer has been his daily allowance, reduce this to a pint-and-a-half; and if he usually drinks a small bottle of port after dinner, reduce the size of this bottle. Deal similarly with cigars or pipes, but, if he is a regular smoker, be careful how you stop his after-breakfast or after-dinner pipe—it will do him more harm than good in all likelihood.

For example, we will suppose a strong, healthy man of forty in fair exercise wants to go in for a middle-weight competition, and that his weight, which at twenty used to be eleven stone, has increased to thirteen stone. It will take a lot of trouble probably to get him back to anything like his old weight; but the effort must be made to reduce him below the middle-weights—eleven stone four pounds.

Commence, as above indicated, by a gradual diminution of liquids. Substitute, if agreeable, a small bottle of champagne occasionally at meals instead of beer, which is too fattening. Let the food he eats always be of a very wholesome and digestible character, and let him always stop eating with a capacity for "just a little more." Then, having started with some attention to diet, let him don plenty of warm flannels and sweaters, and work each day either at running, boxing—skipping for an hour in wet weather is a very good substitute for the clubs or dumbbells—or any exercise which causes him to perspire freely without fatiguing him. After each of such exercises there should be plenty of friction to the skin with rough towels. Some people recommend a wash with warm water, and then a cold shower-bath ; but this latter seems often detrimental to the middle-aged liver, and therefore should not perhaps be resorted to. In the case of a very young man it will probably do no harm. Early morning rises and running before breakfast, though much to be commended in many cases, are not often appreciated by the more mature, and whenever they harass or worry they should not be countenanced.

With a man past the first flush of youth you begin his training early in order that you may, without any abrupt transition, lead him to do without the many good things of this world to which he has been accustomed. The first two months should be devoted to attention to careful dieting and plenty of hard exercise; abstinence from all the "fat-producing" meats and drinks, and from *all spirits*. In the third month, when your man may have come down in weight a stone or more, the strictest training must be observed. Even the half—pint of beer may be knocked oft} and if he takes any tea it should be weak, and without sugar. A little claret-and-water with meals may be allowed. The

last week may, if agreeable, be spent at the seaside, and no HARD work should be done on the day immediately before the contest. A walk of a few miles, or a little club exercise for half an hour twice in that day, will be ample.

It is not a good thing to have *anything* to do with tobacco during the last month of training ; so, if you can manage it, try to bring about a total discontinuance of the fragrant weed. If you find that after two months your thirteen stone man does not come down more than a stone *easily*, give up all idea of sending him up for the middles, and train him on comfortably for the heavies, in which class he will succeed better than he could as an overtrained middle-weight.

It is not advisable to “train fine” for boxing, whether the preparation be only for a few rounds or for a regular prize fight; but the longer the contest is likely to continue, the longer should be the course of training. Though unquestionably bad to be too “beefy” or fleshy, don’t lose sight of the fact that a good punch often lies behind all this beefiness. The great thing to be aimed at is a combination between wind and strength. You train your man too fine, and he loses strength; you train him too little, and he gets so blown after a few rounds that he cannot see his opponent from sheer want of breath. This is the difficulty with which trainers of men, who are a good deal over the weight at which they want to fight, are confronted ; they must retain all the muscle and strength, and eliminate fat and adipose tissue—no easy matter when the forties are near, and the tailor has had to shake out a reef or two in the waistcoat!

Then, again, there is the case of the thin man who goes into training. In the great majority of instances, men become stouter with age ; and more especially is this the case when carriage exercise—that most pernicious accessory of redun-

dant wealth—has been substituted for the healthy walk to and from business. But occasionally one may have to bring to the scratch a lean individual, no longer in *la première jeunesse*, who wants to get fit. It won't do to deal with this man as you would deal with his obese brother. He will probably require even more humouring, as, like many slight people, he may have a tremendous appetite, and want to eat a great deal too much. To improve his wind, without weakening him, let him take plenty of outdoor exercise, but don't sweat him very much as a rule, two or three times a week would be sufficient. Knock off his luxuries, keep his diet plain, and vary it as much as possible consistent with simplicity. The thin man will probably not want such a long course of training as the fat one. In all cases, and whether the subject be young, old, fat, or thin, the strictest attention must be paid to regular habits and general health. Let him avoid too much sleep—seven or eight hours should be ample for any one—keep his mind employed, and it will be all the better if he can be with cheerful companions; but don't allow merriment to pave the way to folly or intemperance.

Of course sedentary pursuits are all against thorough training ; nevertheless, it is, as hinted above, good for the general tone of the system to keep the wheels of the understanding well oiled and in constant motion. An idle man, who has no occupation save loafing about, rarely trains well, for he is seldom happy. He feels “a want,” and that he is “a useless atom in a world of uses;” the functions of the body are not carried on freely, as with one whose mind bears its proper share of work, and, therefore, he does not reach that perfect state of health only attained by the lucky possessor of “*mens sana in corpore sano.*”

If you have- a lot of writing to do, stand half the day at

a high desk, sit the remaining half as this gives a nice little change, the benefit of which you will feel in the evening.

When taking outdoor exercise, let the inspirations and expirations be as complete as possible, so as to thoroughly inflate the lungs, and then expel all the air previous to drawing the next breath.

Early in the training a little mild physic may be given; but do not carry this to any great extent, and particularly avoid irritating the system by overdoses of medicine. Rhubarb or blue-pill, followed by Eno's Fruit Salt, do well with most people, but when preparations of mercury are resorted to, care must be taken not to catch cold.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### COMPARATIVE MERIT.

IF you want to get into the black books of half your boxing acquaintances, and make a few enemies for life, take to judging. It is next to impossible to give satisfaction all round, for, where the balance between the competitors is pretty even, as regards the actual hits, the delicacy required to measure certain nice points of form, etc., which then have to be thrown into the scale, is very great. Amongst professionals there is a danger—and this I say without casting a slur on the many excellent members of the profession—of playing into one another's hands, and with amateurs there may also be this danger to a lesser degree; but, when all question of favouritism is eliminated, it must still be a matter of extreme difficulty for three men to arrive at a just decision where the honours are nearly even.

With fencing, single-stick, and other similar encounters, the case is very widely different, for the positions of the combatants being relatively the same, there is not so much difficulty in counting points or hits, but, in boxing, the men are all over the place, and it is often really impossible to count the hits from the side of the ring.

It always seems to me that if you could suspend your judge directly over the centre of the ring, and about nine or ten feet from the stage, he would then be in the best position for watching the game. He would have to be on a platform, from which he could look down in comfort. If then, there was a sufficiently large platform, two judges and a referee might be accommodated, and if their final decision were not approved of by the friends of the vanquished, the thankless task of judging would be at least carried out with the minimum amount of danger at the hands of the malcontents!

Of course there may be many practical disadvantages connected with such a scheme as this, but I don't feel at all sure that something of the kind might not be brought into use. "Lookers-on see most of the game;" but in the case of boxing, the very individuals, whose looking on is of such importance, do not see enough of the game to make their decision satisfactory in a close finish. There are plenty of good judges now to be found amongst professionals and amateurs—especially amongst the latter, for, where fifty years ago there was one really good amateur, there are now at least twenty—and it is a pity that some means cannot be devised by which they may at least be given a fair chance of seeing all that takes place between the combatants whose merits they have to decide upon. As an extension of the rather primitive platform alluded to above, the judges might be seated at the corners of an

elevated gallery; they would then have all the advantage of a bird's-eye view of the combatants.

It has generally been considered that two judges and a referee are sufficient. It would be far better to have four judges and a referee. A judge should sit at each corner and compare notes with his three fellow-judges at the termination of each round, or, if more convenient, at the conclusion of the final round. Possibly, if two of the judges occupied the elevated platform with the referee, and two were stationed at the corners of the ring on a level with the combatants, better decisions might be arrived at. In every case, a timekeeper, *who has nothing else to do*, should be appointed. It is a very great mistake to combine in one individual the important offices of referee and timekeeper. Where the judges are evenly divided, the referee gives the casting vote, and from this there is no appeal.

It is usual in competitions amongst amateurs to spar three rounds, the first and second of three minutes' duration, and the third of four minutes'. One minute's rest is allowed between the rounds, and, if the honours are very evenly divided, a fourth round of two or three minutes may be ordered by the judges. These times may be varied to suit different competitions, but it is, I believe, an invariable rule to allow a minute between the rounds, at the beginning and end of which the timekeeper should smartly call out "Time."

Each man is allowed a second, whose duty it is to look after him in the interval of rest, but no one except the combatants is allowed inside the ropes during a round, unless when a man is knocked down and unable to rise, in which case his second may enter the ring and pick him up and then immediately retire till the conclusion of the round. *During* a round, the seconds are not allowed to direct their principals either by word or sign.

The judges should caution any man wilfully hitting with the inside of the hand, for only fair hits with the closed hand are permissible; they should also caution any man hitting below the belt, or hitting a man whilst down, or just in the act of rising. Persistent transgression in these matters should disqualify the offender.

If either of the combatants is disabled and cannot pull himself together sufficiently to renew the contest when "time" is called, he loses the fight.

|                                         |          |             |
|-----------------------------------------|----------|-------------|
| Men of 8 st. 4 lb. and under are called | "bantam" | weights     |
| " 9 st.                                 | " "      | "feather" " |
| " 10 st.                                | " "      | "light" "   |
| " 11 st. 4 lb.                          | " "      | "middle" "  |

A man over 11 st. 4 lb. is called a "heavy" weight; but in any division all the lighter weights are eligible. Thus, a man of any weight can compete for the "heavies," a "feather" weight, or a "light" weight, may go in for the "middles," and so on.

The ring in which boxing competitions take place should never be less than 12 ft., or more than 24 ft. square, the larger is to be preferred, as it gives an opportunity for leg work, which is so important in boxing.

In February, 1885, an association was formed for the protection of the interests of professional boxers, and for the purpose of assisting those members of the Association who might by accident be prevented from making their living. The prize-ring being practically a thing of the past, it was proposed that the Association should be carried on by benefits arising from competitions, assaults-at-arms, etc., in such manner as should be directed by a committee, consisting of twenty-two members, including a chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, and treasurer. The meetings were to

be held on Sundays, and no business was to be transacted unless a quorum of seven members were present. I believe this association still exists. Most of the competitions and assaults-at-arms one hears of are for the benefit of individuals, and some of them are conducted under the auspices of the Professional Boxing Association, though the judges and referee are nearly always amateurs.

The following are the rules of the Amateur Boxing Association :—

1. In all open competitions, the ring shall be roped, and of not less than 12 ft., or more than 24 ft. square.

2. Competitors to box in light boots or shoes (without spikes), or in socks, with knickerbockers, breeches, or trousers, and sleeved jerseys.

3. Weights to be :—Feather, not exceeding 9 st. , light, not exceeding 10 st.; middle, not exceeding 11 st. 4 lb.; heavy, any weight. Competitors to weigh on the day of competition, in boxing costume, without gloves.

4. In all open competitions, the result shall be decided by two judges, with a referee. A timekeeper shall be appointed.

5. In all open competitions, the number of rounds to be contested shall be three. The duration of the first two rounds shall be three minutes, and of the final round four minutes, and the interval between each round shall be one minute.

6. In all competitions, any competitor failing to come up when “Time” is called shall lose the bout.

7. Where a competitor draws a bye, such competitor shall be bound to spar such bye for the specified time, and with such opponent as the judges of such competition may approve.

8. Each competitor shall be entitled to the assistance of

one second only, and no advice or coaching shall be given to any competitor by his second, or by any other person, during the progress of any round.

9. The manner of judging shall be as follows :—The two judges and the referee shall be stationed apart. At the end of each bout, each judge shall notify the name of the competitor who, in his opinion, has won, and shall hand the same to an official appointed for the purpose. In the cases where the judges agree, such official shall announce the name of the winner ; but, in cases where the judges disagree, such official shall so inform the referee, who shall thereupon himself decide.

10. The referee shall have power to give his casting vote when the judges disagree, or to stop a round in the event of either man being knocked down; the stopping of either of the first two rounds shall not disqualify any competitor from competing in the final round. And he can order a further round, limited to two minutes, in the event of the judges disagreeing.

11. That the decision of the judges, or referee, as the case may be, shall be final, and without appeal.

12. In all competitions, the decision shall be given in favour of the competitor who displays the best style and obtains the greatest number of points. The points shall be—for “Attack,” direct clean hits with the knuckles of either hand on any part of the front or sides of the head, or body above the belt, “Defence,” guarding, slipping, ducking, counter-hitting, or getting away. Where points are otherwise equal, considerations to be given to the man who does most of the leading off

13. The referee may, after cautioning the offender, disqualify a competitor who is boxing unfairly by flicking or hitting with the open glove, by hitting with the inside or

butt of the hand, the wrist, or elbow, or by wrestling or roughing at the ropes.

14. In the event of any question arising not provided for in these rules, the judges and referee to have full power to decide such question or interpretation of rule.

What exactly constitutes "roughing at the ropes" will, it seems to me, always have to be left to the discretion of the judges at each particular contest. It is to be regretted that this should be so, and that judges cannot be provided with a good definition of this particular form of roughing to enable them to know exactly when to disqualify a competitor.

Take the case of a heavy-weight, A, who has been following round the ring a very quick, slippery opponent, B, who is not such a good boxer, but happens to be in rather better condition. We will suppose that A at last succeeds in "getting at" his opponent—say, in a corner of the ring. If B's leg, or any portion of his person, is in contact with either stakes or ropes, he is, in a sense, "on the ropes," though between this position and hanging over in a helpless condition there are many grades.

The question is this: Is A to wait till B gets clear of the ropes altogether, and so lose the opportunity of putting in his hits, or is he to go in at once and do all the execution he can while he has the chance?

If he is to take the former course, he is frightfully handicapped, for he has to throw away what may possibly be his only chance of winning; if the latter, he is almost as likely to lose on the score of "roughing;" for, if B is in contact with the ropes before the final attack, where will he be when the heavier man has come to close quarters with his contracted-arm hits?

Stakes and ropes have been so long inseparably con-

nected with matters fistic, that they must be regarded as part and parcel of the game, otherwise a raised platform, somewhat larger in area than the twenty-four foot ring and unprotected with any barrier save a strong two-foot railing, might be tried—it would be more attended with danger, but would put a stop to a good deal of the rushing style of sparring one sees so much of, and there would be no ropes to rely on as props.

To say that a man is not to be hit when leaning against the ropes, opens the door to all sorts of trickery worse than going down to avoid punishment; for, with such a rule, any one hard pressed or short of wind, has only to lean for a few seconds on the friendly ropes, and thus gain an unfair advantage of an. opponent who is justly entitled to a few points.

To decide. fairly upon the moment where the legitimate scoring ends and the unsportsman-like hammering and bashing on the ropes begins will probably trouble the judges of future generations, as it has those of the present day and those of former years.

Early in May of the present year the public read with interest some critical paragraphs on competitions and judges, which emanated from the pen of "Pendragon," whose intimate connection with the pugilistic world has lasted for a great many years, and entitles him to respect. Alluding to a celebrated competition which took place at the Agricultural Hall under the direction of Mr. Hyams, the sporting critic of the *Referee* said: "Of late we have got a system which gives a champion for every half-pound above the weight of an Ostend rabbit. I think myself that when we have got a champion of eight stone it is hardly worth while having twenty-seven other champions between that and nine stone, each one being eight ounces heavier than the champion

below him, and then having the same thing happen between seven stone and eight stone, between nine stone and ten stone, and so on, till everybody can, if he likes, claim some sort of a championship. Mr. Hyams introduced us to an eight-stone, a nine-stone, a ten-stone, an eleven-stone, and an all-comers or any-weight champion ; and these should be sufficient for the present. There is one curious business about the all-comers' championship that is worthy of attention. The all-comers, or heavy-weight champion, has always been permitted by prescriptive right to call himself champion of England, *i.e.* he is *the* champion, the leader of all other champions. According to this—and I don't see how the point is to be evaded, though doubtless a strenuous endeavour will be made to do so—the boxing champion of England is just now William Goode, the City Chesterfield—a young gentleman who is about half the size of those who are so anxious to make good their claim on the title. The fact that two men who entered were debarred by sickness or accident from competing doesn't count anything in this connection ; indeed, the fact that they both did enter seems to make Goode's claim to be considered champion boxer at four rounds all the better. Perhaps, however, we shall now have a new set of champions, *vice* the champions on the half-pound principle scotched if not settled. This will be champions of England each at four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, or ten rounds; a champion of England for endurance with the gloves, and a ditto ditto for ditto without them. By the time all the various claims on position are settled, we may have come upon a period when ordinary sane people will not be so ready as they have been of late to believe everything that is told them by and about boxers."

As an example of what judges may have to put up with,

I must be excused if I quote a few more lines of "Pen-dragon's" criticisms on the Hyams competition. "During the week one of the boxers who was made a loser in the eleven-stone competition has been at the pains of explaining that some of the judges at present engaged in the pursuit and detection of winners in competitions will not give him fair play or justice." Without believing for one moment that there is the least *mala fides* in any of the young or middle-aged amateurs who now so delight to sit in judgment, I am of opinion that ballast as well as ability to box is necessary before a man can become a good judge; some of the best boxers ever seen have been the worst judges. . . . On public show, some of the decisions are rather contradictory. Let us pick out from a lot of similar samples the Burns-Bobbitt-White-Mullins position. Burns, at Her Majesty's Theatre, took such a lead of White that he made him leave off without the judge having to give an opinion. Bobbitt, at the Agricultural Hall, beat Burns with, as it was said, something in hand. Then Mullins beat Bobbitt, and White beat Mullins.

"Contradictions of either form or judgment similar to this at various other weights cannot very well have evaded the notice of those interested in recent big boxing shows ; this sample will, however, be sufficient for all purposes.

"No wonder several professionals are going about denouncing in no measured or half-hearted fashion the judgment of amateurs. But why do they accept it? Three or four years ago, an association of professionals was formed, one of the chief reasons for the existence of which was said to be the necessity for having professional judges in professional competitions. Presumably this association has died out, if it still existed, it would, as a matter of course, insist on having a governing hand in matters which intimately con-

cern its members—just the same as is done by all other sporting associations.”

Chapter XIV., on “Comparative Merit” may assist the reader in coming to a conclusion respecting the competition alluded to in the above passages. An unlucky hit may have had something to do with it, and on another occasion the position might possibly be reversed. Be this as it may, the difficulty of spotting the winner at any big boxing show is, for a variety of reasons, very great.

In conclusion, it may be well to give the ordinarily accepted definition of an amateur who is described as “One who has never competed with or against a professional for any prize, and who has never taught, pursued, or assisted in the practice of athletic exercises as a means of obtaining a livelihood.”

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### EXERCISES.

THE first two of the following exercises are designed especially to practise the left hand in straight hitting. They may be gone through over and over again, and the boxers, whom we will call A and B, should change about from time to time, B taking A's work and A B's.

Before starting, NOTA BENE!

1. Eyes fixed on opponent.
2. Left toe pointing straight in his direction.
3. All joints loose and easy.
4. Weight of your body evenly balanced on both feet, which should be about fifteen inches apart.
5. Left arm working freely and loosely (*vide* Chapters II. and III.).

6. Right arm well across mark and in contact with body.
7. Head erect.
8. Mouth shut.

## I.

## A.

1. Leads off. at head with left, simultaneously guarding with right, gets back.
3. Guards with right and returns at head with left.
5. Guards mark with right fore arm placed firmly against the body, and retreats.
7. Retreats half a step to avoid blow, and then steps in and hits with left at head.

## B.

2. Guards with right, returns at head with left.
4. Ducks to right and hits at mark with left.
6. Advances so as to get within striking distance and leads at body with left, at the same time ducking to the right to avoid A's left.
8. Guards with right.

## II.

1. Ducks to right and leads off at body with left.
3. Gets away and returns at head with left.
5. Guards hit (*a*) in the usual manner with right and instantly hits out with left at head before B's hit (*b*) has time to get home. N.B.—This is likely to lead to a counter, after which both men should work round to their right and look out for the next opening.

2. Guards with right in usual way and tries the "upper-cut" with left.
4. Retreats out of distance and then, ducking, steps in and tries (*a*) hit at mark with left, followed *immediately* by (*b*) hit at head with same hand.

This variation should be frequently practised in order that B may learn to make his second hit follow as quickly as possible on his first, and that A may get into the habit of using the left—hand "stop," *i.e.*, may "time" B before hit (*b*) can take effect.

## III.

## A.

1. Leads at head with left with duck to right.
3. Gets back and repeats hit at head with left.
5. Steps to left and comes in with right on body.

## B.

2. Ducks to right and comes in on body with left.
4. "Cross-counters" with right.
6. Gets away.

## IV.

1. Feints lead off at mark and comes in on face with left.
3. Tries to stop this by (a) uppercut with left or (b) cross-counter with right.
5. Advances, and, ducking to left, tries to bring in right on body (just above the belt on left side).

2. Ducks to right and comes in on mark with left.
4. Steps back.
6. Guards with left arm and tries right-hand upper-cut.

## V.

1. Leads with left at head.
3. Gets to close quarters and tries contracted-arm hits with both hands.

2. Cross-counter with right, following this up with left-handed hit at mark.
4. After a few exchanges break away.

Both men should frequently practise "in-lighting," but *never continue at it for too long*; a few "rallies" of a dozen hits each will be quite sufficient.

It will also be advantageous to get into the positions from which come the "cross-buttock," the "back-heel," etc., and carefully practise the stops, *not for use in the ring*, but for general purposes of self-defence (*vide* Chapter IX.).



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