SPORTSMAN'S MEMORIES

EDWARD ROPER

THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/sportsmansmemori00ropeiala

A SPORTSMAN'S MEMORIES

In this world of hurry it is sometimes pleasant to recall, and metaphorically sit down and converse with, our friends of the past.

TEDDY.

(On his 70th birthday.)

A SPORTSMAN'S MEMORIES

BY

EDWARD ROPER

ILLUSTRATED

Edited by FRED. W. WOOD

C. TINLING & CO., LIMITED,
53, VICTORIA STREET, LIVERPOOL,
AND PRESCOT.

1921.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PREFACE	11
CHAPTER I.	35
CHAPTER II.	50
CHAPTER III.	61
CHAPTER IV.	77
CHAPTER V.	91
CHAPTER VI.	107
CHAPTER VII.	127
CHAPTER VIII.	150
CHAPTER IX.	169
CHAPTER X.	188
CHAPTER XI.	206
CHAPTER XII.	219
CHAPTER XIII.	228
CHAPTER XIV.	238
CHAPTER XV.	253
CHAPTER XVI.	268
LAST CHAPTER.	281

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Edward Roper . . . . . . *Frontispiece*

E. Roper, W. Bowring and H. G. Garnett (400 for 3) . . . . . . Page 12

Richmond . . . . . . ,, 35

The Ground of the Sefton Cricket Club . ,, 46

A Touring Team . . . . . ,, 128

Robert Roper . . . . . ,, 144

Edward Roper and Edgar C. Hornby ,, 208

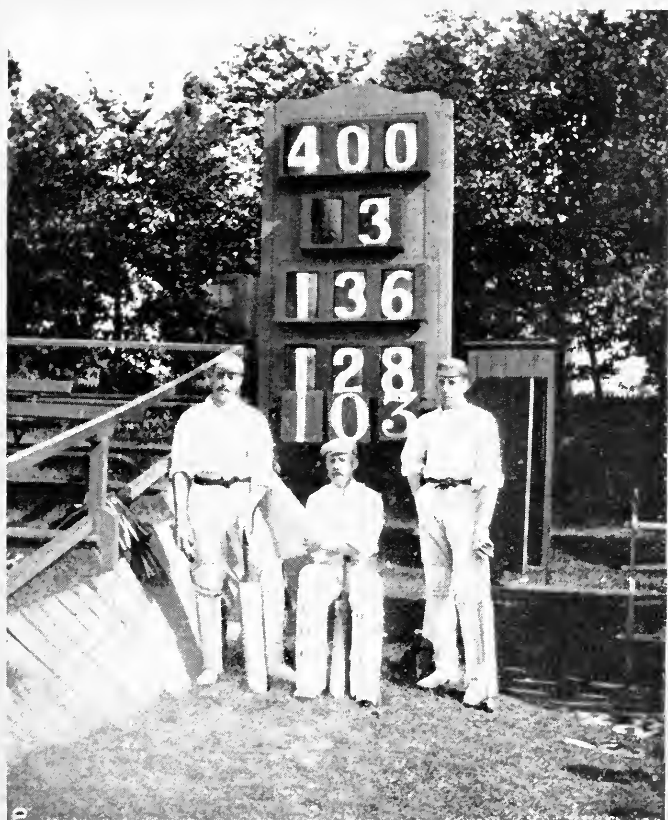
The Ground of the Liverpool Cricket Club ,, 224

I THINK it is taken for granted by everybody that the death of Edward Roper has made the greatest gap yet known in the little big world of local cricket. Greater cricketers than he—that is, in the sense of merely being greater exponents of the art of batting or bowling—have disappeared from our midst, leaving behind them, moreover, careers not easily effaced, yet none of them had so subtly grown into our hearts and affections as "Teddy" Roper. *They* had to make a hundred against the Australians, or do the hat trick against Surrey or Yorkshire, to become idolized by the man in the street, a fact which should not be overlooked.

Not so he, however. I think no one has quite properly defined what that gift of the gods called *personality* really is, but at any rate the gods had endowed him with the full measure of it, and to the eyes of most of us, the gods quite well knew what they were about, for Roper had a character well worthy of the distinction.

While, of course, the primary work of his life was a superb devotion to the game of cricket, yet this book of his own reminiscences will easily show that there were a score of other outlets for his ready tact, his gay wisdom, and his iron rule of doing the square, sporting thing all the time. Does this make it the easier, or the harder, to write, in due proportion, an introductory preface? I am far from sure.

But I am quite sure that the main achievement of his career, although very little has been said about it, was working up the Sefton Cricket Club from what you might call a really good second-rate organization till it became, all said and done, the premier team in the district. I have in my memory, and I hope it is faithful to me, that the Sefton first eleven once enjoyed an abnormally long period without losing a match, and established a local record in consequence. To what was this due? Nothing but the magnetic personality of Edward Roper, the smiling martinet who listened to everybody, did just what they told him, for so it appeared, but yet always had his own way in everything, all the time. And this is what being a



A RECORD PERFORMANCE.

For Liverpool *v.* Warrington: E. Roper 136 (centre), W. Bowring 128 (left), H. G. Garnett 103 (right).

personality means. When " Teddy " was working for Sefton, no cricketer was safe. You will have to do your best to excuse a pun which passed muster at the time—but he *roped* in anybody who could play out of the common, whether he lived at Warrington or Wigan, distance being no object to the master-mind.

Born at Richmond, in Yorkshire, the son of a banker, he received his early education at the Grammar School there, and went to Clifton College in 1867, entering the " House " of the Rev. T. E. Brown, that famed intellectual personality whom Gladstone called " Oxford's greatest son," and Hall Caine said was the "most famous Manxman, living or dead." Be that as it may, however, he refused a thousand a year, offered by Gladstone, to enter the diplomatic service, got ordained as a kind of small curate, instead, and became second master at Clifton. I mention these matters because it so befell that the minds of scores of boys were soon to be moulded by this remarkable man, who could always see their point of view, join in their fun, write the lightest and wittiest of lyrics, and yet

translate with uncanny ease the crabbed Latin of the old missals. I mention them, moreover, because I had it from Roper's own lips how proud he was of having been under "dear old Tom Brown," the man whom to know was to love. It is strangely odd that I should have personally known them both.

By 1868, "Teddy" was not only in Tom Brown's "House" but also in his form. I think he did tolerably well at Clifton in what he called the readin', 'ritin' and 'rithmetic departments, but he was, naturally, the most proud of having got his footer cap and into the cricket XI. He played for Clifton along with C. W. Boyle (afterwards a Cambridge bowler), and E. F. S. and H. G. Tylecote, the former later keeping wicket for England against Australia. He went out in 1882-3 with the Hon. Ivo Bligh's team, a largely amateur combination which had Roper's old friend, A. G. Steel, in it as what you might call its star performer, and this without any reflection on C. T. Studd. So it was with cricketers of this stamp that "Teddy" grew up, and learned the game with, at Clifton.

I never quite knew just exactly what had brought him to Liverpool, but this was only due to my want of asking, for he would have told me, although I well remember how he first came under the review of my (then) youthful eyes. I believe I was the youngest student (up to then, for I don't know what happened afterwards) who had got into the first eleven of the Liverpool College. In those days there was a tremendous undertaking—a match against Sefton. Doubtless it was against the third team, but I think we all privately magnified it into, if not quite the first, at least the second. I know we spent sleepless days and nights thinking about this important contest, and dolefully ruminating on the horrors of facing the terrible bowling which lay before us. I was a nervous, shivering laddie of little above twelve, but when I reached the old ground of the Sefton Club, in Smithdown Road, there was Edward, along with his elder brother Bryan Roper, waiting to give me advice and encouragement. Thus I early found a standard which I tried to imitate as best I could. I am bound to mention this, also, for almost to the day of his death one

of "Teddy's" hobbies was to give a leg over the stile to schoolboys anxious to play cricket.

What did he not do for cricket hereabouts? Or, to put it another way, who knows a tenth part of what he did do? Here is an instance. Old J. Briggs, the father of the famous "Johnny," was pro. attached to the Widnes Club for many seasons. He was the truest of old sports, but never the possessor of a bewildering income. At that time Mr. Roger Wilcock, always a figure in the Rugby world, announced his intention of organizing a benefit match for Briggs, Liverpool Gents v. Lancashire Pro's, at Widnes, one-day match. Had it been a Rugby XV, Roger was, of course, all right, but with cricket the matter was different. To whom did he instinctively turn? Edward Roper, who brought along Arthur Kemble, S. M. Crosfield, and the rest of the nabobs of that period. To give the game a splash of local colour, Tommy Laws, noted in Widnes as Rugby forward and runner, played, and ten minutes before the official time for the factory bells to ring—this was stealing time without a doubt—the echoes

of a thousand pairs of clogs came reverberating over the Widnes cobble stones, the owners to divide their cheers between Tommy Laws and Edward Roper. The match was drawn, and the presence of Skipper Roper hilariously demanded in front of the pavilion. Everyone was happy, old Briggs the happiest of the lot. Roper did it.

I have already mentioned the magic way in which he drew players to Sefton, but I think a good deal of the magnetism was no more than common sense. In his reminiscences you will find Shore mentioned. He was very proud of Shore, well knowing that he had in him the best professional bowler of that period. I hardly think that many know how he managed this particular capture. Sefton were, one day, playing Huyton. During the usual little "knock" beforehand, a broad-shouldered youth rather astonished Roper by bowling him. He turned to "Teddy" Jackson, the Huyton captain, asking who the bowler was. "Oh! it's only Shore, the lad who carries the bags and brings the nets in." "May I have him for Sefton?" says Roper. "Certainly, if you

wish." And that is how another long service and another long friendship originated. Charles Shore belonged to Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts, and died there seven years ago.

He was a genial, strong, broad-shouldered fellow, a slow bowler with a powerful arm. And this reminds me. I was captain of the New Brighton Club at the time, and we had been playing Sefton (who won quite comfortably) at Liscard. After the game was over, Roper and myself were enjoying a cup of tea (or something) in the pavilion, when angry voiees were heard coming from the professionals' room, that of Champion—another good Sefton pro., but a man with a litigious, assertive bent—predominating. A row seemed in prospect. "Teddy" went to their door, opened it, and said: "What's the matter, boys?" "Oh! well you see, sir, it's like this. We agree that Percival"—the holder of the world's record for throwing the cricket ball, then a New Brighton pro.—"can throw further than anybody else, but if he had no 'run,' and was to stand in a tub, Shore could beat him." Here the master tactician, as usual, shone. "Then get a tub and

let them try," says "Teddy" Roper. They borrowed one from the caretaker's cottage on the ground, the match came off, Percival winning easily. "Tact rules the world," once said Disraeli, and Edward Roper must have made a note of it.

Then again, to this ready tact he allied a nimble sense of fun and humour, which writing about poor Percival reminds me of. There were odd occasions when this powerful thrower, who had become a daring, reckless batsman, could hit any bowling, however good, to all parts of the field, much to the delight of hundreds of small boys, to whom he was the perfect hero. He was once dealing in this merry, unorthodox way with two of the Sefton bowlers, Shore and Edgar Ratcliffe, both now, alas! no more. As something had to be done, "Teddy" decided to try his own lobs, of which (as presumed by us all) he had a fair amount of belief in. Anyhow, this sudden departure led to an extreme re-arrangement of the "field." Everybody had, however, been provided with a "place" of some sort, save Ratcliffe, the discarded trundler. "Where shall I go, Eddie?"

he cried. The answer came back, dead on the instant, in Roper's fascinating, musical voice: "Oh! it's Percival; walk about!" The front of the pavilion was crowded, and I can hear the echo of the laughter to this day.

No cricketer ever died in Liverpool leaving behind so long a trail of good work for the game as he. I have already mentioned the way in which he stepped into the breach of the Briggs' benefit match. That was a pretty long time ago, but there has since been given me another instance so much further back that Roper, at the time, could have been little less than a lad. He got up a team of XI Gents v. XI Pro's for a game to be played on the old Breckfield ground—it was behind Queen's Road, Everton, and is now a maze of small streets—for the benefit of one Morley, the professional belonging to the club. It was a two-day, kind of full dress affair. The pro's went in first and made, so I am informed, for I was much too young to be present, somewhere about 190. The "Gents," which seems to have been the accepted designation at that period, sent in—or rather Roper sent them in, for he was the youthful captain—

the tall, angular, rather ancient looking, but very good player, Smith, and the merry-faced Tom Jones, who is as happy as a grig to-day, although nearing seventy, both stalwarts of the long-since defunct Everton Club. They put on seventy-odd without losing a wicket, and stumps were drawn for the day. On the following morning, Jones, who unfortunately had the office to consider, as well as cricket, was just late enough in arriving to find half an over bowled to a batsman who had taken his place. As soon as the first wicket fell, Jones proceeded to the crease, but was stopped by " Corney " Coward, of Preston, the captain of the pro's, who, sheltering himself behind the rules, declined to let young Jones go on batting. Although the dignified appeal of Roper to have the " game played in a sporting give and take way " (that mission of his life in all things) was of no avail, the impression which his sturdy character made on that team will never fade till the last survivor —I believe there are only three left— departs.

I have never been able to find out what exactly attracted him to the Sefton Club, to work up

which became the chief effort of his career, but I have it from an old member that at any rate he was there in 1873, just five years after leaving Clifton, although, of course, it might have been earlier still. At that time the Sefton ground was on the left-hand side of Smithdown Road, on what was, as far as I can make out, more or less a portion of the fields attached to the mansion of Sir Hardman Earle, afterwards destined for the common fate of falling into house-builders' hands. But it is an ill wind which blows nobody good, and the Corporation granted the club their present "pitch" in Sefton Park. Desperate efforts were made to raise funds for the first pavilion there, and they included concerts at Hope Hall. At these entertainments Roper would put his modesty aside, go on the platform and *tell the tale* in his inimitably winning way that when the hat was sent round it came back full!

The pavilion was soon put up and Sefton's early glory commenced, but later came the present pavilion and probably the best team in the district, certainly the team which lost fewest matches. It was all due to Edward Roper. I

have said that he *roped* everyone in* and now I might add that he got called "the body snatcher" in consequence. If you were a very good cricketer you were immediately confronted with his magical personality and soon made mysteriously aware that the Sefton Club was the proper place for you. As a rule you instinctively submitted.

I should imagine that he would have been about as proud of the following, as of any other Sefton, eleven of his time—himself with the two brothers Jones (Charlie and Fred), the two brothers Ratcliffe, Tom Evans, S. M. Crosfield, J. P. Kingston, the two professionals, Shore

---

* Here is an instance, from the lips of Mr. Frank Edwards :—"The first time I played for Sefton was about July, 1883. I was then fifteen, and was playing for Parkfield School v. Liverpool Institute, when Teddy Roper came over and asked if I could go to bat for Sefton as they were a man short, George Tate, a left-handed bowler and a fine bat, not having turned up. He played regularly until he went on the stage to sing. This is how I came to join Sefton, for it was my intention to join Dingle when I left school. Sefton's opponents were Werneth. When I went in to join Shore, Sefton wanted 41 to win and I made 29 not out. Sefton won, and afterwards Teddy Roper said 'Edwards, that finishes you going to the Dingle.' So I became a member of Sefton, and remain one to this day."—Edit.

and Champion, with the remaining place filled by any one of six who were available.

He used to go in first with the late Mr. C. L. Jones, and it has been publicly stated that they put up over 100 runs before being parted on more than thirty occasions, and that the late Mr. Fred Jones took over 100 wickets for twenty successive years, an amazing record for what was practically Saturday afternoon cricket. I scarcely think either of these performances have been equalled in this district—but, as you know, everything in connection with the Sefton Club was nothing more than the personal work of Edward Roper. For a score of years it was life to him and he was life to it. There was a little kind of cavern, or cubicle, set apart for him in Messrs. Dixon's offices, in Brunswick Street, and from there, when he was not fighting them in the green fields, he fought Sefton's battles, planning, arranging, looking forward and forgetting nothing.

His labours for the Sefton Club would alone require a volume. I have before me all their fixture cards, from before the year he joined till he ceased to play with them. He was secretary

in 1873, when his brother Bryan was captain, and the club played thirty-two matches. By 1887 he had long since become both captain and secretary and so remained, but before he retired the thirty-two matches had grown into eighty-nine. I am not quite certain what his best average was, but his figures for 1883 can be termed *averagely* good, 23 innings, twice not out, 859 runs with 104 the best single effort and an average of 33.1. He bowled 38 overs for 97 runs and captured five wickets, so there must have been something in his lobs, after all. In 1879 he arranged a game at Sefton Park between the United North of England XI and fourteen local amateurs, and this was looked upon as a rather daring venture. A. G. Steel and Reggie Wood, the *doyen* of Birkenhead Park, got the pro.'s out for 83, and the " gents " replied with 124, Roper claiming the odd four. In the end they lost, but their names are extremely interesting for Liverpool could not turn out to-day so fine a team of amateurs—A. G. and D. Q. Steel, Geo. Bird, E. H. Porter, S. S. Schultz, F. M. Horsbrugh, W. S. Patterson, R. Wood, C. L. and F. Jones, W. R. McCormick, F.

Pickworth, Harry Miller and Teddy Roper. I am sorry they did not win for such an able lot deserved to.

His money, of which he at one time had more than many suspected, was invested in Dixon's sailing ships, but the halcyon days of the wind-jammers were even then numbered. At any rate the Dixon craft were never much in the way of being golden argosies and the Roper money vanished with them. It was in another light, certainly, but these misfortunes only served, once more, to show him at his best. He met his calamities with the defiant bravery which was his characteristic, and surmounted them, for he had a big balance of friendship and credit in the bank of goodwill to draw upon.

But yet while the hobby of Edward Roper's life, the welfare of the Sefton Club, had come to an end, the bad fortune which did it really turned out the good fortune of better expanding his opportunities for furthering the game. He became Secretary of the Liverpool Club, thenceforward to work not amongst strangers, but old friends who were grateful for his manifold services. At that time Mr. E. C. Hornby, who is

president to-day, was one of the leading playing members of the first eleven, and of course "Teddy" became one also, the two thus appearing on the same side instead of being, as previously, opponents. "It was in the early '80s that I first played against 'Teddy' Roper," said Mr. Hornby, the other day, "and those were the times when the Sefton v. Liverpool matches, especially on the Sefton ground, were full of thrills and unexpected excitements. I had beforehand heard him say that he rather preferred batting to a left, instead of a right, handed bowler. This made me think a bit and ponder over the best means of getting him out, in case I was put on when he was in. For many years I tried without even looking like getting him out, till just about the time when he was nearly giving up playing for Sefton. I then met with success on the Aigburth ground, although after trying all sorts and finding *nothing doing*. In a kind of despair I tossed him a very high, and very slow, one, caught him in about three or four minds, forward, back, half-cock, anyhow. The ball slowly reached the wicket with just enough strength to push the bail off. As he

passed me, going out, his face was a study. Many a hearty laugh we had afterwards over that ball. In his humorous way he would say, 'I ought to have kicked the beast, but then I might have been l.b.w.' It was one of his numerous stories, always ready, especially if I was present." Even at this late hour I sympathize with the victim, for I have myself had to face the great height at which Mr. Hornby could deliver the ball.

One of Liverpool's biggest local scores was made at the expense of the Sefton Club, when the teams met on July 9th, 1884, and Liverpool batted all day. At the start nothing out of the common was foreshadowed for the first wicket fell at 9. Then followed some hurricane hitting by D. Q. Steel, who made no fewer than forty-three 4's in an individual innings of 226, and almost as lively a century from his younger brother, the late H. B. Steel. I think you will find the full score interesting :—

A. T. Kemble, c. Crosfield b. Evans	1
H. B. Steel, l.b.w. b. E. Ratcliffe	100
D. Q. Steel, c. F. Jones b. Harold Ratcliffe ...	226
E. H. Porter, b. Harold Ratcliffe	68

G. Nicholson, b. H. Wall	11
E. W. Edmondson, b. H. Wall	22
A. L. Melly, not out	15
G. F. Hornby, not out	7
Extras	28
Total (6 wickets)	478

There is also another instance which comes to mind. In 1893, at Aigburth, Sefton only made 25, all told. A. G. Steel took 6 wickets for 12 and E. C. Hornby 4 for the same number, Liverpool making 273 runs in reply.

Big scores like these are not prevalent to-day, for now (unlike the conditions then) the innings can be declared closed, the main object being not to make a high total, but to win the match. Under these conditions Sefton once made 427 for 8 against Birkenhead Park, of which C. L. Jones got 172 and Edward Roper 47. Of course the " Park " did not bat. So far as I know, the match Liverpool against Warrington was the one to which Roper looked back with the greatest delight. He made 136 himself, W. Bowring 128 and Harold Garnett 103, and the trio were photographed beneath the scoring

board which recorded the fact. But it would be an impossible task to refer to a tenth part of the far out of the common games in which Edward Roper took part.*

Enough to say that under the keen eye of Edward Roper, the Liverpool Club enjoyed a long period of great success, probably never more so than the year of his retirement (1919) when they easily gained the local championship. Here, to his mind, was the sporting reward for a long and diligent endeavour. Once again the battle was won; and everybody knew that he had always *kept smiling* whether the fight was going well or the reverse.

But you should not overlook the fact that, while nine-tenths of the public regarded him, and revered him, solely from the point of view of cricket, he had other instincts which were but the natural outcome of so manly a game. These

---

* Mr. Roper had the rare experience of playing for both Lancashire and Yorkshire. His first appearance for Lancashire was in 1876, and his best score for the county was 65, against Kent, in 1884. In 1878 and 1880 he turned out for Yorkshire. It has been calculated that Mr. Roper got together about 3,500 teams for various matches.—EDIT.

lively reminiscences from his own pen prove it. While we are immensely poorer by reason of his death, we are far richer than we would have been had he not left behind so agreeable a series of sketches of the many pastimes which he not merely favoured, but adorned. His memory for events which might be classed as within the broadest range of athletics was prodigious and whether the subject was as big as the Waterloo Cup or the Derby, or as small as anything you like he had an ever ready fund of anecdotal comment which fitted the occasion like a glove.

I am glad that destiny did not make him a banker, or a bread baker, a poet or a politician, for however well he might have done at either it is impossible to picture him half so well succeeding as by being arbiter of our out of door affairs. He was born for the pitch, the path, the meadow and the green. Young in heart himself, down to the very last, he had the gift of even making seniors feel younger also. If it were an ugly sky with a dreary drizzle beginning —Oh ! cheer up, boys, all over in a few minutes. If forty runs were wanted with but the last two wickets to fall—well, look what so and so had

done, at Richmond, or Clifton, or Old Trafford, once upon a time! And shall we not number these little, timely encouragements as among the gifts from the gods?

The memory of no other cricketer buried in Liverpool ever drew so wide a range of mourners to his funeral, and I can hardly think that even a solitary unit out of those hundreds will ever forget the impressiveness of the occasion, or the gloriously straight-forward, sporting address which Canon Ainslie gave in the Chapel, a triumph of proportion and simple, good taste. And the long procession to the grave. Where did we find that grave? At the spot in the cemetery nearest to the Sefton ground, the very proper place.

The immortal couplet of "R.L.S." kept humming in my mind—

> Under the wide and starry sky,
> Dig my grave and let me lie.

In taking a last look at it I found myself alongside of Harden, the old Rock Ferry professional, a tear in his eye. How often had we

both played with, or against, Edward Roper? He gave my hand a silent squeeze, for he knew that—

> Home was the hunter, home from the hill,
> And the sailor, home from the sea.

T.E.E.

RICHMOND (YORKSHIRE).

A SPORTSMAN'S MEMORIES

Chapter I

At Richmond.—Endurance test at billiards.—£90 card tricks.—Watching a trial.—My first win.—When Blue Gown was disqualified.—A Chester Cup dream.—How Mr. Young won £3,000.—Lady Bolton's extraordinary dream.

RICHMOND, in the old days, was one of the best sporting places in the world. Although only a town of five thousand inhabitants, or thereabouts, it was a question at one time in history whether it or York should be the capital of the north, and there is now a Richmondshire. At one period of its history it had two members of Parliament with a total voting register of some hundreds. Nobody can understand how much sport there was in a small place of this sort, and all kinds of things happened. The licensing laws ceased to run, and you could do anything you liked in the way of sport at all hours, whether day or night.

In proof of this I will relate the story of a

game of billiards which began one night at ten o'clock and went on all through that night, all next day, and was only closed at 2 a.m. on the third day by the landlady of the hotel coming down and turning the gas out. The gentleman who was my opponent was Mr. Alexander Young, a breeder of racehorses, who was a good many years older than I was, but a very charming man and a great friend of mine, of course. He said to me on that particular evening, about nine o'clock, "Edward, you fancy yourself at billiards too much. You have a swelled head, and I think it ought to be taken down." I said, "Quite right, sir, but who is going to take it down?" He replied, "I will." I remarked then, "How do you propose to do it?" He said, "We'll have a game at billiards, one hundred up, and then I will show you." I said, "Mr. Young, my opinion is that I can give you fifteen in the hundred; I don't think you have a chance at evens." He rejoined, "Ah, that is where your swelled head comes in, and I am going to show you up." Then I again said, "I can give you fifteen in a hundred, but as you have stated your opinion we will do

as you choose, and at the end of the game when I have won, as I expect I shall do, you must not reproach me for your losing money."

So we began at ten o'clock on Wednesday night, and we played all that night games of one hundred up, and all the next day until 2 a.m. on the following morning, and it became an absolute test of endurance, and as I was the younger, that enabled me to stick it the better of the two. On Thursday at mid-day we sent for slippers, because our feet had swollen so. Our meals were sandwiches, which were served up at irregular intervals, and I shall never forget Mr. Young walking round the table with about six inches of a ham sandwich hanging out of his mouth. There were sundry drinks, of course, during this long period. Mr. Young drank gin; my liquor was of a weaker character. Perhaps at that period the money we were playing for—so much a game—was of more consequence than strong drink. We were both thoroughly exhausted when the finish came—suddenly. It came in the form of Mrs. Dabbs, the landlady, who appeared in her *robe de nuit* at 2 a.m. on the Friday, carrying a candle and as she

" doused " the lights the game stopped abruptly. We shook hands. Mr. Young said to me : " Edward, there is nothing like experience. I find that you are right and I have great pleasure in handing you this cheque, which is the balance against me. I bear no malice," he proceeded, " I retract all I have said about your swelled head, and I hope it won't be swollen in the morning."

To show further what latitude was allowed in the old town of Richmond, one night four of us set to work to play at three-card loo. This was the year that Sabinus won the City and Suburban Handicap, 1870, and I had backed him and had won some money on him. The game of loo was then a great gambling game ; its place was later taken by poker. Every player had three cards dealt him, and there were three cards put in the middle of the table called " Missy." In Yorkshire you had, if you chose, to discard the whole three cards and take up " Missy." In Lancashire every player could discard one or two of the cards and draw from the pack. If " Missy " was gone you couldn't draw any cards at all, and you had to play what you had in your

hand or not play at all. Another rule was that if " Missy " was taken by any of the players no one else got any more cards, and if only one man was playing—the others having thrown in—the dealer had to defend the pool no matter what he had. The game that fairly made my blood run cold was as follows:—I was the dealer. There was £270 in the pool. Mr. Dabbs, the landlord, on my left, a very careful player, said he would play—that meant that he had one certain trick, probably two. The rest of the players—there were four of us—threw their cards away, and I had to defend the pool, being the dealer. Hearts were trumps. I looked at my three cards—nothing. I threw them away and took " Missy " up. Again nothing, the knave of diamonds was the highest card I had. Mr. Dabbs began with the ace of trumps, the ace of hearts; then he played the knave of hearts, and I burst into a cold perspiration. Then he put down the nine of diamonds. I had the knave, which took the trick!

Now the pool was £270, which meant £90 a trick. If I had not got a trick I should have had to put £270 into the pool, so that

little knave of diamonds not only saved me the £270 I should have had to put in, but got me £90 out of the pool, making a difference of £360 to me. These big figures startled me very much, for if we had all played and three been "loo'd" the next pool would have been £810, and I suggested that we should stop, which we did. Curiously enough, a week afterwards I was walking down the Burlington Arcade, in London, and I stopped to look at a French bijouterie shop. There was a shield of pins in the window, scarf pins, you know, and in the very middle of it staring me straight in the face was a little enamelled knave of diamonds. I said, "My little fellow you saved me £360 last week, and I will certainly buy you," and I went in and bought him, and I have got him now, and I have never in my poorest moments parted with him.

One night I was playing billiards with a man named Ned Gill, who used to do the training reports for the London sporting dailies, and he said to me, "Would you like to see a good horse tried?" I said I would. As we would have to be astir very early we went on playing billiards,

and after having done justice to a grilled bone we proceeded to the moor, arriving there about 2 a.m. The trial we were going to watch was that of a horse trained by James Watson, father of the Watson who now trains in France at Chantilly. Well, we went on the moor and hid ourselves in a quarry hole, because Mr. Watson was a gruff, bad-tempered man, and we did not want him to see us, naturally. Morning broke between half-past four to five o'clock, and out came the horses. They were Dryad, a chestnut mare, belonging to Mr. T. V. Morgan, who won the Leger with Hawthornden—Dryad had won a big race at Goodwood—Lady Dewhurst, winner of the Convivial Produce Stakes at York, and Virtue, who got the Champagne Stakes when Blue Gown was disqualified. These were the trial horses, and the one to be tried was a colt by Thormanby out of Plausible, called Plaudit, belonging to Major Elwyn, a great ironmaster of the Cleveland district. They finished close to where we were hiding, and Plaudit won by a length and a half.

Mr. Watson had followed the horses and as he pulled up near to where we were lying dormy

under cover of a thorn bush, Gill, to my horror, rose up and walked on to the moor in the direction of the trainer. Blazing with wrath, Mr. Watson rode up and, addressing Gill, asked him, " What the —— do you want here? "

Gill coolly replied : " Ah, Mr. Watson, I am very fond of mushrooms, and I am told you have to get up very early in the morning to get them."

Watson stormed for a time—you see he had already galloped about the moor to see that nobody was about—but it was no use, and finally said to Gill : " Well, what do you want?"

Gill replied : " Ah, now you are talking sense. I want £100 to nothing and I'll not say a word."

Watson said : " Very well."

During this conversation I had sneaked up, and Watson turned to me. He was more polite, knowing, of course, that my father was chairman of the bench of magistrates. " What are you doing here, Master Edward? You have no right in this place."

I acknowledged this, and added that I merely accompanied Gill out of curiosity.

Mr. Watson, who, I flattered myself, was rather fond of me—I had ridden horses of his upon the moor when I was young, and used to go to the house—said : " Well, what would you like?" and I said : " Well, Mr. Watson, I would like to have two sovereigns on." He replied : " All right, if you promise not to say anything about what you have seen, I will cover you in the stable commission," and I was returned £25 to £2.

This two-year-old, Plaudit, won at Newmarket, I forget the name of the race, beating that great mare, Achievement, who had won nine races. She was sister to Lord Lyon, who won the Derby and the Leger that year, and the following year Achievement won the 1,000 Guineas and the Leger. Plaudit was the first horse that ever beat her. I won £25, and I thought I would never want any more money. I was only young then.

This carries one to Virtue, who belonged to a man named Holmes, a veterinary surgeon of Beverley. She was engaged to run in the Champagne Stakes at Doncaster, in which Blue Gown, who afterwards won the Derby (Sir J.

Hawley's horse), was entered. The Champagne Stakes was such a certainty—supposed to be—for him. I remember on the moor one day, Jim Snowden, Doyle* (who rode Tim Whiffler in the Chester Cup), and Mr. Watson, the trainer, were talking about the race. Mr. Watson said it was little use running Virtue in the "Champagne," for she had no chance with Blue Gown. Doyle chipped in and said: "Mr. Watson, I would advise you to prepare the filly for the Champagne Stakes and run her." And then, turning to Snowden, he said: "Jim, you'll ride her, and what you have got to do is to get second. No doubt Blue Gown will win easily, and the others will probably ease up, so you'll have no difficulty getting second." He would give no explanation at that time why he gave this advice.

* John Doyle, who died on May 27th, 1921, at Stetchworth, was born in Manchester in 1844, and was apprenticed to Mr. John Foubert, the trainer of Flying Dutchman. During his career Doyle rode many notable winners, including Tattoo in the Portland Plate in 1860, Joey Jones in the Northumberland Plate in 1861, Tim Whiffler in the Chester Cup in 1862, Ace of Clubs in the Chesterfield Cup in 1863, and La Toucques in the French Derby, Oaks, and Grand Prize at Baden Baden in 1863.

The race was run, Blue Gown won in a canter and Virtue was second, and even then nobody but Doyle knew what was going to happen. Wells, who rode Blue Gown, went to the unsaddling enclosure to weigh in. Doyle and Mr. Watson were waiting at the scale. Wells got into the scale, and Doyle said: "Wells, take your toe off the floor." Then the fat was in the fire. Wells turned green, and then others observed he had his toe on the floor. When he lifted it up, down went the scale. He was overweight. The stewards were sent for; 2lbs. extra was added to the weights. Wells got in the scales again, which went down flop again. Blue Gown was disqualified, and Virtue got the race.

It transpired that Wells and Doyle had had a heavy quarrel. At that time Sir Joseph Hawley had three great horses, Blue Gown, Rosicrucian, and Green Sleeve. They were all so good they could put up any reasonable extra weight, and Wells went on riding over-weight, trusting not to be found out. Doyle had this "up his sleeve," so when the quarrel took place he knew how to get his revenge. I asked Doyle myself

how much Wells was over-weight, and he said he thought about 7 lbs. to 9 lbs.

Now then, about Jim Doyle and Tim Whiffler. I was, and am supposed to be, a pretty good cricketer, and in those days Doyle used to fancy himself at cricket. I used to play him single wicket at Richmond about once a week, and Jim Snowden used to back me for a fiver. Doyle won one match in six, so I was a little annuity to Snowden. Doyle rode Tim Whiffler to victory in the Chester Cup, and mention of this fact recalls an extraordinary dream.

Mr. Alexander Young—who bred Digby Grand, second in the Derby; Grand Flaneur, who won the Portland Plate at Doncaster twice; and Controversy, sold to Lord Rosebery, and won the Lincolnshire Handicap—passed me one day in a great hurry to catch a train.

I said: " Where are you going, Mr. Young?" And he replied: " I am going to Chester to see the Cup run, because I have had a most vivid dream that I was at Chester in the ring after the race was run, and I saw No. 21 go up on the board as the winner, and I am going to back it."

THE GROUND OF THE SEFTON CRICKET CLUB.

Mr. Young went to Chester, and the first man he met was the then greatest bookmaker in England, John Jackson, of Oran, near Catterick. Mr. Young did not often go to race meetings, so Jackson expressed his surprise at seeing him there. Mr. Young told Jackson why he had come, namely, to back No. 21.

"The cards are coming out now," said Jackson, "so we'll soon see what it is."

They bought a card apiece, and, after scrutinising it, Jackson ejaculated: "Well, this is most extraordinary; it's my own horse, Tim Whiffler!"

Young asked if he had any chance, and Jackson answered: "I think he'll win."

Mr. Young took a bet of £3,000 to £180, stood in exactly the same place as in his dream, and saw the horse win in a canter.

Talking about dreams, Lady Bolton, whose family seat was close to Middleham, was a most extraordinary dreamer of winners. She dreamt that Blue Bonnet won the Leger, and Ellington the Derby, but her final dream was the most extraordinary of all. The family have the envelope in which the letter was contained

relating this dream, with the postmark on it to show it was posted before the race was run, and I have seen it. Lady Bolton dreamed the first three in the Derby—Voltigeur 1, Pittsford 2, and Clincher 3—and these horses finished in that order. Her son, the Hon. Amyas Poulett, had some fabulous odds about placing them.

I was a great friend of Jim Snowden's, and used to ask him all sorts of things. I asked him once who was the best jockey he ever rode against, and he replied : " George Fordham and Fred Archer." I said : " Yes, but which is the best of the two?" He said : " Fordham. I always think I know when Archer's all out, but old George sometimes produces half a length or a neck which you know nothing about."

I saw Blair Athol tried. I was a boy at the time, and went with Snowden to Malton and saw him tried with Caller Ou, who had won the Leger. Snowden rode Blair Athol in the Derby and Leger, and he won on him in all his races, as a matter of fact with a whip I won in a quarter-mile race, and which he had asked me to give him.

Snowden had a great sense of humour. I

used to go long walks with him when he was sweating, from Richmond to Middleham and back again, 21 miles. There were no Turkish baths in those days. One time, coming back, we saw the gaol at Richmond, which is on a hill; it's a most prominent building. I said to Snowden: "Jim, if everybody had their deserts where would you and I be?" pointing to the gaol. "Well," he said, "Mr. Roper, I think I should be walking here by myself."

Jim Snowden.—Scrap in a bedroom.—Winning the wedding expenses.—Bendigo and the Lincolnshire Handicap.—A run of luck.—What Cathal's failure meant.—Fight between stallions.

AS I have already said, Jim Snowden was a great friend of mine, and I used to go to race meetings with him and Doyle, the other jockey in Watson's stable. One day we were at Ayr for the races, and we occupied the same bedroom. Doyle was a man who carefully said his prayers every night, and on this occasion he prepared to do so. And quite right, too. He had been on his knees for some little time when Snowden began to laugh, which enraged Doyle exceedingly. He turned round on his knees and said: "Jim, if you don't stop laughing I'll come and hammer you." However, Jim couldn't repress his laughter, and all at once Doyle jumped up, and after a good deal of doubtful language they set to work to fight. It

was a better exhibition than we often see at the Stadium.

After about ten minutes I intervened, and they stopped. Snowden got back into bed, still laughing, and Doyle went down on his knees and finished his prayers.

Towards the close of his career, Snowden became a victim to consumption. He had a great friend who was engaged to be married, but was short of funds. He decided to risk his fortune—now this is a true story, not one of Nat Gould's—in a plunge on a horse called Nappa, who, I think, won the Ebor Handicap. This horse would only give his best running for Snowden, who, although half dead at the time, consented, to oblige his friend, to ride him. Snowden rode a most desperate and magnificent finish, and got his mount home by about half a length. He was so exhausted that he had to be lifted off the saddle, but turned round and said to his friend: "There you are, old boy; I've done it for you; go and get wed." He was so weak he couldn't carry his saddle to weigh in.

A story told many times, and attributed to many jockeys, really applies to Snowden, who

was somewhat independent and outspoken. He was engaged by the famous Duchess of Montrose to ride for a short period for her—she was always changing her jockeys. One day she gave him orders how to ride a horse. They were: "Now, Snowden, you must get nicely away, keep with the others until you get to the distance, and then come away to win."

The race was run, and Snowden and the Duchess's horse were down the course.

On returning to the paddock they were met by the Duchess, who exclaimed to Jim: "Why didn't you fulfil my orders?" He answered: "How could I come without the —— horse?" He never rode for her again.

Snowden had the gift many great jockeys did not possess, of being able to tell you what other horses in a race had done. He went down to Lambourn, and I had a letter from his clerk to say that "Mr. Snowden wants to meet you at Richmond, and will be glad if you'll come there. He won't put anything down on paper, but will tell you by word of mouth."

Of course, I went over to Richmond, and I said: "Now, Jim, what is it?" And he

answered: "The greatest certainty that ever was. I've been down at Lambourn riding Bendigo in his gallops for Joussiffe for the Lincoln Handicap, and it's the greatest certainty on earth."

The horse was then quoted at 20 to 1. He said: "You must take £1,000 to £50." I said: "I don't bet in those figures, James; it's out of my depth." He replied: "You and your brother take it between you; you won't want any money to settle with."

And so we did. And afterwards, we "took courage," and took 100 to 6 and 100 to 7 and 100 to 8, and backed the horse to win a considerable sum for us.

Three days before the race, when Bendigo was first favourite at 3 to 1, I wrote to Snowden's clerk, and said we had those big bets for us, averaging about 12 to 1, and what should we do; should we hedge it? The message came back: "Mr. Snowden tells me to say that you must hedge it by taking £300 to £100 more, the horse cannot be beaten."

Well, the race was run, and Bendigo won by about a length. I noticed that he had not won

with the ease I had expected him to do from what Snowden had said, and when Snowden joined me here in Liverpool—he had come on from Lincoln to the Liverpool meeting—I said: "You did not win so easily as I expected." He replied: "Well, no, it was this way; I had them all beat except one that was in front of me, and he was a three-year-old, and I thought he was sure to come back to me." (Three-year-olds seldom win the Lincolnshire Handicap.) "Well, I had to set my horse going fairly in the last 150 yards, and, of course, I always had him sort of beat, you know, and I won; but that tells me that this three-year-old is a good horse, for nobody knows how good Bendigo is." And this three-year-old won the City and Suburban; he was Bird of Freedom.

Snowden came to stay with me for the Liverpool meeting. It was the year that Voluptuary won the National, and I knew Mr. E. P. Wilson very well. He told me he thought Voluptuary was sure to win, and we backed him and won a good stake.

The Liverpool Spring Cup then came on, and there was a horse called Chiselhurst in, and he

had run second in the St. Leger to Ossian. He took my fancy, and I said to Snowden: "This horse looks well, but he's rather big in condition. I wonder if he's fit?" He said: "We'll ask Fagan," who was riding him. Fagan said: "Yes, he's fit; it's his nature to look big." Ten to one we got, and he won.

The Oxford and Cambridge boat race was at the end of the week—such a week as never was! I remember laying Mr. Bob Howett 6 to 4 on Oxford to a considerable sum, and they won. And I thought again I would never want any more money, but again I was wrong.

Voluptuary was an extraordinary horse. He ran fourth in the Derby, won the Grand National, and later was in Liverpool winning a steeplechase every night at the Royal Court Theatre. Leonard Boyne used to ride him out of the wings, pop him over a jump, and the "race" was won.

I will next tell you about a double event bet which changed my life. In Cloister's stable there was a boy I had done a good turn to, and when this horse was first favourite this boy wrote to me telling me not to back Cloister as he had a

bad back, but they had another horse in the same stable called Cathal that was well worth backing. So I took a double event bet—Euclid for the Lincoln and Cathal for the National, 886 to 1. Euclid won, Cloister did not run, and Cathal started first favourite at 3 to 1. A friend of mine told me to hedge, and I said, "No, I'll have it all or none." "Why," he asked. "Because," I replied, "I am dead broke, and I want it all to go to America with." Cathal jumped the last hurdle half a length in front, but from that moment every stride cost me, I calculated, about £25, for Mr. Widger, on Wild Man from Borneo, rode a very determined and fine race, and beat Cathal (Escott). So I lost, and I thought it hard lines at the time. It turned out to be the luckiest thing that ever happened to me, for if I had gone to America I should have been knifed or scalped (a little difficult to do this—bald) probably in some gambling saloon, and I should not have been where I am now and should never have received those overwhelming kindnesses which everybody has extended to me.

People pay a great deal to see sensations

nowadays, and we read of bull fighting at Madrid and so on, but I saw a sight on Richmond Moor far in front of anything of that sort and for nothing at all. There was a horse called Brandy Wine, trained by Robinson. He was a fiend horse, a perfect devil. A friend named Bradley and I were out watching the horses at their work. Brandy Wine was such a bad devil that he came out to gallop by himself. We were standing about fifty yards away from a wall in which luckily there was a gate. As he got opposite to us, about sixty yards off, he bucked, and his jockey came off. The boy crept into a gorse bush on his hands and knees as fast as he could. The horse looked round to see what he could go for, and spotting Bradley and myself came for us as hard as he could gallop. We ran for the gate in the wall (I could have won a Sheffield handicap easily that time from scratch). We slammed the gate to after us, and luckily it held. We crouched under the wall, and we saw him rearing up against the wall and looking over as much as to say, " Where are they? "

Then he turned away and saw a string of

horses trained by Elliott coming up the gallops. He immediately went for the first horse, an animal called Ameer, whose jockey threw himself off and also crept into a gorse bush. And then the two stallions set to work. It reminded one of the pictures you see of those two Arabian horses fighting for the mare, you know. They kicked, reared up, and kicked with their hind legs, fought with their fore legs, tore with their teeth, and shrieked and yelled like two human beings. It was a magnificent sight; I shall never forget it. Then stablemen came running along with sticks and things to beat them off, which they eventually did, but Ameer's fore leg was broken and he had to be destroyed. But he got Brandy Wine with his teeth behind his ears and tore off the skin down to his withers, there being nearly two and a half feet of skin hanging down. He was also otherwise knocked about. He recovered; he was a good horse and they took a great deal of care with him, but about two years afterwards he got loose in his stable at night and killed a horse next to him. Then they thought it was time he was put away and they shot him.

I also saw that great horse called Strathconan —he was placed in the Leger—throw his jockey and get loose on Richmond Moor. Every creature, animal and horseman, got off that moor quicker than anything I ever saw, and Strathconan was left in sole possession. He was captured in about an hour, and did no harm, but it was a fine sight to see him galloping about seeking whom to devour.

It is curious how sometimes very important matters seem trivial to some people. At Catterick there was a steeplechase run, and a horse fell at a jump in the country. The rider had a severe fall; in fact, he fell on his head, and he lay there with his head doubled under him, and we thought he had broken his neck or was very seriously injured. We sent to the grand stand for a doctor. While we stood watching him die, as I thought, a great big countryman came along, and after looking at the jockey for a moment said, "Come out of the way, what's all th' fuss about? It's nobbut his neck"—just as if it was a trivial matter. However, he must have known something, for he got the jockey's shoulders between his knees, got hold of his head

and, I suppose, pulled his neck into place again. The doctor came along, and said there had been partial dislocation, and if the countryman had not done what he did the jockey would have died before he (the doctor) got there.

There was an extraordinary difference in the dress of jockeys in those days to the present. I remember all the old jockeys of Snowden's time, like Chaloner, Aldcroft, Ashmole, the two Grimshaws, etc., and I remember Aldcroft particularly. He wore a blue surtout coat, a tall hat, and long Dundreary whiskers, as unlike the ordinary idea of a jockey as anything could be. He was a fine, determined horseman, and won the Derby on Ellington. Ashmole was another of the same style. In those days jockeys sat down at a severe finish, now they never sit down at all, but perch up like monkeys. Probably the modern way is best, the reason being, it is now maintained, that horses can carry weight better on the withers than on the back.

Tom Sayers.—The biter bit.—Boxing men's temperaments.—When I beat John Roberts.—Games at the Racquets Club.—Good billiards advice.

MY interests in sport were not confined to the turf. I took as much pleasure in boxing, billiards, swimming, running, cricket, and all other athletic pursuits. In regard to boxing there are very few men now living who can say that they had the gloves on with Tom Sayers. When I say " men," perhaps it is an exaggeration, because I had the gloves on with Sayers when I was eleven years old! in this way.

After the great fight between Sayers and Heenan, the account of which I know off by heart because my father saw it, they came round the country with a circus called Howes and Cushions, and they stayed at Richmond for a week. My elder brother was also a bit of a boxer and a great " pal " of mine, and he said to me one day, " Edward, would you like to see Sayers

and Heenan? " and of course, as the glamour of the big fight was still over everybody, I suppose there were no two men in the world that I would rather have seen. So I was taken to a public-house, the Fleece Inn, and I remember we went into a little sanded parlour. The host of the inn was sat at the door, and four men from him to the left in the corner was a man who, I eventually found out, was Tom Sayers.

Sayers later took a sort of fancy to me, and I used to go up to the circus to see him practice in the mornings. He said to me one day, " Little fellow, put the gloves on and then you can say you have boxed with me." I little dreamed that I should ever be recording the fact. I put the gloves on and, of course, he let me do as I liked, and at last he put his head down to me and said, " Now, then, hit me on the jaw," which I did with all my puny strength. He fell down on his back laughing and said, " Now, you can say you have knocked down the champion of England." And it is true; poor old Tom.

I am going to tell you a story of Tom Sayers' kindness of heart. You would never have taken him for a prize fighter from his dress. He wore

a blue frock coat and light-coloured trousers, and a top, chimney-pot hat. He looked more like a gentleman walking down Bond Street than fighting in the ring. I remember him striking me as a beautifully-shaped man. He had magnificent shoulders, a waist like a woman, and then his hips came out powerfully. Although only 5ft. 8½in. and 10st. 10lbs.—that was his fighting weight, you know—he looked a very formidable man. He had a dark complexion, his face was a sort of copper colour, and his nose showed signs of the many batterings it had had. A man came into the parlour whose name was Heugh. He was a rough-and-tumble chap, a man people were much afraid of, a very aggressive and objectionable fellow, and he sat down opposite to where Sayers was, having no idea that Sayers was in the room. He afterwards joined the Liverpool police force, and I believe died here.

Amongst the company was a poor chap who was afflicted with stuttering; when he tried to speak he stammered, and Heugh, with bad taste, whenever this man spoke, stuttered at him, which made him get vexed and stammer much

worse. This went on for a bit until Sayers said very quietly to Heugh, " Look here, sir, I think it is too bad of you doing this to this poor gentleman, and I would ask you not to do it any more." With that Heugh, a look of contempt upon his face, used bad language, and asked Sayers what it had got to do with him, and that he would do what he liked. Immediately afterwards he stuttered again at this poor chap. Sayers again reproved him a little more sternly, and added, " If you do it any more I shall try and stop you." The same thing happened again, upon which Sayers jumped up and brought his hand down on the top of Heugh's hat—he had a tall hat on, too—and smashed it down over his neck. Heugh foamed at the mouth, jumped up, dragging his hat off his shoulders and said, " I'll have it in for you for this; come out and I'll give you a d—— good hiding."

Sayers replied, " Quite right, we'll go into the back yard," and went out. As Heugh was going out after him the landlord, Mr. Haywood, tapped him on the shoulder and said, " Bill, I suppose you know who you are going to take

on." He replied, " I don't know and I don't care; I'll give him a d—— good hiding." " Well, you may or you may not," answered Haywood, " only it would be as well for you to know it is Tom Sayers." Heugh said " Rot," but Haywood repeated what he had said and convinced Heugh that it was Sayers. Heugh then asked, " Where's he gone? " " In the stable-yard waiting for you," replied the landlord. " So," he said, " then I'll go the other way," and away he went. Sayers came in presently and said, " Where's the gentleman? " to which Haywood replied, " He got to know who you were and he's gone." Sayers laughed. Haywood said, " Tom, what would you have done to him? " and he answered, " I would not have hurt him badly, but I would have given him a good hiding, for I think he deserved it."

To further prove what a good-hearted man he was, a nice fellow. At night, after Heenan and Sayers had boxed, they invited anyone in the audience to spar with either of them. Sayers, who by nine o'clock was always in a kindly mood, used to treat his opponents with the greatest leniency. He would just tap them,

play with them, box their ears, and so on. They were only countrymen. But Heenan was a bad-tempered man, and if a man by any chance hit him pretty hard he used to let him have it back right off. So that by about Thursday, whilst there was a queue waiting to box with Sayers, Mr. Heenan was left by himself. Now Heenan was also a magnificent man, 6ft. 1in., broad and about 14st., a splendid human being. And as they stood up opposite each other you would absolutely wonder how Sayers could have put up such a fight against such odds as he had to contend with.

In those days at Richmond there was a fair held as there is now, but then it was a much bigger function in the way of shows, merry-go-rounds, etc., and a man called Mickey Bent used to go round with a boxing booth, and several great fighters used to come. I have seen Bendigo, who was champion for years, and the man he fought with, Ben Caunt, and the nigger, Bob Travers, all in this booth. Bendigo was, when I saw him, more or less a veteran. He had short-clipped, grey hair, and was bent at the shoulders, but a very powerful and determined

fellow, as clever as you make 'em, and a tremendous hitter. The man he fought for the championship was Caunt, a powerful, big man, but nothing like so active as Bendigo, and as they had their bout there seemed to be some recollection of their fight for the championship in their minds, for they used to give a good show. But Bendigo always had the best of it; he was much the more active and quicker.

Mickey Bent's booth came to Richmond when the Militia was in training there. There were a lot of officers in the Militia who could box. Amongst others was the father of the present Duke of Leeds, the Honourable Godolphin Osborne. I saw him have a set-to there with a nigger, who had won several fights, and Mr. Osborne gave this nigger the biggest hammering a man could have. He was a fine boxer. I was quite a boy at the time, and the reason I was present was that a gentleman named Major Buckle (in the Militia) used to ask me to breakfast with him, and I remember particularly the day on which Mr. Osborne was boxing being invited by Major Buckle, and eating nearly a whole jar of marmalade, which seems to have

impressed itself on my memory as much as the boxing.

Boxing men, like other men, have different temperaments. Some are good-natured; some are not. I remember years ago, at the Gymnasium here in Liverpool, Jem Mace used to give lessons. Old Jem always wanted to get down to the Star music-hall, or somewhere of that sort about nine o'clock in the evening. He used to give so many lessons, a quarter of an hour each, to different members, but when the last one came he generally wanted to be off. I remember being the last on one occasion. No sooner had we put our hands up than he hit me a most awful smack on the nose, and the rest of the proceedings interested me no more. So that lesson was finished, and James went down to the Star. Mace was so good with his head that I have seen him put his hands down and ask his amateur opponent to hit him on the head, which very few people could ever do; he would just dodge like that (a quick jerk sideways).

People will think I am boasting, but I hope what I am going to say now will not be considered as such, although I have said I have

knocked down Tom Sayers. I am now going to say that I am the only man that beat John Roberts at billiards every time he played me. About the year 1871-72 John Roberts was staying at Bedale, some nine miles from Richmond. I believe he was then courting the lady who afterwards became Mrs. Roberts, and was staying with his prospective father-in-law, who travelled in the wine and spirit trade. One day he came over with his father-in-law—who came over to Richmond in the way of business—and having nothing to do, of course, gravitated into the first billiard-room, which happened to be at the Black Lion in Finkle Street, where I was with Mr. James Watson, the trainer, the same gentleman of whom I have written before. We knew Roberts quite well; he had just beaten Cook for the championship, and, of course, a game was proposed. I said, "How many will you give me, Mr. Roberts?" and he said, "Sixty in a hundred," which was very little indeed for him to give any amateur.

In proof of this fact I recall the time when he was playing at the Liverpool Racquet Club in Upper Parliament Street, and at the end of

the regular game he invited members of the club to play with him. The first gentleman was Mr. Oliver Jones, that well-known and most popular of Liverpool sportsmen, who received 95 in 100, and although he was a player who could make 25 and 30 at a break, Roberts beat him. He was succeeded by another very well-known local sportsman, who shall be nameless, but is well known for his great popularity, especially in cricket circles, being a very fine all-round player, both batsman and left-hand bowler, has often played for Lancashire, and also has the advantage of being so tall that he seldom requires the rest when playing at billiards. He is now a member of one of the most important firms in the cotton market, but as it is possible he may not wish his name to be mentioned, I hide his identity in this effective manner! He asked Roberts the same question, "How many will you give me?" Roberts said, "Mr. So-and-So, if you'll break the balls I will tell you." When this was done, both balls being out of baulk, Roberts said, "You can have 99," and Roberts ran out with 100 unfinished!

Having proved that 60 in 100 was nothing for

Roberts to give, we will proceed with my game. I gave a miss in baulk. Roberts gave a miss under the right hand cushion, which astonished me, and I remember saying to him, "Ah, Roberts, you are afraid of me already." However, I went out for a cannon up to the spot, made it, and collared 38. I may say that when the money was down and I was trying I was rather useful then, but now that old age comes creeping on, the object ball has whiskers on it, or a halo like the moon when bad weather is imminent, and you play where you Hope (?) the edge may be. Poor old eyes. Anno Domini. And I was doing my best, because I was playing for Mr. Watson's 10s., which they had betted. The 60 Roberts gave me and 38 and a miss made 99 to his one. But he scored and went on till he had got 82, when my ball went into the pocket. He was left with the red in a most favourable position. He was in hand and the red in the middle of the table, and it looked any odds on him winning, and if the balls and the table had been true he would have done so. But the ball he was playing with was a foul ball. He played a long, slow, losing hazard into the right-

hand pocket, and if the ball had been true it would have gone in all right, but he played it too slow, and the ball ran off ever so slightly and waggled in the mouth of the pocket. I remember standing over it and saying to myself, " If that goes in I'm beat." But it didn't. I proceeded to put my ball down in the " D " and took careful aim at the white.

Roberts said to me, " You are not going to pot me, are you, Mr. Roper? " and I said, " Well, John, it all depends whether I hit it or not; but I'm going to try."

Well, of course, I made 4, 99—103, game! He said, " We'll play another." I said, " No, John, certainly not." He replied, " What for? " " Well," I said, " I am going down to posterity as the only man who beat you every time he played you," and added, " We'll have a bottle of wine out of the ten shillings "—fancy getting a bottle of champagne for 10s.!—" but I will not play you again."

Two years afterwards I went to see him playing North at his rooms in Admiral Street, London, in the afternoon, and after the session was over I went to speak to Roberts. I said,

"How do you do, John?" He looked at me for a moment, and I saw in his eyes that he did not know me. I said, "You don't remember me." Then his memory came back.

He said, "Now I know you, Mr. Roper." He remembered my voice, and he turned round to North and said, "Come here, North. I want to introduce you to the only gentleman who beat me every time he played me—Mr. Roper."

He asked me if I had been watching them play, and I answered yes. He said, "What are you going to do to-night?" and I said, "I'm not quite sure." He then remarked, "Well, I propose this: you come and have a bit of dinner with me, come and watch North and I play to-night, and then afterwards you and I will have a game." I said, "No, John; I will come and dine with you, and I'll come and see you play, but wild horses won't drag me on the table to play with you. I am going to remain as I was before, the only man who beat you every time he played you!"

We became great friends, and he gave me good billiard advice. The first was:

> Do not play slowly up to the red for a cannon unless it is good odds on you making it or you'll leave them together for the other man to score.

The next was:

> At the end of a break, when you are getting into difficulties perhaps, leave as many balls in baulk as you can, for then the other man may have fewer to play with if he makes a losing hazard.

The last was the best of all:

> Never "bet" unless you are playing yourself, *and then you know what one player is doing, at any rate.*

Roberts and Mitchell, a fine player Mitchell was, you know, came to open the then Vines's public-house (Liverpool) at the corner of Copperas Hill, by the Adelphi, and they played 750 up and three games of pyramids. In those days 100's off a ball were not made so frequently as they are now, and the game was in this state: Roberts gave Mitchell 250 in 750. Mitchell was about 620 and Roberts about 480. There was a

gentleman in the audience who had backed Cook against Roberts for the championship several times and lost money doing it, and he was therefore rather prejudiced against Roberts. At this moment Roberts said, "I'll take £20 to £5 I make 100 break before the game's over." He had only 270 to get to complete the game, so there was not much margin, but from that moment the balls seemed to run in Roberts' favour, and he made 144 at his third break.

To further illustrate what luck is—when they got to the second game of pyramids there were eight balls left on the table. Roberts said, "I'll take £20 to £5 I take these eight balls," and he did—not at one break, but he got them all right. Mitchell from that moment seemed to have no "luck."

I have seen all the great billiard players since John Roberts, senior, but I think a large majority of those who have had the same privilege would say that John Roberts, junior, was the best player, and certainly the most fascinating to watch. He knew how to please the public, and gave up the monotonous spot stroke to play the open game that he could play so

well, because he could see that the spot stroke had ceased to be attractive. All the billiard experts have their virtues, the elegance of Stevenson, Reece's fine touch, the cannons of Falkiner, the losing hazards of the champion Smith, the fine all-round play of Newman, and last, but by no means least, the nerve, determination and indomitable courage of the ex-champion Inman, and I suppose if we all had to back a man to play for our money in a tight corner the majority would choose the latter. But if I had the chance of choosing who I wanted to see, say, to-morrow, I should choose John Roberts, junior.

A lucky hit, a dinner and a race.—Shaw, cricketer and greyhound trainer.—Three Waterloo Cup winners.—Boxing at Carlisle.—My " dark " opponent.—Fair " side shows."—How two " biters " were bitten.

I CANNOT get away from Richmond—dear, old Richmond! I remember playing in a cricket match there for Richmond against Northallerton. It was a " blood " match, and a very near thing. I was only twenty at the time, and was put in tenth, being played at that period as a bowler. We wanted six runs to win, and our last man was a perfect image who never got a run. The very first ball was on my middle stump, and I remember being so nervous that I hardly saw it. However, I closed my eyes and with a blind swipe to square leg I hit it out of the ground for six. I was carried out shoulder high.

This resulted in the Northallerton captain saying to my brother, who was captain of our side, " Well, Roper, you've beaten us at cricket,

but we have got a chap in our team who can beat any of your men at a certain thing at 100 yards." My brother said, "Oh, yes, of course. I know what you mean, Jack Shaw, the runner, to run any of our men," and added, "We have nobody except my brother Edward, who is only a youth, but he has just won the 100 yards at Clifton College," and my brother came and spoke to me. I said to him, "I don't think I have much chance with Shaw, but I will run him if you make it 120 yards." My brother asked why.

I had better here state that cricket lunches in the country are very substantial meals, with big lumps of meat and so on, and I had sat opposite to Shaw during the lunch and watched his extraordinary performance. It was at the time that new potatoes were coming in, and he seemed exceedingly fond of them, but unfortunately, he only had, so far as I could make out, one tooth, and his mode of procedure was as follows:—He would put a new potato about the size of a gooseberry into his mouth, and it seemed to go round his mouth like a roulette ball on a table, and when it passed this tooth he had

a jab at it. If he hit it, it was all right, but if he missed it went round again. After the third unsuccessful attempt he generally swallowed it whole. So that after lunch he was full up to the neck with solid new potatoes, and hoping that this would be some handicap, I made the race over as long a distance as I could.

The race proved that both my eyesight and judgment were correct. At 80 yards he was a yard in front of me, at 100 yards we were level, and then the potatoes told and I won by about two feet. A match well made is half won!

Shaw and I became great friends, and one day, some years afterwards, I met him in Basnett Street, Liverpool. I said, "Shaw, what are you doing here?" He replied, "I am training greyhounds for the Waterloo Cup, and I believe I have got the winner with me." I asked what it was, and he said "Coomassie. She's at 40 to 1, you must back her," which I promptly did, £200 to £5. She won all right, and I met him again in the same place the next year. He repeated the same advice, "Coomassie again," but the odds were only 5 to 1. I backed her, and she won again. She

was a great little greyhound—I believe the smallest that ever won—for she won two consecutive Waterloo Cups and was never beaten in her life.

But that was not the only good turn that Jack Shaw did me, for several years afterwards I met him again, and I said, "Anything for this year's Waterloo Cup?" He answered "Yes, I am training for Mr. Osborne, and we have three in, Waterford, Wild Mint, and another," whose name I forget. I said, "Which is the best of the three?" and he said, "Waterford," which was then at 14 to 1. I said, "I feel inclined to take a 100 to 1 about something; can you tell me one worth taking that about?" After carefully thinking he said, "Well, take £500 to £5 about Wild Mint." "But," I rejoined, "you said Waterford is the better animal." He said, "In all his trials he leads her three lengths to an inch, but when she gets to the hare there is no better greyhound in the stake. Of course, I think he is sure to beat her if they meet, but you asked me for a long shot, and I have given you the best advice I can."

The first course she ran was against a dog

called Phillips Form. I thought Wild Mint was beaten, but the judge gave it an undecided. The same result when she went to the slips again—another undecided. She won at the third time of asking and struggled through that day. She was quoted at 66 to 1 against that night. I took 200 to 3 sovereigns more about her, so that I had altogether £700 to £8 about her. She came out the next morning and ran yet another undecided, but again struggled through the second day and had to meet her kennel companion Waterford the first thing next morning in the last four.

Shaw dined with me that night and he said, "Well, Waterford is sure to beat her. She has had three undecideds while Waterford has got through quite easily." But I could not hedge any money and I had to stand it out. In the morning Waterford and Wild Mint were slipped, and Waterford was beating her exactly to an inch as Shaw said, three lengths, used the hare once or twice and would have won all right, but that in trying to kill he pulled a tuft of hair off the hare's back which got into his throat and choked him so that he had to check. He put his head

up in the air and could not draw his breath. So Wild Mint won, and she had to go into the final with the greatest favourite that ever started in a final for the Waterloo Cup, Snowflight. They laid 8 to 1 on Snowflight. I tried very persistently to hedge some of that £700 with a bookmaker, who eventually told me in language more forcible than polite to go and smother myself, and my money with me.

The end of it was that Wild Mint won the Cup. I was with a friend, and I was so absolutely astounded at the result that although I saw the white flag go up and everybody shouting "Wild Mint," that even after that I could not believe it and turned round to appeal to my friend with the excuse that I really could not see the white flag. He reassured me that Wild Mint had won, and I had the pleasure of going to the bookmaker and asking him in language more vigorous than polite if he would like any Wild Mint money then, but that it was really too late. So this bitch ran nine courses, three undecideds, was the non-favourite every time she started, and killed every hare she was slipped at, including the undecideds. So that my recol-

lections of Jack Shaw, Wild Mint, and new potatoes are among the very pleasant ones that I have.

I used to take a cricket team up into the north, and in 1887, Jubilee year, we played Cumberland County at Carlisle. Enormous preparations were made for this particular year, and the whole of Carlisle racecourse was covered with merry-go-rounds, boxing booths, shooting galleries, and a lot of other fair side-shows. My friend, Sidney Crosfield, was with me—he played for Lancashire for years, and was captain of the Lancashire County—and with him I used to have the gloves on. Sidney was not a very good boxer; he could only box about three rounds. As we were passing a big boxing booth Crosfield put up his hands to me in fun as though boxing, and the man who had the booth, and had been watching us play cricket, came down and said: "Gentlemen, will you come and set to inside? We have not done very well; it will do us a good turn." Sidney said "Yes," and I said "Certainly," and in we went.

I must say this: Crosfield very soon lost his

temper if there was any hard hitting, and about the third round he began to knock me about, and got me with my head to the post in one corner, hit me on the nose, and buffeted me against the post. Of course I had to do something under these circumstances, and I hit him rather hard, and down he went.

After we had finished, two of the professionals set to in the ring, and when they had done the ringmaster asked if anybody would like a set to with a young fellow who had just been boxing. The three rounds I had had with Crosfield—and some champagne which we had won in a bet from a young fellow who was there over the weight of Kitchenar in the Chester Cup, which he thought he knew more about than we did—had made me feel very brave, and I would have boxed with anyone at the moment. So I said: "Yes; I will box this gentleman."

I stood up and shook hands with him, and whispered to him before we set to: "The old bargain between an amateur and a pro., please—I hit you, and you don't hit me." He replied: "All right, sir, I'll not hurt you." So we set to work.

About the fourth round we were hitting each other rather hard, and I was boxing, as I thought, exceedingly well. I really was not a dummy at it, mind you, and I had noticed that he never used his right hand. Now, as we all know, some men are good with their right, some with their left, some equally good with both, so I dismissed his right hand from my calculations.

In the fourth round we got rather close together, and hit each other really hard counters, and I remember having time enough to say to myself, from the look in his eye, "I wonder if I have done wrong?" In a second or two I found out that I had, for out came his right hand. It cut my left eyebrow to the bone, the next sent my nose over my right shoulder, and the final one, as I was going down, hit me on the jaw and sent it somewhere else, and down I went.

He was an awful nice chap, for he bent over me and said at once: "I am so sorry, but you hit me so hard I lost my temper for the moment." I replied: "All right, never mind, let's wind-up." And I got up and finished the round easy.

I said to him : " I had come to the conclusion that you had no right hand." And he answered : " Ah ! that is where you made a mistake. My right hand's a long way the best of the two, but I never produced it until you hit me hard, and I may say that, taking on anybody, I have not been hit so hard this week, and I lost my temper and let you have it back." I said : " Quite right, I don't complain, but it's a very lucky thing you didn't produce that right any sooner, or else this bout would have been over long ago."

And now I want to tell you who this gentleman was. His name was Tug Wilson, of Leicester. At that time John L. Sullivan, who in my opinion was the most desperate fighter of any of them, was offering, in America, the sum of 500 dollars to any man who would stand up to him for three rounds, and he invariably knocked them out. Tug Wilson, however, went over to America on purpose to accept the challenge, and each time Sullivan took him on he stood the three rounds, and won the money. This was the angel I was entertaining unawares at Carlisle !

Referring back to Sullivan, I remember seeing him box at the Aquarium in London. He was a born fighter, a man who liked it, and even when boxing he very soon got to fighting, and at about nine o'clock at night was a very formidable man to take on. His sparring partner was a man named Abbott, taller and heavier than Sullivan, a big man he was. On this night they got to hitting each other very hard. About the fourth round Sullivan hit Abbott a terrible blow in the stomach, and Abbott went through the ropes into the orchestra, which was seated round the platform. Abbott crashed on the man with the violoncello, and the two, with the instrument, were all of a heap in the corner. Someone in the gallery shouted out : " See where John's sent him, into the dog kennel." Well, John came to the edge of the platform and looked down at Abbott, and I thought he was going to jump on him and kill him, but he turned away and walked round the ring like a lion seeking whom he might devour.

What amused me was that Abbott picked himself up from the debris, came to the edge of the platform, looked up at Sullivan, who glared

at him, said " Good night, John," and retired to the dressing-room. I admired his sagacity in doing so, for Sullivan at that moment was not a man to take on.

Two little anecdotes which so admirably illustrate the tricks of the fair, and how you always ought to have your wits about you, recur to me—before I had left my dear old Richmond. I had a great friend called Sim Metcalfe; he was a fine sportsman and a very good shot, a very good shot indeed. We were up on the moor during race week, and in this country place during race meetings, like at Chester and all those old-fashioned places, there were all sorts of amusements going on, merry-go-rounds, side shows, etc., amongst others, shooting at glass balls. Metcalfe had a shot—and missed. And then the man who had the glass ball show offered to bet him half a crown he couldn't hit one, which Metcalfe accepted. He had about five more shots at half a crown each time, and missed them all. And then came away, whispering in my ear: " We'll get this all back again."

Next day we turned up again, and Metcalfe had two or three more shots at half a crown a

time, and missed! The man began chaffing him about his shooting, and said: "I'll bet you anything you like you can't break one." Sim said: "What will you bet?" And the man replied: "Anything you like up to £25." Metcalfe said: "Done, put the money down." And the £50 was deposited in the hands of a policeman. Sim was handed the gun, and he immediately took the cartridges out and put in two of his own which he had brought in his pocket. And, of course, broke the glass ball to smithereens. The man dare not object to his cartridges being changed. When we got home we opened the two Sim had extracted from the gun, and they were full of sawdust!

Here is another story with a moral. In those old days thimble-rigging was a great game on racecourses. It has been superseded now by the three-card trick, just as poker has taken the place of loo. We were coming off the moor when we saw in front of us a crowd round a thimble-rigging man. They had apparently all lost their money, and were in a state of great unrest. As we approached the crowd, Sim said to me: "Come along and I'll show you how to

make a fiver." The thimble-rigging man saw us coming, and played up to us, probably saying to himself: "Here are two mugs." And when we got there he said: "Nobody finds the pea for a fiver." Sim Metcalfe said: "Done," put a fiver down, and it was covered. With that, Metcalfe put his finger on one thimble and flicked the other two thimbles off the board. So, therefore, as no pea came from under them it must be under the one on which Metcalfe had his finger, or it was not there at all. Now if this crowd of vexed yokels who had lost their money had known that they had never had a chance of winning, there being no pea on the table at all, they would probably have killed this fellow. I never knew whether to admire most Metcalfe's cleverness or the coolness with which the thimble-rigging man accepted the situation; for, knowing what he was likely to receive from his dupes, he immediately turned to Metcalfe—with a nasty look in his eye—and said: "You are quite right, sir; it is under that thimble." But the thimble was never lifted, and of course the pea, which he had had all the time under his little finger, was popped in at the next turn.

Another souvenir story.—How I acquired "The Colonel" buttons.—Cricket curiosities.—A bowling feat at Aigburth.—The Indian "sign."—Bowled five times by Harry Eccles.

MY JACK OF DIAMONDS mascot recalls to mind another souvenir of which I think a great deal, and which I must confess I stole. I have an overcoat on which are leather buttons which were made out of the saddle that The Colonel carried when he won the Grand National Steeplechase twice. And, by the way, I think I can claim a record in sight-seeing, for I have been present at every Grand National and Waterloo Cup since 1868, The Lamb's and Master M'Grath's year. But to return to the buttons. In those days I was playing cricket for the Gentlemen of Yorkshire, and I had a great friend who played in that team with me. His name was J. J. Atkinson, well off and much

interested in horses. He raced under the name of Mr. Doncaster, and ran horses such as The Robber and Myosotis, and won races on the ground which is now the Hoylake golf links, and will be recollected by old sportsmen of Liverpool.

Mr. Atkinson had a great deal to do with the management of The Colonel. He also, at the time of the Franco-German War, bought several very good horses from, I think, the Count Lagrange of that period. Amongst others were two called Nuag and Massinnissa. However, Nuag jumped on to the racecourse at the end of one Grand National lengths in front, and would have won if he had not stepped on a stone and broken down. But with regard to Massinnissa, I want to mention now what was probably one of the greatest certainties in racing ever known. In those days there were races for hunters, and all you had to do was to show your horse to the Master of the Hounds and get a certificate from him that the horse had been out hunting, and that qualified him to run in a hunters' race.

The fields in these particular cases were

enormous, and at Aintree on the occasion I am going to mention there were, I think, at least twenty horses started in what was called a hunters' race. I met my friend in the ring, and he said to me: "Teddy, have you backed anything?" I said "No." He proceeded: "Go away at once and back this horse of mine, Massinnissa; it's the greatest certainty that ever was known. He is a very good horse, and these hunters cannot go fast enough to keep him warm."

Well, I began by taking 8 to 1 about him in this field of a score, but Atkinson betted as if there was no hereafter, and the horse started at 6 to 4 against. Atkinson was quite right; they never extended this horse, and he won in an absolute canter all the way. But to prove that, as Atkinson said, what a certainty it was for his horse, he next year met the winner of the Derby, Blue Gown, and beat him. A nice animal for hunters to take on!

But now, at last, I return to the buttons. We were playing at Chelford against the Gentlemen of Cheshire for Gentlemen of Yorkshire. The year before I had a very nice cricket blazer,

which Atkinson took a great fancy to and stole from me. I remembered this, and pondered how I could get square with him. The opportunity came on this occasion. He had an overcoat on which were these leather buttons, made from the saddle of The Colonel, and he was telling us all about them, how he had won a good stake over the horse, and what a good horse he was. I said to him : "You stole my blazer last year, you ought to give me those buttons in return," because he had already said he had two sets of them, and he could spare one. He said : "Certainly not. I would not take a guinea a-piece for them." There were eight of them.

I did not say anything more at the moment, but, like the sailor's parrot, I thought a lot. We were staying at the Alderley Edge Hotel that night. We had a good dinner, and, afterwards, Atkinson, whom I never left, went into the billiard room. I pressed him to have an extra glass or two of whisky, and then he went to bed about half-past ten. I gave him half an hour to get to sleep, and then I took my boots off and went to his bedroom in my stocking feet,

armed with a pair of scissors. To my great joy I heard that he was asleep as I went along the passage. The door was unlocked, luckily, and the coat hanging behind it. You may imagine it did not take me long to snip the buttons off.

In the morning I got up very early, walked into Alderley Edge village with the buttons, went into a haberdasher's shop, bought an old collar-box, stuffed the buttons in, and posted them off to myself at Liverpool.

The day passed, and the match was over. J. J. was going back to York and I was coming to Liverpool. We were standing saying good-bye at Alderley Edge Station, on the platform, I praying that one of our trains would come in quickly so we should part as soon as possible. Unfortunately it got rather chilly, and Atkinson put his coat on. I was talking to him at the moment, and he began to try to button his coat, feeling around for the buttons, and I remember saying to myself: "Now you are in for it."

He had about three goes trying to fasten it, and then looked down to find the buttons, and, of course, missed them. He said: "Teddy, you've got those buttons!" I said: "J. J.

you can search my luggage here if you like; I have not got them." By that time they were at my lodgings in Liverpool. He had a look at the luggage, of course without success, and so he went away, leaving behind him a trail of blue, oh, so blue, language.

We met next at the Grand National the following year, and, as luck would have it, I had the coat on with these buttons attached. Of course he was the first man I ran up against in the ring, and before he even shook hands with me he said: " You blighter, you've got them." I said: " Well, J. J., it's no use lying over it now, but I had not got them when you asked me at Alderley. But they are here now, and I am afraid if you want them you'll have to come and fetch them." He was no fighting man, and so I still have the buttons.

In a long cricket career, naturally I have seen numerous curious incidents, some of a humorous character. For instance, on one of the many occasions on which my team was playing at Kendal, in Westmorland, a great, big, hefty-looking chap, a very rough customer, awkward chap, was run out some yards very easily, and

his own umpire gave him out. But he took not the slightest notice of the umpire's decision, and prepared to receive the next ball. I was fielding at point, and I very humbly suggested to this big country chap that he was out. I said: "I am very sorry, but I think you are out, and your own umpire has given you out, and I am afraid you will have to go." He said: "Go! What for?" I said: "You were run out, and that is the reason." He replied: "Young man, I'd have you to understand that I am not going until one of them sticks is bowled out of the ground. And mebbe not then." And he put his bat over his shoulder and looked at me as if he would drive me to the boundary instead of the ball.

I dare not argue with him any more, so I called his captain out from the pavilion, a Mr. Shepherd, a great friend of mine from Burton and Holme, and explained to him why this gentleman would not go out, and that I thought he had better remove him, which, after a long argument, he managed to do. But as the batsman was retiring from the wicket, every 15 or 20 yards he turned round and sort of glared

at me, as if I had done it, and afterwards I said to Shepherd: "You had better have a policeman to take me to the station, for I think that gentleman will be round the corner waiting for me."

We have heard the old story of the village cricket match where the grass was so long that, after three overs had been bowled without a run being got—at least a run was being made—and directly the two batsmen ran between the wickets five partridges got up on the pitch, but I can narrate a most extraordinary case, for we have the old adage, "You can never catch a weasel asleep." Well, these weasels were not caught asleep exactly, but I was playing at Darlington once when five weasels came across the ground between the wickets. They came out from an old fence, and went right across the pitch to the bank of the River Skern. We all left the game and pursued the weasels. My brother George and myself were batting, and we chased one. You would have thought they all would have been killed, but only one met his fate, and that was killed by a dog. The other four got away. My brother and I ran after

one; we hit at it with the bat, and the way it dodged us was extraordinary. We never hit it, and I could not help but admire the beggar, for when he got to a hole in the bank he did not rush down it as if he was in a terrible fear, but when he got inside the mouth of it, he stopped to look round, and grinned at us as much as to say: "You big cowards, you are too strong for me, but I would like to have a go at you," and I thought he was a brave little beast.

Extraordinary things have happened at cricket. For instance, take Mr. Atkinson, of the buttons incident. We were playing again for the Gentlemen of Yorkshire at Lord Harewood's place in his park. The ground was surrounded with hawthorn trees. Atkinson, who was a very heavy hitter, hit the ball into one of these trees, and it stuck in the fork. The fielders saw it in the tree, and we went on running. When we had run six the other captain called out "Lost ball." Atkinson said: "Certainly not, I will show you where it is." With that he quietly walked to the hawthorn tree, and, pointing up to the branch, J. J. said: "There it is; it is not lost," and thereupon we

proceeded to run again, knowing full well that nobody could climb the tree because of the thorns. But when we had run thirteen the other captain suggested a compromise, and we took ten. And the incident closed.

It is also known that in—I think it was—a gentlemen-players' match at Leeds very many years ago, as the batsman's name will prove—George Anderson, the Yorkshireman, and one of the best batsmen of his time, hit a ball into the end of a spout at the Tavern, and it went so hard into the end of the spout that they could not get it out. They could touch it, but they could not get behind it, and the question always remains whether that ball was lost or not.

To show how sometimes the worst bowling will get wickets when the best has failed—the Liverpool club were playing the Harrow Wanderers at Aigburth. Harrow had a very strong team, so strong that their last man, Mr. W. Law, was one of the best men in the Oxford University team! And he went in last on this occasion. D. Q. Steel was our captain (Liverpool), and when we had got five of them

out for 89 he was exceedingly pleased and came to me and said, " Teddy, aren't we doing well?" I said, " Yes; I wish we were back in the pavilion and give them another 100 runs for the last five wickets." He said, " Oh, I don't think so, we have got the five best men out for these." " Well," I rejoined, " you know who is going in last, Willie Law, and you can turn this team of theirs round about and the last man will be as good as the first."

At that moment Mr. I. D. Walker was not out 40, and Mr. Hewitt, of Somerset fame, came in to partner him. That wicket put on 279 runs; two other batsmen after that put on a lot of runs, so that when we got to five o'clock in the afternoon they had compiled 586 runs for seven wickets! And we were still fielding! Our bowlers were beat and our fielders were fatigued. Steel came to me and said, " What shall we do? " I replied, " Do what you ought to have done an hour ago, put me on with lobs. I'll take care there's only myself and the wicket-keeper near the wickets, all the others will be on the boundary, so that 4's will be only ones." However, I went on to bowl, and the comment

in the Liverpool *Courier* the next morning was—

> At last Mr. Roper was put on to bowl and the innings terminated.*

Young, who when I went on to bowl was not out 85 or 86, when he saw me go on with lobs licked his lips in pleasurable anticipation, and came rushing out to the third ball, which pitched along about three times. He missed it and was stumped by Arthur Kemble. The next man played the next ball, a very easy catch to George

---

* In 1871, Mr. Roper, playing for Sefton against Northern, took 6 wickets for 4 runs.

In 1874, playing for Sefton v. Ulverston, he scored 65 runs and took 7 wickets with lobs.

In 1875 (v. Prescot), 59 runs ; 8 wickets for 11.

In 1876 (v. Rusholme), 43 runs ; 8 wickets for 32.

In 1878 (v. Formby), 65 runs ; 6 wickets for 36.

In 1878 (v. Medicals), 36 runs ; 8 wickets for 30.

In 1879 (v. Lymm), he captured 5 wickets for 7 runs, and (v. Northern) 6 for 7 ; 3 wickets in four balls.

In 1881 (at Notts Castle), he carried his bat through the innings for 53. In the same year, at Old Trafford, Manchester, against a team which included Briggs, Crossland and Watson, he made 92. Sefton's total was 213, and the homesters 68. Shore took 9 wickets for 35 runs, 8 being clean bowled.

In 1873, he made his first century, 113 (Sefton v. Warrington).

Kemp, now Lord Rochdale, which he held. And the last man came in.

They got two runs off the last ball. After a maiden over from the other end, I had to bowl to Mr. Law, and I said to W. Price, one of the professionals playing for us, " Go and stand at the middle entrance to the grand stand, the Riversdale Road side of the ground. With my third ball I shall try to hit Mr. Law on the nose. He will turn round and hit it to you "—at deep square leg. Everything came off absolutely as I prophesied. I tossed it into his face. He hit it to deep square leg, and Price did not have to move an inch, and caught it. And the greatest compliment I had was, " Mr. Roper is the most extraordinary man I ever met. He not only tells me what he is going to make them do, but they do it ! " The result was three wickets for two runs.

The above story is very egotistical, so I must make an average by telling something against myself. Years ago some of the pleasantest matches played in this district were against the Hoi Pepneumenoi, a team composed of past and present Uppingham players, and a very strong

eleven. One of their team was my old friend Mr. Harry Eccles, late captain of the Huyton team and one of the best all-round cricketers that the district has produced. We've all heard of the " Indian sign "—I have always thought that Mr. Eccles had it on me. Five times I played against him that week, and five times he clean-bowled me, neck and heel. I am sure he will not contradict this. The last occasion was at Huyton, at the last match of their tour, and when I went in I said to myself, " You must not allow yourself if you can help it to be bowled by him again." I can see the ball now, a beautiful length, two inches off the off stump, and it flashed through my mind, " Edward, you'll have to do all you know to play this one." I tried my best. The result was that the leg stump was knocked out of the ground about ten yards.

I was batting at the end nearest the Huyton pavilion, and Harry Eccles was, of course, bowling at the far end. But before leaving I walked up the wicket to him—he told me he thought I was going to knock him about, or something of that sort for what he had done; instead of which I shook hands with him and

said, " Good-bye, Harry; thank God this tour's ended." At the same time I don't think it was any disgrace to be bowled by him, for, as I said before, he was a cricketer of a type I always liked to have on my side. He was a brilliant fielder at cover-point and mid-off, above the average of club bowlers, a fine bat, and most excellent wicket keeper, combining every branch of the game—and, of course, he played for Lancashire county.

I have often been asked what in my experience have been the highest and longest hits I have known. Well, the highest hit, I think, was made at Birkenhead Park by Mr. Ford, one of the great cricketing Ford family. He was playing against Birkenhead Park, and he hit the ball so high that the batsmen were turning for their third or fourth run before it came down! I almost think it was the fourth run! I wondered at the time whether the clouds were the boundary or not! I do not want this feat to be accepted on my word, but I had it from two gentlemen whose veracity I have generally had no reason to find fault with, both good old friends of mine, Cecil Holden and W. H.

Major, and I am certain they will not dispute anything I say. I think it was the fourth run?

The longest hit I ever knew was on the Edge-hill ground, called the Gasometer, on which the Liverpool club used to play before they went to Aigburth. The London and North-Western Railway ran just beyond the boundary. A batsman hit the ball over the boundary into a wagon of a goods train that was passing, and that ball was fielded at Crewe! ! ! This is the longest hit I ever heard of.

To show how careful even cricketers ought to be in domestic matters—I remember a well-known professional in this district, an excellent cricketer and very highly respected man, a very popular man, who after a jovial evening retired to rest about midnight. The next morning his better half remarked to him, " Sam, if you don't cut your toe nails you won't sleep with me any more," but when she found that he had got into bed with his cricket shoes on the cause of the impending estrangement was removed.

A Sportsman's Memories — *Chapter VI*

A tip on the moor.—Marvellous escape at Chester.—Advice to those who shoot.—How I won £68 at Huddersfield.—Sidney Crosfield's fine performance.—Ninety-three pigeons shot out of one hundred with one hand.—Rat v. Weasel.

MY friend, the Sporting Editor of the *Courier*, from whom I had the inspiration to write my reminiscences, in an introductory note to one of my " instalments " in the Press, observed that I was a striking example of the " better be born lucky than rich " sort of person, and I agree with him, although fate has decreed that I should only try half of the old saying, as I never was rich. But I have been really lucky in this wise.

When I was over forty years old I had the misfortune to lose every penny I had, or, to use a vulgar phrase, was " dead broke." It is said that " when a man gets down the world kicks him," and that is where the luck comes in. It

never kicked me, and I never knew I had so many friends before, so many that if I had to thank them all personally I should be an old man before I could do them all justice. But I shall always remember the innumerable kindnesses so many have heaped upon me " as long as memory holds a seat in this distracted globe." (My head.) Yes, better be lucky than rich.

About the third week in January, 1876, I was over at Middleham, being continually between Richmond and Middleham, and was up on the moor with my friend Mr. Fred Bates. Some horses came galloping across our front, and I heard him say *sotto voce*—perhaps he intended it only for my ear—" there goes the winner of the Chester Cup." Of course, I said, " Which one, Mr. Bates? " and he replied simply " the fourth one." He did not further enlighten me, and I did not like asking him straight out for its name, so later I strolled among the boys who had been riding, and asked them the names of the horses which had taken part in the gallop. Number four was Tam o' Shanter. Immediately betting on the Chester Cup began, which it did much earlier in those

days than now, I took 100's to 2½ and 100's to 3's to win between £600 and £700, and all my Sefton Cricket Club pals were on as well. We all went to Chester to see how Tam o' Shanter fared. I need hardly tell you the horse won, much to our delight. Thompson, the lad who rode, was a promising lightweight, but he died of small-pox.

Chester is one of those old race meetings which still has its fair as a counter or extra attraction at race time, with shooting galleries, etc., and we stopped until late in the evening enjoying ourselves amongst the shows. We had dined—we had done ourselves well in the circumstances, and were very merry and bright. All at once someone said " Let's go and have a shot at the shooting galleries, first there gets first shot," and away we rushed. One of the party, who was a pretty good runner, got there first. I was closing up a good second: I would be about ten yards off when he clutched one of the rifles, and, to my horror, he pointed it towards me and pulled the trigger. What possessed him to do such a thing goodness knows, for otherwise he was a quiet and careful chap. The gun

misfired. The proprietor of the gallery snatched the rifle out of his hands and expressed his indignation at what our friend had done. He said to me, "Sir, you've had a most extraordinary piece of luck. There are six rifles lying there. This one is the only defective gun of the lot, and about once in fifty shots it misfires because the hammer works loose and it strikes the side of the cap instead of the centre. I will show you." He recocked the gun, turned to the range, pulled the trigger, and off it went. That was a 1,000 to 1 chance, wasn't it? After the proprietor had talked to my friend in a fashion much more forcible than polite, the seriousness of the incident dawned upon him. He was perfectly unmanned, and it took quite a long time to get him right, so full of remorse was he, as he ought to have been.

And still further to illustrate the "lucky or rich" proverb. Many years ago, I was very fond of going to the Isle of Man. I was crossing in the old *King Orry*. In those days when the vessel got within a mile or so of Douglas a cannon was fired as a signal of her approach and was answered by another piece of ordnance

situated in front of the Fort Anne Hotel. At this time there was not a brick of the present promenade built. On what is now the promenade were the backs of the houses in Strand Street, which came down with little gardens into the harbour. You landed at the old pier, sometimes in boats. To show the difference between the pace of the steamers now and then I may say I have been sixteen hours going to " the island " in the old *Douglas*.

But to return to the *King Orry* incident and to show how careful people ought to be and what foolish things they sometimes do. On this occasion the man was down at the powder magazine getting out the charge to load the gun. This was always done, I thought, with a good deal of show, so as to impress or interest the passengers. The magazine was at the bottom of one of the ventilators, and at the moment the man was getting the charge some idiot of a tourist lit his pipe and threw the fusee down the ventilator! The poor fellow, a man I knew quite well, called Mylchreest, told me with his own lips that he saw the fusee as he was stooping over the powder taking out the charge, drop into

the middle of it. He had no time to do anything for, of course, the powder exploded at once. I don't know how much there was, but a considerable quantity of the deck was blown up. Mylchreest was terribly burned and shattered, and, I believe, died soon afterwards from the effects in Douglas hospital.

There are often amusing incidents in tragic cases of this sort, and I must say that I smiled when I heard one old lady say to another quite coolly, "Come, Mary, let's get the luggage together and be off," just as though there was nothing to do but step ashore. If the powder had been confined it would have been a much more serious matter. Another amusing incident was this. A man who was down below near the magazine had, as was fashionable in those days, Dundreary whiskers, and the flame of the explosion burnt one side of the whiskers off without doing him much more harm. Again, it made one smile to see him with a long whisker down one side of his face and the other side bare, and instructive to hear the language he used, far more annoyed at losing his hairs than pleased at having been spared alive.

Now I have told you how lucky I was to escape being shot, I will tell you when I was actually shot. I have been shot six times, twice by my father! The first time he shot me I was quite a boy. We were rabbiting, and I was standing beside him, but he went away after a wounded partridge which had flown past and which he had knocked down. As he was coming back a rabbit ran across between us. He had, I suppose, forgotten where I was, and shot at the rabbit with the result that some of the charge hit me on both ankles. I cried, naturally, and when my father came up he asked me what was the matter. I said, "You've shot me," and he said, "What the dickens were you doing there?" I answered, "Father, it's where you put me to stand." Then he was sorry, and gave me half-a-crown; and I thought I would like him to shoot me every day in the week at that price, for half-crowns were very scarce. Another time it was a ricochet off a wall, but it was not so serious a matter as the other. Two shot corns hit me in the wrist, but I got no half-crown.

Everybody knows now, or should do, that I belong to Richmond, which is surrounded by

some of the finest grouse moors in Yorkshire, and in which I have spent some of the pleasantest days of my life. It is an extraordinary thing to me how a man who has had so much shooting can only be such an ordinary shot as I am. One day I was on my cousin's moors, and next to me was a gentleman who must be nameless; he was not accustomed to grouse driving, which is very dangerous sport for such men, and, therefore, I would excuse him in every way. He shot me through the left arm, and now I may say (in parenthesis) this gentleman was the best shot at other folk I ever knew, for on the second day he shot my cousin, who could not sit down for a few days afterwards. By that time we had come to the conclusion he was dangerous, so the next day a vacant butt was left on each side of him. He was an exceedingly nice man, and very, very penitent for what he had done.

On the fourth day he said: "I am sorry, but being left with a butt on each side vacant it rather shows me up and let's everybody know I am dangerous." So, his being, as I said before he was, a very nice fellow, I said to my cousin: "Let him come next to me; I'll chance it,"

with the result that he was put in the right butt and I was next to him. The very first drive he turned round, shot at a bird between us, and hit me all over the right side of the head, and the boy also who was holding my cartridges. I shook my fist at him. Then I sat down; I was rather badly shot, and all the right side of my face was bleeding, and at the end of the drive I sat showing the good side of my head towards his butt, wanting to startle him. My cousin came up then, and after looking at me said: "Well, this is rather a bad job." Then the shooter came down and said: "Roper, I didn't hit you, I am certain." I asked: "Well, what did you fire at?" And he answered: "I fired at three birds behind your butt about 25 yards off." I asked: "Did you kill one?" and he said "No." I said: "How do you account for this, then?" turning the bleeding side of my face to him. "Did I do that?" he exclaimed, and I replied: "Well, there's nobody else; you are the end gun. There's no one else between Barnard Castle and yourself." This ended his grouse shooting, for that week at anyrate.

One shot corn hit me just above the eyebrow

on the right side, ran along the bone, and was nicked out at the other side of my forehead. I appreciate that piece of luck, for my eldest brother George had his eye shot out, also at grouse shooting. I have also been shot by a clergyman and a gamekeeper. The latter was using No. 4 shot. He was only about fifty yards off, and nearly knocked me down. But I must also confess I have not been altogether spotless, for on three occasions I have hit other people. The first was my own brother, and it only shows how super-careful a person ought to be, because on this occasion I thought I was very careful.

Here I will pause and give a little poem containing advice to people who shoot:

> Never, never, let your gun
> Pointed be at anyone.
> That it may unloaded be
> Matters not the least to me.
>
> When a hedge or fence you cross—
> Though of time it be a loss—
> From your gun your cartridge take,
> For the greatest safety sake.

If 'twixt you and neighbouring gun
Bird may fly or beast may run,
Let this maxim e'er be thine—
"Follow not across the line."

Stops and beaters oft unseen
Lurk behind some leafy screen;
Calm and steady always be,
Never shoot where you don't see.

Keep your place and silent be;
Game can hear, and game can see.
Don't be greedy—better spared
Is a pheasant than one shared.

You may kill or you may miss,
But at all times think of this—
All the pheasants ever bred
WON'T REPAY FOR ONE MAN DEAD!

Now to return to when I shot my brother! He was going down a covert side, and I was at the end of the covert in front of him. The field on his left was ploughed and hard frozen. A hare came out between us. I shouted to my brother to shoot it. He replied: "No, it's yours." With that I waited, remembering the frozen ground, until I thought the hare was safe

to be shot at. It was, I remember, 40 yards from the covert, out in the field. I shot at it and killed it, and, to my astonishment, my brother shouted out: "You've hit me!" One shot had hit him on the cheek; it hardly broke the skin. The pellet must have rebounded from a stone or some other hard substance.

I also had the misfortune to hit a gentleman well known on the Liverpool Corn Market; luckily, not at all severely, but some pellets hit him on the hand. He, no doubt, remembers the circumstance, and I can only thank him for the kind way in which he forgave me.

The third occasion on which I erred was the most unfortunate, as there was a lady in the case. I was shooting grouse in Scotland. In the butt on my right was my host, and a lady who was watching the shooting. Three grouse came between us. I waited till they were right behind us, perfectly safe, as I thought, and then I fired and killed the last bird. But a pellet hit the lady on the cheek. How it got there no one could understand. It must have glanced and come back off a bone in the bird, and is another case of the many extraordinary and

almost miraculous results that have often happened through the eccentricities of shot, and proves that it is impossible to be too careful.

I was asked by a great friend, who used to play with me for the Gentlemen of Yorkshire at cricket, to go and shoot with him at Huddersfield. So I went. There were eight guns, including myself, the others being mostly Huddersfield and Bradford cloth merchants, you know. Their looks were deceptive. Their clothes—well, they looked as if you could have fitted them out at £1 each, while as regards this world's goods, I think they were individually worth a quarter of a million each, very rich men.

Before we started, one of these gentlemen said to me: "Mr. Roper, perhaps you don't know we have a custom here when we are shooting, and it is this: Every man who shoots a woodcock gets half a sovereign from each of the other guns."

Not being too well endowed with this world's goods, I was rather anxious about this, and I went to my pal and said: "Charlie, I must have a woodcock." He replied: "All right, you go and stand down at the end of this covert

we are going to shoot, and if there is a woodcock he'll come there. The rest is up to you." I stole quietly to the end of the covert, and the beat began.

Almost immediately a woodcock came hurtling down through the wood, and settled on the ground about twenty yards off. I peeped at him from behind a tree, where I had hidden, and said to myself: "My friend, you represent £3 10s. I must have you." So drawing a deadly bead on him as he was on the ground, I fired and killed him. There was just enough left to swear it was a woodcock. However, that was not the end of it, for I had a most extraordinary day. At luncheon time four woodcock had been got, and I had them all.

When we were sat at luncheon, one of the guns asked if anybody had got any woodcock, and I said: "Yes, here are two," and put them down, being kind of bashful about producing four. Then, when they had had a little time to digest these two, I said: "I am very sorry, gentlemen, but I have got another here." And after an interval I produced the fourth. They looked sort of savagely, said that I

was very lucky, and they would settle up at the end of the day. So we set out again after lunch.

Four more woodcock were killed in the afternoon. My share was three of them, so that I got seven altogether out of eight, and they had to pay me forty-nine half-sovereigns, and I had to return one to the lucky gentleman who had killed the eighth.

At night we played that old game I have mentioned before, three-card loo, and everything came my way. I won about £68, and came back to Liverpool next day well satisfied with my visit—but I have never been asked to go to Huddersfield since.

I will now tell you of a great performance that I saw on my uncle's moors in Yorkshire. The then Lord de Grey (subsequently Marquis of Ripon), always acknowledged to be one of the finest shots that ever fired a gun, was one of the party. He was missing one Sunday afternoon, and after a prolonged search was ultimately discovered in a barn breaking in a new loader who handed him his third gun. The next day we were shooting in rather a heavy wind, and

the birds were coming on very fast. Five grouse were approaching his beat. He killed two with a right and left in front of him, and with the first barrel of his second gun killed a third bird overhead. He turned round, and with his third gun killed the remaining two with a right and left. I was in the next butt to him, and saw it done.

Mere words cannot do justice to the merit of the performance—the birds were going very fast. His lordship certainly deserved his success for the way in which he looked after himself, even going to the extent of taking his own cook with him when he visited country houses.

Another of the best all-round shots I ever knew was my old friend, Mr. Sidney Crosfield. He was twice second in the great shooting competition at Monte Carlo. I am going to relate what I think is one of the most extraordinary performances on record. He was backed to shoot Mr. Tom Stone at a hundred pigeons, Sidney Crosfield to use only one hand. He stood at 26 yards, and Mr. Stone, with two hands for use, stood at 30 or 32 yards. I used to go to Bay Cliff, at Lymm, Cheshire, where

Mr. Crosfield lived, and stayed with him for week-ends, for, amongst other things, he was the finest bat-mender I ever knew, and had a most beautiful workshop and lathes to do everything with, and I used to take my broken bats there, and he used to mend them as no professional could ever mend them. He and his brother made the most beautiful fishing-rods that could possibly be made, being great fishermen as well as shooters. To return to the pigeons.

Sidney was then practising to give his right arm strength, for he shot with a Purdey gun that weighed nearly 9lb., and to shoot at 100 pigeons with such a weapon one-handed was a great strain. He used to put it up to his shoulder a great many times to get himself fit, and repeatedly told his brother it was the greatest certainty that ever was, that he shot nearly as well with one hand as with two. But his brother doubted it, and kept saying to me that Sid overrated himself. However, Sid was most insistent to me that it was the greatest certainty for him.

The match was made to shoot at the 100

pigeons right through. Sidney wanted to have a rest at 50, but the other side would not agree, so they had to shoot straight off at the 100. Crosfield shot so well that early on in the first 50 it was odds on him; he was several birds in front. There had been considerable betting as to whether he would kill most birds in the first half or second half, the odds being considerable against his killing as many in the second fifty as in the first, because his arm would tire.

When Sidney thought he had the match in hand with the first 50, he said: "I think I had better miss one or two to give me a chance of shooting more in the second 50," as he had taken the odds to shoot more in the second 50; but his brother and I most strongly advised him to shoot out and do his best to win the match, which was the main thing. And he did. He killed 46 out of the first 50, the other four falling outside the boundary.

I remember he said: "Well, that has done it. I cannot possibly beat 46 in the second 50." But he shot more magnificently in the second half than in the first, killing 47, a total of 93 out of 100 birds, with one hand! This, I think, is

one of the greatest performances in pigeon shooting ever known.

Having led for the first part of my three-score-years-and-ten an outdoor life, one cannot help making a little nature study now and then. It is notorious how some animals are hypnotised by others. For instance, the weasel seems to have a malign influence over anything he pursues. I once saw a weasel hunting a hare. The hare, if it had used its physical power, could, of course, have run right away from the weasel, but, instead of this, after going about fifty yards, he sat down and squeaked, as if having a presentiment of his impending fate. Then the weasel came quietly along, and two or three times the hare got up to run a shorter distance each time, seeming to grow more and more helpless, till at last the weasel quietly got to him, and there was an end of it.

How different to the well-hated but plucky old rat. I was returning home with my brother after some shooting, and as we were driving past a wall on the roadside we heard scrimmaging and squealing in the wall. We pulled up, and out came an old rat, who, to our astonishment, sat

and waited in the middle of the road. A weasel followed him immediately, and they had a rare set-to. The rat put up a good fight, and stuck it for two or three minutes, but finally the weasel got him behind the neck, and there was an end of that. You could not help but admire the spirit of the rat. He had evidently said to himself: "I have not much chance, but I'd rather have it out in the open than in the wall, and I'll see it through."

And the same day, strangely enough, two pheasants came down to the middle of the road and fought like game cocks. When it was over, one was so beat—it was not quite dead, but nearly so—that we picked it up, and the other just had strength enough to fly away. They were both completely exhausted.

A Sportsman's Memories — *Chapter VII*

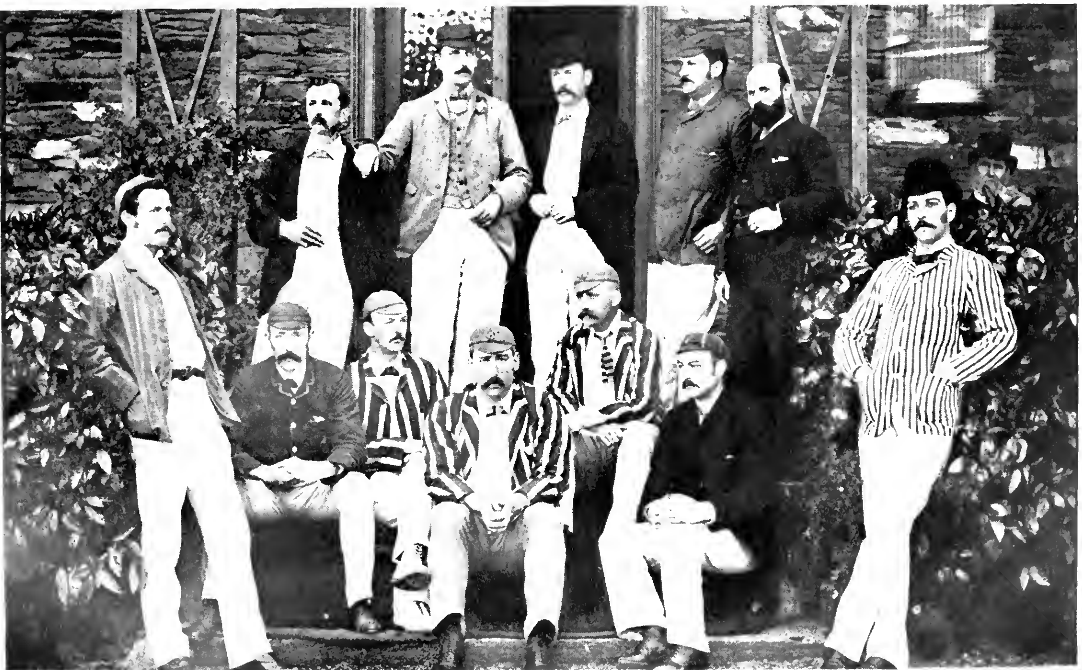
More cricket stories.—Leaving nothing to chance.—Grace confounds his critics—A record time.—Mold's bowling feat.—Bowler taunts umpire.—Singing for a wager.—How cricketers spent a wet afternoon.

I HAVE always thought it best in our lives to leave nothing to chance that we can command, but to take advantage of everything that came along which is inside the rules. As bearing this out, I will relate a little anecdote of what happened to me at Wigan once, many years ago. In those days I used to take a team up to Windermere—for twenty-one years I took a team to Windermere and district—and on one return journey we played a match at Wigan, of which club my old friend, Harry Wall, who played for the county, was captain. We were both very keen; I, at any rate, always was, and wanted to win this match. We had been up at Windermere for a whole week, enjoying ourselves, and did not, perhaps, feel up

to producing our very best form, so more than ever we wished to win the toss and take a little rest while our side was batting. In addition to this, it had been raining, but the wicket was very hard and very fast, and the grass, in consequence of the rain, was wet. Therefore it was naturally against the bowlers, as the wicket would continue to play perfectly well, but the ball would be greasy and slippery for them to hold. So you can understand a great deal rested on winning the toss.

I threw the coin up, a half-crown I remember, very nearly the last I had after that week up north. Wall cried " Head," and it came down the flattest head you ever saw. Wall said nothing, so I, taking, as I thought, a thousand-to-one chance, said: " All right, we'll go in." And he replied: " Yes."

I went in first with Edgar Ratcliffe, and when we had made 126, and neither of us out, Harry Wall, who had been fielding at point, came up to me and said, " Teddy, I won that toss!" I answered: " Certainly you did, but you never said anything, and, as when I suggested we should bat first, you raised no



A TOURING TEAM.

Back Row: FRED. [illegible] JONES, TOM EVANS, CHARLIE JONES, JOE KEVAN (OF WIGAN), JOHN LENNON.
Front Row: W. S. FAY, E. WOODHEAD, SIDNEY CROSFIELD, EDWARD JACKSON, (WICKET KEEPER FOR LANCASHIRE), EDDY ROPER, FRED. DICKINSON AND J. J. CROSFIELD.

Photo taken at Rigg's Hotel Ambleside

objection, here we are—or, as the French would say, 'J'y suis, j'y reste,'" and we stayed there.

Perhaps my readers are not aware that among my many accomplishments I am a fine French scholar, that I went all through France with five words, which is another record. They were:

> Du pain (bread).
> De la viande (meat).
> Du vin (wine).
> Un bain (a bath).
> Je t'aime (I love you).

And I found the last one was the most useful of the lot. It is many years ago, and I was very young.

Here is another story illustrating the leave-nothing-to-chance maxim. Mr. A. G. Steel went in to bat in a "district" match against Yorkshire County, one of the teams we used to play in those days (the Eighties).

Louis Hall was captain of Yorkshire. H. B. Steel and Cecil Holden went in first. "H. B." soon got out, and was succeeded by A. G. Steel, who, when he had three or four runs, hit one

hard and low back to the bowler, Fletcher (who occasionally played for Yorkshire in those days), who made a brilliant catch with his left hand close to Holden's right foot. A. G. Steel advanced a little down the wicket and commenced to tap the ground with his bat. George Ulyett said: "You're out, Mr. Steel." "Oh, no," said A. G. Others said he was out, but A. G. still kept tapping the ground and mildly suggesting the negative.

Then Peel and others sat down, but the superficial defects of the pitch still continued to receive from the batsman the closest and most diligent attention. Then Louis Hall came up, and said: "You're out, Mr. Steel, fair enough." To this A. G. smilingly, but with considerable firmness, shook his head, while still paying continued attention to the tapping of the ground. At last, Louis Hall said: "Well, how was it, umpire?" To which the latter replied, with the greatest determination: "Not out." And the result, I think, was 109.

The public at times are very severe critics of players, and in their superior wisdom do not hesitate to say that So-and-So is "going off."

This happened once during the lengthy career of Mr. W. G. Grace, in my opinion the greatest run-getter that ever handled a bat, as the following figures will amply prove.

The critics said: "The old man is going off and losing his form, poor old chap." So he began to contradict them by making 404 not out at Grimsby. He next played for the M.C.C. against Kent, in the Canterbury week, Kent then being champion county. He went in first, and was not out 344. At that period there was a cricket week at Cheltenham. Nottingham played there the first three days, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday; and on the Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, the home team (Gloucester) played Yorkshire. I had the honour of playing for Yorkshire. On our way to Cheltenham we met the Notts team, who were on their way back, and Tom Emmett, our captain, asked Alfred Shaw, the Notts captain, how they had fared with the G.O.M. Shaw said: "Oh, we got him out quite early, he only made 178!" Upon hearing this, Tom Emmett said: "Well, he has got all these runs in the last three matches, surely to goodness we may

hope something sudden will happen to him for a change, bowled off his leg or run out."

However, next morning we set to work. W.G., as usual, won the toss—I am not sure he didn't have a double-headed penny, he used to win all the spins of the coin. He went in first, of course, and on Thursday night was rooted to the ground, still in, and on Friday afternoon, at about five o'clock, when their tenth wicket had fallen—they could not declare in those days—he walked into the pavilion with 318 not out, and he settled three of us at mid-off—Champion, Lockwood, and myself. He hit so hard that our hands were knocked up one after the other. This shows the fallacy of prophesying without you know.

An incident which may almost be described as amusing occurred in this match. I was batting with Ephraim Lockwood, a great Yorkshire bat. He was a very fine square leg hitter, and had been got out by W. G. Grace, both at Lord's and at the Oval, in the Gentlemen—Players' matches of that season, by hitting to deep square leg, where Mr. Fred Grace was planted to catch him. When he and I went in

at Cheltenham, he said: "Mr. Roper, I'll never be caught there again, for I won't hit there any more." And so we went on to bat.

But W. G. had his brother Fred at deep long leg, not at square, and after playing for about twenty minutes, W. G. said to me: "Watch me get old Ephraim out." By this time Ephraim had seen that Mr. Fred Grace was down at long leg and not square, and so he made up his mind to have a hit to square leg. W. G. tossed him the necessary half volley on the leg side, which Ephraim hit very finely to deep square leg. As I passed him up the wicket I said: "Ephraim, you are out." He said: "How?" And I called back: "Look where Mr. Fred Grace is." And there he was, right under the catch, which, of course, he held—he seldom missed a catch.

What amused me was that W. G. went on bowling with Fred Grace at long leg until he had got Ephraim into that state of mind that he thought there was nobody at square leg at all; then, at a concerted signal between the two of them, Fred Grace had gone round and Ephraim met his Waterloo.

We will now turn to the greatest bowling feat I ever saw. I was at Old Trafford, and Lancashire were playing Notts. At that time William Gunn—whose loss we all deeply deplore, for a nicer man never played the game —Arthur Shrewsbury, and Barnes, would probably have been chosen in any first eleven of the whole world; they were all in tremendous form. But Mold clean bowled them all three in four balls. He bowled Shrewsbury and Barnes with consecutive balls. William Gunn came in. He played forward to the first ball, missed it, and it just missed the leg stump, and our old friend, Mr. Arthur Kemble, who was wicket-keeping, took it. Gunn turned round to Kemble and said: "That is not the way to play him, Mr. Kemble, is it?" The next ball he played back to, missed it, and it took his middle stump. He then turned again to Mr. Kemble, and said: "Neither is that the way to play him, I think, Mr. Kemble. Good night." Mr. Kemble said "Good night," too, and off he went. To bowl three men like them, neck and crop, in four balls, was, I think, the greatest feat ever performed.

Some funny things have happened by

accident. Mr. Coker, a gallant young fellow who was killed in the war, was playing at Woolwich for Woolwich against some team, and as a wicket had fallen, retired to a booth there was close to to get some refreshment. The next batsman came in and happened to hit the first ball a tremendous height in the direction of the booth. Mr. Coker at that moment turned to look out of the booth, saw the ball coming, walked out and caught it. Hard luck on the batsman. Mr. Coker was a nephew of Mr. Frank Tobin, himself a well-known and first-class all round athlete; fine boxer and runner, both over hurdles and on the flat, international Rugby footballer, and used to go in first in that great Rugby School team which included Brian Pauncefort and W. Yardley. Mr. Coker played frequently for the Liverpool Cricket Club, was a very fast bowler, and one of the most charming young men I ever knew.

Another incident of this sort happened to myself. Sefton were playing Liverpool at Aigburth, and I was fielding near the bowlers' screens at the pavilion end. Mr. Edgar Hornby was batting at the other end. I had gone behind

the screens to talk to somebody, and Mr. Hornby hit a ball, a very high catch, in the direction of the screens. I happened to pop out from behind the screens just at that moment. My character as an out fielder was not of the best, and this ball was hit very far and very high. Mr. Hornby not having seen me thought there was nobody there, and when he did see me under it he had very little fear of being caught. I believe he turned to my old pal, Charlie Jones, and said, " That's all right, old Teddy there will never catch it," but unfortunately for him the unexpected happened, and " old Teddy " caught it. Mr. Hornby walked from the other end of the wicket, gave me a reproachful look and walked into the pavilion. And I returned behind the screens and finished my conversation with my friend.

Still talking of catches—a rather amusing incident occurred when we were playing Gloucestershire County with the " district " team. Mr. Jessop was batting, and Cecil Holden, my old friend, was in the deep field. Cecil Holden was one of those men who hardly ever missed a catch. Jessop had sent a very high ball to him

in deep field towards the edge of the ground. Cecil was under it, and in the ordinary way would certainly have caught it, but just as it was coming down a man in the crowd behind him, close to him, whispered savagely in his ear, " You blighter, if you catch this I'll brain you with this half-brick." This remark, Cecil told me, sort of flustered him, and expecting a half-brick in the back of the neck he missed the catch, to everybody else's satisfaction, because they wanted to see Mr. Jessop bat, so that Cecil for the time was the most popular man on the ground.

Another curious experience was at Old Trafford. I was playing for Lancashire against Yorkshire, and at that time there was a good deal of doubt about the deliveries of some of the Lancashire bowlers. But none of them had up to then been " no-balled " by the M.C.C. umpires appointed for the purpose. Peet, the Yorkshire bowler, was always full of fun and jokes, and he turned round to Wootton of Kent, who was umpiring, and said : " Look here, George, you umpires are not worth twopenn'orth of gin, you daren't no-ball anybody. The first

ball of the next over, I declare to you, I will throw at Mr. Roper, and I'll bet you anything you like that you daren't no-ball me." Sure enough the first ball of the next over Peet walked up to the wicket, stood, and deliberately threw it at me, and as Wootton didn't shout "No-ball," I thought it best to play it. Then Peet turned round and called out, "There, it shows what you umpires are all worth." Shrieks of laughter came from all round the ground.

Here is another case illustrating the value of presence of mind—still at cricket. I was playing for Lancashire against Yorkshire at Bramall Lane, Sheffield, the match being for Ephraim Lockwood's benefit. The first day was awful, so bad that no play was possible. The pitch was roped round, but the crowd broke in and surged all over the ground, so that when the people were cleared off there was just a green strip in the middle where the ropes had been. The rest was like a ploughed field. It was a terrible wicket and runs were worth anything.

The end of it was we had about 74 to get, and every one was worth £5. Peet and Bates were bowling, and as the ball was jumping about in

all directions, George Ulyett came close up under the bat, forward point. As all batsmen know, it is a horrible thing to have a man there when the ball is popping up. I said to myself, "Edward, you must shift George Ulyett as soon as you can, or he'll soon catch you out." So I said to him, knowing him very well, "George, I just want to tell you this bat of mine has a very slippery handle, and it sometimes slips out of my hand when I hit at the ball, and I think you are dangerously close." He replied, "Oh, I'll chance that, Mr. Roper." So about an over afterwards Peet bowled a ball well on the off side. I made a blind swipe at it, never dreaming of hitting it, let go the bat, and it whizzed past Ulyett's ear. He picked up the bat, gave it to me, and said, "How often does it do that, Mr. Roper?" and I answered, "A good deal depends on how long you stay there." With that he retired to another part of the field, and I went on with the innings.

It was a wise precaution to take, as it turned out, as I happened to get some very important runs, which enabled us to win the match. I had played for Yorkshire before that time, and

when I went in to bat the crowd were very unfriendly and shouted, using language which those hard Sheffield file-makers are such adepts at. However, I got these runs, and when the match was won went back to the pavilion. We only won by two wickets, and I must say the crowd " turned round " and applauded. There was an old gentleman sitting at the bottom of the pavilion smoking a long clay pipe, rather an unusual thing in the open, and when I went past him he touched me, and said " Young man, I want to speak to you." I said, " Yes, sir, what is it? " He proceeded, " I want to congratulate you on your nerve; the way those ruffians shouted at you might have upset any young fellow." I believe I was only six and twenty at the time. I replied, " I don't mind what anybody says to me. Words have no effect, so long as they don't kick me in the stomach." Nobody proceeded to this extremity, and so all was well.

Another little anecdote illustrating the extraordinary things watchers on the pavilion will say, people who think they are judges of the game. I was playing at Old Trafford, Lancashire v. Surrey. There was a middle-aged

gentleman at the pavilion, who used to say he was the best judge on the pavilion, and make all sorts of remarks criticising the captain's strategy—in fact, the typical " pavilion cricketer " whom we all know. I was given out by old Bob Carpenter lbw. to Mr. Roller, and I had no complaint to make about the decision. I was walking into the pavilion when this gentleman said to me, " Allow me to condole with you, Mr. Roper, about that decision." I asked, " Why? " and he said, " I have a very good pair of glasses here, and could see that the ball did not pitch straight." Considering that the wicket was the best part of a hundred yards from the pavilion and pitched at right angles to it, this shows the value of the " pavilion cricketer's " criticism. It was absolutely impossible for him to see whether the ball was pitched straight or not.

All cricketers are not handsome, and I will now tell you a story on this point, referring to a very well-known local cricketer—one of my greatest friends. We have played against each other for many seasons in days gone by, and I hope I may say there are no better friends than

we are. And, further, I hope he will forgive me for what I am going to say, but it doesn't matter whether he does or not! The gentleman I am going to mention is good old Jim Bretherton, one of the best bowlers the district has ever produced. It is an extraordinary thing that, whatever successes he had in other matches, he invariably did well against Yorkshire, both for the District and for Cheshire county, always getting a considerable number of wickets. On one of his usually successful outings he was bowling them out at Aigburth. David Denton was playing as a colt for Yorkshire, and that shows how long it is since, for he is now called a veteran. He stopped in for some time, but at last Bretherton penetrated his defence and bowled him out. Denton returned to the pavilion, and as he passed Louis Hall, who was captain of Yorkshire, he said, "Louis, who is that frozen-faced old blighter that is bowling us all out?" Louis Hall told him who it was, and for several seasons after Denton had cause to remember him, for Bretherton took his stumps on other occasions.

I would not tell the following incident about

Mr. Bretherton except that he himself on one occasion acknowledged he was not the handsomest man in the world. He was playing for the District, and the game had proceeded up to about five minutes off luncheon on the first day without his having been put on to bowl, an unusual occurrence, for most captains would have put him on first. He was fielding close to the ladies' enclosure in the outfield, a most unusual place for him, and close to where I was sitting. He was evidently a little annoyed, and, I think, quite properly, at not having been called on to bowl, and to acquaint us with this fact turned round to me and shouted, " Teddy, what am I playing in this match for? You know it is not for my blooming beauty." And all who were sitting near me agreed that what he said was true.

Bretherton was a cricketer after my own heart, a determined trier, could bowl all day, magnificent stamina, and so keen that I have seen him field his own bowling at long leg. This sounds a bit thick, but is absolutely true; it happened at Aigburth. Good old Jim.

Now, having told these anecdotes against my old pal, Jim, I must tell one against myself. I

was playing for Lancashire against Oxford University at Old Trafford, and in running a very short run for Barlow at my utmost stretch, the big muscle in my right thigh gave way and I fell down at the wicket. I was not out, but I "foundered." I was taken down to the hospital, and a gentleman there said: "If you lay up for two months, bandage it, and take things easy, you may play before the end of the season." I was foolish enough to say that I would not lie up that long, and would play long before the end of the season. I went to the Isle of Man,* and had sea water played on the leg for about three weeks, when I was asked by Mr. Swire to come and play against Yorkshire at Old Trafford. I told him I didn't think I was fit enough with my leg, but he insisted, and I went. It was a very hard wicket and Ephraim Lockwood was batting, and everybody knows how beautifully he could get behind point. I was fielding third man, and stopped a good many of these hits, but some-

* In 1876, Mr. Roper while on holidays, played for Douglas against "The Visitors." He made 133 runs out of a total of 197 by most brilliant batting. "The Visitors" total was 19.

MY BROTHER BOB.

times the ball twisted, and when it went towards boundary I had to run after it. When I had done this about three times I felt the muscle beginning to go again. Jack Payne, who was fielding next to me, saw that I was in trouble, and said, " Teddy, I'll go for the next for you." However, when the next did come down I again went after it, but approaching the boundary Payne ran past me and fielded the ball. I trotted out slowly to save the muscle, and as I got near the crowd I heard one man saying, " What's this fat, lazy blighter playing for? " This shows you the consideration one gets from the spectators when you are playing under difficulties, in pain, and against your own wish.

I will next relate a story of many, many years ago, and I would like to ask my readers to name the odds against a similar event occurring in the present day. This incident occurred in the days of George Parr's All-England eleven, and they played 18 or 22 of Bootle, a kind of match which seems to have pretty well died out. The game was being played on the old Bootle ground, somewhere about 50 years ago. George Anderson, a Yorkshireman, one of George Parr's

best bats, was in. He was a very fine square leg hitter. He hit a ball to deep square leg where a canvas refreshment booth had been erected. In the roof was a rent, about nine inches square. The ball went through this hole. A coachman of Lord Derby's was standing at the counter drinking a glass of beer, and he was holding the tumbler close to his mouth. The ball hit the side of the tumbler between his hand and his mouth, breaking the glass to pieces, leaving, however, the base in his hand, and never hurt him in any way. I have been told that the president of the Bootle Club had the bottom of that tumbler and the ball mounted and put under a glass shade as an ornament and a memento of a unique happening. Perhaps Mr. F. Johnson, the captain of the Bootle Club, may know about it, and I put him on his word of honour not to contradict me. Mr. "Freddy" Johnson is another of my old friends. I have lots of them, bless them all, and they never give me away.

I once took part in a singing competition at a cricket match. Amongst my many accomplishments I am a great singer. I have always

been exceedingly sorry for the poor wretches who have had to listen to me, for I use the word *great* not from a euphonious point of view but from the number of songs I could sing. When I used to go up and down the country with teams I generally had somebody who could do something, a good runner, a good billiard player, a man who could throw the cricket ball, or a boxer, so I could be prepared for all eventualities—and challenges. But on the occasion I am going to tell you of none of these " sports " came into use. I took a team to Stone, in Staffordshire, to play. It rained horribly, and at luncheon time it was quite apparent that there was no chance of cricket that day. So Parrington, the opposing captain, said, " Roper, it's no use thinking of playing, let's go to lunch and have an afternoon concert or sing-song." I consented and away we went. On the way Parrington spoke to my old pal, Charlie Jones, and said " Jones, I know that old Teddy Roper has a useful man in his team usually for most things, but there is one thing that a chap in my team can beat you all at." Jones said " What's that? " and Parrington answered " Singing." And

this is one of the few occasions I fell out with Charlie Jones because he asked the question, " Is it quantity or quality? " for my opinion of my singing was that I represented Caruso at about 6st. However, Parrington said, " Oh, quantity." Charlie Jones thereupon remarked, " If that is the case we have somebody we will put up against your chap for all you are worth." Parrington asked who it was, and Charlie said, " The old man himself," and with that, after luncheon we set to work. My opponent was a man named Baines, a very good bowler. It was a question of who could sing the most songs; we had all the afternoon before us. Well, at that time, I believe, if I had had the first lines before me I could have sung about 75,* so I was not very much frightened. He won the toss and began—we sang alternately. Knowing it was going to

* Mr. Roper's favourite was one of Moore's melodies :—

> Let fate do her worst, there are relics of joy,
> Bright dreams of the past which she cannot destroy,
> And which come in the night time of sorrow and care
> To bring back the features that joy used to wear.
> Long, long be my heart with such memories filled,
> Like the vase in which roses have once been distilled.
> You may break, you may ruin the vase, if you will,
> But the scent of the roses will hang round it still.

be a long job, and as we had got to the hot whisky and water stage, I commenced with the songs I was a bit doubtful about, as I knew that later on one's memory might become a little cloudy, and I had a strong reserve of about five and twenty songs that I could sing asleep. We sang alternately until about 4 o'clock, and when I had sung my 18th song he started his 19th. He got to the second verse, and then began to stutter. When your memory fails it is fatal; the more you think, the less you can remember that particular line. And I took a mean advantage of him. If you begin to talk to a man who has broken down in that way it makes him worse. So I remarked to him, " Baines, take plenty of time; it's early in the afternoon; pull yourself together and think of that line. Begin the verse over again." But he broke down at the same place again, and I knew I had him beat. He sat down and gave in. I said, " Have you done? " He replied, " Yes." " Well," I said, " you've failed after the 18th." I said this to make it certain and get the judge's verdict. " I'll sing three more quickly, so there can be no doubt it," which I immediately did, and we collected the " boodle."

A Clifton win.—My brother Bob as coach.—A great Army victory.—Bob upsets the favourites.—Officers have a good win.—Fifty mile walk.—Humours of barbel fishing.—Caught poaching.—How I swam Douglas Bay.

VERY few of my friends looking at my figure in 1920 would think I could ever run, but I could at one time when a school boy. I won the 100 yards at Clifton when I was there after a dead heat between three, the other two being my well-known old pals and well-known cricketers, Frissy Bush (who kept wicket for Gloucestershire for years) and E. F. S. Tylecote (who played for the Gentlemen of England and, I think, also against Australia), a fine bat and wicket-keeper. I won the race by a magnificent example of "jockeyship," and ought certainly to have been disqualified, and this anecdote is nothing in my favour. As I said before, we ran a dead heat of three, and had to run it off. When

we got to about 80 yards I saw Bush, who was running on my right, fade out of sight. Tylecote and I were running a most desperate race. By a tremendous effort I just got my shoulder in front of him, and as we were not running in tapes I am afraid I rather bored him on to the rails. However, we flashed past the post together, and the judge's verdict was, "Roper won by nine inches." Tylecote said to me, "Teddy, you bored me." All I could say was, "I was so beat I did not know what I was doing;" but the judge's verdict was not upset, and I have the Cup.

A mile steeplechase was run, and there were fourteen or fifteen starters. Opposite the grand stand was a water jump, quite a deep one had been dug, and the earth that was taken out was in front of the water—a mound. We had to jump this three times during the mile race, and when we were coming to it for the third time—which was the finish—a man called Lucas (who afterwards ran for Oxford against Cambridge) and myself were in front, all the others beaten. I was as "done" as a man could possibly be, and could not have jumped six inches. Lucas

was about four or five yards in front of me, and I said to myself, " My only chance is Lucas falling by trying to take the water jump as a fly," as we had done before. I felt certain he could not do it, if he felt anything like I did. To my great delight when we got within about ten yards I saw him steady himself to jump it. He tried his best, jumped about six inches high, hit the top of the mound, and fell right across the water, spanning it. I leisurely climbed up the mound, popped into the water and walked out at the other side, and as I passed him poor Lucas, who was lying gasping on his side with every ounce of breath knocked out of his body, stuttered at me, " Go on, old pal," and so I won. If Lucas had had the sense to run over the mound he would have won easily; his fault was in trying to jump when he was beaten.

As I have often emphasised, it is a good thing never to give up until you are absolutely done. A year afterwards, at Richmond (in Yorkshire), there were some sports, and my brother Bob, who was an infinitely finer runner than ever I was, was supposed to be going to win the principal event, which was a quarter-mile race; but

unfortunately about a fortnight before the race, while training, he very seriously wrenched his ankle, very nearly broke it, and was absolutely incapacitated and could only drive about in a little donkey-chaise. This made it necessary for me to take his place, never dreaming for a moment that I could adequately fill it. However, there was nothing else for it, so I ran in the race, which took place in an enclosure with rails on the outside.

My brother Bob drove round the rails in his little trap quite close to me. The opponent who was considered a danger to Bob, let alone me, was a man called Robson, who I believe came from somewhere in Durham. He was supposed to be very good and started a hot favourite, a position he was entitled to in Bob's absence. Well, the race was duly started, amidst tense excitement, there being a big crowd of people present, and much to my astonishment—and I daresay also to that of the onlookers—I held Robson to within about fifty yards of the winning post, where we were abreast. At that point I became so beat that I could hardly run or even see, and was going to give up when my brother

shrieked over the rails into my ear, " Look at the other chap; look at the other chap," which I did over my right shoulder, and there I saw Robson in as bad a state as myself with his tongue out—a beaten man. That gave me courage to go on, which I did, and we rolled past the post bumping and boring from sheer distress, but I got the verdict, I think by about a foot and a half.

To show what a good runner my brother Robert was, we had a trial one Sunday night in Skeeby Lane, close to Richmond, when everybody was at church. Well, although I never professed to be a first-class runner, or even a good one, still I could go a bit, and everybody who knows what a start is in one hundred yards will understand how good he was when he gave me seven yards in one hundred and beat me. I could run as fast as he could for forty yards. I was quicker off the mark, and I do believe that at fifty yards I had all my own way; then at seventy-five or eighty yards I heard him close behind me, and he beat me by nearly a yard. But now I am going to prove how good he was.

He joined the 7th Hussars, to which regiment the present Field-Marshal Haig belonged, and he was subaltern to my brother. Robert went to Aldershot, and the sports for the whole division there—some 26,000 men—were going to be held in about three weeks or a month.

In the open race, which was 600 yards, a large number of men had entered, officers and privates; it was an open race. Each regiment had its particular favourite, but two men who were fancied the most were, one in the 7th Hussars, and the other in a regiment I cannot remember. They were thought much of, and there was a lot of betting going on. There were two great professional racing men looking after this pair. The 7th Hussars man was being trained by the champion-miler of England—Bill (W. Lang)—also nick-named the "Crow-catcher" because he once caught a crow in his hands; and D. Richards, the great Welshman, was training the other. Lord Marcus Beresford was then in the 7th Hussars.

One night my brother Bob went with Lord

Marcus to see their man do his work, and my brother rather bashfully suggested that he might have a spin with the man, which he did, and to everyone's astonishment was only just beaten by him, though not nearly so well trained. Lord Marcus expressed his surprise and said, "Can you run like that?" and my brother replied, "I do not know how good I am. I have won everything I have run for where I come from, but I have no idea of the strength of the opposition." However, he went into strict training, and in about a fortnight's time another trial took place. Bob won easily. This fact was kept very quiet and the original representative was kept in the market as much as possible, my brother being supported at long odds to win a good deal of money. The day of the race arrived. I went to see the contest, and my brother asked my advice as to how he should run. I said, "I should go right away from the start, and run the 600 yards right through," for he could stay.

"These other two men will be so occupied watching each other that if you poach a good lead they'll never catch you." This turned out

exactly to be the case. The last 100 yards was down an incline.

My brother Bob went right away and they let him get some 20 yards in front, and he came to the top of this incline with that lead. When he got there I put my glasses down. Lord Marcus Beresford said to me, "What did you do that for?" I replied, "Because it is over. no man in England will catch him now," and he won in a canter. He came out an hour afterwards and won the 120 yards hurdle race, and we had a great night, for a great deal of money was won.

We will now return yet once more to dear old Richmond. My life there was full of excitement and adventure. I want to talk about two events of years and years ago, when I was staying there with my brother. They were important events to me at that period. A military depôt had just been established at Richmond: there are now big barracks there, and my brother and I went to dine with the regimental officers. Some of the latter, I expect, had heard of some of my little performances about that period—I am talking now of some forty-five years ago.

Well, we had a good dinner and did ourselves very well, including wine afterwards. Suddenly my brother came to me and said, " Are you in form for boxing? " I asked why, and he said " Well, they have a young fellow here and he wants to put the gloves on with you." I replied, " Oh, anyone can see through this scheme. This chap has probably been readied for this job two or three days and they want me to tackle him now I'm full of victuals and a certain amount of port wine, and as unfit to box as it is possible to be." My brother said, " If you don't they'll say you are frightened," so I answered, " In that case I'll box and do my best, but they must be two-minute rounds and five of them will be as far as I shall get under the circumstances. If he hits me in the stomach I shall probably be very ill."

However, we set to work, and I scrambled through five rounds. The last, I remember, was a desperate business. I had to use the ring and do everything I could to last out the fifth round. Just at the end he hit me in the waistcoat, with the result I had foretold—I was very ill. The verdict was a draw, rather in his favour, and the

officers came and said, "He had the best of you." I bowed to their decision, but said to my brother, "Make a return match with them in a month to a finish, and bet whatever they like." That was arranged. I came back to Liverpool, went to the Gymnasium, had a month's preparation, got pretty fit, and went off once more to Richmond. There was a different result to the other, for I knocked him out in the seventh round, but up to that time it was a pretty good fight.

This seemed to have rankled in the brains of these gentlemen, for the next year I had to meet another challenge. We were dining in the barracks—officers' mess—again, and I can only surmise that something had been said about my long walks with Snowden, the jockey. My brother again came to me and said, "Are you fit to walk?" and I replied, "Yes; distance, but not pace," and he said, "They want to bet you cannot walk fifty miles in twelve hours." I said "You can go and bet anything you like on that." There was a considerable sum of money betted. I asked when the walk had to take place, and my brother told me they wanted it

"To-morrow." I said, "Very well, in that case, when you have got the money on I'll go home to bed," and I went home. The next morning the walk took place between Richmond and Darlington. It is exactly twelve miles between these two towns, so I had to walk four times between them and two miles over. At that time I could walk four miles an hour comfortably all day almost, and having a stop watch on me I knew to a yard or so what I was doing. When I got to the bottom of Skeeby Bank, which was about two miles from the finish, I had eight minutes in hand, and I said to my brother, "George, I am going to break down half-way up this hill, they may lay a little odds." So half-way up the hill I swerved into the hedge, sat down, and began rubbing my ankle. Someone shouted out "Five-and-twenty to five against him doing it," which my brother took twice. Then I got up and went on, and won by about two-and-a-half minutes. It looked rather a near thing, but it was not, for I timed myself to a nicety. So I won on both occasions.

You sometimes get a little fun in life when you don't expect it. They are called unrehearsed

incidents, and it is strange how they come back to mind when talking about old times. You sometimes wonder how they still hang on in the memory. We are still at Richmond, where we used to have great sport at nights going out barbel spearing. The barbel come out of their deep holes at night and lie with their heads up stream. You go with leisters, which are spears, and torches, and it is a most extraordinary thing that the light from the torches, which are held for you by others—a torch to each leister—as you and they go up the river, seems to hypnotise the fish, and they lie there and you can spear them between your feet. Another rather curious thing is the effect that whisky has on you when you put your feet in cold water. It seems to fly quicker to your head than in ordinary circumstances. Well, I remember going up stream with a man named Turner on my right, and I suppose the whisky flew to his head. He slipped down and fell on to a stone and I was going to his assistance when he struck out and tried to swim ashore, in two inches of water—thought he was drowning!

We had a man called Ellerton who received

the fish from us, as we speared them, in a game bag which he carried over his shoulder. We had given him all our watches to carry for fear we might tumble in the water. He also, I think, had had a little whisky, for as I was handing him out a fish the game bag swung round his neck and he took a plunge into about four feet of water, and our watches all stopped at the same time. There was a parson with us one night. The torchbearer allotted to the reverend gentleman was a rough chap named Whitfield, who was engaged at the gasworks. He was a man who used a good deal of coarse language, so we warned him to be very careful and keep his mouth shut. The clergyman made a stab at a fish and thought he had got it. Whitfield went on his knees to take it off the leister, but it was not there, and he turned round to the parson and said: "—— —— —— —— has gone." With that he got up, but they had not advanced ten yards before Whitfield slipped on a stone and placed the whole of the lighted torch on the clergyman's neck, burning his coat collar and the back of his hat all to pieces. And his language on this occasion was even worse

than before. It is a very picturesque sport, and a beautiful river, and the torches, etc., at night make a sort of Rembrandt picture that is very satisfying to the eye. The barbel, which are a very bony fish, we give away; but it is very good to kill them, because they eat up the spawn of trout and destroy useful fish. Our biggest bag was 126, some of them weighing up to as much as 5, 6, or 7lbs.

In earlier stories I have emphasised the advantages of caution, of never leaving anything to chance, and herewith I relate an incident which both points a moral and adorns a tale. My brother Jack would do anything in the world almost; his love of adventure was too strong for an ordinary humdrum sort of life, and he delighted to get the better of any opposition. But he was a real good chap, and met his death by being shot at the capture of Coomassie in West Africa. Close to where we lived there resided a gentleman who owned the fishing of Gilling Beck, which is about three miles from Richmond. My brother had permission from this gentleman to fish in the beck, with the exception of a quarter of a mile in front of the

house, which he kept for himself. That was enough to make Jack want to fish there. He looked upon it as a kind of Naboth's vineyard, so one night, when the owner was giving a ball to the tenants, gamekeepers, and everybody connected with the estate, my brother thought it was a good opportunity to go and fish this part of the beck. He went there with a man called George Metcalf, a great poacher, and they set to work to fish. The beck was about 100 yards from the front of the Hall, which was lit up on account of the festivities, but as they were sat under the bank they never thought for a moment they would be seen.

Now this only shows how a thousand-to-one chance comes off. In an unguarded moment Metcalf thought he would have a smoke and struck a match to light his pipe. As extraordinary luck would have it, John Boo, the head keeper, at that particular moment was looking out of a window of the hall and saw this light. The next thing my brother knew was a tap on the shoulder, and a voice said, "Ah, Mr. Roper, I am glad to see you having such good sport," for there were eight or ten very fine trout lying

on the bank. My brother turned round and said, " Well, John, I suppose you want the rods, the fish, and everything. It's a fair catch," but Boo said, " No, sir, I don't want them, but I must report it to my master," which he did. There was an interview later with the master of the hall, and although, of course, a good deal upset by the occurrence, he said, " Well, all I shall ask you to do is to pay £5 to a charity in York," which my brother did, and was jolly well out of it. Again I say, never leave anything to chance that you can command.

When I was young I was very fond of dancing, and I went over to Douglas, in the Isle of Man for two or three days, and I found there Mr. Fred Vetter—the poor gentleman only died lately—conducting one of the finest dance-music bands I ever heard at the Mona. Instead of staying three days, I stopped a month. During this period swimming came on the *tapis* and a man said, " Do you swim, Roper? " I said, " Yes, I can swim a bit; but like everything else I do it is sticking it that pulls me through, as I have not a great turn of speed

at anything." He went on, "How far can you swim?" I replied, "I don't know. I am one of those lucky fellows who can stop in the water any time almost—hot blood." He said, "Can you swim across Douglas Bay?" We were then standing in front of the Castle Mona Hotel. I replied, "I think I can." He queried, "From Derby Castle to Port Skillion?" and I said, "Yes." He said, "I'll bet you £50 you can't," and I said, "Done."

The match took place three days afterwards, as I wanted a little time to prepare, and, of course, he was in a boat rowing alongside. I started out from Derby Castle, but unfortunately made a mistake of about a quarter of an hour to twenty minutes in the tide, it also got very rough, the wind blowing hard in my face, and when I got to within about 250 yards off Port Skillion the tide was running round that dangerous corner like a millrace, as it was, and I was getting beat. It looked as if the boat and myself would both go round the corner and there might be trouble, but I was not going to chuck it. Turning over on my back I began to sing a snatch of a song. (Camouflage!) He said,

"We are getting very near the corner, Teddy." I answered, "Oh, that doesn't matter." "Yes, it does," he said, "I don't like being in this boat going round that corner, *if* we have to go," and I said, "You can please yourself; I am going to land just there," pointing to where I knew I could not get. He said, "I don't like it." I was close to the boat at the time he said this, and he went on, "I'll give you £25 to cry off." "Well, to oblige you," I replied, "I'll take it." He put his hand out to me and with some help pulled me into the boat. And then they rowed away from this dangerous point. It was nearly ten minutes before I could get up, and he said, "You old beggar, you're beat!" I said, "I could have gone about ten yards further with a bit of luck, and that is about as far as I could have got." Moral: *Nil desperandum.* It was a very nasty place for boats, with rocks about, when a heavy tide was running, as it was.

As I said before, I was only a sticker at anything, but I won the diving prize at Clifton, that is by staying under water and picking up

more pieces of marble from the bottom of the bath than anyone else in the competition, being under water I should think nearly three minutes.

Visions.—Warned of brother's death.—Trying night in a Welsh Castle.—"Scrap" in a bedroom.—Hair restorers.—Bald heads for advertising purposes.

WHILST sat in solitary state the other evening I read a paragraph in a newspaper about some extraordinary phenomena in a Liverpool vicarage. It reminded me of certain strange incidents within my own personal knowledge. I am a thorough disbeliever in all spirits, ghosts, visions, etc., myself. The only spirits I have met have been Irish and Scotch, never any English ones; but I am going to relate two or three exceedingly curious happenings, which I confess certainly take some arguing away. My nephew, Captain Roper, R.N., who commanded the *Fearless* in the Jutland fight, once had an extraordinary dream or vision, and I want to say here that he was a hard-headed sailor, a man of the world, not in the least likely to be impressed by anything supernatural, in

fact, rather the opposite. At the time this incident occurred he was serving under Admiral Seymour on the China station, but when Lord Charles Beresford assumed the command of the China fleet he sent for my nephew to be his flag lieutenant, a post for which he was exceedingly well qualified. My nephew had a brother, Bryan Roper, who was then in Africa serving against the Boers. The two young men were devotedly attached to each other, something like the Corsican brothers. During the time Captain Roper was on his way home, via America, we heard that Bryan had been killed in action in Africa, shot.

Captain Roper arrived here (in Liverpool) one Sunday morning on board the *Majestic* and his father (my brother) came from Richmond, in Yorkshire to meet him. We knew, of course, that Bryan had been killed, but Captain Roper did not know. I shall never forget that when we met him on the Landing-stage as he came off the steamer, after he had greeted us, his first words to his father were, "How is Bryan? Have you heard anything about him?" And my eldest brother George, his father, not exactly

knowing how to break the news, replied, " Oh, he's all right so far as we know." I think the lie was pardonable under all the circumstances, for my brother wanted to break the news gently. Captain Roper heaved a sigh of relief and said : " I am glad to hear that."

I asked him : " Why did you ask that question so impressively, so suddenly? " and he replied : " I'll tell you. Coming across from China, overland, in the cars one night I had a vision. My brother Bryan stood opposite the bed and said, ' Donnie ' (which was his pet name) ' I've been shot.' This made me very unhappy, but in two or three days the feeling passed away. Then I got aboard the steamer at New York, and I had a double cabin with another gentleman, who will verify what I am now going to tell you. We were two days out when exactly the same vision appeared to me, and I was so very much upset at this second visitation that I mentioned it to this gentleman who was with me, and he made a note in his diary, and so did I, and here is the gentleman to speak to the fact himself." And with that my nephew introduced the gentleman to us. He said to my brother George, " What your son

has just stated is exactly what happened. He told me about the other vision and said, 'I have had that thing again; I wonder what it means.'" Shortly afterwards my brother told him the truth, which was that Bryan had been shot by an explosive bullet and nearly cut in halves in Africa.

Years ago, my sister Elizabeth, a very strong-minded woman, with no hallucinations of any kind, used to stay at an old country mansion near Richmond. The lady of the house was a particular friend, and liked my sister to visit her. One night there was a ball given, and my sister was given a bedroom she had never slept in before. The ball over, the ladies retired and the gentlemen stopped up to have another whisky and soda. My sister told me she went to bed, and was half sleeping and awake when she heard someone come to the door of the room and open it. Thinking that some gentleman had mistaken his room she sat up and said, "I think you have made a mistake; this is not your room," but no one answered. There was a sound like a man walking right across the floor from the door to the window, and then it ceased. Not seeing

anyone, however, she concluded that the intruder had withdrawn, and so she went off to sleep. In the morning she mentioned the incident to her friend, the lady of the house, in a joking way, saying, " One of those gentlemen mistook his room last night, and came into my bedroom." With that the hostess remarked: " Oh, were you sleeping in such and such a room? " and on my sister replying in the affirmative, the hostess called her husband up and asked my sister to say what she heard. She related the facts as I have told them, and then they told her that the room was never used because it was supposed to be haunted, but that, as the house was exceedingly full, they had put her in that night. It transpired that a man who formerly resided there had passed through this room and hanged himself outside the window—where he was found, and ever after this noise had been heard during the night.

These are the experiences of two of my relatives which may lead people to suppose that the Roper family were " susceptible," but I am now going to give you my own experiences. I was once invited to shoot in Wales at a place

called Bod Idris. It is high up in the hills away from any town. Corwen is the nearest. It was given by Queen Elizabeth to her favourite, Leicester, and was an old castle then. One of its owners and occupiers was a chieftain named Idris—Bod Idris means the abode of Idris—who, in his time, had the "right," or assumed it, of hanging any of his followers who did anything that displeased him. These poor wretches were hanged out of the window that I shaved at in the mornings, so that probably the place I stood on was the identical spot where the victims had been pinioned before the hanging. The window looked out into the courtyard.

The castle was full of sporting gentlemen, and I was sent to sleep in a part of it which was very scantily furnished and very seldom used; in fact, because this portion was haunted! No servants would go into that part of the castle after sunset, and I must say I thought it was the most ghostly looking place I was ever in. To get to my room I had to go through a long gallery of stone, and up a spiral staircase, also of stone. The bedroom was a very large one, and had four

doorways. Two of them had no doors, but had curtains drawn across. It was very windy, and these curtains kept flapping to and fro. After I had been in the room about ten minutes I began to think there were people peeping at me behind these curtains. One of the doorways opened out upon another vista of unused, uninhabited ruined apartments. The only consolation I could derive was that the ghost supposed to haunt this part was a beautiful lady who had been murdered by her husband, who had come back from the Crusades to hear stories about her which did not please him.

The bed was a four-poster and had curtains. It looked like a hearse, and the one candle which I had made the darkness most appalling in this great room. There was no chance of communicating with anyone else, no bells or anything; I was isolated, and as they had told me all about the place being haunted before I went up to bed, and left the others in the better part of the castle nice and comfortable, my mind was ready to absorb any emotion. I remember beginning to undress, looking over my shoulder, and fancying all sorts of things, but, however,

nothing happened, and I got into bed. I won't say I was frightened, but the story had got on my nerves, and I could not sleep. The noises were something extraordinary. The place, I should think, was full of rats. However, I waited for the lady to make her appearance till about 3-30 a.m., my candle went out, and I lay there almost perspiring with fear.

I said to myself: There are two alternatives—one is to lie here until morning, which meant until eight o'clock—it was in November—the other is to go downstairs, get a candle, and read. I thought the latter was best, so I got out of bed, crept down the stairs with a feeling that someone was going to put his hand on my shoulder all the way down, tramped along the gallery into the room of a gentleman I knew well, and went to get his candle. He awoke, jumped out of bed, gripped me by the throat, threw me on the bed, and proceeded to try and strangle me. I was taken unawares, but presently I threw him off, and spoke. He exclaimed, "Oh, Teddy, is that you? What are you doing here?" and I told him. He said, "Well, come and doss in here; don't go up there again; this bed is big enough

for two." I said " No, I am going," and so I went back with the candle and saw it out.

In the morning I went down to breakfast, keeping a stiff upper lip, and I was greeted with the question, " Well, Mr. Roper, how did you sleep?" I answered, " Very well indeed," winking at my friend. Then the children joined in. They said, " Well, that is curious, because the ghost walked last night. Nurse was awake about half-past three o'clock, and the footsteps came past our room." Now the steps were mine, going down for the candle.

I went out that day and did all the hard work, walking on the outsides, shooting, came back at night, good dinner, extra glass of Scotch (ghostly spirit), went to bed, and slept eight hours solid. Stayed there for a week, and, to my great disappointment, never interviewed the lady.

So sceptical am I about ghosts, I will go anywhere to sleep in a haunted house. Even with the cases before me I have related I remain an absolute sceptic. Nothing will make me believe in ghosts, hauntings, or illusions, until I can be brought face to face with a genuine

ghost without the absurd jugglery of tambourines, dark rooms, and doubtful mediums. If these poor phantoms are permitted—and by whom, Peter or the *other* doorkeeper?—to re-visit "the glimpses of the moon," why should we not be allowed to meet them in a reasonable way, without these ridiculous accessories, which Maskelyne and Cook can, and have, offered to provide in a much more complete and workmanlike manner?

Table-turning is another farcical thing which appeals to people who otherwise might be considered fairly sensible. I *would* like to meet a *genuine* ghost face to face. I would give anything I possess to meet again, for instance, my poor brother Robert, because we loved each other and neither would be afraid. Otherwise, I would like my ghost to be able to tell me something worth knowing—the winner of the Grand National, or the price of cotton next December.

I have been in a good many awkward corners in my life, exciting moments at cricket, football, shooting, double event bets, etc., but none have given me more anxiety, I might say excitement,

than the application of hair restorers to the top of my head. I am notoriously bald; why, I don't know. When I was 22, my hair began to come off, and as I have never had a serious illness all my life, I cannot account for it, and now, as everybody knows, I am exceedingly bald. It has its advantages, for when I go away it is absolutely unnecessary to take either brush or comb, and I can do what remains round the sides with the wet end of a towel. From a financial point of view it would be one of the greatest roads to fortune to find a restorer that would make my hair grow.

My baldness may possibly be due, however, to the effects of a very serious accident when I was about three or four years old. I was taken out by the nursemaid on a pony—of course, at Richmond in Yorkshire. Along the footpath three men came running with clogs on, and the noise startled the pony, and it broke away. I fell off the saddle and one foot went through the stirrup, and I was hanging down by the pony's side. The road was covered with new metal, and my head just tapped the ground round about where I am bald at the back of it now.

The pony dragged me over this new metal for about two hundred yards; then he was turned round and dragged me back again. Then the stirrup leather broke, unluckily for you, kind reader, whom I bore with these anecdotes. But I remember perfectly well, when I came to, being held in the arms of an old stonemason, David Bullock, and looking up in his face to hear him say: "Poor little fellow, I think he is about finished." He was entirely wrong for in ten minutes I was walking towards home, hand in hand with my mother, who was in a terrible state. I also recall being put into a warm bath, and the doctor coming, and hearing him say I was in a very bad way. I was laid up for about a fortnight, and during all that time I was delighted at being allowed to choose my own puddings—tapioca, rice, sago, or semolina—and I never enjoyed myself so much at any other period of my life.

But a big lump formed at the back of my head—the Editor has seen it—and certain of my friends mistake it for the bump of knowledge, as witness the following.

A very great friend of mine, a well-known

Liverpool doctor, who always went with me to shoot in Scotland at Christmas time, with a mutual friend, took advantage of these occasions to go over me with the stethoscope, etc., and examine me thoroughly. One day he came to this bump at the back of my head, and said: "You've got a very curious head, Teddy, I should like to have it." I replied: "Certainly, Peter, I'll leave it to you, and my body as well, at the Royal Infirmary, and you'll very likely find out some more curious things."

With a view to restore my fortunes, I have often tried experiments to make my hair "come back," with the assistance of my friends, as I shall now relate. I may claim Mr. Richard Gladstone, of Court Hey, the owner of Greater Scot which divided the Waterloo Cup with Herschel, as a particular friend of my own. I used to dine with him at Court Hey frequently, and on one of these occasions he said to me: "Teddy, there's a fortune for you!" I said: "Thank the Lord; what is it?" And he replied: "Hair restorer."

I remember it was after one Grand National, about 25 years ago, a French gentleman had

been staying at Court Hey. This gentleman had looked longingly at my head as one on which to test the hair restorer he was going to produce. Mr. Gladstone said to me: "Do you mind your head being used for this purpose?" And I asked if there was any money in it. He said "Yes." "Then," said I, "you can do what you like with my head, but before we begin let us have matters put on a business basis. This gentleman produces the restorer, I provide the bald head, and we go halves." He said: "Certainly."

With that he wrote off to Paris to this French gentleman for his pomade, which in due course came along, a large glass pot of it; but in the post it had received a heavy bang, the pot was broken, and the pomade and glass were all mixed up together. I did the best I could, collected the pomade, and put it in another little pot on the mantelpiece and forgot all about it for some time. One night, coming home from dinner somewhere, I remember walking up and down the room as I used to do, talking and reciting to myself, when my eye caught a glimpse of the pot of pomade, and I said:

"Oh, now's the time, to-night's the night, I will use this unguent." I took the pomade out of the pot I had put it in, and as the instructions were "Rub it well in," I did, with both hands. I recollect walking up and down the room rubbing it in. In about two minutes it began to sting and smart, and I said: "By jingo, that's good, beginning already!" I went on rubbing, until at last I thought I would take a look in the glass to see what was going on, expecting almost to see long hairs coming up. But what I did see was the top of my head like a cricket ground that had been brush harrowed. It was scratched from end to end and side to side, and bleeding, and then it struck me I hadn't got all the glass out of the pomade. And the little blood-letting that happened was all the good it ever did me.

One day, when the Liverpool Cricket Club office was at 21, Dale Street, a great friend of mine, a well-known racing official, came upstairs and repeated the same story as Mr. Gladstone: "Mr. Roper, there's a fortune here for us." I said: "Yes, what is it?" Reply: "Hair restorer." I said: "Very well, Mr. H——;

terms as before; you provide the stuff, I provide the head, go halves." And he answered: "Agreed; this is a certainty. It makes the hair grow anywhere, and you have only to apply it three times." He then produced a bottle of stuff that looked like dark-coloured Worcester sauce. I applied this lotion three times. The result was that the top of my head was stained a dark mahogany colour, and that I was prevented from going out to dine or to a theatre for about three months, until it wore out. With the same result as before.

I went to my brother's home in Yorkshire once, and my niece said to me: "Uncle Edward, will you promise to do something I ask you?" And I answered: "Yes, certainly I will." And she said: "I want you to use something to make your hair grow." I think it was either petroleum or paraffin oil. I knew it prevented me sleeping, and I thought I

In the Sefton C.C. pavilion hangs a framed photograph of Mr. Roper and four bald friends, taken during a cricket tour in the Lake District. The group consists of "Teddy," Sid. Crosfield, Champion (the pro.), John Lennox (who played cricket occasionally), and Mr. Tenter (who went on the tour and didn't play).

preferred a bald head. But the whole matter was settled by my sister-in-law, who said one morning to me : " Edward, what do you put on your head, for you are spoiling all my best pillow-slips?" So then I gave it up, but I was wondering how to turn it to financial use when I saw an advertisement in *Tit-Bits* which stated that they would give—I am not quite sure now about the conditions—but I think it was £5, hire a suit of dress clothes, and a stall at the theatre, to any eight bald-headed men who would sit in the stalls with a letter each on their heads and a hyphen making the word TIT-BITS. Again my bad luck pursued me, for I could only get six men to come. I am sure, if we had gone, there would have been lots of fun that night, for it is certain that some of my ruffian friends would have been in the gallery and thrown rotten oranges and election eggs at us. So perhaps it was all for the best that we did not total eight.

Now I have for ever given up hope of having a head of hair, although it would be nice to have two pictures printed, one with a bald head, " Mr. Roper before using," and one with long, flowing, cavalier locks, " Mr. Roper after

using," as it is in the shop in Regent Street. But failing that, there seems to be other possibilities of making money—which, it may have been noticed, I am particularly fond of doing—out of my scalp, and so now, as a little variety, and apologising to those people who have waded through these anecdotes in prose, we will insert a little poetry. After reading it, I can only say that my head is entirely at the service of anybody on the lines suggested in the poem—provided the terms are high enough :

BALDNESS AS A BOON.

Our daily life of one great truth
  Fresh and insistent proof produces ;
The oddest, most unlikely things
  In Nature's store possess their uses.
Thus, even for the baldest head
  The Press is now a use recording,
For it in Paris has become
  A moving advertising hoarding.

Men with a polished frontal bone
  'Neath hats no longer seek to stow it ;
If they've a hairless scalp it pays
  At tariff price per inch to show it,

Scored with the praises of a soap,
  Or with the warning, stencilled gaily :
" Let those who'd shun a poll like this
  Use 'Bunkum's' Hair Restorer daily."

Good heads of hair may now become
  A deprecated superfluity,
Whereas a cranium like an egg
  May prove a positive annuity.
Locks prematurely lost may start
  Anew in life, our errant brothers
And sons may even shave their heads
  To be the prop of widowed mothers.

The Grand National.—Mr. Ede's terrible death.—Stevens picked his ground.—Value of a good memory.—Country house bets.—The death of "Primrose."

THERE are very few people who can truthfully say they have seen every Grand National Steeplechase since 1868 (I saw the three war-time Grand Nationals on the films), but I am one of those who have, and am glad to be able to say so. The first I saw, when I came from Clifton College to Liverpool as a youth, was won by The Lamb in 1868, and I shall never forget my feelings at seeing such a sight, for previously I had seen nothing better than a small field of horses at Catterick Races or Richmond. It was very thrilling to see between five-and-twenty or thirty horses in a steeplechase of the importance of the Grand National. As a rule, in the earlier years, I went down to the first jump, and I can assure you that when the horses came along, like

a squadron of cavalry, it makes such a thrill pass through your blood that few other things could effect.

The first horse I saw win the big race was The Lamb, a little grey animal belonging to Lord Poulet. He was only described as grey because he had a few white hairs at the root of his tail; I thought he was black.

Curiously enough, my first four Grand Nationals were won by two horses, The Lamb in 1868 and 1871, and The Colonel in the two years between, 1869-70. Only one other horse has won the National in consecutive years, and that is Abd-el-Kader, 1851-52. The Colonel was quite a different animal to The Lamb; he was a dark-brown horse, and one of the most beautiful animals I ever saw.

In the second year that The Colonel won, a charge was brought against the rider of the second horse, he being prosecuted by the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals' Society for excessive punishment of his mount, The Doctor. This rider was George Holman, of Cheltenham, and I was present as a spectator in the law court, which was then in Basnett Street, Liverpool, on

the site at present occupied by Messrs. Lee's shop. The charge against Holman was that he administered excessive punishment to The Doctor. Well, it certainly was a desperate race, all the way up the straight from the canal turn they were neck and neck, and it was only in the last couple of strides or so that George Stevens got The Colonel's head in front. I remember seeing the horse unsaddled, and certainly The Doctor was very badly spurred, for Holman was a tall man with long legs, and he had spurred the animal underneath the body. The case was tried, and Holman was acquitted, the verdict being that there were justifiable grounds. There was such an enormous sum at stake that Holman was excused for doing what he considered necessary to effect a successful issue.

The second time that The Lamb won he was ridden by Mr. Thomas, whose real name was Pickernell. The reason Mr. Thomas was in the saddle was that the horse's original rider, Mr. Edwards—whose real name was Mr. G. M. Ede—had been killed at Aintree in a small steeplechase. This was a terrible tragedy, I can see it now, over again, with my eyes closed. I

was a spectator of it. Three horses started in a small race, and Mr. Edwards rode one called Chippenham. The first fence was quite a small one, only put there as a preliminary jump, and as he rose up at it Chippenham crossed his legs and fell, and in struggling to get up rolled over and over on Mr. Ede. I watched the sight through my glasses, and it seemed to me the horse fairly rolled him flat. Mr. Ede was terribly crushed by the pummel of the saddle. He was removed to the Sefton Arms, and though he lived for two or three days—owing to his magnificent condition, the doctor said—he eventually succumbed without ever regaining consciousness. He was a fine rider, a charming gentleman, and a good cricketer : he represented his county, Hampshire, for several seasons at cricket.

To return to The Colonel and his jockey, George Stevens, who was successful in the Grand National on five occasions, a feat which has not been equalled. He won it on the Colonel as before stated in consecutive years, and then for Lord Coventry on Emblem and Emblematic in 1863 and 1864. His first winner was Free

Trader in 1856. Stevens rode the National course in his own particular way, invariably letting the field get away from him, and you would see him last at the first jump, riding on the extreme right, on what was called the sheep track. This was a path made by the sheep coming home at night to the farm buildings and padding the ground hard through following each other. Stevens never appeared on the scene until the water jump, and was then generally in the first half-dozen or so. Afterwards he again used the sheep track for the second time round, but did not lie so far behind. Well, he won the National oftener than anybody else has won it, probably more through his methods than the actual merit of his mounts.

In 1872 Casse Tete won for Mr. Teddy Brayley. This man was so successful at one time—every horse he had won for him—that after winning an important race at Goodwood he threw himself down on the grass exclaiming, "I am tired of winning." Casse Tete is indelibly impressed on my mind because I was on the top of the stand when she was being saddled right in the middle of the course,

opposite to the winning post. I was with my brother Bryan, and I said to him, "I feel inclined to back that mare"—she was at 40 to 1. Bryan asked me why, and I said, "She looks so fit and well," and I recalled she had won a steeplechase at Croydon or somewhere down there a little bit before. Bryan said "All right, go and take £400 to £10; we'll have it between us," and I did so. This was one of the years when there was a snowstorm. I recall when the horses came round the first time Casse Tete was about third over the water jump, and then they went into the snowstorm, and it seemed an age before they came round again. The murmur of the crowd heralded the approach of the survivors up the straight. I had my glasses glued on the snowstorm to see what came out of it first, and to my intense delight I saw the scarlet jacket, yellow cap appear. I kept my glasses glued still on the snowstorm to see what came next, if there was any danger, but before the second came into sight Casse Tete was almost past the post.

We have often been told you must never prophesy unless you know. A gentleman named

Feist, who wrote for the *Sporting Life*, under the now well-known *nom de plume* of "Augur," in summing up his views on the Grand National of that year, wrote something like this: "I now come to Casse Tete. I will dismiss her in very few words. I will guarantee to eat her, saddle and bridle and all if she wins the National." After the race, Mr. Brayley went up to Mr. Feist and said, "Now, Mr. Feist, how will you have the mare cooked?"

I was particularly interested in the next two winners, 1873-4—Capt. Machell's Disturbance and Reugny; and they were both ridden by one of the finest gentleman riders who ever threw a leg across a horse, Mr. "Pussy" Richardson. The reason my sympathies were in his favour was because we met frequently at cricket. Mr. Richardson was a member of the Harrow eleven, and I played against him very often. He was a fine cricketer and also a charming fellow.

Austerlitz, in 1877, was one of the few five-year-olds that have carried off the big steeple-chase, and was ridden by his owner, Mr. Hobson, who, although a fine horseman—he won many steeplechases—invariably took hold of the back

of the saddle with his right hand at every jump. It is remarkable how often the outsider of a stable has beaten his more fancied companion in the National. The year before Austerlitz won, Regal, another of the few five-year-olds that have won the race, started at 40 to 1, while Captain Machell relied on Chandos, a tremendous favourite, and ridden by Jewitt. Regal was ridden by Joe Cannon, now the doyen of our trainers, and won a fine race by half a length. Chandos fell by the canal.

Shifnal won in 1878. I shall never forget him, for in the 'eighties I won a good deal of money over him owing to having a good memory.* I went with my old friend Mr. Sidney Crosfield to Enville, where Lord Stamford, a great racing man, lived, to play in a cricket match, and at night we dined there. There were a great many well-known sporting men in the company, racing

---

* One of many striking examples of Mr. Roper's memory is the following :—

Playing in a match against Chirk, he made a century. Not hearing any applause he challenged the score and was informed he had only made 99. He insisted he had made 100, and on the scorer counting up again found he had missed one. It was Mr. Roper's habit to count his runs.

men as well as cricketers. The Grand National was being talked about and by and by the question of what jockeys had won the race cropped up. Someone said it was curious that J. Jones had never won the race, although he was such a fine horseman. I heard this remark, and humbly whispered up the table that I thought he had won it. " Oh, no, you are quite wrong," was the answer, " he never won it." Again I said, " I thought he had," and with that Sidney Crosfield said to me, " Teddy, I'll bet you a tenner he didn't." I replied, " Yes, I'll take that," and then the two gentlemen who had contradicted me joined in and offered to lay me a " pony " each he didn't. I took those bets. Then another man capped it by saying, " I'll bet you £100 he didn't," and I said, " Done." Then Sidney Crosfield said, " I don't like the way the old beggar's betting, he doesn't bet in hundreds unless he knows something." The question next arose as to what horse Jones had ridden. I didn't say anything until Sidney Crosfield asked me at last " What did he ride? " and I replied, " I think he rode Shifnal, a horse that was trained within a few miles of

where we are sitting." "Oh, no," said one of the other gentlemen. "I know all about that. Jones rode His Lordship, who started at 4 to 1." I said, "No, I think that is where you are wrong. Robert I'Anson should have ridden Shifnal, but begged off to ride His Lordship, who was a very hot favourite at 4 to 1. Robert I'Anson was very anxious to ride him." They scoffed at this—this gentleman was so certain and offered to double the bets, which I agreed to do.

The next question was, how should we decide? They said the coachman there, Lady Stamford's coachman, was better than a "Ruff's Guide," his memory was so good. I said, "That may be so, but I am not settling on his memory, I am settling on the 'Calendar.'" However, they brought the coachman in, and gave him a bumper of port. "You know about the Grand National," they said to him, and he replied "I know all about it almost from the beginning." They then said, "Who rode Shifnal?" and he replied "Robert I'Anson." Sidney Crosfield turned to me and said, "There, I told you so." I answered, "Well, Sidney, you have told me

captain in the regiment. He had taken 100 to 6 Seaman on my tip, and I took £300 to £18 about the horse. This was another year in which the outsider of the stable beat the more fancied one. Linde, the great Irish sportsman, who had won the National in 1880 and 1881 with Empress and Woodbrook, had two in, Mohican and Cyrus. Mohican was first favourite at 4 to 1, while Cyrus was at a considerably bigger price, but Mohican fell, and when the horses came to the last hurdle Seaman and Cyrus were fighting out a desperate race, head and head. They jumped the last hurdle locked together—close to where our coach was—and I said to my brother, "We must be beat." He asked "Why?" I said, "Well, if Tommy Beasley cannot ride Lord Manners out of it 200 yards on the flat I shall be very much surprised." However, Lord Manners did the best thing he could possibly have done, that was to sit still and let his horse do his best. There was no flourishing of arms and legs, he just sat still. They flashed past the post, and I looked for the man with the numbers to see what he took hold of. I saw him hold up No. 16, Seaman's number, and I thought, by

Jove, I hope he'll put it in the frame, which he did, and so Lord Manners attained his ambition. Seaman won by a head!

Curiously enough, Mr. Linde had Seaman the year before and sold him after winning a steeplechase at Aintree November meeting to Lord Manners, thinking all the time he had the beating of him with Mohican. Seaman was lame when he passed the post, so his victory on three legs and a " swinger " showed what a gallant horse he was.

The most extraordinary winner of the National was probably Voluptuary, who ran in the Derby, won the Grand National, and finished his career by winning a steeplechase every night on the boards of the theatre, ridden by Mr. Leonard Boyne. I saw him myself at the Court Theatre.

The easiest won National was Cloister's, and when it is discussed, as it often is, which was the best horse that ever won, I think that if Cloister, Manifesto, Jerry M. and Poethlyn could meet, all at their best, that Cloister, in the same form as that day he won, would beat them all. He won by 40 lengths, and cantered past the post.

captain in the regiment. He had taken 100 to 6 Seaman on my tip, and I took £300 to £18 about the horse. This was another year in which the outsider of the stable beat the more fancied one. Linde, the great Irish sportsman, who had won the National in 1880 and 1881 with Empress and Woodbrook, had two in, Mohican and Cyrus. Mohican was first favourite at 4 to 1, while Cyrus was at a considerably bigger price, but Mohican fell, and when the horses came to the last hurdle Seaman and Cyrus were fighting out a desperate race, head and head. They jumped the last hurdle locked together—close to where our coach was—and I said to my brother, "We must be beat." He asked "Why?" I said, "Well, if Tommy Beasley cannot ride Lord Manners out of it 200 yards on the flat I shall be very much surprised." However, Lord Manners did the best thing he could possibly have done, that was to sit still and let his horse do his best. There was no flourishing of arms and legs, he just sat still. They flashed past the post, and I looked for the man with the numbers to see what he took hold of. I saw him hold up No. 16, Seaman's number, and I thought, by

Jove, I hope he'll put it in the frame. which he did, and so Lord Manners attained his ambition. Seaman won by a head!

Curiously enough, Mr. Linde had Seaman the year before and sold him after winning a steeplechase at Aintree November meeting to Lord Manners, thinking all the time he had the beating of him with Mohican. Seaman was lame when he passed the post, so his victory on three legs and a "swinger" showed what a gallant horse he was.

The most extraordinary winner of the National was probably Voluptuary, who ran in the Derby, won the Grand National, and finished his career by winning a steeplechase every night on the boards of the theatre, ridden by Mr. Leonard Boyne. I saw him myself at the Court Theatre.

The easiest won National was Cloister's, and when it is discussed, as it often is, which was the best horse that ever won, I think that if Cloister, Manifesto, Jerry M. and Poethlyn could meet, all at their best, that Cloister, in the same form as that day he won, would beat them all. He won by 40 lengths, and cantered past the post.

Behind him, placed, was Why Not, who won the next year under 11st. 13lbs., a weight that has only been exceeded on four occasions, including Cloister's. Why Not won in 9mins. 45secs., a fast race, so it looks as if Cloister was taking something on, and I verily believe if Dollery had ridden him out all the way he would have won by a quarter of a mile. His time also (not always a good test, but still something) compares very favourably with the others that have won with 12st. 7lbs. He never was headed and made every yard of the running—a marvellous performance.

The worst beaten winner I ever saw was Disturbance. I know, because I backed him, and when he came to the last hurdle it was a question if he would jump it. He was a long way in front, and that consummate horseman Mr. J. M. Richardson (also a fine cricketer), had plenty of time and handled him most carefully; but I don't think he jumped twelve inches, got mixed up with the hurdle, and gave a sickening long stagger. But Mr. Richardson "hauled" him up and he won; but he was so beat that when he went to weigh in two men had to stand

one at each side of him, with their shoulders supporting him, otherwise I think he would have fallen down.

Lastly the most *pitiful*, and I can never remember or think of this without feeling a lump in my throat, years ago, I forget which, there was a very good mare called Primrose, belonging to Mr. Brockton, a Lincolnshire gentleman, a fine rider, a good sportsman. She ran in the National more than once very well, and the year in question was greatly fancied. He loved that mare, and would not ride in spurs or with a whip for fear he might touch her. This year, however, she fell at the second jump in the country on the way to Beecher's Brook. I was standing there and saw it all. There was a ditch at the far side, and she fell with her hind quarters in the ditch and her fore quarters and head "over the top," in front, and lay there, apparently unhurt, for I remember she began to nibble the grass, but did not move. When they tried to get her out they found she was helpless, and I remember a dark, swarthy gipsy-looking man saying to Mr. Brockton, "I am very sorry, sir, but I am afraid her back is broken." Poor

fellow, it had never struck him, and he was terribly affected, and I remember the man taking out a little knife and just pricking her on her hind quarter to see if she moved. She did not, and then the vet. came along and confirmed it, and of course she had to be destroyed. It would have made your heart sore to see poor Brockton. As I said before, he loved this mare, and I am sure she did him, if animals can feel such affections. The last scene I shall never forget. When he realised it he took off the saddle and bridle, leant down, caressed her, and kissed her on the muzzle, and she sort of whinnied back, and then we led him away, poor fellow, heartbroken.

Surely two verses of that best of all that class of song, the beautiful words of Whyte Melville, "The place where the old horse died," are applicable :—

I stood for half a minute, but he never seemed to stir,
  Though I scored him with my rowels in the fall.
In his life before he'd never felt the insult of the spur,
  And I knew that it was over once for all.
As motionless he lay in his cheerless bed of clay,
  Huddled up without an effort on his side.

'Twas a hard and bitter stroke, for his honest back was
broke
At the place where the old horse died.

* * *

There are men, both good and wise, who hold that in a
future state
Dumb creatures we have cherished here below
Will give us joyous greeting when we pass the golden
gate.
Is it folly if I hope it may be so?
For never man had friend more enduring to the end,
Truer mate in every turn of time and tide.
Could I think we'd meet again it would lighten half my
pain
At the place where the old horse died.

* * *

If we could ask Mr. Brockton, I am sure he would say—

"Could I think we'd meet again."

Bad-tempered horses.—A thrilling time at Gilling.—The hunter's preference.—Nasty accidents to horses.—A Chester relic and escape.

SEEING several horses at Aintree with muzzles—indicative of bad temper—reminded me of a most thrilling experience that happened to me when I was young. My readers will, no doubt, remember that I mentioned my brother Robert as a runner on several occasions, and on this day when I had the thrilling experience he had been running at Gilling in a 300 yards race down the middle of the village. There were nine competitors, several of them semi-pro.'s, local celebrities, and pretty good runners. The judge was the then Lord Zetland's trainer. We backed my brother Robert, and he won quite easily, and we were so pleased that we went with the judge and called at the stables at Aske Hall on our way home to Richmond. We were looking over

the different animals in the different stalls, one of the stablemen and myself being together, and the others in a separate group. We came to a loose box, and the man opened the door. The horse was loose, and had a muzzle on, and I shrank back for I hate a bad-tempered horse. The man saw me do this and then happened one of the most unpardonable things that ever could happen. He said, " You don't like a bad-tempered horse." And I said, " No." I can only think he must have been celebrating my brother's win at Gilling, for he suddenly pushed me in the box and shut the door, and I was left alone with this fiend of a horse. It haunts me now.

At first I did not know what to do. Of course the horse came at me, but luckily I did the best thing I could have done under the circumstances, that was to rush into a corner and squat down to make myself as small as possible. The horse stood over me and tried to strike me with his fore-feet and, fortunately for me, hit the wall every time. Then he knelt down and began thrusting at me with his head and squeezing me as hard as he could. But the two walls saved

me. I never shall forget that horse's face through the muzzle, his bared teeth and savage eyes, his ears laid right back to his head.

Then the man opened the door and came in with a stick. I had only been a minute or so inside, but it seemed an age. He beat the horse off. If it had not been muzzled I should have been worried to death, and if I had not gone into the corner he would have had me down in the middle of the box and rolled on me, for he was a perfect devil. The horse's name was El Cid, a pretty useful animal that had won at Chester. I was completely unmanned when I came out of the box, sort of half-collapsed. This man seemed to enjoy it, for he laughed, but when I had recovered myself in about five minutes he was jolly sorry for himself.

When I was very young my father had a hunter called Scrip. He was also a bad-tempered beast, and was kept in a loose-box in the paddock. Close to this box, the door of which was always open for him to go in and out when he liked, for he was an old pensioner, was a cart on its end, what we call in Yorkshire "skelled up." Another boy and I had got past

TEDDY ROPER AND EDGAR HORNBY.

the box and close to where this cart was, but the horse had evidently been watching us, for when we tried to get back he rushed out of the box and we made for the cart. He chased us round and round the cart, but luckily we were more nimble and he did not catch us. To show what extraordinary creatures horses are—the only person who could handle this animal was one of the nurse girls, Ellen Wilson. She was in the garden close to, saw what was happening, and came right into the paddock. No sooner did she appear than the horse left us, went to her, and rubbed his nose affectionately on her shoulder. She could do anything with this horse, but he would never allow anybody else to touch him.

My brother had a mare called Sally, a very fast trotter. I was staying at home at Richmond one Christmas time and had been in the market-place and bought some apples. On returning I happened to walk into the stable and into the stall where this mare was. She was a very good-tempered animal, and I was patting her, and so on. I noticed she turned round as I was doing this and kept sniffing at me, and as I went

up to her head she put her nose into the top of my pocket, evidently smelling the apples. I gave her some, and never saw her again until the following year at Christmas time. Once more I went into her stall, and no sooner did I get near to her than she turned round and put her nose into my pocket again—evidently fond of apples.

To show what extraordinary form people produce under certain circumstances I relate a story of a Liverpool incident. Many years ago in Great Charlotte Street was Lucas's Horse Repository, where they used to have a sale of horses every week or fortnight, and you may judge that all sorts of brutes were taken there. The chief clerk was a Mr. Girvan, a Scotchman, whom I knew very well, a very nice fellow. He was probably 17 stone weight, and had long ceased to be active, but on this occasion a horse was brought in that we were told was bad-tempered, and the yard was cram full of people. You would have thought it could not be cleared for minutes. This horse broke loose as he was being led round, and looked about seeking whom he might devour. That place was clear in a few

seconds. I saw one man disappearing on his hands and knees into a box, and Mr. Girvan was left sitting in lonely state on a chair at the bottom of a dais there was. The horse spotted him and turned round, having evidently made up his mind to have a go at the chief clerk, when, to my astonishment, Mr. Girvan hopped off the chair, swarmed up the dais, and sat on the top of a shelf, a feat I should have thought it was a thousand to one against him performing. You never know what you can do until you are forced.

Here is a story showing what nasty accidents can happen to horses. My father was once riding a horse named Samson, a very good hunter, with Lord Zetland's hounds. I have often heard him say that he was up in the air, jumping a biggish place, when, to his horror, he saw on the other side a plough with the two handles sticking up towards the horse, and which it was impossible to escape. The horse jumped on the plough and one of the handles went into him, and he galloped several strides with the plough sort of hanging on to him. Of course the handle broke off and the horse bled terribly.

My father tried to stop the wound up with his silk handkerchief, but it was shot out like a piston rod. However, assistance arrived and they managed to stop the bleeding, the horse got over it, and was hunted for several seasons afterwards. The piece of the broken handle is still preserved as a curiosity.

My brother George was once riding a horse called Leotard with Lord Zetland's hounds. The hounds had been running, but there was a check, and my brother walked his horse through a gap in a fence. As the horse went through he put his foot on the far end of a piece of wood lying on the ground, and his weight raised the near end up. It caught him in the stomach, just snipping the girth, and went right into him; the further the animal moved forward the deeper in went the piece of wood, eventually breaking off. Most extraordinary to relate the horse never flinched. The next man to my brother called out, "Roper, your horse is staked." My brother replied, "Impossible! We have only just come through that gap, and he hasn't shown the slightest sign of injury." The man said, "He's got a lump of wood inside him; look,

there's the rest of it lying on the ground fresh broken." My brother immediately dismounted and examined his horse, which was not bleeding, and I have heard my brother say that he tried to reach the piece inside the wound with his middle finger and couldn't.

The poor beast was taken to Stanwick Hall, and when they got him there they put a tallow candle up the wound to see how far the stob of wood was in, and they touched it at the end of about four or five inches. A veterinary surgeon came and after tremendous trouble the piece of wood was extracted. It was 19 inches long, and with the five inches of the hole in addition the wood had penetrated into the interior of that poor horse over two feet. He hardly bled at all, but on the third day afterwards got very restless, reared up, and fell backwards dead. Blood poisoning and internal hæmorrhage.

Thinking of old Grand Nationals I have seen, it strikes me that the speed of the present steeplechaser is not so great as that of years gone by. This year, for instance, Shaun Spadah took 10min. 26secs., which compares very unfavourably with the fastest time, that of Huntsman,

who compassed the old course in 9min. 30secs., 1862. In those days the course was longer, for they started where the paygates (Tattersall's and paddock) are now, and the course did not cut across the first time from the canal bridge up the middle as it does now, so that probably the old course was 200 or 300 yards longer. The course itself was not in such good condition as it is now, when the heavy roller makes it look like a cricket pitch. The Lamb in 1871 covered the distance in 9min. 36secs., and it was frequently done after that year under 10 minutes. So the present steeplechaser cannot be considered better or faster than the old ones.

It only seems a day or two since Poethlyn won at Aintree in 1919, and was entered for the Chester Cup. This fact brings to mind Old Joe's victory in 1886, when he was credited with doing the distance in 9min. 14sec. It was, of course, wrong by a minute, and has now been altered in the records to 10min. 14sec. But the belief that he had only taken 9min. 14sec. gave his people so much confidence in his supposed speed that he was entered for the Cesarewitch, for which he was allotted 6st. odd, and, to the surprise of his

connections, he was never able to go the pace at all, and lay last most of the way. After Old Joe had won the National he went lame. They took him to the Sefton Arms Hotel and poulticed his foot, and in about a week or ten days a piece of wood came out about the size of my thumb.

I am not at all sure that they bet as heavily now as they did in the old days, for I remember when Lord Westmorland, the Duke of Hamilton, and Captain Machell were at their zenith they each had a fortune on any horse they fancied. I have said how I used to watch Captain Machell, considering him the greatest wizard of the lot, and I remember watching him closely on the occasion at Liverpool which I am now about to relate. First of all, I think it was the Duke of Hamilton's horse that was backed down to almost first favourite. Then Lord Westmorland came in and his horse was backed as if it was all over, and all the time the Captain stood and watched, and I watched him. And after all other commissions had been worked and it was getting near the time set for the race he began to back his horse. Directly he did so

I rushed out of the paddock, and I remember I got 15 to 1 outside. By the time I returned the horses were at the post and the betting had practically ceased.

The Captain's horse was Tommy Up a Pear Tree, and I went in again to see what Machell was doing, but the bell rang and the horses were off. The Captain was still in the paddock—where Tattersall's used to be, behind the stands—looking at his book. A young nobleman who, I think, was connected with him at the time, came close up and called out to him, "Machell, aren't you going to see what's winning?" He replied, "Oh, no, I know what's winning; needn't bother about that." But I went to see, and by the time I got to where I could see, one horse was coming home by itself, about six lengths in front, and that was Tommy Up a Pear Tree. So that my opinion of him as the great wizard became more confirmed than ever.

Among other sporting relics I possess is a watch chain which contains the hairs of four Derby winners, a St. Leger winner, and the dam of probably the best horse that ever ran, Ormonde. Many people think he

was. Their names are Doncaster, Bend Or, Shotover, Ormonde—the four Derby winners —Sandiway, the Leger winner, and Lily Agnes.

I became possessed of this relic in this fashion. It is one that I didn't steal! My nephew was on the Eaton Park estate, the Duke of Westminster's place, learning land agency, and through the kindness of Mr. Chapman, the stud groom, he was able to get the hairs from the bundles which Mr. Chapman collected from the most famous animals under his charge.

This recalls to me an occasion on which I was hunted out of one of the paddocks there when I called on Mr. Chapman, whom I also knew well, by Vampyre, the dam of Flying Fox. She was a fiend of a mare, very bad-tempered, but I did not know it, and while going round the stud with Mr. Chapman one day, he got engaged with someone else for a few minutes, and I strolled into the big paddock in which this mare, which, as it turned out, had Flying Fox at her feet, was grazing. She was nearly at the other end of the paddock when I walked in at the gate, and I started to go across to look at her.

Suddenly I was hailed by Mr. Chapman, who shouted: "For God's sake, Mr. Roper, come back; don't go another yard." I called back: "Why?" He rapidly walked towards me, saying: "This mare's a perfect devil, and although you don't know it, she's watching you out of the corner of her eye all the time, and when you've got far enough, so that she thinks she can cut you off, she'll come for you and worry you."

To show how true it was what Mr. Chapman had said, immediately the mare saw that I was retreating, she came for me as hard as she could; but, luckily, I had not got quite far enough for her. Mr. Chapman and I sprang through the gate together, which he slammed after us, and the mare dashed up to it and reared up on the top, staring at us. If I had gone twenty yards further into the paddock she would have had me.

A Sportsman's Memories — Chapter XII

An old slipper at Waterloo.—Master McGrath's victories.—A precarious sport.—The twelve best dogs.

OLD Tom Raper, who slipped in the sixties and seventies, one of the best slippers who ever handled a greyhound, came from a village called Gilling in Yorkshire, about three miles from my native Richmond—where I was born. He was a pretty good cricketer at one time, and he taught me my earliest lessons in that game. He was one of those old-fashioned bowlers who bowled fast under hands, with a jerk from the elbow. They had a curious safeguard in those days to detect no balls. It was a no ball if the elbow hit the side in the moment of delivery. The bowler's arm was whitened with chalk on the inside, and after each ball had been bowled the umpire would look at the bowler's side, and if there was a chalk mark on his side it was a no ball. They decided then.

Tom Raper used to bowl a medium paced ball

which broke from the off side, of good length, and which I am sure would get wickets nowadays. But to return to him as a slipper. The first year I saw the Waterloo Cup was in 1868, when Master M'Grath won. There was a romance about this greyhound, if my memory serves me right. He was the ugly duckling of the litter, small and unpromising and was given away by Lord Lurgan to a young boy on the Lurgan estate of the name of M'Grath, hence the dog got his name Master M'Grath. One day they were trying the other dogs and this boy was looking on with his four-legged playfellow. By some fluke or another he was put in the slips with one of the others, and to everybody's surprise beat him very easily. Then they trained him and found out what a great dog he was.

To return to Tom Raper once again. I went to stay with him at a cottage at Formby where he resided when he was slipper. At breakfast Lord Lurgan's trainer came up with Master M'Grath and two other greyhounds, and I had a good look at him. I recall him quite well. He was a black dog with a white patch on his chest, very plain looking, showing none of the wonder-

ful powers that he possessed, and weighing only something like 56lbs. However, handsome is as handsome does, and he won the cup that year, '68, and the next, '69, and then we come to '70.

I was again in the same room with Raper, and the dog was brought along again. As he went out of the room Raper said: " Mr. Roper, that dog doesn't look right. I don't like the look of him." I must now say that Raper used to " make a book " at home, at Gilling, and when he came to the Waterloo Cup he used to send word to his wife what he thought and what he fancied. We went out to course. Master M'Grath was slipped with a bitch called Lady Lyons, belonging to Colonel Goodlake. I was standing behind Raper at the time, for in those days we walked the hares up; there were no hurdles. When the dogs left the slips Lady Lyons went straight to the hare. Master M'Grath who did not seem to see anything, turned to the right after going a few yards and sort of staggered off by himself. He fell into a ditch, and if it had not happened that a spectator was standing near the spot he would have been drowned. However, he recovered and won

the Cup a third time in 1871. The whole business was very suspicious, and it is quite possible that the dog had not had fair play.

To show what a good judge Raper was, immediately Master M'Grath was beaten, he telegraphed to his wife not to lay Bendemere and Sea Cove. His judgment was justified, for these two dogs went in to the slips for the final heat, Bendemere, a red dog of Lord Haddington's on the right hand, Sea Cove, a small bitch of lighter colour, on the left. When they were slipped the hare rather favoured Sea Cove—I was close behind them—came round to the left, and she beat Bendemere and won.

Coursing is a precarious sport, and luck has a great deal to do with it. There are many gentlemen whom we would wish with all our hearts to win the Cup, but who do not seem able to succeed in doing so.

The Duke of Leeds, Lord Sefton, and Mr. Brocklebank come to one's mind as very old supporters of the game, who have not been rewarded by winning the Cup.* The Duke of

* This was written before the meeting of 1921 when the Cup was won by the Countess of Sefton's nomination.

Leeds has been most unfortunate, second on three occasions, in consecutive years, in 1898, 1899, and 1900, with Langside, Lapal, and Lavishly Clothed. The dog that beat Lapal was called Black Fury, and it was his owner's first attempt to win the Waterloo Cup. When Mr. Townsend won with Tide Time, I believe it was the only dog he had. At any rate, he won at the first time of asking. Lord Dewar with Winning Number had the same good luck. His Lordship became possessed of the dog through the death of Mr. Paterson, who died on the day of the draw the year before his dog won, and it seemed the irony of fate that a gentleman like Mr. Paterson at the end of a long and honourable coursing career should have a winner of the Cup and die for the dog to pass into the possession of a new comer at the sport. To come to last year (1920), Mr. S. Beer is also an example of novice's luck, for a few weeks before the last Waterloo Cup he had neither a nomination nor the dog.

Here is a matter which may give rise to endless discussion and difference of opinion. Some years ago the opinion of a number of coursing gentlemen—I think the number was 31—of the

best judgment were asked as to which they thought were the best twelve greyhounds. The result was :—

Master M'Grath, 30 votes.
Bab at the Bowster, 29 votes.
Coomassie, 26 votes.

And then followed Bed of Stone, Miss Glendyne, Green Tick, Snowflight, Chameleon, Lobelia, Honeywood, Rebe, and Cerito. It would be interesting to know what good judges say now, and for the sake of argument I myself would name the following twelve :—

Master M'Grath,
Bab at the Bowster,
Coomassie,
Fullerton,
Miss Glendyne,
Harmonicon,
Snowflight,
Thoughtless Beauty,
Long Span,
Farndon Ferry,
Herschel, and
Paracelsus.

THE GROUND OF THE LIVERPOOL CRICKET CLUB.

Of course, I quite understand this opens up endless argument, for all coursers have their opinions, but I cannot think of any better than this dozen. I am certain in my own mind that Master M'Grath is the best dog I ever saw run for the Waterloo Cup. People say he always had weak hares, but he couldn't always have them, in addition to which when he reached the hare, the other dog was always five or six lengths behind. It was his speed and skill which made the hares seem weak, so much so that I have heard the hares—and Mr. John Mugliston will corroborate this—that Master M'Grath went after fairly squeal with fear when he was near them knowing they had met their match, and he was a wonderful killer.

Bab at the Bowster was one of the greatest bitches that ever ran, and to show what stamina they had in those days she won two 32-dog stakes in one week. Coomassie, twice a Waterloo Cup winner, was never beaten in her life. She was the smallest animal that ever won the Cup, weighed 39½lbs., I think, and must have been a great greyhound, for she was never challenged. Mr. Dent, who had Fullerton, Miss Glendyne,

P

and Princess Dagmar, I know, thinks very highly of them all, and I doubt which he would place first.

The most unlucky dog of my dozen was that brilliant greyhound of Mr. Pilkington's, Paracelsus. I consider him very unlucky not to have won two Waterloo Cups. His performances in other big stakes were extraordinary. I have always had the greatest admiration for this dog. Quite a number of dogs have given their trainers and owners great anxiety, and to show what a difference a few minutes may make I will relate a story about Miss Glendyne.

In the Cup contest of 1887 she dislocated her toe when running with a dog, I think, called Hermes. Mr. Hutton, the great bone setter, was telegraphed for to come and attend to her foot. But he was in France. He came back to England as quick as possible, and left London early in the morning, and if the special train he travelled by had kept time everything would have been all right; but it was a little late, a few minutes only, and Longest Day had run the bye just before he arrived on the ground. The toe was immediately put right, and as the bitch

walked away perfectly sound afterwards, I think it was only the lateness of the train that prevented Miss Glendyne winning the Waterloo Cup three times. I remember having backed her on this occasion, and watched anxiously for Mr. Hutton to come. Everybody was on tenter-hooks, and when he arrived he walked up to the place where Mr. Dent was with the bitch, took hold of the foot, and the operation was over in a few seconds. But all too late.

The longest-priced winner I ever remember was on the occasion when Magnano and Surprise contested the final. Magnano was 120 to 1 and Surprise 250 to 1 on the night of the draw. To show what bargains in dog flesh may be picked up, Homfray, who won the Cup in 1904, was bought for five guineas at the Barbican, and Minchmuir, the runner-up to him, did not fetch ten guineas. Fancy buying first and second in the Waterloo Cup for less than 15 guineas!

A Sportsman's Memories — Chapter XIII

The torn envelope.—A railway carriage tip.—Old Liverpool " bookies."—The stars and winners.—On the slack wire.—A music hall adventure.

READING an article in the Liverpool *Evening Express* on old Houghton Lane and the old Liverpool " bookies " reminded me of the old days when the principal bookmaker of that period was John Sadler, a great man at that time, and his three principal men were Tom Clarkson, Dalzell, and King. Mr. King was a great favourite of mine. He had a peculiar idea about double-event bets. He said : " Back the first horse, and leave the money down for the second," which gave you a chance of saving a bit, if you liked, out of your winnings.

To show in what an extraordinary manner one can get tips—or they may come to you—I was returning from the Liverpool Autumn Meeting many years ago, in fact, it was 1871, in a first-

class carriage, and two very well-dressed men, evidently men high on the turf, sat down opposite to me. One said to the other: "You must have had a good win to-day over that mare of yours," the mare being one called Modena, who won a big race, and belonged to the then Lord Wilton. "Yes," said the other man, "we had a very good one, and she's a good filly; but we have a better at home, and shall very likely win the Chester Cup." This made me, as you can imagine, excessively curious, and I kept watching them over the top of my newspaper. The first gentleman said: "What's the name of this one?" The other made no answer, but took an envelope out of his pocket, wrote down the name on the envelope, and handed it to his friend, who read it, tore the envelope in four pieces, and threw them under the seat. You can understand that, when we got to Tithebarn Street Station, I was the last out of the compartment. I recovered the pieces of envelope, and later pieced them together. Written across the envelope was the name Napolitaine.

Going back to Sadler—in those days they began betting on the Chester Cup at Christmas

time. Immediately Sadler's book was opened I went to see him, and said: " Mr. Sadler, what price Napolitaine?" He said: " 100 to 1 and 25 to 1 for a place." I said: " £500 to £5 and £125 to £5 for a place." Time went on, and we got close to the Chester meeting. Napolitaine was never mentioned at all, and I became rather anxious. The night before the Chester Cup the horse had not arrived, and there was very little mention of him in the papers, and I thought the money was all gone. However, on the morning of the race Napolitaine arrived. She was trained by Tom Wadlow at Stanton, and started at 25 to 1. She had a very light weight, and the rider was a mannikin, and couldn't give any help from the saddle. He came to the Grosvenor turn about three lengths in front, but was gradually overtaken and beaten two heads. Inveresk won, Saucar was second, and Napolitaine third. So I lifted £125 place money, and the tip, after all, was not such a bad one. If there had been a jockey up, the horse would have won in a canter.

I knew Mr. Sadler exceedingly well, and did a commission or two for him. When Oxonian

won the Portland Plate at Doncaster, Mr. Sadler asked me to work a commission for him for this horse in Houghton Lane. Now the lane was a very difficult place to work a commission in. If anyone whom the bookmakers suspected started at one end to back a horse, before he got a few yards it was known at the other end, with the result that prices were cut down, or you were refused altogether. So the way I worked the commission was to get four friends of mine, two to begin at each end on different sides of the street, and they came up or down together, and met in the middle and got the lot. The result was so very satisfactory that Mr. Sadler expressed himself as very pleased, and we all won a good stake, and I had several other transactions of the same sort with him.

Mr. Sadler opened a big place in Hanover Street, a very fine room, and the three clerks I have named, Clarkson, Dalzell, and King, each had a table where they betted. I think they were there until Mr. Sadler died. And at one time he had offices in what are now Cooper's Buildings, in Church Street.

Mr. Sadler was originally a gamekeeper on

Lord Hill's estate, Shropshire way or Staffordshire. He came to Liverpool and made a considerable fortune by bookmaking, eventually becoming the shooting tenant of the estate on which he had acted as gamekeeper! I would like to say this about John Sadler, because he stood for all that was straight and right—he was an honourable man, one of nature's noblemen, because I know of the charitable things he used to do.

I will tell you a few curious "tips" that a great friend of mine, a partner in a big firm in Liverpool, well known to many people on the Flags and in the Newsroom, a clear, level-headed man of the world, gave me many years ago (perhaps 40), as a result of consulting the stars on the great racing events of the year.

First, let me explain how he did it. He carried a book full of plans of the Zodiac in his pocket. All the constellations were there, and if you met him and asked what chance had such a horse for, say, the Cesarewitch, he would first take the time from the Town Hall clock, then make a note in his book, go home, work out the horoscope, and send you the answer. And some

of his prophecies were extraordinary, and the curious part of it was that he did not always know the name of the horse, but would tip the winner in other ways.

I remember the following cases. He said one day to me: "Are you going to see the Leger?" I said: "I am not sure." "If you go," he said, "you must be certain to back the middle number of the runners on the telephone board. If there is an even number of starters, then the two middle numbers." I went. There were thirteen runners. No. 7 was Dutch Oven, 40 to 1. She won! I backed her!! I met him in Castle Street one day, near Pierce's shop (the tobacconist), and we talked about the Liverpool Autumn Cup. "You need not bother about that," he said, "the stars say the top weight, whatever it is, is a certainty." Thebais, 9st. 4lb.! Another. The Goodwood Stakes, a big betting race in those days, came up. I asked him his opinion. "I don't know the name of the horse, but the colours of the winner will be all scarlet." Red Archer, all scarlet, won.

But now I am going to tell of two cases more extraordinary still. I was shooting on some

grouse moors in Yorkshire, and, as you may be sure, we were a sporting lot of chaps. Racing came up in its turn. I mentioned my friend and his extraordinary prophecies, and one of the party, a gentleman called Hildyard, said: "We'll try him; the Cambridgeshire is next week; ask him." I wrote, and the answer was: "I can't tell you the name, but the winner will carry 6st. 4lb." Hackness, 6st. 4lb., won all right! Hildyard was so taken with this that he wrote my pal, and corresponded with him for years.

Now the climax, and I am prepared to be called a liar by anyone. I had a fancy for Mr. Perkin's Lucy Glitters for the Cambridgeshire. She had been placed in the St. Leger, and I asked my pal on the Flags if she had a chance. As usual, he took the time, etc., etc., and wrote me the following, or words to that effect: "I cannot say whether Lucy Glitters will quite win, but she will go very close indeed. But, from the horoscope, I should fancy something will happen in the race to interfere with her. She may win. Anyhow, it will be a near thing." What happened? Lucy Glitters was

winning at the distance when she was savaged by that great horse, Tristan, which enabled Foxhall to get up to win by a head; she was second. What do you think of that?

Now, these are all my own personal experiences of him. There are lots of others, and many men now living will no doubt remember my friend, but for all the above I will vouch. He had a clergyman friend in Yorkshire who worked out the same idea, and if both their horoscopes pointed the same way they thought it a good thing. But I am sorry to say that, in the end, the stars were beat by that 6 to 4 on the field; that, as I said before, always has, and always will, "whack the lot" of systems, dreams, and prophecies.

Amongst my other accomplishments few of my friends will give me credit for being an acrobat, looking at my present form and figure. When I say an acrobat I ought to say an acrobat's assistant. Very many years ago, when the present Repertory Theatre was the old Star Music Hall, there was a man, a Swede, a magnificent fellow about 6ft. 1in., and as fine a man as ever was seen, whose name was

Menotti, but he was called the King of the Slack Wire. He used to walk on a slack wire from the bar right up in the ceiling, from one end of the theatre to the other, and then back again. Just before he went on one evening, I was talking to him up in the bar, and, hearing that he sometimes carried people across on his back, I thought I would like to go myself. I said to Menotti: "Will you take me across?" And he looked at me, and said: "What do you weigh?" I replied: "About 12st. 10lb." He said: "You are rather heavy, but you can come if you like." So when the time came I got on his back. He had a tremendously powerful balancing pole, and I never thought what power that pole had until I felt him move it. The slightest dip on either side brought him up as firm as a castle, and it appeared to me as if I was sitting in an easy chair. I whispered in his ear: "This is all right."

I remember seeing a sort of grim smile pass over the side of his face, which was the only part I could see, and immediately afterwards I found out what he was smiling at, for when we had got to the middle he made a sickening slip with his

left leg. My heart was in my mouth, and I thought we were going down amongst the people—there was no net under us. We should have landed in a little private enclosure that the chairman, Mr. Johnson, used to occupy, and who during the evening was supposed to average about 42 glasses of gin. I happen to know myself that most of the gin was water, and that the cost of it was put to his credit account. Well, just as I thought we were going below, with a twist of his wrist and the weight of his balancing pole he came up again all right, and whispered to me : " How did you like that?" I said : " If you do it again we'll go down together," for I had my arms round his neck and I promised to choke him. With that he just walked to the other end. He said : " Now, I am going to put a sack over my head and baskets on my feet, and we'll go back again." I said : " You can go where the deuce you like ; I am going down to Mr. Johnson." And away I went, although I don't suppose for a moment there was any danger, but the first slip was enough, I wanted no more.

A golf poem.—How I lost my medal round.—Peter Jackson again.—Knocked out.—A trip to Westmorland.—Match that did not come off.

I HAVE touched on many sports in my reminiscences, but up to the present there has been nothing about golf, and I must confess I have never given this game the attention it deserves. Consequently, I have not that command of language which at times one finds it almost necessary to use in various spheres of life. But I have played some rounds of golf, none of which have been calculated by the ordinary rules of the game, that is, so many strokes to the round, or hole play. My efforts have been governed by the time limit, and when I have set out to do a round of golf in the morning, I have generally suggested to my opponent that, with luck, we might be back by luncheon time; and I may as well say here, in parenthesis, that if the round was not completed

by luncheon time, I should have broken off at that welcome hour, and left the links for the table. But if I am no player, I have a great admiration for the game, as may be gathered from the following poem, which I may truthfully say has been in great demand at convivial gatherings, and those gentlemen who have in the past requested a copy of it must here seize the opportunity.

THE PLACE WHERE I SPOILT MY MEDAL ROUND.

(A parody on Whyte Melville's most beautiful poem, "The place where the old horse died.")

I.

At the bottom of the bunker, where the sand is soft and deep,
And each ball takes a heel mark for its own,
Where the stance is loose and shifting, and the face in front is steep—
And you seize upon your niblick with a groan—
There's a spot I never pass, though lying safe on grass,
But my heart gives a flutter and a bound;
And I breathe a little word, by bunkers often heard—
'Tis the place where I spoilt my medal round.

II.

There's my driver in the corner, there's my mashie by
its side,
But I've driven and I've lofted all in vain.
I shall never win the medal, I haven't even tied,
And I'll never have so good a chance again.
How the ball flew off the tee, how I holed my first in
three,
How I walked as if I hardly touched the ground—
The lowest score that day, and only two to play,
At the place where I spoilt my medal round.

III.

"Did I heel?" I hardly think it; "Did I slice?" I
cannot tell;
I had done the first sixteen in sixty-nine.
I was swinging like a windmill, I was driving strong
and well,
Two hundred yards and never off the line.
But I sometimes think 'tis true that my soaring spirit
knew
I was pressing just a quarter of a pound;
Still I played my level best, and my caddy knows the rest,
At the place where I spoilt my medal round.

IV.

I stood for half a minute as the ball rolled down the bank,
Then I hacked it with my niblick as it lay;

But the more I smote behind it, the deeper in it sank,
  And I saw that it was in there for the day.
And when I plucked it up from the bottom of that cup,
  And dashed it in a frenzy on the ground,
I had played about thirteen, and I wasn't on the green,
  And that's how I spoilt my medal round.

V.

There are men both good and wise who hold, that in a
    future state,
  Poor fellows who were bunkered here below
Will be always on the green in two, and always putting
    straight;
  Is it folly if I hope it may be so?
For if you wish to try the flesh to mortify,
  There is not a better method to be found
Than to play some eight or ten in a sandy bunker when
  You have very nearly holed your medal round.

I have already mentioned the fact that I met Peter Jackson at Grasmere sports. This was not the only occasion on which I had the pleasure of his company, and I should like to mention here that Jackson, whom many considered the finest boxer who ever fought, was also a charming gentleman. His manners were perfect. I knew him fairly well, and I never

heard him say a word or express a sentiment which even the most particular person could find fault with. The first time I met him was in London. I used to stay with a friend of mine, visiting various places of amusement. He said to me one day: "You always like to see champions of whatever sport it may be, would you like to meet Peter Jackson?" Of course I was delighted to do so. He said: "Jackson is now performing at the Aquarium; he stays at a house near the Langham Hotel, top of Regent Street, and when he's done at the Aquarium he will come up there. If you like, we will go and meet him." We went to this house, and in due time Peter Jackson came in. I thought he was the most perfect figure of a man I had ever seen, about 6 feet 1 inch, with beautiful shoulders and chest—in fact, the beau ideal of a fighting man. I remember so well—he was dressed in a blue surtout coat, with top hat, and carried the most tricky little umbrella you ever saw. I was introduced to him, shook hands with him, and I remember at the time feeling as if my hand had dropped into a bag or something, for it was lost in his.

After we had been talking for some little time, with my usual impertinence I said to him: "Now, Mr. Jackson, I am going to do what I like with you." He said: "Certainly, anything in reason." So I said: "Stand up, please," and he stood up. "Now," said I, "clench your fist, stretch your arm out, and put it very gently on the end of my nose." Having done that, I stood opposite to him with my arm stretched out in the same manner, but my hand was twelve inches off his nose. He asked what I was doing that for, and I said: "You are going to fight our champion, Smith, who is about the same size as I am, and I wanted to see what chance he would have with you in counters from the difference in your length of arm." Jackson said: "Well, Mr. Roper, I do not think he'll have very much chance. Everything is in my favour, height, length of arm, and, I think, I am the better boxer, too." I also recall that when he put his fist on the end of my nose I could hardly see anything—it obliterated everything almost, it was such a big weapon of offence. When I mentioned this fact, Jackson looked at his right hand, sort of admiring it, and

remarked: "Well, I must confess it is a good fist, it has never failed me yet, has never been knocked up, and I believe I could put it through the door now without hurting it."

The fight with Smith is historical. In the first round Smith hit Jackson very low, very low, indeed, and Jackson's seconds appealed loudly for a foul. Jackson, evidently wishing to inflict the penalty himself, stopped his seconds, calling out: "No, no, leave it alone." The blow had the effect of thoroughly rousing him, and Smith was out in the second round, having received the maximum punishment in the shortest time it ever happened to anybody.

Jackson and I were talking one night about his coming fight with Slavin, and I asked him if he would beat Slavin. He answered in a somewhat cocksure sort of manner: "Of course I shall." I retorted by saying that, according to the papers, and opinion generally, there was not much "of course" about it, for Slavin, as we all knew, was a most determined and fine fighter, and it was thought it would be a very near thing between them. However, Jackson's reasons were that he taught Slavin in Australia;

they had met there when he was young, and he knew every method that Slavin would produce; and he prophesied what actually happened in the fight to me. He said: "If you are there you will see that Slavin will try all the time to get in his body blow (which was his greatest asset), but I doubt if he will ever get it home. I know exactly when it is coming, and how to avoid it."

I saw the fight, which was one of the greatest prize fights in the history of the ring, although it only lasted nine rounds, and it was exactly as Jackson said, Slavin trying continually to get in with the body blow, which Jackson was able always to avoid. And, to show what a decent man Jackson was, at the end of the fight Slavin was almost helpless on the ropes, and Jackson turned round to the referee and said: "Haven't I done enough?" The referee suggested that, as Slavin was still on his legs, he would have to give the *coup de grâce*, which Jackson very reluctantly and as gently as possible administered.

I have already said Jackson was a gentleman, and it is recorded of him that once, at Doncaster during the race meeting, he went into a bar for

a drink. At that moment he was the only customer, but presently three toughs came in, and for some reason or another—perhaps they were not served as quickly as they wanted to be—began to abuse the barmaid, and used filthy language. Jackson took her part and expostulated with them quietly. They retorted with more " language," whereupon Jackson fastened the door and proceeded to lay the three of them out, after which he flung them through the door. I have always deeply regretted Jackson's death, for to me he seemed to be everything that a high-class man, let alone a pugilist, ought to be.

I spoke in an earlier chapter about knocking a man out, and as I always like fair do's, I am now going to relate how I was knocked out. It was in a boxing competition at Manchester, very many years ago, in the heavyweights. I was one of those unfortunate people who were too heavy for the middleweights and too light for the heavyweights. My best boxing weight was 12st. 2lb., which is very light for the heavyweights. However, on this occasion I had got into the final, having always had to box men heavier than myself, and in the final I had to

meet one of the finest boxing amateurs in England, Mr. Holliday. I guessed him at about 6ft. high and 13½ stone weight when trained, a magnificent fellow, and I knew I had no chance, but had to box the best I could. One of my seconds said to me: "What are you going to do?" I replied: "I am going to run about the ring like a scalded cat for as long as I can, and being, I think, faster on my legs than him, I may keep out of his way for a certain time, but the end will surely come when he gets me in a corner."

This is exactly what happened. I struggled through four rounds, dodged under his arm and ran about, but at last he got me in a corner, and I couldn't get out any more. I felt like Marshal Foch when he said, "My left wing is trembling, my right gives way, and my centre is in trouble; therefore I will attack." So I went at Holliday and hit at him with my left hand as hard as I could, but I was rather short and my glove just went on to his left breast. This didn't stop him, he was so much heavier than I, and I was left in the position of the whole of my left jaw open. I recall perfectly well to this day seeing his right

hand coming along and thinking to myself, "Edward, I think you've got it." The next thing I know was looking up into my second's face, and I said to him, "Am I in time?" He said, "Yes, Teddy, you are in lots of time to go home; you've been out five minutes!" I said, "What do you mean?" and he answered, "He knocked you through the ropes on to the ground." Then I said: "There's nothing more to be done; let's go home." But the extraordinary part of it was that I never suffered the least pain either at the time or afterwards, simply those five minutes were five minutes of complete oblivion and no bad results after them at all.

Holliday was such a fine boxer that efforts were made to bring about a match between him and Mr. C. F. Buller, who was a captain in the Horse Guards, and also a very fine boxer. He played for Middlesex County at cricket and for the Gentlemen of England, a fine all-round athlete, and one of the handsomest men I ever saw. There was great difference of opinion as to which of these two men were the best, and many attempts were made to bring them together.

The stumbling block was that Holliday wanted to fight to a finish. Buller wanted to fight on points. I always thought that if it had come off Holliday would have won, certainly if it had been to a finish, for he was a most determined fighter, a man of great power, with a tremendous punch, and a very savage man when he got warmed up. However, the match never came off. Buller was so good that whenever a young man joined the Guards either in the ranks or as an officer he would send for him to come to his room to see what he was like as a boxer.

Also a great many years ago, Mr. W. Birkett, well known in Liverpool in those days, came to me and said, " Are you inclined to box? " and I said, "What is it; what's the game" "Well," he replied, " I want you to box Mr. Wilson," who lived then near Windermere. I said I would like to see Mr. Wilson first. I always used to have a look at anyone before I boxed him, so he said, " Very well, go and see him." I had and have a great friend in Mr. John Rigg, of Windermere, who was also a great friend of Mr. Wilson's, so I wrote to Mr. Rigg and asked if it was possible to see Mr. Wilson. He replied,

" Certainly, you come along, and I'll have Mr. Wilson up and you shall dine together." I answered " All right, I'll come, but don't tell Mr. Wilson why I am coming."

So I went up there and directly I saw Mr. Wilson I said to myself, " Edward, this is no job for you." He was bigger, heavier, stronger than I was, a very formidable man, in addition to which John Rigg told me that anybody who took Mr. Wilson on had got a very tough job—he might not be very scientific, but he was a terribly bad man to beat, having had very many encounters of this sort in his life, and always up to all sorts of sporting adventures, a very hard nut to crack.

Well, we dined together, and the more I saw of Mr. Wilson the less I liked the job. At the end of the dinner he proposed we should go into the billiard room and have a game of billiards, to which I agreed, and we went. We took our coats off, and as I wanted to see as much of him as I could I stood with my face to the glass over the mantelpiece and had a good look at him up and down. And again the more I looked at him, the less I liked taking him on.

At that moment, before I could get away from the glass, he turned round rather suddenly, saw what I had been doing, burst out laughing, and said, " Look here, Roper, you and I are too old to start fighting at our time of life." With that I held out my hand and said, " Thank God, shake! Let's have a drink," which we had. I said, " You knew? " and he answered, " Yes, it is all nonsense for you and I to do this. Let's turn our attention to get Birkett and Mr. Brocklehurst—who was Birkett's partner in the job—into the ring instead of us." We tried our best, but the result was the same as in our case. I was very thankful, for I think he would have finished me.

As I am writing these lines I am fast approaching " the allotted span," and in a few days I shall have attained the age of three score years and ten. Memories come and go; visions of old friends take shape and melt away; I bring before myself vivid pictures of departed relatives, smile at them and talk to them. They do not answer and are gone. Relatives of mine have figured in many of these anecdotes. I shall be pardoned, I know, if I commit to whatever fame

I can command the names of those who have done their bit for King and country :—

Jack, my brother, was killed at Coomassie.

Bob, another brother, killed in the first Boer War.

Bryan, nephew, killed by an explosive bullet in the second Boer War.

Geoffrey, nephew, in this last war ; and

Charles D., nephew, who commanded the *Fearless* in the Jutland fight, is now dying in consequence of the effects of that action.

My failure at a Chester cricket match.—Throwing the ball.—Shore's feats.—Money making at cricket.—A shilling a run.—Bowler and poacher.—John Roberts again.

DURING the first few years of my life in Liverpool I was captain of the Sefton Cricket Club, and in that club were two of my oldest friends, Charlie and Freddy Jones.* Freddy was, in my opinion, one of the best—if not the best—fast bowlers this district ever produced, and I consider myself exceedingly lucky to have been invariably on the same side

* "Charlie and Freddy" Jones were two of the oldest stalwarts of the Sefton Club. In 1873 Fred Jones (v. Liverpool Rifle Brigade) took 6 wickets for 7 runs. In 1874 (v. Croxteth Rangers) he took 7 for 8, and (v. Croxteth) 7 for 15. In 1881 he did the hat trick three times in one week (v. Lymm, Poulton and Bootle, respectively). In the same year (v. Bolton) he took 7 wickets off the reel. Charlie Jones in 1874 (v. Prescot) took 8 wickets for 20 runs and (v. Southport Alexandra) 8 wickets for 18 runs. As batsmen they were equally good. In 1874 Sefton C.C. were the champion club of the district, losing only one match during the season.

as he was—with one exception. I took a team to Mr. Pipon's school at Chester at his request to play the boys there. I had a very strong eleven, seven or eight being men who were playing for the county at that time—far too strong for the boys. Mr. Pipon noticed this and expressed this opinion. I agreed, and said, "Well, sir, you shall have your choice of my side. You shall pick any man you like out of it to play for you." My opinion of Mr. Pipon's judgment of cricketers went down when he chose "E. Roper," his reason being, I suppose, that I was then playing for the county. So we set to work. I went in amidst the applause of the boys, who, no doubt, were saying "There goes a hundred," but Freddy Jones's third ball I played easily forward and placed it gently into the hands of mid-on.

The boys were very kind, expressed their regret and astonishment at this short life, adding, "Never mind, Mr. Roper, there's a second innings; of course, you will get a lot then." In due course my second turn arrived and I went in again. This time I survived, I think, an over, but the first ball of the second over—I can see

it now—was a most beautiful length ball, about three inches off the off stump, and I said to myself, "Edward, if you don't smother this and it breaks back at all you'll be out." I did the best I could. I played it all I knew, but the ball beat me, came back, and knocked the leg stump out. It knocked the leg bail 32 yards and broke it, and Freddy Jones has got it now in his smokeroom, as I presented it to him with the feat inscribed on it. There was a dead silence for a few seconds, and then all my own team, who were, of course, fielding against me, solemnly, without a word, gathered round me, took out their pocket-handkerchiefs, simulating a grief which none of them felt, and escorted me in dead silence back to the pavilion, and I remember that when we got within a few yards of it one of them began whistling the Dead March in "Saul." That is the only time I opposed Freddy Jones, and I am very glad it was.

My reference to Mr. Birkett in the boxing match which did not take place brings to mind a cricket anecdote connected with him. He was going to take a team to a Midland county to

play at cricket and was short of a bowler. He came to me and asked if I could find him a bowler, for I was going with them. I said "Yes, the best in Liverpool"—at that time. He said "Who?" and I replied "Shore, the professional at Sefton Park." In reply to my inquiry why he wanted a good bowler Birkett told me: "We are going to play a very good team, Cambridgeshire, captained by the Rev. Mr. Voules, who's very bad to beat." I said, "All right; they'll have to play pretty well if you take Shore."

We played the match and Shore* got 13 wickets for about 60 runs—and we won very easily on account of his excellent bowling. But now comes in what I have mentioned several times before, the wisdom of being prepared for all eventualities. As I have previously stated, I generally had a man on my side who could do something in other departments of sport. Mr.

---

* Shore first figures in Sefton's records in 1879, when (v. Walton) he captured 8 wickets for 15 runs. As already mentioned in another footnote, in 1881 playing at Old Trafford, Manchester, he took 9 wickets for 35 runs, eight men being clean bowled.

Voules, who was a bad loser, rather, and didn't like the beating they had got, said to Mr. Birkett, "Well, you have beaten us at cricket, but we have a chap who can beat you at something," and Birkett said, "What is it?" Voules replied, "Throwing the cricket ball." Birkett said, "I don't know whether any of our fellows can throw," but at that moment he happened to catch my eye, and I nodded to him. He then said, "Oh, all right; we'll have a go now," and there was some wagering.

Birkett came and asked me who it was who could throw the cricket ball and I said "Shore, and you can bet your life he can throw it further than any fellow these men can produce." So they began. The Cambridge man threw first, and Shore went down to the end where he was throwing to. He threw a fair distance, about 90 yards, and the ball rolled some ten yards further; the ground was very dead. Shore picked the ball up and threw it back over his head, and then we walked back for Shore to have his throw. And he threw 114 yards, which won very easily. So we brought off again the double event.

Another story about Shore. He was a most fearless fellow, cared for nothing, and names of famous men had no weight with him. He was playing for Liverpool and District against Australia, and made, I think, some 46 runs as last man or almost. He batted exceedingly well. When he came out I congratulated him on his innings, and said, "Well, Shore, which of these great Australian bowlers did you think the most difficult?" He replied, "None of them gave me much trouble, but I think yon long chap bowling with his back to the railway, was perhaps the best of the lot." This was Spofforth, by many people supposed to be the best bowler who ever bowled a ball.

Another time we were playing Birkenhead Park, and we wanted four runs to win when Shore went in last. One of my own peculiarities was that unless I was batting, I was funking, and being most anxious to beat my old pal Cecil Holden and Birkenhead Park, as it was always a most keenly fought match, I was perspiring with nervousness when Shore went in to get those four runs. As he walked past me he said, "Don't bother, Mr. Roper, I'll get them all

right," and in he went. Smith, that excellent bowler, of Birkenhead, an exceedingly nice man, tried to bowl him a yorker, but it happened to be a half volley, and Shore promptly hit it into the crowd and the game was over and we had won. So I "came down the tree" that they always said I climbed up behind the pavilion.

I have made considerable moneys at cricket in the following way: On one occasion Lancashire were playing Warwickshire at Aigburth. The wicket was fast and rather in the bowler's favour, and the visitors had a very fast and good bowler called Field bowling for them. They had got about 120 runs, when my old friend, Mr. Oliver Jones, who was sitting on the top of the pavilion, said to me, "Teddy, we shall have some difficulty to get these runs the way the wicket is playing and the way that Field will bowl." I replied, "Oh, no, we shall get them all right," but he still stuck to his opinion that we should not. So I said, "very well, I'll give you £6" —holding out to him six nice new shining sovereigns, I remember well—"if you will give me a shilling back for every run we get." He

jumped at this, said "Yes," and took the money. I said to him, "You perfectly understand; you give me a shilling back for each run our side makes," and he answered, "I know all about it." We set to work, and Lancashire got 315, the balance in my favour being £9 15s.

Another time I was playing in North Wales with a team called Liverpool Ramblers. We were playing three two-day matches. We had played two of them, and were finishing on the Friday and Saturday at Lord Powis's place at Welshpool. One of the players on our side had had the bad luck to make four ducks in succession and was going in for his fifth innings. My old pal, Sidney Crosfield, was there, and for some unknown reason he had taken a dislike to this unlucky gentleman. As he went in Crosfield said to me, "There goes another duck!" I said, "No, Sidney; he's a pretty good bat." Sidney's reply was, "Oh, rot, he can't play a bit." Holding out two half-crowns I said, "Very well, will you take these two half-crowns and give me a shilling back for every run he gets?" He remarked that he would be delighted to do so and he pocketed the half-crowns. At luncheon time

my " unlucky " friend was not out 68. He finished with 82—balance to me £3 17s.

This was not a lesson to Sidney Crosfield, for we went to Poulton-le-Fylde once and it was a very rough wicket. The home team had two fast bowlers at us, knocking us about very much. One of my team was named Parrington. He was a hard-hitting, dangerous bat, but not a good one. Eight of us were out for about 90 runs when he went in. Sidney again said, " There goes another duck." " Well," I rejoined, " I grant you he's not a good bat, but he may get a run or two." Sidney was very pessimistic, and said, " He won't get a run," so I pulled out four shillings and said, " Take this, same terms as before." He pocketed the coins. Parrington hit the first ball out of the ground for six, so I was immediately two shillings to the good, and he made a total of thirteen. To show how rough the ground was, poor Sidney himself got hit bang in the mouth by one of these fast bowlers. He had false teeth which, with the plate, got so smashed up by the hit that nobody there could do anything for him, and he had to go all the way to Manchester to get his mouth put right.

Years ago we had at Aigburth a Notts professional, named Wass, who afterwards was one of the very best bowlers in England. He was a rough chap, but a very decent fellow, and amongst his other accomplishments he was an inveterate poacher. He used to get his nets for rabbit catching from a man at Birkenhead. When at home at Nottingham, living, as he did, among the Dukeries, he used to go out beating for the big battues and knew all about the habits of game and what happened after they were shot. I mention this to illustrate what happened in a cricket match. In those days we played a local club which had a rather rough wicket, and two very fast bowlers, who knocked us about a good deal at times; in fact, I had a little finger broken on their ground. This team came to Liverpool one day to play, and I was captain of the Liverpool side, and Wass was told off to play for my eleven. The ground had been very hard, but on the morning of the match there had been some rain, which put a little crust on the top, so that the ball flew about rather dangerously, and as Wass was very fast he was nasty to play. He got seven of them out for 29, when their captain

came in. His side had been rather knocked about, and he said to me: "Mr. Roper, this is butchery." And I replied: "No, I am sorry the pitch is flying about, but I must remind you of days gone by when my finger was broken on your ground." I was covered with spots, I remember, the next morning, on my body where the ball had hit me, just like a leopard.

The third ball or so he had got up and hit him very hard on the hand. The next over another one went so close to his head that the ball and his cap went over the long stop, floating through the air. This completely unnerved him, and very shortly afterwards another ball got up very quickly about head high. He played at it, missed it, and it hit him behind the ear. He dropped his bat, looked up into the air, and began walking round his wicket. I was rather alarmed, and came up from point to assist him, but Wass, who had bowled the ball—and remembering what happens to birds when they are shot in the head—said to me: "Let him alone, Mr. Roper, let him alone. He's hit in the head. He'll 'tower' presently," expecting, I suppose, to see the gentleman soar up into the

air like the shot pheasants do. The captain, however, fell on his back. We carried him to the pavilion and spent some anxious minutes with him, but eventually he came round, and luckily never felt any ill-effects from the blow.

One story leads to another, and mention of the fact that Wass was a Notts " pro." reminds me of the Goose Fair at Nottingham, which in the old days was a much more important function than it is now, lasting a week, full of shows, merry-go-rounds, world's fairs, and all that sort of thing. I was there with a friend of mine. Wondering how we could make ourselves popular, an idea came into my usually obtuse brain, and I proposed to him that we should take a Pepper's Ghost show and run it on lines which I suggested to him. He agreed. So we went to a man and asked him what he would let it to us for for the week, and he said £20. We gave him £20 for it, not caring very much then whether we made any money out of it so long as we had some fun. The man said we should very likely make a loss, and I said : " No, not if we run it on my lines." And he asked what they were. I replied, " You'll see."

So I went up on to the platform, knocking a big drum, and when there were a lot of people round us I said something like this:

"Now then, ladies and gentlemen, this show is going to be run on fresh lines, and they are these. Having always been a great admirer of the fair sex, and they having always been very kind to me, I wish to make some slight return. Every lady in Nottingham is welcome to come into this show for nothing, on one condition, and that is, that she brings her sweetheart with her, but he pays."

The show was full from early morn until dewy eve, as the ladies, bless them, seemed to make it a point of honour to support me by bringing in their men. We made over £30, and let the man who owned the show stand in with the profit. I doubt if there were any more popular men in Nottingham than we were that week.

My readers will recall the fact that, among other things, I have mentioned the good advice John Roberts, greatest of all billiard players, once gave me, never to bet with an opponent I didn't know. This was demonstrated very much

to me by Roberts himself. As I have said before, he was courting the lady who afterwards became his wife, at Bedale, Yorkshire, and accompanied his father-in-law on his business to Ripon, where John, having nothing to do, gravitated into the nearest billiard-room, in which I happened to be. The billiard marker was a good player, but a swanker, and fancied himself very much, always trying to make money out of people. Roberts came in. He was a complete stranger to this marker, and the latter at once proposed a game of billiards. Roberts, with a sly look at me, consented, and asked: "How shall we play?" The marker said: "I think you had better have 30 in 100." So Roberts said "Yes." The marker then asked Roberts if he would bet a sovereign, and the latter replied "Certainly." Well, Roberts won the game. Then the marker offered him 20, with the same result, and then they played a game at evens, with the same result.

Roberts thereupon turned round to the marker and said: "We have just time for a final game, and then I'll have to go. I'll give you 60 in 100." I thought the marker would have

had a fit. Of course, he could make breaks of 40 and 50, and so it really turned on who got the first run. But Roberts managed that all right, and went out with an unfinished 92, I remember, and put down his cue. By this time the marker owed him about £8, and took out his purse to pay, which rather astonished me, and then said to Roberts: " I would like to know who you are." Roberts said: " My name is John Roberts; perhaps you have heard of me in connection with this game before." The marker then realised he had been entertaining an angel unawares. Roberts was very nice to him, and gave him the same piece of advice that he had given to me, adding: " I don't want this money from you, but I will take £1 of it, so that it may remain in your memory; and always remember what I have told this gentleman here (pointing to me), never play billiards for money with a man you don't know."

Another racing dream story.—Theatrical memories.—Great wrestling contest.—A Stock Exchange Cup.—Hound Trail story.

IN my opening chapter I mentioned some dreams connected with racing, and I must say that although I do not believe in these extraordinary visitations I backed several winners in consequence, notably Tim Whiffler, when he won the Chester Cup. But I am now going to place before you the most extraordinary dream I ever heard of; in fact, it is so extraordinary that, having had my veracity impugned on occasions, I disclaim all responsibility for this, and will give the names of the gentlemen responsible for it, but in whose veracity all who knew them will have the most absolute faith.

In the year 1884 my friend, Mr. A. P. Eccles, was at Cambridge, and Mr. Edgar Storey—one of the finest athletes and most brilliant runners that ever put a pump on, and a charming gentle-

man as well—also at that University, even in those days occasionally backed horses. It was the year that Florence won the Manchester Cup for Mr. Hammond. Mr. Storey had three dreams. The first was that Florence won the Manchester Cup. Not content with that he dreamt the first three, and, still not content, he dreamt the three numbers that went up on the telegraph board. Mr. Storey asked Mr. Eccles to go with him to Manchester, pointing out that they could start early in the morning from Cambridge and get back at night, but Eccles couldn't go and Storey went alone. When he got to Manchester, of course, he bought a card, and to his amazement found that the three numbers he had seen hoisted after the judge's verdict coincided with the names of the three horses he had dreamt—1, 2, 3.

Mr. Storey went to Fry, the big bookmaker, told him the circumstances, and asked him what he would bet him against placing the first three. Fry offered him 1,000 to 1—it ought to have been 10,000 to 1. Storey took £5,000 to £5 and also backed the mare to win as well. The three placed horses were according to the dream and

the numbers on the card, and, as Mr. Eccles says, he got back to Cambridge that night so laden with money he could hardly carry it. This, in my opinion, is the most extraordinary dream that was ever dreamt, excelling that of Lady Bolton, who, as I have already related, dreamt the first three in the Derby—Voltigeur, Pittsford, and Clincher.

The burning of the Adelphi* brings back a flood of memories of happy days. People who knew it at the moment will hardly realise that it was an exceedingly high-class place in the old days, and many famous artistes appeared there. Two men who principally come to mind were tragedians, one a gentleman called Bennett, not very well known, but a very fine actor, and I went to see him frequently, because I thought he was particularly good. Mr. Lindo Courtney was then the proprietor, and brought Mr. Bennett down from London. They had a revival of "King John," and I recollect that the Mayor of Liverpool came there on several occasions to see Mr. Bennett play, and for some

* Adelphi Theatre, Liverpool, 1921.

time the Adelphi Theatre was a home for Shakespeare in the town.

Every man has his favourite actor, mine was Barry Sullivan. I used to go night after night to see him. Perhaps I liked him because I saw him in the first play I " patronised," at the old Amphi-theatre, now the Court, in the year 1868, when I was taken by my brother to see " The School for Scandal," that excellent comedy in which Mr. Barry Sullivan was Charles Surface. His acting made a great impression upon me, possibly because it was the first time I had been to the theatre, or that my mind, being only that of a boy, was very impressionable. I can see them all now coming before me, Mr. Buckston, Mr. and Mrs. Chippendale, Madge Robertson, and many others, who are now almost all dead. My finances at that time did not permit me to go into the stalls; in fact, it was rather a luxury going into the pit, and as I went to see Sullivan every night, I very often had to go into the first row of the gallery, and I used to be at the door either first or second, long before it opened, often running a dead heat with " a lumper " from the docks. We used to fight for first place

until we got very good friends at the finish. I remember it was very, very hot, and he used to hang his coat over the rails in the gallery, and then we used to regale ourselves with the liquid refreshment we both had brought. If I had the choice now of going to see a play, out of all those I have seen in these many years it would be Barry Sullivan in Lord Lytton's play of "Richelieu." He acted the wily old cardinal to the life. It is a magnificent play.

I also saw Mr. and Mrs. Kemble play at the Theatre Royal, which is now the Liverpool Cold Storage, on the night they were married. It was a Shakespearian play, and whether it is that one's age makes a difference, I must say those old comedies were magnificently played, and were much more worth seeing than many things put on the stage to-day. At the Prince of Wales Theatre, now a picture house, I have seen the great Sir Henry Irving, who died at the head of his profession as a tragic actor, dressed in woman's clothes, playing in a burlesque. I have also seen him play in burlesque in what is now the Empire Theatre in Lime Street, under the lesseeship of Mr. Edward Saker.

With Mr. Lionel Brough, Mr. Edward Saker, and the then Henry Irving in the east, you may imagine the performance was well worth seeing. In those days plays were called burlesques, and two which I very well remember even now were called " The Field of the Cloth of Gold " and " Ixion, or The Man at the Wheel." From these places it is not far to the old Star Music Hall, where we heard about Mr. Menotti and his slack wire. There was a lady there called Miss Bessie Bellwood singing comic songs. Something in one song caused a man in the gallery to bandy words with her, a silly thing to do, as she had a most extraordinary vocabulary of high-strung expletives, perfected by long and frequent practice. After a good deal of badinage she said something rather extra hot, when a man shouted out, " That's right, old Bessie, give the blighter the retort courteous, as old Bill Shakespeare used to say." If you had heard " the retort courteous " you would have smiled.

Another time I was in a local play-house when the orchestra had been playing infamously and the audience were tired of them. There was a quarrel in the gallery and a disturbance. Very

shortly cries were raised of "Throw him over; throw him over." A man sitting near me shouted out, "Don't waste him; kill a fiddler with him! Toss him into the orchestra." At this same place one night Italian opera was being played, and the price for the gallery was raised from sixpence as it had been for other things, to eighteenpence. There was a man in the gallery who, having for years paid sixpence and seen blood and thunder and such like for that amount, was evidently expecting to see or hear something far more extraordinary for eighteenpence. He stood Italian opera for the first scene, hoping for better things, but when a tenor in the second scene began singing a song in Italian, the man, who was an Irishman, in a reproachful tone of voice, said, "Och, me eighteenpence!" and walked out.

There was once a circus in Newington—the Cheshire Lines railway tunnel goes underneath its site. Some forty odd years ago a group of French lutteurs (wrestlers) came over. They created a great sensation up and down the country, undoubtedly being very fine wrestlers. Their style was catch-as-catch-can or Græco-

Roman, that is, both shoulders on the ground at the same time constituted a fall. The two heavy-weights were called Le Bœuf and Dubois, respectively. The last named was 20 stone and Le Bœuf about 18½ stone, both magnificent men. Le Bœuf was rather old, grey hair and grey moustache, looked like a retired colonel.

After touring the country they arrived at Liverpool. The men who opposed them were Dick Wright, of Longtown, and William Jameson, of Penrith, who were then our champion wrestlers. Jameson was about 15 stone and Wright about 13½ stone, the latter one of the most beautifully shaped men I ever saw, and a handsome man, too.

They were here for a week. During that period excitement ran high, and there was a good deal of feeling in these matches. A very handsome cup was subscribed for by the members of the Stock Exchange, and a purse of money as well, to be wrestled for at the end of the week. The difficulty was this—the Frenchmen wrestled catch-as-catch-can and Jameson and Wright in the Cumberland-Westmorland style. So it was arranged that Jameson should wrestle with

Dubois in the French style, and Wright with Le Bœuf in the English style. If both sides gained a victory the style for the deciding heat had to be tossed for. It was any odds on Wright throwing Le Bœuf, as the English style was more difficult to acquire than the French. Wright used to get hold of Le Bœuf, who "set" himself, and that was all he could do. A little wrestling, a little quiver, and then Le Bœuf used to go flying over Wright's shoulder, cross buttock or hype.

Jameson acquired the French style easier than Le Bœuf did the English, and Jameson and Dubois had some tremendous tussles. Well, as each side gained a victory, there was a toss, and the Frenchman won, and Jameson and Dubois had to go in for the final throw. I ought to say here that the Frenchman's hair was cut so short you could have hardly got hold of it with a pair of pincers. I mention this because there was an amusing incident at the close. The two men fought a great battle and I should think fully half an hour elapsed before Jameson got a half-Nelson on the Frenchman and put him down, but to show what a strong man Dubois was,

although one shoulder was on the floor, he held Jameson up with the other for some minutes before he was fully laid out. When it was over the Frenchman jumped up, walked round the ring using French swear words and trying to tear his hair with his fingers, but, as I have said, it was so short he couldn't get hold of any.

Now, Wright and Jameson, who were at that time the two champions of England, were very much lighter than the men who subsequently became champions, for both George Steadman and George Lowden who came after them were over 20 stone weight. I remember at Grasmere sports seeing George Steadman, who had just won the Cumberland and Westmorland championship. Antonio Pierri was at Grasmere on that occasion. Of course, he was a Græco-Roman wrestler, of which style George Steadman was supposed to know very little, but old George knew a good deal more about it than people thought, and when there was difficulty in finding an opponent for Antonio to give an exhibition bout, George volunteered to wrestle with him. As I said before, George weighed about 20 stone, and he was a tremendously

powerful and active man for his avoirdupois, but Pierri used to get him in trouble at times, and when that happened Steadman would throw himself flat on his stomach, put out his arms and legs as if he was crucified, and peep over his shoulder to see what Antonio was doing. Pierri would walk round him and try to pull him over without success. He could not move the weight so at last he stood up, and with his arms akimbo looked at the mountain of flesh on the ground. A wag in the crowd cried "Come, come, H'antonio, get done with it. Now you've got it what are you going to do with it?" H'antonio did his best, but the end of it was a draw. I believe had Steadman really tried he would have thrown Antonio.

At the same sports was that magnificent fighter and charming man, Peter Jackson, who, although his colour was black, was a real white man at heart. I got to know George Steadman very well, and one day met him in Vine's hotel, Lime Street. He was at that time engaged with a troupe of foreign wrestlers, who were going about the country wrestling in their respective styles. They were performing at the Empire

Theatre, and as the Turkish, Bulgarian, and Indian styles were more or less catch-as-catch-can they were on the ground nearly all the time, and wrestling on cocoanut matting, so poor old George's knees, arms, and all the corners of his body were absolutely raw, the skin being rubbed off. Nobody had the remotest chance of tackling him successfully in Cumberland-Westmorland style; he would have thrown them into the orchestra. I said to him, "George, how are you getting on with all these infidels?" and he replied, "I can throw any of them except that Turk. The blighter oils himself with something before he comes into the ring, and you have as much chance of holding him as you have a piece of wet soap. All the others I can put down whenever I like."

I remember a great wrestling match at Islington Flags, where there was a circus in the old days. It was a match which created the very greatest interest all over the country, between W. Rickaby, of Liverpool, and Ralph Pooley, a Cumberland man. There was a tremendous lot of money betted. Rickaby was probably the cleverest man, but Pooley was a very powerful

wrestler and had what they call a roach back—a round back, one difficult to get hold of, and I remember that although they began by laying odds on Rickaby, that at the finish Pooley's extra strength pulled him through, so a good deal of money changed hands.

One of the most interesting items on the card at Grasmere sports is the dog trail, on which there was plenty of speculation. One man won it two or three times, and it was thought he did so by standing near the judge at the finish and shouting the name of his dog as soon as it came within earshot, a call which, of course, the dog responded to and came right away to its master's voice. So a new condition was framed that no one was allowed to call to his dog. The next year the same man made himself very officious at the end of the trail by pushing people about in their places and shouting out, " Stand back," " Stand back," as loud as ever he could. His dog won again all right, and then it was discovered that the dog's name was " Stand Back ! "

A note by the Editor.—The vacant chair.—Mr. Roper's last request.—The Poem.

DEAR READER,

It was a happy inspiration that prompted me to ask Mr. Roper to relate his experiences for publication in the columns of the *Courier*. One story led to another, and yet another, so entertaining that the next instalment was eagerly looked forward to by the general public, while friends suggested to him that they would like them, when completed, to be published in book form. Mr. Roper was highly delighted with the idea and as he approached his 70th birthday dwelt with pleasure upon his forthcoming debut as an author.

The brief notes for the closing chapter were written out by him and should have been enlarged upon to me by word of mouth on the day he passed away. So the last chapter was never written.

You will have observed that Mr. Roper in his reminiscences touched very lightly upon the part he played in local cricket—a very prominent part indeed. To cover that deficiency, I approached Mr. Edwardes (T.E.E.), a gentleman who knew him for many years, and also a well-known cricket celebrity, and the preface to this volume is from his gifted pen.

The introduction I wrote to the last article by Mr. Roper which appeared in the *Courier* is reprinted here by special request :—

> Oh, for the touch of a vanished hand,
> And the sound of a voice that is still.

With head stooped towards desk, I am busy writing, a colleague also busy on my right, a vacant chair opposite to me at the other side of the desk. Presently I glance up, and to my surprise the vacant chair is occupied. A whisper floats across the desk, "Don't let me disturb you." "Hallo, Mr. Roper, how quietly you came in," and a few seconds later the task, a very pleasurable one, too, of taking down his reminiscences begins. A humorous incident is reached. "Ha, ha; that'll make 'em laugh, eh?" he exclaims.

* * * *

That was typical—an incident happening several

times during the period in which Mr. Roper gave his reminiscences weekly in the *Courier*. But the vacant chair will never be filled by Mr. Roper again. No more that whisper will float across the desk. The reminiscences are ended. Seventy! And the grand old sport is out. With what pleasure he looked forward to the publication of his tales in book form. That book will be a biography, not an autobiography. His last article was to have been related to me on the day he died! Do you remember the couplet at the top of last week's article?

Men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

And the one at the top of this! A fortnight to-day he said: "I want this poem in, last of all, at the end of my reminiscences—at the end." It is entitled "The Optimist," and it appears below—at the end. His epitaph—THE OPTIMIST.

THE OPTIMIST.

I

Old Time, they tell me, is hurrying up,
With terrible troubles of snake-like brood,
To spoil my serenity, poison my cup,
To rob me of heaven and tax my food.
But I gibe at him rudely, that ancient man,
My purse he may steal and my food attack;

But, whatever his weapons of blight or ban,
  The dinners I've eaten he can't get back.

II

I've had my innings of glorious youth,
  And I gibe at him rudely, that ancient man.
I've had my kisses from Rosie and Ruth—
  Ah! rob me of those, you old brute, if you can.
Those hours of sweethearting under the moon
  Time cannot recover, whatever his knack;
And the scent of the roses I've smelt in June
  And the dinners I've eaten he can't get back.

III

The friends who loved me when life was young,
  The books I've read and the wine I've quaffed,
The money I've spent and the songs I've sung,
  The jokes I've joked, and the laughs I've laughed,
The evening parties, the nights at the play,
  The pipes I've smoked till their stems were black--
I chuckle, Time never can take them away,
  And the dinners I've eaten he can't get back.

IV

So Time may come with his threatening frown
  To steal my pleasures and bring me woes;
He may break me up, he may knock me down,
  But I snap my fingers under his nose—

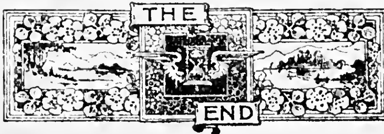
For hidden away in a golden room* there are golden
dreams,
And when nights are black,
I bring them out to enliven the gloom,
The joys we've enjoyed, that he can't get back.

* * * *

So, friends and brothers, come join with me,
And still together our jokes we'll crack,
Defying Old Time in our "Optimist" glee—
For the dinners we've eaten he can't get back.

---

* The head.



A GREAT SPORTSMAN.

Canon Ainslie, in his address at the funeral of Mr. Edward Roper, said the deceased gentleman might have had his faults—we all had them—but he did not know them. But he knew many of his virtues. He knew how kind he was to young fellows on the cricket ground, how many a time he put his gentle hand on the shoulder of a boy beginning his cricket career just to encourage him. Mr. Roper was a real and true friend. He was not only a great sportsman, but, as they had seen lately from his reminiscences in the Press, an all-round sportsman.

He looked at English sport from every point of view, and he always played the game. It was true he was able to take care of himself. He used his wits ably ; the wits God had given him, and those who tried to take him in found they had got hold of the wrong man. Mr. Roper always played fair, and he was a true sportsman and a true friend to the best of our English games. Now he had gone before a higher Umpire, and now they could understand, perhaps better than before, what the poet meant when he said :

> "Oh, for the touch of a vanished hand,
> And the sound of a voice that is still."

Who, that had ever heard Roper speak, could forget his voice, one of the sweetest, most impressive voices he (Canon Ainslie) had ever listened to ? It did one good to hear him speak.

Now, his work here was ended. He had gone from their midst, and they recognised in him one who brightened life, who went about with a cheery face, who met disaster bravely, one who had many trials, domestic and financial, that might have overwhelmed many men of less spirit. But he came out triumphant over all, and he had gone from their midst respected and loved by all.

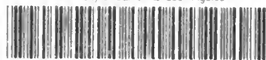
Printed in England by C. Tinling & Co., Ltd.,
53, Victoria Street, Liverpool,
and at London and Prescot.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY
Los Angeles
This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

REC'D LD-URL

MAR 2 - 19

Form L9-50m-7,'54 (5990) 444


University of California Los Angeles
L 005 326 613 6

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
A 001 341 370 3