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FIGHT STORIES

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No. 5

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OCTOBER, 1931

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- GAME GUY Eddy Orcutt 3**
Raw courage. The will to keep going in spite of awesome odds. That Lefty fellow had it. But— "You game guys are dumb guys," the Big Boss had said. And maybe he was right. And maybe he wasn't!

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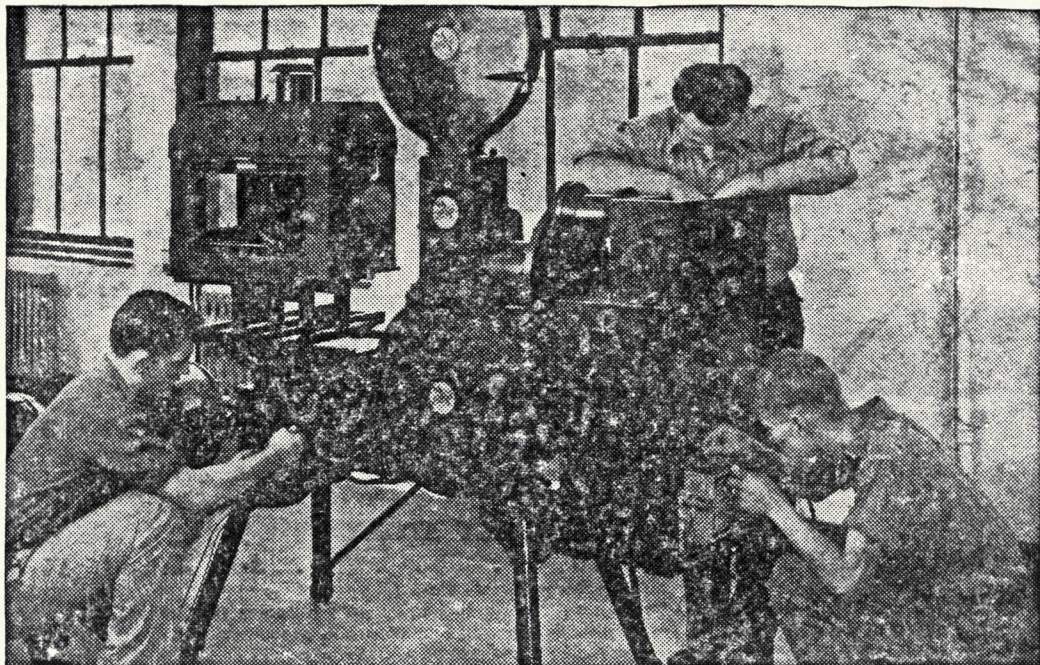
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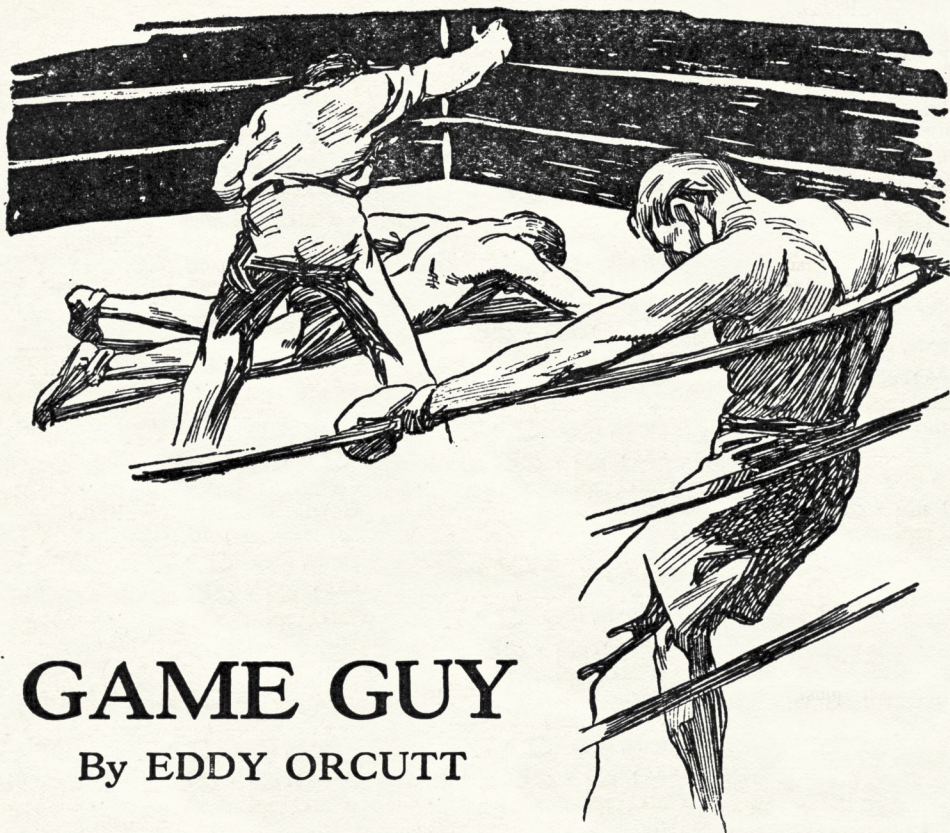
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GAME GUY

By EDDY ORCUTT

Raw courage. Sheer fighting instinct. The will to keep going in spite of awesome odds. That Lefty fellow had it all. But—"You game guys are dumb guys," the Big Boss had said. And maybe he was right. And maybe he wasn't!

"**C**OURAGE, applesauce!" Barney Minor yelled. "It ain't courage—it's just plain, dumb ignorance! You game guys are dumb guys!"

Lefty Cal Sullivan, stretched out on the rubbing table in his dressing-room and feeling numb and sick all over, could barely hear his Big Boss yelling at him. He was too sick to lift his head and look at Barney, and, if he had lifted his head, he could barely have seen him. Kayo Sammy Pelzer had closed Cal's left eye and hammered his right eye pretty nearly shut. But Lefty Cal knew what the Big Boss was meaning by what he said. It isn't what a man says—it's how he says it.

Bet-'Em-Up Barney Minor was half

laughing and half crying, and there was a light in his eyes that said more than any words.

Lefty Cal rolled his head a little and tried to smile up at Barney. Lefty's lips were cut and swollen. He tried to say something to Barney, but his lips would only mumble.

"If you hadn't been so darned game," Barney added, "you wouldn't have been dumb enough to go in there at all tonight. And if you hadn't been so darned dumb, you'd have had sense enough to quit before Sammy half killed you."

Doc Hicks, who managed all Bet-'Em-Up Barney's fighters, was holding the door to keep the populace out of the dressing-room. Little Ringdoodle Williams, handler, was trying to rub some

life back into Lefty Cal's carcass. But Bet-'Em-Up Barney went right on talking. He was full of it.

Game an' dumb—dumb an' game!" he said. "It's horse an' horse."

And he said more than that, too.

Cass Roseberry, the big frame-up and sure-thing man, had pulled a fast one on Barney and Lefty Cal Sullivan that night. He had pulled it because he knew how game Lefty was, and how much Lefty thought of his Big Boss. That was what Bet-'Em-Up Barney had on his vocabulary when he swarmed down into Lefty's dressing-room the minute the bout ended. That was what he was talking about.

Lefty had begun feeling bad that afternoon, six or seven hours before he was due to go on for his big shot with Kayo Sammy Pelzer. He had felt all right earlier in the day. He had taken a snappy walk through the park before breakfast. He had rested most of the morning. He had put away a fair lunch. And after lunch Doc Hicks had gone out to the track with Barney—a couple of Barney's horses were entered that afternoon—and had left Cal to loaf around the hotel, take a little nap and do as he pleased until twilight. Lefty was a good, dependable kid, and Doc was a nut about the horses.

But when Lefty woke up from his nap, between three and four in the afternoon, he felt pretty rocky.

When he first woke up he didn't pay much attention to the way he felt—a guy sometimes imagines a lot of symptoms on the day of a fight. In a few minutes, though, he knew he was really sick. His head buzzed and his eyes hurt, and when he got up to get help he found he was dizzy and weak in the knees.

He called the desk and requested the attention of the house doctor. It was promised immediately.

The clerk at the desk made a hundred dollars out of Lefty's call.

A few minutes later there was a tap on Lefty's door.

"Come in," Lefty called. He was lying down again.

The lad who came in was not the doctor. He was a little rat named Monte Hyde—Lefty knew him by sight, and knew he did odd jobs for Cass Roseberry, the sure-thing gambler.

"What th' devil!" Cal said when he saw Hyde.

Monte grinned—a wizened, mean little grin.

"Heard you was sick," he said.

Cal sat up suddenly, dizzy as he was. "I ain't too sick to beat you up," he said. "What do you want?"

Monte stood in the doorway.

"Just checkin' up," he said, still grinning. "My boss is the luckiest buzzard in forty-two counties. Believe it or not, he's makin' a cold five grand out of you bein' sick."

"Beat it!" Lefty said. "What's that to me?"

"Nothin' t' you, maybe," Monte said, "but it's five grand outa your boss' pocket!"

He laughed out loud, and made as if to shut the door and ease away again. Cal stopped him. He felt pretty sick, but not too sick to take an interest if his boss was getting clipped for important money like that.

"How come?" he asked Monte.

"Easy," Monte said. "Cass Roseberry laid Mr. Minor five hundred dollars at one-to-ten that you wouldn't show up for the scrap tonight."

"What!"

"Yeah, just like that," Monte said.

"Five yards to five grand—an' my boss is gonna collect. Ain't that a pip?"

Lefty Cal Sullivan stood up. He swayed a little. But deep down under the sickish feeling inside him he was mad—mad that a lucky tin-horn should have hooked him, hooked his boss, like that—mad that a little rat like Monte Hyde should be standing in the doorway laughing about it.

"An' now," Lefty said, "you lam—an' lam fast, what I mean!"

Monte lammed.

LEFTY kept steady long enough to go over and close the door after him. He walked back to the bed and lay down to think.

He was not surprised at the Big Boss' bet. Big, red-headed, happy-go-lucky Barney Minor would lay a dollar or two on anything where his money had a sporting chance. Lefty knew perfectly well that if some loud-mouth like Cass Roseberry had insinuated that he, Lefty Cal Sullivan, was about to take a run-out powder on the Sammy Pelzer fight, Bet-'Em-Up Barney would be the first to call him with money on the line. He probably named the odds himself.

"I'll lay you ten to one my boy does show up!" That was probably what he had said.

But why had a sure-thing player like Roseberry made such a bet? Lefty wondered. Perhaps Roseberry had noticed something about the way Lefty acted that morning—something that Lefty himself hadn't noticed at the time. Perhaps—

Lefty wished he had asked Monte when that bet was made. That might throw some light on why Roseberry made it.

"Th' dirty little rat!" Lefty said to himself, when he thought of Monte.

But he had to go on thinking.

Never mind why the bet was made—the thing to figure was what to do about it now. If he called a doctor, the chances were a thousand to one he'd say Lefty was in no condition to box that night. And if Lefty tried to go on, anyway, the doctor had only to say a word to Doc Hicks or Bet-'Em-Up Barney himself, and they'd keep Lefty out of the ring. And if he didn't go into the ring, Cass Roseberry would win five grand and the Big Boss would lose five grand. That was all there was to it.

Aching all over, Lefty got off the bed and went to the house phone again. He called the desk.

"Cancel that call for the doctor," he said. "Never mind the doctor—I feel all right now, see!"

"Yes, sir," the clerk said. But the clerk snickered when he'd hung up. He had never called the house doctor at all. It was he who had tipped off Cass Roseberry and Monte Hyde when he first learned Lefty wanted a doctor. The clerk knew Cass could always use info. Roseberry and sent that clerk five double-case notes, and told him to lay off calling any doctor.

Then Lefty remembered Monte Hyde. What if Monte Hyde should go to Cass and tell him Lefty was sick, and then Cass Roseberry should tip off some doctor?

Then the desk clerk had another call from Lefty Cal Sullivan.

"Listen," Cal said. "Do you know where Mr. Roseberry is this afternoon?"

"No, sir," the clerk said, lying, "I dunno. He may be out at the track—most of the boys're out this afternoon. I ain't seen him."

"Do you know where that bird Hyde is—the little fellow that sticks around with Mr. Roseberry?"

"No, sir," said the clerk. "I ain't seen him this afternoon, either."

Cal thanked the clerk and hung up. He went over and sat down on the bed again to rest. Then he started out to find Monte Hyde.

IT was hard going. The old legs were weak. He felt light-headed. He could never be sure that he'd put his feet down in the right places—stairways and thresholds made him dizzy. But he kept on going. Whenever he was where people could see him, he tried to walk carelessly—it wouldn't do to let anybody see that he wasn't "right." But he had to lean up against the wall in the corridor outside Monte's room, when he found Monte wasn't there. And going down in the elevator he braced himself against the side of the cage and rested.

He found Monte in the tobacco shop off the lobby, playing Twenty-six. He interrupted the game and took Monte to one side.

"Listen," he said, "if you make any crack to anybody about me being sick, see, I'll catch up with you an' beat the living daylight out of you. I'll do that if it's the last thing I do!"

The rat was scared. Lefty gripped his arm and looked him in the eye.

"You're th' only guy that knows anything about it," he said. "So if any doctor comes bothering around me, I'll know you squawked, see! If any doctor tries to get to me before this fight, I'll get you an' I'll get you good. An' don't you forget it."

Hyde stammered and lied.

"I ain't seen nobody," he said. "Mr. Roseberry is out at the track or some place—I ain't seen him. I ain't told nobody."

Lefty gave him another straight look and walked away.

He tried walking around in the open air. It was not so good. His bones ached. His clothes bothered him where they touched his body. People who brushed against him bothered him. He felt touchy all over. And it was hard to put his feet down in the right places—he couldn't even walk without keeping his mind on what he was doing.

He was glad to go back to his room, finally, and flop on the bed until Doc Hicks should show up.

"Gosh," he said to himself, "what a socking the other boy is gonna give me tonight!"

But he felt too rotten to be much excited about it.

THE racing season was in full swing, and Barney Minor had brought Lefty and three other good boys out at the same time he had shipped his stable of horses to the track. Because Barney was a horseman and a good sport—and because his boys were pretty fair boys, all four of them—the race followers all turned out whenever one of Barney's boys was on. Lefty had dusted off three pretty fair lightweights earlier in the season, and when he was matched with Kayo Sammy Pelzer, the horse-

men had all been steamed up about it. Sammy was plenty tough and had a good deal more of a rep than Lefty had. The match was sure-fire from the box-office angle, and there was a lot of money up on it.

The room phone awoke Lefty out of a sound sleep at six o'clock, and he jumped up and stumbled over to it before he was well awake. He felt worse than ever, mumbled into the transmitter, leaned against the wall to keep his feet.

"Hello," he said.

It was Doc Hicks.

"Hello," the Doc said. "Hey—what's the matter, Lefty? Ain't you—"

"I been asleep," he said. "I been asleep, an' you woke me up. I guess I ain't all awake yet."

He heard the Doc chuckling at the other end of the wire.

"Gosh, you're a cold-blooded kid, Lefty," the Doc said. "Sleeping, huh? I was afraid maybe you'd be all nerves. I'm late—got tied up with some business at the track—just got in. I'll be up as soon as I grab a snack of food."

Lefty had to sit down again.

Food! Doc's very mention of it sickened him. Thank heavens he wasn't supposed to put away more than a cup of beef tea—if anything!

He arose, went into the bathroom, wet a rag and dabbed some cold water on his face. He wanted to cool off—the water didn't do it. It just felt bad—face was hot, burning hot—but the cold made him ache and shiver. He dried his face, combed his hair carefully, smoothed out his clothes and was ready when Doc barged in.

"How about a stroll?" said Doc.

"All right," said Lefty, without enthusiasm.

Doc was hard to fool. "Anything bothering you, Lefty?" he inquired, as they emerged from the hotel.

"No. Certainly not." Lefty tried to bluster it out, but his step was none too steady.

"Look, kid—" the Doc began.

He quit abruptly.

"Come on," he said. "Let's walk around a bit."

The Doc suspected that Lefty had been having a couple of drinks, but he was puzzled because he could not smell it on him. Lefty knew what the Doc was thinking. He had to grin.

"I'm gonna loaf up in the room till it's time to go to the Coliseum," Lefty said, when they got back to the hotel.

"I'll sit around with you," the Doc said.

A LITTLE after eight o'clock, the Big Boss himself showed up.

"How's it going, Lefty?" he asked. "Everything okay?"

"Fine," Lefty said.

"Don't get up," Barney said. "Take it easy. We're gonna show the visiting clergymen something tonight—hey, Doc? This little Pelzer's been showing a string of clippings eight feet long, they tell me. He ain't gonna be saving any press notices from tomorrow's papers! How about it, Doc?"

"That's right," the Doc said.

Barney looked at him. The Doc was a wiry little fellow, clean-shaven, red-faced, with a mop of gray hair—quite a contrast to big, beefy, good-natured Bet-'Em-Up Barney Minor.

"What's a-matter, Doc?" Barney asked. "Tired?"

"I guess so," the Doc said, looking away suddenly. "All afternoon out at the track gets me sleepy. I ain't as young as I used to be."

The Big Boss looked at him with the least bit of worry in his own eyes.

"You been bearing down too hard, Doc," he said. "I'm gonna send you out to the ranch for a couple of weeks after this bout. Do you good. Send Lefty out, too. Whaddya say?"

"Sure," the Doc said. "Fine!"

Barney rushed away and Lefty heaved a sigh of relief. He settled back in his easychair and shut his eyes. The waiting was terrible.

Lefty knew that the Boss had gone away worried. He couldn't help that.

The Boss knew something was wrong. But he hadn't asked too many questions—nobody had asked too many questions. Lefty felt sure he could get by the doctor at the arena. He'd save the Boss' five grand if it was the last thing he ever did. The thing went around and around in his mind. He'd save that five grand. The Boss hadn't done any too well at the track, that season. He couldn't afford to blow any five thousand dollars on a fool bet.

Lefty's head swam and he felt sickish when he closed his eyes, but when he kept them open the room lights made them water. Doc Hicks kept watching him like a hawk.

At last Lefty managed to drop off into a doze.

He awoke at the Doc's hand on his shoulder.

"Time to go," the Doc said.

Queer! Usually on fight nights Lefty liked to walk through his hotel, have people see him, hear them talk about him—"Lefty Cal Sullivan; gonna fight tonight; good kid"—things like that. He liked to be part of the show, just as when he was a kid he used to envy the performers that rode on wagons in the street parade, swaying when the wagons rocked, looking down lazily at the rubes on the sidewalk. Usually he liked that, but not tonight.

He had nothing to say when the elevator boy wished him good luck. The lights in the lobby hurt his eyes. The people in the lobby annoyed him. He had to be careful to walk carelessly—but not to stumble. It was nasty going. He almost let out a groan when he finally got into the cab and lay back on the seat.

"What's a-matter, Lefty, kid? What's bothering you, Cal?"

Old Doc Hicks made one last effort to get at the trouble. He reached over and was about to lay a hand on Lefty's hot forehead. Lefty brushed it away angrily.

"Lay off, can't you?" he said. "Leave me be. I'm all right. Leave me be."

They rode out to the Coliseum without any more talk.

RINGDOODLE WILLIAMS, handler, exercise boy and general utility—one of the blackest boys in the world—was waiting in the dressing-room. Lefty undressed slowly, hating the feel of his clothes as he slid them off, and lay down on the rubbing table. He buried his face in his arms, and lay there while Ringdoodle gave him a going-over. Lefty even hated the feel of Ringdoodle's busy black fingers, but it was good to be able to lie down and not think.

He heard the pound and clamor of the mob. He heard footsteps tramping up and down the aisle outside the dressing-room. He heard people talking. He heard confusion and noise everywhere, but he lay quiet.

The Boss did not come back to the dressing-room, and Lefty was glad of that. The Boss was liable to notice something.

Lefty told himself he'd save that five grand, anyhow—and Roseberry's fool five hundred would go up the spout, too. That would help some.

He tried not to think any more than he could help.

There was too much noise outside—too much noise—

"Some kinda dope—"

Lefty rolled over suddenly. He heard the words—the voice was Doc Hicks—coming from a long distance. The Doc was standing nearby. The club doctor, with his stethoscope around his neck, was standing beside him. They were looking at Lefty.

He sat up suddenly. He had to force himself, but he sat up quickly, briskly, like a man r'aring to go.

"Okay, Doc!" he said, but he saw the real doctor and Doc Hicks look at each other.

"What's the matter, son?" the doctor said. "Feel funny?"

"Who? Me?"

Lefty hopped off the rubbing table.

Dizzy as he was, and weak as he was, he felt the old thrill tingling around inside him. It was pretty near fight time—pretty near time to go on.

Then, without any warning, Lefty felt scared. This doctor—not Kayo Sammy Pelzer out in the ring—was the boy he had to lick. And here he was. He had caught Lefty napping. Doc Hicks had tipped him off. He had Lefty dead to rights!

Lefty went cold all over. A second before, he had felt light-headed and hot. Now he was chilled. He shivered a little, shut his mouth suddenly to keep his teeth from chattering, tried to look the doctor in the eye.

"I'm—I'm all set," he said, steadily enough. "Put the old telephone on me. I'm okay."

This doctor had only to say the word, and Lefty was through for the night. And if that happened—

A little fuzzy in the head, Lefty had to stop and think. He remembered. He remembered the bet Monte Hyde had told him about. He remembered the Big Boss' five grand. If Lefty didn't go on, Bet-'Em-Up Barney Minor would have to hand over a cool five thousand to Cass Roseberry.

Lefty gritted his teeth, forced the old legs to go to work, and began dancing around the room, shadow boxing. The doctor always made a boy do that, so he could see how the heart was behaving. And Lefty, ducking and feinting and shuffling around—weak in the knees—worked as hard at that shadow boxing as he had ever worked through a tough spot in the ring.

In the ring, with another boy against him, there had always been heat and excitement—lights, noise, the color of the crowd.

Here, shadow boxing in a cold dressing-room, trying to lick a fish-eyed doctor fiddling with a stethoscope, Lefty was all alone. And he was sick.

A call boy stuck his head in the door.

"Semi-final going on!" he hollered.

Lefty stopped in front of the doctor.

"How about it?" he said.

And Lefty won.

The doctor put the stethoscope on Lefty's chest, listened, tapped, listened—then he nodded his head.

"I guess he's all right," he said to Doc Hicks. "Maybe a bit of a cold—don't look serious to me."

Doc Hicks gave Lefty a straight look when the doctor walked away.

"You darned fool!" he said, under his breath.

Lefty laughed.

"Break out the bandages," he ordered.

THE Doc and Ringdoodle Williams got out the tape and gauze and went to work on Lefty's hands.

They were called out twenty minutes later.

As far as Lefty was concerned, getting down to the ring was all there was left to do. He put everything he had into doing it. He bore down. He kept himself steady, kept himself walking. The crowd roared, people yelled at him, the lights hurt his eyes. But he walked steadily, head down, intent.

He hauled himself up to the ring platform, crawled through the ropes, looked up into a glare of lights that hammered at his head like a battery of clubs.

The Doc took off Lefty's dressing gown, wrapped it loosely around his shoulders, and Lefty walked over to the resin box. Kayo Sammy Pelzer was just leaving it. Lefty touched Sammy's shoulder and held out his taped hands. Sammy touched them, flickered a grin and turned away.

"A tough monkey," Lefty thought to himself, while he shuffled his ring shoes in the resin.

"What's a-matter, kid? Snap out of it!"

The Doc yanked at him savagely when Lefty sat down on his stool. The Doc and Ringdoodle began jamming the gloves on. Lefty could not see very well. The ring was blurred. The lights were blurred.

"—Lefty Cal Sullivan, a hundert an'

thirty-six, champeen of Caliente!" the announcer yelled. The crowd laughed. Caliente was the name of the track where the Big Boss' horses were running.

Lefty stood up, mitted the crowd, and walked out with the Doc and Ringdoodle for the referee's instructions.

It was almost time! A couple of minutes now, and that five grand would be safe, everything would be all right—

Lefty did not care what happened, once the bell rang.

Somehow he got back to his corner, went through the motions of limbering up, saw Ringdoodle and the Doc climb out through the ropes—

Then, at last, the bell rang.

AUTOMATICALLY, from force of habit, Lefty came out at a swift shuffle, his right hand covering his jaw and the right elbow covering the right side of his body. He held the left cocked to hook—he had dynamite in that left hook.

And Kayo Sammy Pelzer, swinging a wicked overhand left that caught him on the right shoulder, hit Lefty three times before the Southpaw realized again how bad he felt.

Then, for first few seconds, Lefty wasn't sick any more, wasn't shaky, wasn't light-headed or blind. He was beginning a fight—beginning it just as he always did, crowding in, trying to get under the right hand, hunting a target for his left.

Then Sammy shot his right.

Lefty went down.

He didn't feel the bump of the blow. He felt nothing at all until he found himself on the canvas, trying to brace himself. And he felt then, somehow, like a man pushing at an enormous toy balloon—a thing without any weight at all, offering no purchase, no leverage. He weighed nothing at all, but he had nothing to push against. He was as weak as a cat.

"Gosh! I guess I'm sick," he said to himself, astonished.

And he got up into the white glare again, with the crowd yelling all around it—yelling, hooting and angry. From where the crowd sat, it looked bad. The fight looked like a bust. Something had happened to Lefty Sullivan. Sammy Pelzer wasn't that good—

"You dirty faker!"

Lefty didn't hear that red-faced piker at the ringside—didn't hear the hundreds of others that were yelling at him, cursing him under their breaths, hooting at him because they thought he'd crossed them. All he heard was the noise all around him, and the anger in it.

He went in.

Sammy came over with that looping left, and uppercut viciously with his right when Lefty staggered. But the uppercut missed and Lefty threw his own best hand—hooked it to the body. Sammy fell back, stepped in again, rushed Lefty to the ropes. On the ropes, Lefty felt himself sagging once more. He threw both hands as he was going down. He saw Sammy jump back. Somehow he got to his feet, slipped along the ropes, fought the other boy off—

Lefty went through the rest of the round in a daze. He slipped to the canvas once or twice. Once Sammy knocked him down with a right-hander—a little too high for any serious damage. The punches didn't hurt, but Lefty couldn't stand up against them. It was no use.

The bell rang.

AND then, back in his corner, Lefty Cal Sullivan got a shock that stood him up like a needle full of hop.

He realized, all of a sudden, that Doc Hicks was cursing him steadily, and that Ringdoodle Williams—working over his legs—was sullen and angry.

"Wha—what—"

He started to ask Doc Hicks what it was all about.

"Shut up!" the Doc snarled at him.

The Doc gave him the salts, wagged

his head back and forth for him, rubbed viciously at his chest and arms.

"Shut up!" the Doc said.

The warning whistle blew.

"You dirty double-crosser," the Doc said then, into Lefty's ear. "You're a fool if you think you can get away with anything as raw as this."

Then the Doc was gone.

The bell rang.

Lefty came out with a kind of fever raging in him.

Double-crosser!

So they thought he was stalling! The crowd thought it. Even the Doc thought it—he ought to know better than that. Probably the Big Boss thought it, too!

Lefty blocked Sammy's first right, dove into a clinch, lay on the other boy for a second and rested. He needed to clear his head, get things straight.

"Get outa that!" the referee barked.

And then, with Sammy coming in with a storm of gloves to finish him, Lefty Cal clenched his teeth and staggered in, shoulders swinging, to fight him off. He got the idea that he couldn't take a punch, couldn't take a knock-down—couldn't take any chance at all of letting the fight end there. Because, if the fight ended there, he'd never get a chance to explain. He'd go down in the books as a faker—as a boy who'd gone in and taken one on the chin because some tin-horn had hired him to.

All of a sudden Lefty remembered that he'd known boys like that—diving beauties and call-shot experts.

Sammy's right-hand smash caught him over the left eye, staggered him for a second and almost blinded him. Through the mist he saw the right hand cocked again. He threw his left. He caught Sammy below the ribs, followed up that punch with another, then mixed 'em up and hooked at Sammy's chin.

Kayo Sammy was no cluck. He expected that hook. He blocked it, fell inside it and clinched. And when Sammy leaned on him, Lefty felt his legs give way. He clutched desperately at the

right-hander, tried to catch himself, fell over—

Squirming on his back with Sammy scrambling over him, Lefty heard the crowd's yell again, but with a new note in it.

For a moment, the crowd wasn't angry any more. It was seeing a fight. Something had happened.

Lefty was up, touching Sammy's gloves after the fall.

He felt the rip of Sammy's gloves on his face. The crowd booed. Sammy had jumped in on the handshake, clinched and pulled his gloves through.

Lefty lashed out at him, fought him off—

The bell rang.

L EFTY CAL knew that his left eye was almost closed, that he had a cut on his face somewhere, that he'd been hurt by that fall. He felt queer and dizzy. He wasn't sweating; his skin was dry and tight.

"Wh—what do you mean—'double-crosser'?" he yelled at the Doc.

The Doc was staring at him like a man seeing a ghost.

"I thought—I thought—"

It wasn't like the Doc to stumble for words. He usually had plenty of them.

"Yeah, you thought!" Lefty half sobbed the words. "You know me better'n that."

"Listen," the Doc said. "Listen—"

The Doc gave him the salts, rubbed him, worked him over—and all the while he was trying to talk—trying to explain something—

The warning came.

The bell rang.

And once more Lefty went out with the crazy, blind notion that he had to get through the round somehow, no matter what happened. He had to stand this tough monkey off—he had to get through with it—he had to be there, to stay there, to get at the bottom of it all.

And that round he took a terrific beating.

Desperately, with some tiny flicker of hope in the back of his mind, Lefty held back his own good hand—his left. Against Pelzer's overhand lefts his own right hand was good for nothing more than a jab. His only chance to score lay in beating Sammy's right hand with his own left. His only chance to score lay in trading best hands with the other boy.

But Lefty held it back, waiting, watching as well as he could through his battered eyes, through the fevered fog that filled the white ring.

His only hope was to park that left hook on Sammy's jaw—and park it so it would stay parked.

Dimly the southpaw realized that his own weakness offered one advantage. He was "riding" the other boy's toughest punches—riding them because he couldn't do anything else. He couldn't stand up against them. He had to fall back. He took them and rode back on them. They cut him and bruised him, but he felt no hurt. He felt nothing at all.

If he could ride it out, catch one opening, throw that left into it—

Anyhow, Kayo Sammy would know he'd been hit.

T HE bell rang at last, and Lefty staggered back to his corner through a madhouse of noise.

It seemed a long while before he could look up from his stool and see Doc Hicks in front of him, staring at him wide-eyed, his jaws working. Then he began to hear what the Doc was saying.

"—ain't right, kid. Something's haywire—what is it? Tell me. Spit it out. Somebody been feeding ya something?"

Lefty shook his head.

"I'm all right," he mumbled. "Sick this afternoon—little sick. Not bad. All right now. If I—"

The Doc was working on him frantically.

"Whyn'tya say something? Call it off—bout woulda been called off. All bets

called off. Listen—the Big Boss has got five thousand dollars on ya—five grand on y'r nose, kid! An' you go into th' ring sick or drunk or doped! You—"

Confusion whirled inside Lefty's head.

He heard the whistle blow.

He heard the bell ring.

He felt so tired he could barely get off the stool—but the weariness wasn't in his legs or in his arms or in his body. It was somewhere in his head. He was tired because he had to go on—because he couldn't let go now—because the fight would never end. It would go on and on—

He covered and clinched, then came out of the clinch with a crazy drive that drove Sammy back to the middle of the ring. Sammy threw gloves—ripped, cuffed, slugged—and Lefty had to break ground. He took a beating, went into his shell, wove dizzily on his feet and barely saved himself from going down. Sammy came in again. The looping left threw Lefty off balance. The right came over.

Lefty did go down, that time.

"I can't see! I can't see!" he said to himself.

But he got up because he had to. He had to figure out something. Doc Hicks had told him something—something about the Big Boss—five thousand dollars—couldn't let Bet-'Em-Up Barney go for five grand—specially to a tin-horn like Cass Roseberry—

Lefty had to get up, and he did.

And, when he got up, he took that left off the peg and let it go. He plugged Sammy a good one, staggered him back. But when he tried to follow it up, he wasn't there.

It was no good.

"Gotta hold that," he told himself. "Gotta watch it."

But he went in. Sammy roughed him in close, but Lefty blocked and smothered the other boy's punches. Sammy couldn't knock him out from in close—he had to get set. Lefty put his mind on it, bored in, worked on the body.

And all the while he was trying to get clear in his mind what the Doc had told him.

Lefty was taking a fair beating when the round ended.

"Your boy in shape to go on, Hicks?"

Lefty heard the referee talking in his corner.

"Yeh—all right," Lefty said. "I'm all right."

The referee didn't even look at him.

Doc Hicks didn't look at the referee. He worked on Lefty.

"I'll give him the towel if he wants to quit," he told the referee. "He ain't injured—yet!" he said.

The referee went away.

"—told me Cass Roseberry bet the Boss I wouldn't show up," Lefty found himself explaining, gasping while he talked, sobbing while he talked.

The Doc shook him.

"That was to get you to go in the ring!" he yelled. "See? If the bout had been called off, Roseberry couldn't of got a sure thing on it, see? But if he could make you go in sick, see, all he had to do was to out an' bet against you. You was a sure thing to lose."

The Doc rubbed at him, shook him, worked over him.

"You're a darned fool!" the Doc yelled. "You fell for it!"

The warning whistle blew.

"But you're a game darned fool!" the Doc said.

The bell rang.

And Lefty, getting it all at last—knowing what the tin-horn had done to him, and done to the Boss—went out of his corner like a crazy man.

HE didn't feel the canvas under his feet—didn't feel the weight of his own arms—didn't hear the yell of the crowd.

Whirling like a dancing dervish, Lefty threw his right hand over, looping—the way Kayo Sammy Pelzer had been throwing his left.

He threw that right hand over the way a logger swings an axe.

Sammy, coming in fast with his own left hand already swinging back for a wicked loop of his own, caught Lefty's crazy punch between his left ear and his temple. He toppled, swayed—

Sammy Pelzer's eyes were wide, staring. His mouth was open. His head lolled over stupidly.

And Lefty Cal Sullivan threw in his other hand—his best one—the hand with the dynamite in it.

His left hook took Sammy on the point of the jaw.

Lefty caught himself, braced himself. His knees were giving way, but he would not let them go. He stared out into the fog through his puffed eyes and saw queer things happening. He saw Kayo Sammy Pelzer squirming on the canvas, turning over and over—very, very slowly. He saw the referee waving at him, shouting at him. He heard a terrific noise all above and about him.

Lefty caught at the top strand of the ring ropes, guided himself by it, made his way over to the corner where the referee was pointing.

The noise went on.

Sammy was on the canvas, moving a little.

The noise kept up.

The ring seemed a long way off. The floor tilted and settled back. The lights were a white glare. The mob was a vague noise—a noise out somewhere beyond the horizon.

Lefty knew that somebody was holding him up—had an arm around him. He could barely see who it was.

It was the referee.

The count over Sammy Pelzer was ended, and the referee had to hold the winner up while he raised his hand.

AND a long time later. . . .
“—game an' dumb—dumb an' game!”

Lefty at last began to understand what Bet-'Em-Up Barney was saying, standing there above the rubbing table in the dressing-room, half laughing and half crying.

“You game guys are dumb guys,” the Big Boss said.

But he said more than that, too.

Lefty smiled at him. He was beginning to be able to talk a little.

“I guess you're right,” he said.

He remembered what Cass Roseberry and that little rat of Roseberry's, Monte Hyde, had tried to do to him and his Big Boss.

“I *was* pretty dumb,” he said.

But the Boss explained the whole thing—explained it very carefully.

“As soon as Roseberry knew you were sick,” he said, “he ribbed you up to go on anyhow. He could do that because he knew you was game, see? Then, when he made sure you'd come into the ring too sick to fight, he run out to the track, got a hold of me, an' ribbed me into betting five grand on you, even money!”

Lefty got that. He gasped.

“Then you win five grand?” he said. “Just because I got lucky in the—which round was it?”

“Yeh, five grand!” Bet-'Em-Up Barney said.

He was helping Ringdoodle Williams give Lefty a rub; he was kneading and petting Lefty's tired shoulders with fingers that loved to touch thoroughbred flesh.

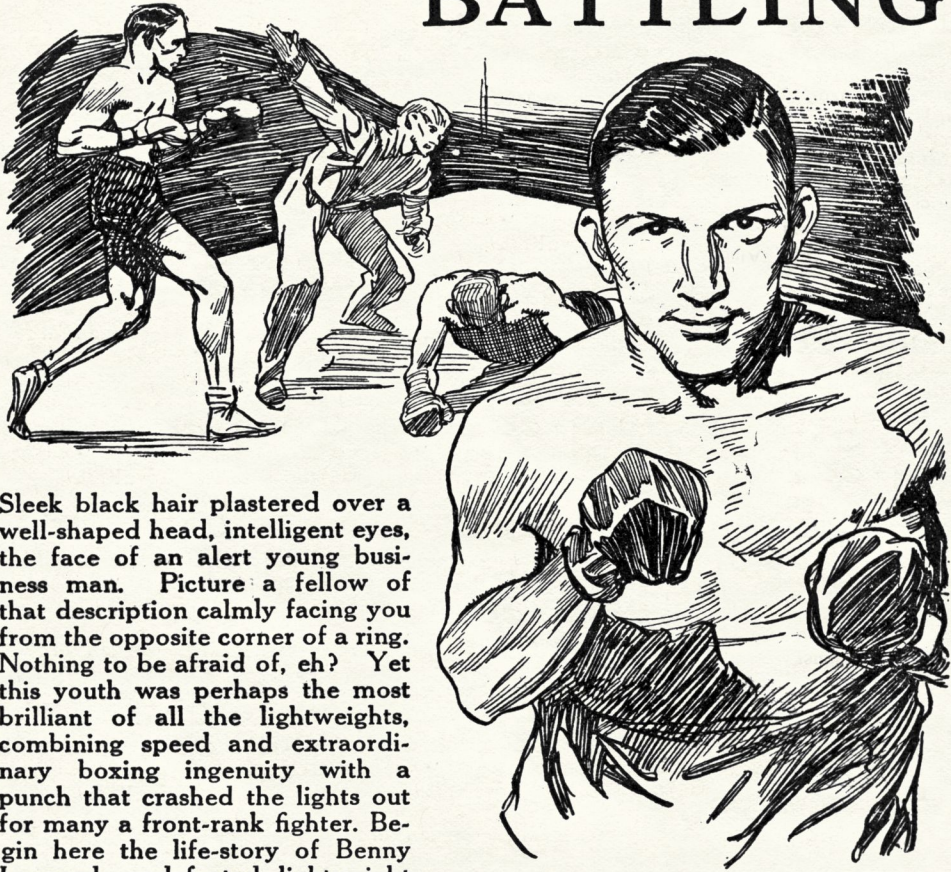
“You see,” he said, “they out-figured you, but they didn't out-figure you far enough. That was their mistake.”

He grinned all over, and made his explanation as complicated as he could.

“It was like this,” Bet-'Em-Up Barney said. “They knew you was game enough to be dumb enough to go in the ring with Sammy. *But,*” he said, “*they never figured you was dumb enough to be game enough to lick him!*”

And after Lefty Cal got over his touch of flu, Mr. Barney Minor gave him a six-weeks vacation on the ranch—with nothing in the world to do but eat three squares a day, play pinochle with the stable boys, and figure what to do with the purse he'd won licking Kayo Sammy Pelzer.

BATTLING



Sleek black hair plastered over a well-shaped head, intelligent eyes, the face of an alert young business man. Picture a fellow of that description calmly facing you from the opposite corner of a ring. Nothing to be afraid of, eh? Yet this youth was perhaps the most brilliant of all the lightweights, combining speed and extraordinary boxing ingenuity with a punch that crashed the lights out for many a front-rank fighter. Begin here the life-story of Benny Leonard, undefeated lightweight champion of the world.—Part I.

THE sun blistered the Benton Harbor arena that July 5th afternoon in 1920.

In one corner waited Charley White, whose left hook was the terror and despair of the lightweight brigade. He was dark-faced, scowling. Already, he had been given five chances to win the championship of his division . . . and had narrowly failed each time. There was a bitter drop in him. This time he *must* beat the title-holder.

Opposite him sat Benny Leonard . . . king of all the lightweights. If it had not been that he wore ring togs, you might have thought him ready for a party. He was barbered within an inch of his life. His hair was plastered flat. Not a stray hair stuck out from the

shining surface. His closely shaved cheeks were as smooth as a baby's. He smiled and nodded easily to acquaintances at the ringside.

Twelve thousand eager fans who crowded the arena watched the rivals, wide-eyed. . . . Everyone knew their records . . . White was the veteran of nearly 150 battles. He was a desperate hitter, and possessed a world of stamina . . . Leonard was the incomparable one . . . the champion . . . but, good as he was, he'd have to step at a lightning pace to whip the grim Chicagoan.

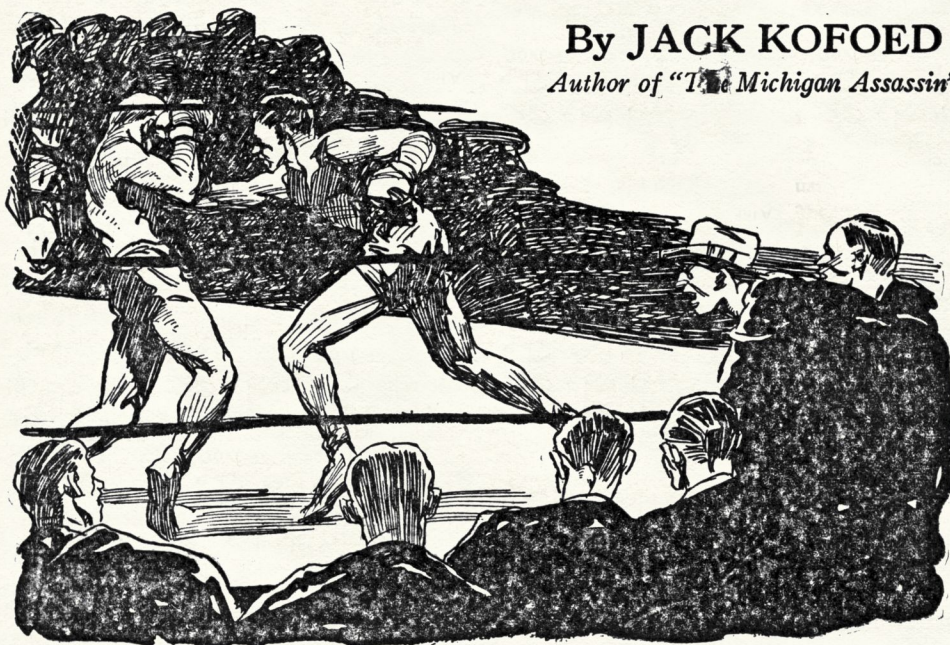
The fans seemed more tense than the fighters. An air of expectancy hung over the battle-scene.

Ah, but the first two rounds were disappointing! The men felt each other

BENNY LEONARD

By JACK KOFOED

Author of "The Michigan Assassin"



out. Leonard tried to feint his man into an opening, but cautious Charley was not to be caught with that bait. He'd get into a clinch and dig his left hook into Benny's stomach . . . or try to, at any rate . . . while Leonard tied him up, and, in the open, popped White with light jabs.

The crowd, jeered. It had come to see a battle and it was witnessing a dancing match . . . But it vented its wrath too soon. These veterans were not to be shaken from their plans of action by the yelps of the customers. Very soon they would make those customers cheer in delirious ecstasy . . . Applause or blame are ephemeral things in the squared circle.

At the start of the third round Leonard met White in the center of the ring, and hooked a hard left to the body. That stung the Chicagoan's pride. He flared into excited action, beating away with both fists as hard and fast as he could. Benny was driven into a neutral corner. He wasn't hurt in the vicious exchange

. . . but it was only good sense and good policy to retreat at a time like this . . . Charley White was a fellow with whom you could not take too many chances.

Wait for the inevitable let-down. Then take advantage of it. A man could not go on in Charley's way indefinitely. Not a chance . . . And, when White slackened momentarily, Leonard took the offensive. He shot three lefts to his enemy's jaw, and then whipped in a hard right that shook Charley to his heels.

That was something like, Benny told himself. He was getting the range now. White was tough and a hard hitter, but his fatal defect was slowness of foot. He couldn't get around the way Leonard could.

Both were glad of the minute's rest. The pace had been a hot one, and no matter in what good condition you happen to be, there's bound to be a strain on lungs and legs and arms.

Leonard continued to box through the fourth round. He made Charley miss . . . and miss again. He stabbed him

with lefts, and tied up White's furious hooks. Once he shook his dark-faced rival with a thundering right cross . . . but Charley was tough if he wasn't speedy, and he came back with a furious rally.

That was action enough, but it was tame compared with the drama that cropped up in the fifth.

Benny came out with his nicely timed jab, and poked White on the nose. The challenger hustled in past it, and nailed Leonard with a smacking right hander to the chin. It hurt some . . . and it threw Benny off balance for a moment. Charley was on top of him instantly, clinching with the left and ramming his right into Benny's face four times without a return.

"Make him stop holding," the champion panted to the referee.

Before anything could be done about it, White let go another jolting punch, and that, combined with a shove, threw Benny out of the ring. The champion's back had been against the ropes . . . and suddenly he was through them, and lying, half dazed, in the press-row.

The shock of an unexpected fall like that is great. Besides, Leonard's back hurt from landing on a typewriter, and his wits were a bit addled. But one fact burned brightly in his mind . . . That was the necessity of getting back into the ring as quickly as possible.

The hands of the newspapermen shoved him upward. He reached one gloved hand above his head and grasped the lower strand, hauling and tugging.

The referee had only reached "four" in his count by the time Leonard was on his feet again.

White gave him no chance to get set. He was in close, battling furiously with both hands. Benny had little opportunity to fight back. He was too busy defending himself . . . If Charley landed one of those blazing left hooks on the button, it would be just too bad . . . Then he wouldn't be the incomparable Leonard any longer.

It must be close to the end of the

round. When would that darned bell sound? It must come soon . . . It had to come . . . Benny had not yet recovered from his fall. He needed the minute's rest . . . and he needed it right away.

At last . . . the bell!

The Unexpected

THE howling crowd saw Charley White go jauntily to his corner . . . smiling for the first time. They saw Benny go more slowly to his, as though the fire that animated him at the start had burned out.

It wasn't altogether out, but it had dimmed. Leonard's back was stiff and sore. His brain was fuzzy . . . The spot was a tough one.

In the sixth it was White who took the offensive. He had the smell of victory in his nose, and wanted to make it certain. He clouted hard . . . carrying the fight . . . making the fight . . . while Benny danced away and jabbed and protected himself.

It looked as though the tide had turned. Leonard palpably was not himself . . . and it didn't appear that he would improve very soon. In the seventh White again drove the champion to the ropes . . . and in the eighth hammered Benny around the ring, slamming vicious left hooks into the body, and bringing blood from the nose with a right-hander.

Leonard took stock of the situation between the eighth and ninth rounds. He was a good judge of fights in which he was a participant. He knew that Charley had none the worst of this one . . . that, as a matter of fact, the westerner's great rally during the past four rounds had given him an edge. It didn't matter that the fall out of the ring was the determining factor . . . Charley was ahead, and that was that.

Benny felt all right in spite of the rough treatment that had been accorded him. If he was to win this fight, however, he'd have to get started soon . . . He *must* get started . . . or Charley White would be the winner.

The ability to come from behind is an attribute of every great champion. The front-runner doesn't get as far as a title-holder.

The ninth round started just as the others had, with Benny jabbing and White rushing in confidently . . . Then, like a flash of lightning from a clear sky, Leonard let go his right. It landed flush on the Chicagoan's jaw.

Charley pitched forward on his hands and knees . . . The mob arose with a roar of astonishment and unbelief . . . White, who had been charging to victory, was down . . . down there on the canvas! . . . Yes, Charley White! . . . Nobody had ever knocked him out . . . Would Leonard do it now?

The challenger, hardly knowing what he was doing, struggled to his feet. Game? Ah, he was game!

Benny rushed at him with a two-fisted flurry. Charley stood up under it for a moment, rocking, then collapsed. The champion stepped back toward a neutral corner.

It did not seem likely that the dark-faced slugger would get up this time. Leonard knew what had been behind that last wallop.

Yes, White was in a bad way. His eyes were as expressionless as a dead man's . . . wide open and staring.

The referee counted . . . "Six . . . seven . . . eight . . ." And there was the caricature of the Chicago slugger wabbling on his feet again. He retreated instinctively toward the ropes. Leonard, amazed at his resistance, followed . . . and hit him again, hurling him through the ropes.

Charley didn't fall into the press-stand as Leonard had in the fifth round. He feebly hauled himself into the ring, and staggered to his feet. The referee should have stopped the slaughter . . . but he didn't.

So Benny knocked his shaken enemy down for the fourth time.

That should have been enough to convince anyone . . . but it did not convince Charley White. Of course, he didn't

know what it was all about. Only his instinct drove him on to accept a further beating.

He arose for the fourth time.

No one who sat at that Benton Harbor ringside will forget how he looked. His sharp, saturnine face was blank. The muscles sagged. His chin hung on his chest. The eyes stared dully into space. There was blood on him . . . I wonder why a referee lets a thing like that go on? . . . or why seconds refuse to throw up the sponge when their man is in such condition? There was no chance of a wild blow turning the tide in White's favor. He was so weak he couldn't lift his arms . . . But neither the referee nor the seconds made a move to save Charley White, and there was nothing left for Leonard to do but finish the now distasteful job.

Roughness was the greatest mercy. The thing to do was finish it as quickly as possible. Leonard struck his opponent on the jaw. Charley's knees buckled under him. He slumped to the floor, and lay there . . . only his heaving back giving any signs of life.

White's seconds rushed into the ring and picked him up. His legs were too rubbery to support him. He was half carried and half dragged to his corner.

As the referee lifted Benny Leonard's hand in sign of victory, the crowd fairly went mad with excitement. It swarmed down toward the ring, eager to touch and get close to the man who had so sensationally snatched a triumph out of the fire of disaster. The police tried to hold back the half hysterical mob, but were swept aside. So dense was the crowd around the ring that Benny had to wait for more than a quarter of an hour before the bluecoats were able to clear a path for him.

The champion was thrilled to the bones by the finish he had made. It was a victory to be placed beside the other great ones he had scored . . . just a notch above them, if you please, for the rally had been so brilliant and unexpected.

CHAPTER II

The Fire of Youth

BENNY LEONARD was born Benjamin Leiner at Eighth Street and Avenue C, in New York City, April 7th, 1896. He began boxing when he was nine years old. The back-yard was the scene of his fistic endeavors. His uncle took an interest in sparring and encouraged the Leiner boys—Benny, Charlie and Willie—to stick to the game. The yard was full of flower-beds, with a circular spot of smooth earth in the middle. They used this circle for a ring. Benny boxed with all the other boys in the neighborhood. Sometimes he boxed with the big fellows.

Even as a little shaver he was pretty fast and had an instinctive knowledge of how to use his left hand. After a little while he became known as the champion of the street.

The first purse he ever fought for was in one of these little scraps in the circle between the flower beds. There was another kid, Joe Fogarty, who was pretty evenly matched with Benny in physical qualifications and general boxing ability. All the boys in the neighborhood wanted to see Fogarty and Leonard go to it, so they passed the hat and took up a collection to make a purse. This amounted to fifty cents, and the boys agreed to split it sixty percent to the winner and forty percent to the loser.

Everything was done according to the strict etiquette of the ring. Each boy had a manager, Benny's being his uncle. A ring was fixed up and the two little fellows went to it. The tough little Irish boy lasted exactly four rounds before Leonard put the finishing touch on him. So the thirty cents was paid over to Benny and twenty to Joe—and it is not recorded that either manager took his cut out of the money.

When Benny was fourteen years old the family moved to One Hundred and

Sixty-fifth and Kelly Streets. That's where he really began to get interested in boxing. At night, he and some of the other kids used to slip out of the house and up to the Fairmont Club, and sneak through to the back window to see the bouts. This further stimulated young Leonard's interest, and he followed that practice for two years.

One Saturday, when he was sixteen, he was looking in the window at the fight. Kid Herman and Johnny Reilly were the featured artists, and there was a lot of rivalry between them. The neighborhood lads crowded so close that eventually one of them stuck his elbow through the window and broke it. The watchman used to let some of them in to see the bout, but, when he heard the window break, he ran out the grabbed two or three of them. Among the captives was Benny Leiner. The watchman took them all in to Billy Gibson's office. Billy was the big shot of the neighborhood. He owned the Fairmont Club and several restaurants and was a man of both money and prominence.

He looked sternly at the boys and said, "What do you mean, breaking my window that way?"

Now Ben had only one thought in mind, and that was boxing. The window meant very little. He piped up, "I'm sorry about that window, Mr. Gibson, but I can lick all those guys you had in the ring tonight."

The promoter grinned. "Oh, you can, hey? Well, it's just too bad that all the preliminaries are over and I can't stick you in with somebody. But come around next Saturday and I'll see just what you've got. If you're any good, we'll forget about the window."

The Promise of a Ring Career

YOUNG BENNY could think of nothing but that promise all week long. He redoubled his boxing activities. He ran around the block dozens of times to improve his wind, and at seven o'clock next Saturday evening

bobbed up at Billy Gibson's office.

Gibson had a hard-boiled Irish boy named Mickey Finnegan all ready to knock the daylights out of the fresh Jewish youngster from Kelly Street. Finnegan didn't think much of young Leiner, and was not backward in stating his opinion. But Benny, with all the background of his street and yard battles, was not greatly concerned about what Mickey thought of him. Even then he had a supreme confidence in himself. All the kids in the neighborhood clustered around the club house that night and waited for the report on what had happened to their little champion.

Well, Leiner—who was introduced as Leonard because Announcer Peter Prunty didn't think Leiner a fighting name—knocked Mickey Finnegan cold, and was paid the startling sum of five dollars. That was the first real money he had earned with his fists, and it looked like a fortune. He gathered all his playmates together and went to an ice-cream parlor and threw a party for the crowd. They ate five dollars' worth of ice-cream and cake and cheered themselves hoarse over their neighbor who, they said, could lick anybody.

Incidentally, that party idea became an established part of the Leonard routine. After every fight his house was kept open until late, and all his friends in the neighborhood came around. Mother Leonard had lemonade and cake for everyone. Why, the night Ben fought Freddie Welsh there was such a mob in front of the house that it took Benny a half hour to get in. But we're getting ahead of the story.

After that first fight at the Fairmont, Billy Gibson began to take a real interest in the good-looking, dark-faced strippling, and Benny Leonard was on the card almost every week. The boy had seven four-round fights there, and then was matched with Kid Herman.

Herman had been the headliner, you remember, the night Benny was pinched by the watchman at the Fairmont. That was going up the scale rapidly. A

couple of months after his debut, Leonard was to pit his immature talent against the veteran Herman. If Benny had been a nervous fellow, that would certainly have upset him. Herman had quite a reputation in that neighborhood, but reputations were all so much froth and tosh to Benny Leonard. He went into the Kid in the same cool way that he had against Mickey Finnegan.

Of course, knocking out a seasoned campaigner like Herman was quite a different matter from polishing off Mickey Finnegan. Benny didn't succeed in scoring a knockout that time, but the newspapermen at the ringside all agreed he had won the decision handily. That victory brought him more attention than all the others combined. Billy Gibson was already sold on the boy. He was certain that in him he had a real champion.

"Why, the youngster can't miss," he said, time after time. "Give him a couple of years and nobody'll beat him. Just wait and see if what I say isn't the truth."

And, since Billy Gibson was generally regarded as the smartest pugilistic observer in New York, the wiseacres took his word for it.

Benny had somewhat the same idea, but he kept it to himself. Anyway, he said nothing around the house, for he was quite sure his maternal ancestor would not approve.

His Mother's View

BENNY used to slip out at nights and box without his mother knowing anything about it. If he had been marked, she would have known what he was doing, so he fought like the dickens to keep the other fellow from popping him in the face. He would put a shoe in each hip pocket, slip his trunks in his inside coat pocket, and get out of the house that way.

But one night when he came in, his mother stopped him with a serious look in her eyes.

"Benny," she said, "you've been boxing. Why don't you be a nice boy and go and learn your printing trade? Why don't you stop boxing when your mother tells you it's wrong?"

Benny looked at her sheepishly. She knew that he was guilty. All this time his father was standing nearby, frowning. Seeing that he was caught, Benny reached into his pocket for the money.

"How much did you get for boxing?" his father asked.

The boy pulled out twenty dollars and handed it to his mother. She, in turn, gave it to dad. He looked at it for a moment and the hard expression in his eyes died. He tucked the bill in his pocket.

"When do you fight again, Benny?" he asked.

That settled it for good. Nobody ever objected again. But, if there was no verbal objection from Mrs. Leonard, her worry did not abate because of her silence.

Billy Gibson frequently talked to her about this. He tried to convince her Benny was so supremely clever that the chances of his getting hurt were about one in a million. However, even the manager's smooth tongue could not chase away the mother's fear and doubt. But, knowing that Benny was getting along in the profession he had chosen, she decided that the best thing for her to do was to be of all the help she could, not only in cooking the right sort of meals and in giving a womanly supervision to those details with which she was familiar, but also in long, friendly talks that would keep him from getting a swelled head and becoming an extravagant fool with his money when big success finally came along.

The effect of her good counsel was quite apparent. Benny never became swell-headed and was never reckless with money. A good deal of the credit for this was due to his mother.

Mama was never sold on the game as a profession for her son, despite the pride she felt in his success. She was

too nervous. She was not one who could send her offspring into battle with a smile.

CHAPTER III

Early Conquests and Set-Backs

FOR a while Gibson was content to have Benny box at the Fairmont, and bring him along carefully. There was no sense in rushing the youngster too fast. Many a good man had been killed off that way. But Leonard showed so much skill and speed that Billy moved him out of the more or less neighborhood influence to his own club.

Benny's first fight in another building was with Eddie Wallace at the Broadway Sporting Club. Wallace was an experienced veteran who had met all the good ones in his day. Benny tried hard for a knockout but couldn't quite make it. However, he outclassed Wallace from start to finish.

Then Gibson pitted his boy against Tommy Houck at White Plains. Here was by far the best fighter Benny had been called upon to meet.

It was in this fight that Leonard revealed his first signs of being a real finisher. After outboxing Tommy for six rounds, he landed a furious left hook to the chin. Houck wobbled, sought to clinch, but Benny fought him off with the coolness of an old-timer and finished him with a flashing right. He was too young and insufficiently developed to be a real killer as yet. But the instinct was there. He knew what should be done and how it should be done. It was only necessary for his body to grow strong enough to carry out the dictates of his quick mind.

In the meantime, his brother Charlie had taken to boxing and had become just as sensational a performer as Benny. In twenty fights as an amateur he scored nineteen knockouts and stopped six of his first seven professional opponents.

"He is the best fighter in the family,"

said Benny to Bob Edgren. "Why, look—twenty-five knockouts in twenty-seven fights! That makes him pretty good, doesn't it? Gee, I think he'll go a long ways!"

It just happened that Charlie did not live up to his earlier promise and Benny went far beyond him in fistic accomplishment. But at that time the experts thought the younger of the Leiner boys would turn out to be the better performer.

Willie, the eldest, also took a fling at the game, but not very successfully. He fought a fellow at the Fairmont one night, with Benny and Charlie in his corner. Willie took a pretty solid thumping in the first two rounds. At the end of the second he came back to his corner and began to pull off his gloves.

"Don't stop, Willie," said Benny. "You're only half licked."

"If I'm only half licked, you can go in and get the other half," said Willie, but he stuck it out to the finish anyway, having his share of the Leiner game-ness. He fought just once more to show that he wasn't altogether a failure, and knocked out a fellow at the new Polo Athletic Club. Then he put the ring behind him and went into business, believing he would do better in a more sedentary pursuit. However, he didn't lose his interest in the game, and was frequently found in Benny's corner whenever that youthful warrior went to the post.

Outclassed

BILLY GIBSON believed in keeping a young boxer busy. The more work he had, the more experience he gained, the more quickly he would reach the heights—if he had the inherent ability. Benny Leonard started professionally in 1912. In his first year he fought twenty-two fights and scored ten knockouts. There was just one set-back—at the hands of Joe Shugrue.

Looking back, it seems that in this

incident Billy Gibson did rush his youngster a bit too fast. Shugrue was a great fighter, one of the best lightweights of a period when there were many great lightweights. Bad eyes eventually put Joe out of the game before he succeeded in gaining a championship. But for that misfortune, he might very well have been the outstanding 133-pounder of his day. Shugrue could box and hit and knew all the ring tricks that could be crammed into a wise brain. Tossing a comparatively inexperienced youngster like Leonard into the ring with him was suicidal.

The boy hadn't been boxing two minutes with Joe before he understood that he had met his master. Here was boxing skill he had never dreamed of, and a punch that had a jarring, deadly effect on the brain.

Shugrue out-boxed Benny for three rounds. The Kelly Street boy threw caution to the winds. He knew that he couldn't win scientifically. Joe was too smart and too fast for that. So Benny pinned his hope on a rushing attack. He had stopped plenty of other fellows, and his punch wasn't so bad. If he could land on Joe Shugrue, he'd put him down just as he had the others.

So he tore in with both hands flailing . . . putting every ounce of strength he had behind each punch that was thrown. But Shugrue drifted out of the way like a phantom, picking off the Leonard blows, ducking and riding and blocking them.

And then, in the fourth round, he took matters into his own hands. He drove Benny across the ring with a slashing, two-fisted attack. He herded the boy into corners, beat him relentlessly. The youngster reeled under the force of the blows. The club house spun around in wide and jerky circles. He was dizzy. His knees felt weak. He was sick at the stomach. There was nothing in the world he would rather have done then than quit—but there wasn't a quitting bone in Benny Leonard's body. If he had to take a beating, he'd take it. He stuck to his guns while

Shugrue pounded him with relentless fury.

Finally, a swishing right-hander caught him under the chin. He never saw it coming. Down he went on the floor where he had never been before. He tried to get up; he wanted to get up—because the code of the ring demanded it; because his fighting heart would not be appeased by anything but a dying effort. But he couldn't rise. He was too weakened. The muscles of his back and legs twitched as he tried to get to his feet, but the referee droned off the seconds and they seemed fairly to fly. Benny needed more than ten of them to regain the strength that was beaten out of him. He was done. . . . Knocked out for the first time in his career.

Developing Skill and a Punch

MAMA LEONARD was a nervous woman, as has been said. She did not want her boys to be fighters. She was afraid they would get hurt. Every night that Benny or Charlie was in the ring was a martyrdom for her. Only when they came home unmarked and victorious did the nervous strain lessen.

Benny's knockout at the hands of Joe Shugrue still further convinced Mrs. Leonard that her slim son was miscast in his role as a prize fighter. She urged Benny to quit, but Benny, the most dutiful of sons, insisted that it would be a frightful mistake to leave the game now. Set-backs were to be expected in any business. He couldn't go on without a defeat now and then, but he insisted that very few men of his weight could hurt him. He earned his money easily; he was going somewhere, and Mama Leonard, as she usually did, gave in to his pleadings.

During his second year of campaigning, while he was filling out, developing and learning more tricks of his craft, Benny fought only thirteen times, but the calibre of the opposition was considerably better than it had been before.

He boxed fellows like Young Lustig and Frankie Fleming and Jack Shepherd, Danny Ridge and Special Delivery Hirsch. His knockouts were fewer, but there was a finesse and style to his boxing that had not been apparent before. But once more he ran into a crushing and totally unexpected defeat. This was at the hands of the Canadian lightweight champion, Frankie Fleming.

Fleming did not possess the supreme skill of Joe Shugrue. His only real claim to fame is that he knocked out Benny Leonard in five rounds. Ben was disappointed but not discouraged. He had learned his lesson. Hereafter, it would be less easy to tag him on the chin with a punch that was labeled "kayo" than it had ever been before. He was going places. An occasional set-back would not spoil him. Billy Gibson preached that theory, too, and was convinced that Leonard would reach ultimate greatness. There was an intelligence and courage behind the instinctive fighting skill of this young Jewish boy that could not be mistaken. He had everything.

The next two years were most important from the point of view of development in Benny Leonard's life. They lacked, perhaps, the dramatic surprises of later fighting seasons, but without them Leonard would not have learned the things he did.

The best of his opponents during these years were Joe Mandot, whom he knocked out in seven rounds, Phil Bloom, Tommy Langdon, Patsy Kline, Johnny Dundee, Johnny Kilbane, Frankie Callahan and Joe Azevedo. In these men he faced the cream of the lighter division, whose speed and skill and great ring strategy combined in them. Hitting power, too, but none of them knocked Benny over as Joe Shugrue and Frankie Fleming had done.

He was learning fast. He was improving with every fight. And, when 1916 dawned, he was set and ready to go after the highest honors in his division.

He was less than nineteen then, a

smiling, dark-haired boy, five foot five inches tall, weight around 130 pounds. He had coördinated his hitting and boxing to a splendid degree. Usually the boxer is not a hard puncher, but this was not true in Benny Leonard's case. He could hit, too. And he was rugged enough, if necessary, to stand up under a thumping himself.

I recently asked Benny about the comparative value of punching and skill in the estimation of the crowd. He pointed out that a ring man must be able to hit if he expects to draw well at the gate. There has been an exception now and then, such as Tommy Loughran, but these exceptions are rare.

"The first time I had it impressed upon me that to be a real drawing-card you had to hit, was the night I fought Joe Mandot at the Harlem Sporting Club. They all had been telling me I was a good boxer and that all I needed was the ability to hit. You see, I was a growing boy and my strength had not developed. So that night Billy Gibson came over to my corner, at the end of the sixth round, and told me to let my right hand go, and show him just how hard I could punch.

"Now, I had scored a number of knockouts over fellows not very well known, but Mandot was a different sort. He was a pretty good lightweight and he became even better afterward. But I opened up on him with everything I had and finally knocked him out in the ninth round.

"From that time on I began to draw crowds—and more money.

"The first time I went over to Philadelphia, for instance, Mr. Gibson paid me out of his own pocket just for a chance to get me in. On my fourth trip there we drew the biggest crowd, they tell me, that had ever paid to see a boxing match in Philadelphia up to that time. It was all because I showed them that I had a punch. The fans like boxing all right, but they won't keep coming to see a fellow unless he shows them a wallop with something behind it."

CHAPTER IV

The Viking of the Middle West

BENNY started 1916 by knocking out Joe Welsh, a rangy Philadelphia lightweight, in five rounds. Then he took on Phil Bloom, whom he had already boxed in three no-decision bouts, and, to his great delight, flattened that unfortunate young man in the eighth round.

Philadelphia thought a lot of this New York boy, and he was brought back to the Quaker City time after time. They put him on with Jimmy Murphy, an up-and-coming youngster of brilliant promise. But Benny put the kibosh on that promise by knocking Jimmy out in the sixth. He also finished off Eddie Mc Andrews, a tough piece of fighting furniture and one of the hardest-boiled of the Philadelphia crew. In the meantime he engaged in several bouts with that bounding jumping-jack, Johnny Dundee. The details of some of his later bouts with that marvelous specimen of ring ability will be told later.

Billy Gibson decided that his young man should be shown in other parts. He wanted the Leonard reputation to become national rather than local. There were plenty of tough lads in the West, and he concluded that it might be a good idea to take Benny out there and show the folks in the corn belt what sort of fighters were raised in little old New York.

At that time no lightweight had a more scintillating reputation in those parts than Ever Hammer, a square-shouldered young slugger of Scandinavian decent. Hammer was another Battling Nelson in willingness and ability to take punishment, and he was a smacking hitter with both hands. No set-up for any of 'em, this boy.

If Billy Gibson had not been supremely confident of his boy's ability, he would never have allowed him to go into the ring with a fellow like Hammer.

People who saw that fight still talk about it. It was the most sensational thing Kansas City had seen in many a long year.

"This fellow Hammer gave me one of the toughest—I should say, *the* toughest—fight I ever had," Benny is quoted as saying. "Prior to meeting me, Ever had handed out lickings to Freddie Welsh, Johnny Dundee and quite a few others. The little blond Swede looked me over while we were getting instructions and gave me the impression that he was saying to himself, 'This guy's just a mug. I'll send him back to New York feet first.'"

"I didn't suspect I was facing a guy who was built like the rock of Gibraltar and carried T.N.T. in each glove. The moment the first bell sounded Hammer rushed out of his corner and shot a left hook to my mouth. He varied his attack, and, to the amazement of my manager, Billy Gibson, and some friends of mine who had made the trip with us, I was forced to take as fine a pasting in three minutes of as one-sided scrapping as I ever received. I was bleeding from nose and mouth when I went back to my corner.

"Gibson worked like a demon to bring me to. Smelling salts were brought into play, and Billy kept saying, 'Get on your roller skates. Keep away from him.' And I can tell you I took his advice; that is, I tried to. But keeping away from Ever Hammer was no small job. How he tried to knock me out! I could see in his eyes that nothing else would suit him. I couldn't seem to get started, and Billy Gibson was the saddest-looking fellow you ever saw in your life.

A Garrison Finish

"HAMMER was full of pep and ginger at the start of the third, and kept hammering at my body, sending in terrific smashes, now and then uppercutting with his right. The crowd was beginning to feel sorry for me. Hammer looked like a champion; every

inch of him. He had my nose spouting claret and there wasn't a white speck on my face. I was getting weak from loss of blood. I tried to stick it out and go down fighting. The Hammer barrage continued in the fourth and fifth rounds. He whaled away with both hands, beckoning to me at the same time to speed it up.

"'Come on and fight,' he said. 'What kind of guys are you New Yorkers anyway?'

"Had a decision been rendered at the end of the sixth, Hammer would have received it, for he was the winner by a dozen city blocks. Starting with the seventh, I sort of pulled myself together. But I couldn't seem to make any kind of an impression on him with my blows. They lacked power, or else he was made of iron. But in the ninth round the tide turned. What do you think did it? A short right under the heart. The impact of the blow shook Ever from head to foot. I knew in an instant I had him. It must have been a terrible blow, for he never got over its effects.

"Hammer dragged himself back to his corner, all the worse for wear. His eyes were glass and he looked like a beaten man. I told Gibson I thought I had finally gotten him. 'Nix on that stuff!' warned Billy. 'Keep boxing. He's dangerous every second he's in there.'

"But the hard-boiled Swede offered little resistance in the tenth. I punished him severely. He made a couple of wild swings and came near upsetting me with a vicious left hook. I rolled with the punch, or else it would have landed cleanly and flattened me. I was glad that I took Billy's tip, for Hammer became dangerous once more, starting the eleventh. He plunged into a right uppercut and, instead of going down as I thought he would, he retaliated with a terrific hook to the face. The punch dazed me for a second. Back on the roller skates for me. I fainted, left jabbed and whatnot to keep the maddened young man at bay. He kept pil-

ing in, however. He never let up for an instant.

"I supplied the crowd with another thrill in the twelfth and last round; another short right under the heart felled Hammer as if he had been shot. He got up at the count of nine, swaying there in the middle of the ring with his hands hanging down, his eyes emotionless.

"I appealed to the referee to stop it. He wouldn't do it. I made a couple of feints, but Hammer never moved. I didn't want to hurt him or take a chance of injuring him, but I finally lost my head, after the referee refused to wave Hammer to his corner, and started a punch. Before it could land, however, Ever's body crumpled to the floor."

While Benny engaged in many desperate battles during his career, there was not another one in which he suffered so much punishment before pulling through to victory at the finish.

Ever Hammer, of course, was not the type to ever become a champion—not against the tremendous opposition offered by such superbly clever ring men as Leonard, Dundee, Welling and others of their calibre. He was tough and would keep on going right to the end; could punch and take it, but it wasn't marked down in the book of destiny for him to set a crown on his blond thatch.

But if he lives to be a hundred, Benny Leonard will never forget the first terrible rounds he went through with the Viking of the Middle West. He wasn't able to enter a ring for several weeks after that combat.

CHAPTER V

Reaching for the Crown

FIVE years of campaigning that included 120 bouts had turned the young Jewish boy into a perfect bit of fighting machinery. There were many marvelous men standing between him and the throne occupied by Freddie Welsh, however. The lightweight field

was never more thickly populated with first-class boxers. But Billy Gibson was ready to have his youngster go after any of them. Benny's performances were nothing short of magnificent. It did not seem to Billy, who wasn't blinded by prejudice either for or against a boxer, that Benny Leonard could miss winning the lightweight championship of the world.

Gibson started to work on Freddie Welsh, the champion. There have been few better boxers in the history of the ring than the Englishman, who had won his title from Willie Ritchie. But Welsh was getting along in a fistic sense. He knew that Benny was the most dangerous threat to his reign, and he wasn't keen about placing the championship on the line.

They had ten-round-no-decision bouts in New York. Though Freddie recognized the fact that Leonard might out-point him, he was quite certain that no one in the world could knock him out in ten rounds. And, if Benny failed to stop him, the title would stay in the Englishman's possession, since there could be no referee's decision.

But Welsh was cagey. He demanded practically all the purse for giving Leonard the privilege of boxing with him. Both Billy and Benny were willing. All they wanted was the big chance.

Leonard and Welsh boxed ten rounds, and Benny had the better of it, but never even came close to stopping the champion. But he learned plenty about Freddie's style, and convinced the fistic fans of New York that he was well worthy of another crack at the title.

Benny's rise had been phenomenal. Five months after he appeared in the semi-final of the Coffey-Moran fight, he was one of the best drawing-cards in New York. He had a wallop . . . and that was enough to attract the customers.

Of course, money was the leading reason for Benny's entrance into the boxing game. He saw a chance to become rich at an age when most young men are merely beginning to get a

foothold in business. But Leonard had pride and ambition, too. He was not insensible to the thrill that would come of being called "champion."

The desire to manage a title-holder was the driving force behind Billy Gibson, too. He was earning an enormous income through his restaurants and other business interests. It wasn't that he needed the money that would come as a result of Benny Leonard flattening Freddie Welsh . . . if he could flatten him.

It requires considerable shrewdness to handle the details that crop up in piloting a young boxer toward high honors. Had he been after nothing but money, Billy could have rushed Benny along at top speed, sacrificing the boy's health and future for the immediate dollar . . . But he didn't do that—all the more credit to him.

Eventually Gibson arranged another match with Freddie Welsh, and the Manhattan Casino made the best bid for this feature bout. It was another no-decision affair, with Welsh able to lose his title only as the result of a knockout. But, now, Benny felt that he could stop the clever Englishman. There were few newspaper writers who conceded him a chance to do it.

Knock out Welsh?

That just wasn't being done . . . not by a lightweight, anyway. To get through that close-knit defense hard enough to batter the senses out of Freddie would be a task for a great middleweight, no less.

It was a reasonable assumption, but neither the fighter nor his manager were concerned with assumptions. The job had to be done.

The Combination Punch

WHEN Benny Leonard climbed into the ring at the Manhattan Casino he felt deep down in his heart that he would leave that ring as lightweight champion of the world. His parents, his brothers, his closest friends

would hang on the result of that match with almost agonized interest. He could not disappoint them.

In his other battles against the Welshman he had studied Freddie's style and outlined his own plan of battle. He went into action determined to wage a certain kind of fight from start to finish and let nothing that happened interfere with that plan.

Freddie Welsh was a great fighter, one of the best defensive boxers in the history of the game, but Leonard believed there never was a boxer who possessed a defense that could not be penetrated. In those other bouts he had subjected Welsh's defense to a minute scrutiny, and now he made his plans accordingly.

Many fighters had tried to knock out Fred with a blow to the chin. None of them, including Leonard, had succeeded. Benny, therefore, decided to concentrate on some other point.

This was his big chance—perhaps his last—to win the title of lightweight champion of the world. It called for a new idea in offense.

He had decided to make Welsh's forehead one object of his fists—to remove the edge from a remarkable fighting brain. A sharply delivered blow to the forehead would short circuit Freddie's faculties and temporarily impair his nervous system.

That was one of the major points of Leonard's attack; the other was the intestines. The blow which Benny planned to use toward this end was what his brother Charlie called the "combination." It was a right hook and an uppercut in one. Charlie, who had won the 125-pound amateur championship of the world at the Panama City Exposition, and Benny had practiced that combination at home. Charlie would assume the crouch peculiar to Welsh's defensive tactics, and Benny would feint with his right. As Charlie's guard flew up, Benny would pull back his right quickly and whip it to his brother's body with an upward motion. He practiced this until

he could send it through the slightest opening.

Benny thought of this plan of his and all the hours of practice he had put into it as he sat there in his corner waiting for the first bell. Despite his confidence, it was a touchy moment. There was so much at stake. After all, Freddie Welsh was a great champion, one of the finest boxers to ever lace on a glove. It might be a more difficult trick to get that combination home through his defense than it was through Charlie Leonard's. When he thought of this he also thought of his other bouts with Welsh. They had been no decision affairs, just as this one was. A knockout was so desperately necessary. It wouldn't do any good to win a newspaper decision.

It was June 7, 1917. America had entered the World War only two months before. Patriotic fervor was at its height. Before the bout started, Kid McCoy climbed into the ring, accompanied by four boys, and pleaded with every person between 18 and 45 to enlist. Many a man who sat in the audience that night gave up his life for his country before a year had gone by.

Smart Fighting

THE first round was not exciting. The boys boxed carefully and felt each other out. They didn't want to take any more chances at the start than they had to. But it was apparent that Leonard's speed was greater than that of his veteran opponent. Speed was going to cut a very big factor during the rest of the fight.

Welsh might be approaching the end of his championship career, physically, but his mind was as keen as ever. But Benny had the advantage of both youth and speed, and he made them count. He figured that his ability to set a faster pace would eventually pave the way for Freddie's end. As the rounds passed he forced the Briton to work more quickly to keep up with him. Through it all he kept up his bombardment of body blows,

particularly the combination. Freddie blocked most of them during the early rounds, but when they landed they hurt. One of those body blows would do more damage than five to the chin against a fighter like Welsh. It was body and forehead, body and forehead almost always, but Leonard varied his attacks with jabs intended to keep Freddie guessing what was coming next.

Benny feinted, jabbed repeatedly, and boxed with lightning pace. He wanted to make Freddie miss as often as possible, for the reason that, with a boxer like Welsh, failure to land hurts as much as a great many blows that find their mark. The champion stopped many of Leonard's jabs with his gloves. But Benny was determined to keep at him. A left hook often bored its way between his elbows as he held them before his face as a shield. Leonard was willing to take a chance, but so long as he had Welsh working fast and burning up his vitality everything was all right. Benny let Freddie land frequently with a pawing left—a harmless blow—so he could get in with the combination. Welsh managed to divert many of these, but more of them landed close to the danger point and they all helped to slow him up.

In the fourth round the challenger deliberately permitted the champion to hit him on the jaw with his right. It was the hardest blow that Welsh had delivered, but it didn't slow Leonard up in the least. He took it, and rode back to diminish its force. From then on Benny disregarded his opponent's offense almost entirely. He had proved to his own and his rival's satisfaction that the titleholder could do him no damage.

No sooner had Freddie landed this punch than Benny crossed his right to the jaw. Welsh's knees sagged. Leonard felt certain now that he could knock out his foe, but, just as he set himself for the punch, the bell sounded, ending the round. Luck had come to the aid of the old-timer.

Freddie was game. He fought bravely through the seventh. The black-haired

New York boy was standing flat-footed trying to send over a knockout. Up to that point he'd danced and shifted around the ring on his toes. Now he modified his plans; he wanted to get over a haymaker. Welsh landed two blows to Leonard's one for a brief spell, jabbing with his left. Then Benny broke through and connected with a jarring combination blow. The champion grunted and hugged his way into a clinch. The referee broke them.

Freddie made several furious swings, and missed each one of them. He was hurt, but bored in, punching wildly to make Leonard believe he was as good as ever. No, there was nothing wrong with either Freddie's strategy or his courage.

Billy Gibson stood up in his corner and shouted in ecstasy, "He can't go, Benny. He can't go. This is your lucky round."

Usually, Billy never said anything during a fight, and, when he yelled at Leonard, Benny felt completely confident of the result. He knew Gibson could see just what was happening. The exultation in his voice indicated a belief that Welsh was close to the end of his string.

The Old Master and the New

AT the beginning of the eighth Leonard started with a rush, putting everything he had in back of his blows, and again Gibson broke out into a wild whoop of joy. Freddie was in bad shape, and Benny knew it. He pecked away at the side of his head with hooks and jabs.

Leonard could hardly wait for the ninth round to begin. He quivered inwardly with eagerness, but neither Welsh nor anyone else knew that. He sat on the edge of his stool, waiting for the bell. His big chance had come at last.

Freddie's generalship had saved him up to now, but he was all in physically. His arms did not respond as quickly as

they had, and his mind had been dulled by the blows that landed on his head.

The bell rang, and Leonard was in Welsh's corner almost before the champion had dragged himself to his feet. Benny went at Fred and kept after him. He sunk a left into the stomach. A moment later he let go a right to the side of the head. He was ceaselessly in motion.

Welsh trembled. The blows had burned up most of his vanishing strength. Leonard walked up to him and landed another terrific right to the head.

Slowly the Englishman sank to the floor in Leonard's corner.

McPartland, the referee, had counted only one when Welsh arose. He was groggy, half out on his feet. Had his mental faculties been under complete control, he would have taken a count of eight or nine, as he was an exceedingly crafty fellow and knew what to do under all circumstances. But now he was so dazed that only his fighting instinct was left.

Leonard immediately let fly another right to the head. This dropped the old champion to one knee.

Leonard's smooth, good-looking face was contorted with fighting fury. His lips were tight; his eyes blazing. He bent forward, fists clenched, ready to put over the finishing blow should Welsh arise again.

Freddie did get up, of course. Every nerve and drop of blood in him would have cried out against the disgrace of staying down as long as he was able to drag himself to his feet.

As he arose, Leonard let loose a volley of rights and lefts. Freddie, stunned and limp, gazed about in a dazed manner, his back half turned to his adversary, his arms hanging. Benny shot a left hook that Welsh vainly tried to stop. One arm went over the top strand of the ropes, and thus he held himself up. He was out, and Leonard knew it. His chin was exposed—and at this sign of weakness of the once great champion,

the fury passed from Benny's face. He stepped back and looked to the referee, hoping that Kid McPartland would stop it.

The Kid cast an appealing glance toward Harry Pollok, Welsh's manager, but Pollok shook his head. He was not going to throw in the towel. There was only one way for a champion to finish, and that was on the floor. Welsh would want it that way. He wouldn't thank anyone for saving him from the finishing blow.

Leonard prepared to put over as gentle a one as he possibly could, but the referee suddenly took the matter into his own hands. He waved Benny aside and placed his arm around the broken body of the ex-champion. A moment later, as the Kid released his hold on Welsh, the latter reeled and would have pitched through the ropes to the press stand, but his seconds jumped into the ring and carried him back to his corner.

As pandemonium broke loose, Freddie lay there, unconscious. Leonard's friends fairly tore the roof off with their cheers, but Welsh did not hear.

The boy's excitement and joy was beyond all bounds. He was champion of the world! He had reached the pinnacle. Then it occurred to him that it was only the sportsmanlike thing to do to go to Freddie's corner and say something consoling, to shake his hand, and tell poor Welsh just how game and able he really was.

The Englishman's head hung low on his chest. There was a smear of blood on his lips, which were as colorless as snow. His hands, that had been the tools of a master worker, lay helpless in his lap.

Harry Pollok, with tears in his eyes, said, "Go away, Benny. Not now."

It was only in the dressing-room, half an hour later, that the new champion was able to express his regard and condolence to the old one.

A champion of the world—and Benny Leonard was only twenty-one years old!

CHAPTER VI

Benny's Popularity

THERE never has been a more popular champion, particularly in his home town and most particularly in his own neighborhood, than Benny Leonard. The reason is not hard to find. Aside from being a supremely great fighter, the new lightweight champion of the world was a regular fellow. His mother's teachings kept his ego from ballooning. Benny never developed a swelled head. He stayed the same nice, modest boy after his victory over Welsh that he had been while he was fighting his way to the top. He was friendly with everyone.

When a man seats himself on the throne of his class, comparisons are immediately made between him and his predecessors. The other 133-pound champions in modern times had been Jack McAuliffe, Kid Lavigne, Frank Erne, Joe Gans, Battling Nelson, Ad Wolgast, Willie Ritchie and Freddie Welsh . . . as illustrious a line as could well be imagined.

McAuliffe, Erne, Gans, Ritchie and Welsh were boxers; Lavigne, Nelson and Wolgast sluggers.

In point of actual skill, only Gans, I think, equalled Benny Leonard, good as the others were. Gans had everything—brains, skill, speed. He could hit, too, but Leonard has a more impressive list of knockouts, and, when it came to the point of courage, I think Benny had a shade on the Old Master. Not much, mind you, for Joe had much more gameness than some people gave him credit for . . . But enough, anyway, to earn him an edge.

Two of the greatest of the lightweight champions were Lavigne and Nelson. In the ten and fifteen-round fights current today, Leonard would have had an easy time with either of them. They were built for the long-distance route. They showed at their best when fights

were scheduled at from twenty-five rounds to a finish.

Gans couldn't knock Nelson off his feet in the eighty-one rounds through which they struggled in their three meetings. Could Benny have accomplished what Joe failed to do? It seems to me that, if any fighter in the world could have stopped Battling Nelson in his prime, it was Leonard. You see, Gans had passed his peak when he first met the Durable Dane at Goldfield, though I question that he could have knocked out Nelson the best day he ever saw. But Benny, with his murderous, two-fisted attack, great endurance and courage would have had a grand chance.

The same thing holds true with Lavigne. The Kid was a better hitter than Nelson, but, if there was any difference in their rugged ability to assimilate punishment, the advantage lay with Nelson.

It seems to me that, on the face of the records, Benny Leonard was the greatest lightweight champion we have ever had. He combined to a most unusual degree the ability to box and punch. No one had shrewder fighting brains.

There has never been any question as to his courage. He was the showman supreme. No other champion had more sensational fights. His meetings with Welsh, Kilbane, Dundee, Tendler and Mitchell all go to justify that statement.

Of course, these glowing attributes were not as clearly apparent just after he won the title from Welsh as they were later. Qualities of greatness grow on the observer. Had the long-looked-for match between Benny and Mickey Walker for the welterweight championship ever materialized, it would, I am quite certain, have established the lightweight king as a double-title holder without an equal in fistic history.

Important Friends

BENNY LEONARD brought a bright new chapter into the story of the game. This Jewish boy was not a collegian, but he was an instinctive gen-

tleman. People liked him. Men who were not primarily interested in boxing became interested in him.

When Benny was training at Tannersville for one of his matches with Dundee, he had among other visitors two prominent men who came to see him work out. One was Nathan Straus, New York business man and philanthropist; the other, Arthur Brisbane, internationally known editor and writer.

The visit was duly chronicled by the sports writers who were covering Benny's camp. It was noted that Brisbane's visit was the first he had made to a training camp in thirty years. He had not seen one since he visited John L. Sullivan at his quarters in London, when John was conditioning himself for Charley Mitchell.

In the old days training camps were Meccas for celebrities of certain kinds. One of the famous camp followers was the late Nat Goodwin, who never missed seeing the star boxers in their preliminary activities.

A lot of the old-timers like Tom Sharkey, Jim Corbett, John L. Sullivan, Jim Jeffries, Stanley Ketchel, Battling Nelson and Terry McGovern were never so happy as when training before a big crowd—and they never thought of charging that crowd for admission.

Leonard, of course, was too good a business man to have a free gate, but he was a gregarious fellow and liked to have people around, particularly those who were doing things in the world.

Mr. Straus became his personal friend and adviser. That great old gentleman saw in Benny a great advertisement for the Jewish race. In Leonard was combined mental and physical capabilities far beyond the ordinary, to say nothing of a personality that was immensely pleasing. The philanthropist wanted the fighter to get along. He was willing to help in every way he could—and their friendship ripened into one of the most pleasing imaginable.

Detractors started their little brag and bluster after the Welsh fight, as they

always do. They said that Freddie was all washed up; that anyone could have knocked him out in the condition he was in. They didn't try to explain why a lot of other great ringmen had failed where Benny had succeeded.

Benny wanted to prove himself a real champion. He saw no point in having a title unless it brought in dividends of money and fame. It was his idea that a fighting champion was the only kind worth recognizing.

There was plenty of opposition. The lightweight class possessed the most representative group of challengers since Gans was the title-holder, and Nelson, Britt, Corbett, Canole, Herrera and others were seeking to take his championship away from him.

Leonard looked at that group, and saw he would not run out of opposition for a long while. If his jousts with Johnny Dundee, for instance, were continued, that would mean work for quite a while. Then there was Richie Mitchell and the left-handed Lew Tindler from Philadelphia, and Johnny Kilbane, the featherweight king, and a lot of others.

More than anything else, a match with Kilbane appealed to Benny. It would provide a thrill that only the meeting of two champions can provide—and thrills like that have a great bearing on the gate.

Plenty of promoters went gunning for that match. The best bid came from Philadelphia. Benny had won his spurs there with some sensational knockouts, and no boxer had a greater personal following in the City of Brotherly Love than that little jewel of an Irish featherweight, Kilbane.

whipped everyone at or near his weight. When the match was proposed with the newly crowned emperor of the lightweights, Johnny accepted with a smile. He was quite certain that, despite the difference in weight, he would have no trouble in beating Leonard.

He went into training at Lieperville, close to the Chester yards where thousands upon thousands of men were laboring on ships to transport soldiers and supplies to the battle lines in France. Kilbane was immensely popular with these workers. As part of the ballyhoo, he went behind the bar at Dougherty's place every day at noon and served foamy seidels of beer to the men who admired him so much. He worked hard, too, both on the road and in the ring, and was in excellent condition for what promised to be one of the toughest fights of his career.

Benny worked out at Billy Grupp's gymnasium on 110th Street in New York City, where he was coached by Billy Gibson and George Engel.

For the first time the boxing writers really discovered how vitally interested Mama Leonard was in her son's career. She was never more than five minutes behind him whenever he reached the gymnasium.

She prepared his food and looked over his routine. She was continually at the ringside watching him box with Doc Reece, giving him advice or applauding his work.

There was no question of apron strings in this unusual status between mother and son. It was simply an expression of affection. Mrs. Leonard was a sensible woman, and she adapted herself so easily to a training camp that there was no feeling among strangers that she was out of place there. In this, she antedated Ma Stribling by quite a few years.

Someone asked Benny if he thought he would lose his crown.

"What? Drop the title after only holding it two months?" Leonard glared. "Not much! There isn't the slightest

CHAPTER VII

When Champions Clash

JOHNNY KILBANE, featherweight champion of the world, was one of the greatest boxers and hitters ever to hold the title in that division. He had

doubt that I will beat Kilbane. I have seen Johnny twice. Once in the role of opponent in a no-decision match, and the second time as a spectator at his fight with Welsh. I know what he can do, and I think I can carry him at such a pace that his head will swim. I'm not under-rating Kilbane. He's a real world's champion. He can hit and box. Nevertheless, I know he won't whip me. I'm not worrying about this bout. I have no set plan except that I am going to win."

There was one great difference in the training camp at Leiperville and the training camp at New York. Kilbane was serious, industrious. Leonard's attitude was entirely different. He acted as though fighting Kilbane was a common event in his life. Where Kilbane was having murderous punching duels every day with Jimmy Dunn, his powerfully-built manager, Benny did nothing more than sincere sparring. Kilbane prepared to face shrapnel. Leonard seemed to think he would see nothing more dangerous than B-B shot.

The experts regarded this attitude as being one of over-confidence on the part of the lightweight champion. They knew what a shrewd ring master and deadly puncher Johnny Kilbane was. The thing they did not know was that Benny's attitude was that of a student who has analyzed a situation. He knew what Kilbane had and he knew just as clearly what he had himself. Matching these facts, he came to the unalterable conclusion that he was going to come through the winner.

The First Round

PHILADELPHIA was all steamed up over the encounter. Some ten thousand fight fans came out to Shibe Park that hot July evening, and had a little battle of their own with the police before the events in the ring began. There were two stampedes from the dollar seat section. Although hundreds of bluecoats were stationed in front of the

bleachers to guard against just such an occurrence, the boys who had invested eight bits saw a chance to get something better, and vaulted over the concrete wall. The police tried hard to keep them back, but failed. The first place the bleacherites started for was the two-dollar section in the left field pavilion. Some were even braver and went across the field to the main grandstand.

Just before the main bout was put on, the second dash of the dollar populace carried the police virtually off their feet. These fight fans who spent the winters in the rafters at the Olympia, National and Broadway never stopped until they had picked out choice seats as close to the ring as possible.

At nine twenty-six Kilbane hopped through the ropes and, after walking to his corner, shook hands with James J. Corbett. A moment later Leonard appeared, accompanied by Abe Attell. Benny was attired in a purple bathrobe, and his sleek black hair was plastered flat with pomade. There was the usual jam of photographers in the ring, and then Joe Humphreys introduced Jim Buckley and Dick Curley and Jimmy Dougherty, the promoters of the fight. Afterward, Attell, Johnny Dundee and Ever Hammer were presented to the crowd.

The square-chinned Kilbane cocked an eye at the clouds that were beginning to gather overhead, and said, "It's going to rain. Get us started."

He seemed as cool and confident as his opponent. As a matter of fact, no two men ever faced each other in the squared circle who were more certain of barging through to victory.

The first round might not have seemed startling to a casual fan. But to an expert like James J. Corbett, for instance, that first round had a great significance. Feinting of the two champions may have appeared to be only fiddling, but, call it what you like, Leonard gained a great psychological advantage in those first three minutes. He gained it by superior feinting, by a de-

gree of cleverness his opponent had never encountered before.

Kilbane kept looking for one false move, one discrepancy, but he never found it. He had not dreamed that the lightweight champion was really a more clever boxer than he himself. When he found it out, he lost some of his supreme confidence. He was further surprised that he could not gauge the monarch of the lightweights. It had been easy for him to skip around and pester his featherweight opponents, but in this match, conditions were reversed.

Johnny was a perplexed and harried fighter.

Benny returned to his corner, the same easy smile on his lips. The point of which he had felt so sure was proved now beyond doubt. He knew he could hit Kilbane and that Kilbane could not hit him—not hard enough, at any rate, to do any damage. Having found out what he wanted to know, Benny decided to go out in the second round and put everything he had in back of his blows. He was bubbling with happiness. He could hardly wait for the bell to sound. No one had ever knocked out Johnny Kilbane. To accomplish a feat like that would establish his mastery beyond any doubt.

Educated Fists

WHEN the second three minutes of action began, Benny fiddled around, opening up his opponent, and then suddenly shot a terrific right-hander to Johnny's face. The blood spurted from the Irishman's bruised lips. Leonard started walking in, walking in continuously, registering right and left shots while Kilbane seemed unable to set himself for a single damaging blow.

Leonard's boring in was not the rough and ready attack of an Ever Hammer. He went into action in such a masterful manner that Kilbane was utterly unable to find him. Then the lightweight champion shifted his tactics and landed

a hard right to the stomach. This was followed by a left hook to the jaw and a right to the same spot.

Johnny was groggy when the bell sounded. His knees shook as he walked to his corner, and there was no longer a smile on his face. But he had not given up hope. Not he—for Kilbane was one of the gamest men that ever laced on a glove.

They didn't have radios in those days, and Mama Leonard could not sit in the living room of her apartment and listen to a description of her boy's slashing triumph. She just hoped and prayed, and waited for the telephone to ring, and for the sound of Benny's voice telling her what had happened. The lightweight champion knew that, and wanted to get the fight over as soon as possible so he might assure his mother that nothing had happened to him. She would worry. She always did—though the mother of no fighter that ever lived had less cause.

Benny looked across the soiled square of canvas at the sagging form of the featherweight champion of the world. Johnny lay back on his stool, eyes closed, obviously in bad shape. Even his seconds appeared to have little hope that he would be able to last through to the finish. Kilbane needed lots more than a minute's rest to strengthen his arms and legs and bring back the cool craftiness to his brain. But the fleeting seconds wait for no man, no matter how desperately he may need them.

Clang!

The Triumphant Third

THE bell brought Leonard dancing to the center of the ring. Johnny shambled forward and whipped a left hook that landed on Benny's chin. It wasn't hard, because most of his strength was gone. For an instant Leonard became too anxious, too determined to end the fight quickly. He let go a wild swing that missed by a foot. He grinned a little as he realized that this

was no time to let excitement get the better of him.

"The right hand," said Benny to himself, "the right. This guy's so groggy he can't block anything. Just take your time. Feed him the right, but don't get reckless with it."

He swept in with a hook that staggered Kilbane, throwing the featherweight against the ropes. Johnny rebounded and fell forward on his knees.

Referee Pop O'Brien began to count, but the little man, who was too bewildered to take advantage of time on the floor, crawled to his feet and rushed into a clinch. He held on tightly. Instinct told him to do that. O'Brien tried to break them. He pried away. Sweat ran down his face in rivulets. Leonard was neither anxious nor excited now. His moment of triumph was within easy reach. He could take it whenever he wanted it.

Finally, Kilbane was split out of the clinch, and backed away. Benny landed another right, and Johnny, with all the fine fury that had always been part of his make-up, lashed out desperately with both hands. He was brave but ineffective. Leonard was equally brave and ten times more accurate.

A wicked right behind the ear dropped

Kilbane to the floor. He was on his hands and knees, his head wobbling like a man wounded unto death. The referee began to count. His voice had a shrill note in the sudden silence that fell over the darkened ball park.

"One—two—three—four—five—"

Then suddenly Kilbane was on his feet, reeling backward, eyes glassy, arms hanging limply. He was a helpless target for any knockout punch that Benny Leonard cared to throw.

Jimmy Dunn, Kilbane's best friend and manager, crouched in his corner, tears streaming down his face. He knew Johnny didn't have a chance to win, and he didn't want to see his boy beaten any more. He picked up a towel, with trembling fingers, and hurled it into the ring. It was still in the air when the bell sounded, ending the round.

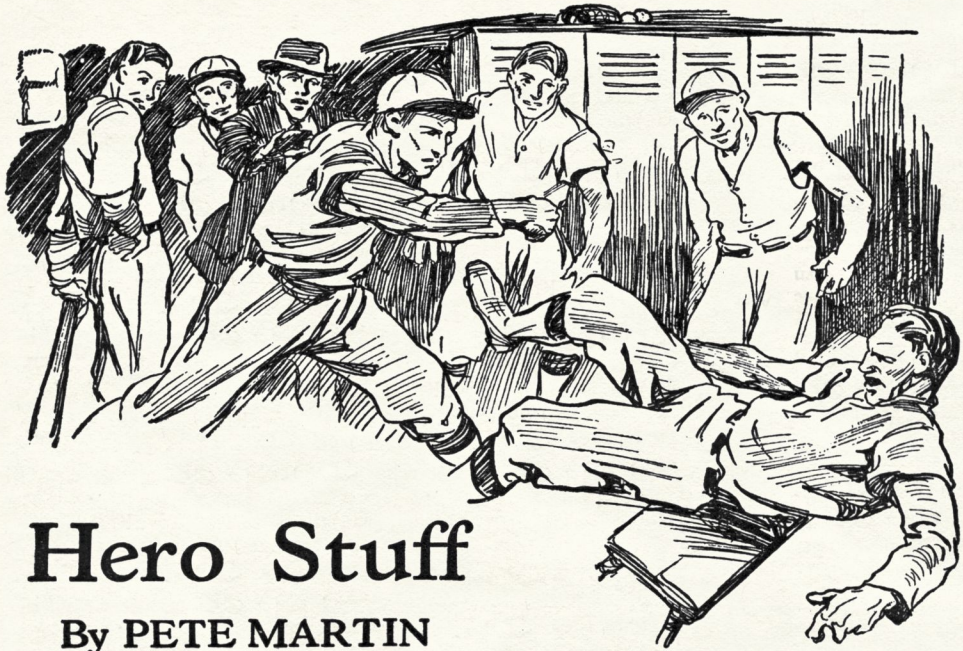
Jimmy was in the ring almost instantly. Kilbane collapsed in his arms.

Within two months Benny Leonard had set the unparalleled record of knocking out the champion of two separate classes. Victory over Freddie Welch had been registered on May 28th; his triumph over Johnny Kilbane was achieved on July 25th. It may be that some other title-holder has equalled this feat, but, if so, I have no recollection of it.

Benny Leonard, champion of the lightweight class, conqueror of Kilbane, the featherweight king, was harassed by the greatest group of challengers the division had known in years. In the second installment of "Battling Benny Leonard" is told the story of his slashing battles with Lew Tendler, Charley White, Joe Welling, Johnny Dundee—all the tough and willing lads who believed they could whip him. And, then, his own confession of why he left the ring behind when he was at the very peak of an incomparable career.

WHY?

IT is difficult to understand why New York boxing promoters failed to feature Tommy Loughran in an outdoor match during the summer. Loughran had proved himself one of the greatest drawing cards in the country by his sensational victories over Baer, Schaaf and Campolo. Yet, he was permitted to stay on the sidelines, while such doleful matches as the one between Slattery and Rosenbloom were arranged. Tommy was willing to fight anyone of standing—Schmeling, Carnera, Sharkey, Stribling—and his terms were not out of reason. Yet he was not utilized.



Hero Stuff

By PETE MARTIN

Big talk and bullying fists . . . and a feud of the diamond flared around swaggering Wallop Wade, center-fielder of the Grizzlies. Heroic measures were necessary. Enter the fighting rookie!

I WAS out on my farm in Jersey putting Patsy Mandlebaum through his paces for his coming bout with the champ when a big black touring car rolled into the drive and a skinny little guy in a natty gray suit leaped out and up the porch steps two at a time.

I took it for granted that he was another tired millionaire seeking health and strength, and I was all set to tell him my place was for athletes only. These old boys who have spent their lives between Wall Street and the Gay White Way think because I can put a healthy young animal on edge for a ring battle I can make a new man out of a soft old wreck in two or three weeks' time.

I usually give 'em a spiel on diet and exercise and send 'em on their way. It's hard enough to keep a youngster in fighting trim, but these moneyed boys are mostly soft all the way through.

They see one of my lads in the ring and think, "I'm getting a bit soft myself; guess I'll run out to 'Broadway

Cook's and have him put me in shape."

But I tell 'em different.

This bird with the snooty-looking car removed his hat to mop his brow and I recognized him. It was "Kicker" McGuire, manager of the Grizzlies, big league ball team. And he was wearing a swell black eye!

"Hello, Broadway," he greeted me. "I'd like to see you privately."

That's Kicker for you. No beating around the bush. All business. He'd been a sweet ball player thirty years ago, and had been managing the Grizzlies for at least twenty-five. A scrapper, every ounce of his hundred and thirty pounds, and he had a reputation for handling his outfit with an iron hand.

I've had all sorts of propositions put up to me in the last fifteen years, and thought I was surprise-proof until I heard Kicker's story.

It seems that Kicker never minces words when he's telling off his gang, and most of 'em expect it. He's a square

shooter and plays no favorites, but he's got a hard tongue.

One day in the club house he was telling his athletes that next year he was going to put the Job Haine's Home for the Aged on the schedule so they could win a couple of games, and started to take the hide off Big Bill Wade, the loud-mouthed center-fielder.

Bill Wade talked back, and Kicker grew tougher. The first thing he knew Wade belted him in the eye. Snow, the catcher, who was as big as Wade and considered pretty tough, jumped the bully, and in less than a minute Wade knocked Snow cold.

Since then, two other members of the Grizzlies had purposely tangled with Wade, and the braggart handed each of them a fancy licking. Meanwhile, he went around bragging until the whole team hated his insides. But the boy had the stuff. He was a swell ball player and a mean man with his dukes.

Kicker was too proud to give him the bounce, and, besides, he needed him on the team. Then, too, if the story got out, Kicker felt he'd lose prestige.

So his proposition was this: He wanted me to dig up a light-heavyweight who could play enough ball to get by. I was to train him until he sent for him, then my lad was to report as a recruit for the Grizzlies, and Mr. Bully Wade was to get licked—and by a recruit! They tell me that's very humiliating to a big leaguer.

Sounds phoney, doesn't it? But Kicker McGuire was smart. If he released this mug, some other team would pick him up and the braggart would tell the world how he'd mopped up the diamond with the whole Grizzly outfit and how they were all afraid of him. It would probably end up with two teams going at each other with baseball bats.

McGuire agreed to pay my boy's training expenses for three months and then put him on the team's payroll for a year.

The trouble was I didn't know any

scrapper who wanted to play ball, or who could even pretend to play ball. We couldn't get any one who was known, or everybody would be wise to the plant. And there wasn't enough money in it even if we could get a dark horse. I could lick half the light-heavies who considered themselves hot stuff, so the chances were that any of the unknowns I could corner would be pushovers for the two-fisted bully.

But try to say "no" to Kicker McGuire when his mind's made up! He offered a bonus of one thousand dollars out of his own pocket if my boy turned the trick.

Now you have an idea to what lengths a guy like Kicker will go just to get even for a black eye. The man's pride had wilted with that sock, and he wouldn't be the same until Wade was properly licked and back in line.

I refused to make a definite promise, but Kicker left with the idea that I could turn the trick for him. Sometimes a reputation is a handicap. Just because I've gotten a name for putting fighters in shape, people think I wave a wand and championship material comes running out of the bushes.

I WAS sitting on the porch mentally abusing McGuire and his Rover Boys idea, and watching the youngster from down the road pulling stumps with a team of mules. I'd hired him to clear a stretch for a tennis court, and I'd noticed how he'd halt his team and stare when any of the boys were working in the outdoor ring.

Just now his mind was all taken up with his team, and one of them was getting temperamental. He refused to budge, and the young farmer was hauling and coaxing.

Suddenly the youngster lost his temper. His right fist shot out and smacked the big mule a crack on the neck. The animal's ears went back and he sat down hard, as if someone had cut his hind legs from under him. The kid grabbed the bridle and hauled the mule to his

feet. And, believe it or not, the beast went right to work like a good little fellow.

That was no mean sock.

The next time I saw the youngster watching Patsy working in the ring, I went over and spoke to him. He'd never boxed, but claimed he was a pretty good "wrassler." Now, everyone knows what I think of wrestlers, but then I remembered he was just a young farmer, so I didn't chase him off the place.

He was a nice looking kid, with cheeks like a school girl, and I sized him up for about a hundred and sixty stripped. Husky, but muscle bound; and his expression was altogether too placid. If I hadn't seen him smack that mule, I'd have laid odds that he wouldn't raise his hand to a mouse.

Without telling him what was on my mind, I invited him to fool around the gym if he wanted to. Out of the corner of my eye I watched him—and he was terrible.

Slow and awkward. Couldn't get out of his own way. It hurt me to watch him try to punch the bag. And all the time with that baby-faced smile.

His name was Danny Peters, he said, and he'd always wanted to be a professional fighter.

Any time the boys were sitting around doing a little bragging, Danny would stand there with adoration shining in his cow-like eyes. I never saw a youngster with a more pronounced case of hero worship. So you can imagine how thrilled he was when I let him play around in the same gym with fighters whose names made the sports headlines regularly.

Then I made a strange and costly discovery. Do you remember when the Halley-Dowd fight was called off when Halley received injuries in training? No one ever got the whole story on that, but the truth was that this dumb farmer kid, Danny Peters, cracked three of Halley's ribs with a round-house swing during sparring practice. It would never do to let the fans know that

Halley had been knocked for a loop by an unknown youngster.

I was so sore I wanted to chase Peters off the grounds without even letting him get dressed. But he was so abjectly miserable that I softened. And Halley himself pleaded for the kid.

"Serves me right for being careless," he said. "Do you know, Broadway, when that kid gets warmed up, gets hit a few times so he forgets to be self-conscious, he's not so awkward. I think the rube is a scrapper at heart."

Well, after that I watched Peters more closely, and Halley was right. There wasn't a bit of malice in Danny's make-up. He liked the whole world. But something inside him seemed to respond to a couple of stiff smacks. When the sweat started to run and his nerves were stung by blows, he was a different boy. For all his good nature, he felt a savage delight in the crunch of his fists against flesh and bone. He reveled in it.

Then, after he had cooled off, he was the awkward, diffident, hero-worshipping farmer lad again.

After watching this strange metamorphosis several times, I wired for McGuire to come down and look the boy over. Danny was about twenty-five pounds lighter than the lad we had hoped to find, and about twenty pounds less than Bully Wade, but I felt that, with several months of careful training, I could have him ready to give away thirty pounds to the toughest ball player in any man's league.

BY this time I realized that I was growing fond of the kid. He was so darn genuine and eager to please that I liked to see him around. Only it was embarrassing the way he followed me all over the place.

I got to thinking it might be a real break for him to join McGuire's team for a while, though I knew the riding he'd take from the Grizzly stalwarts if he couldn't go through the motions of being a ball player.

"Ever play ball, son?" I asked him casually one day.

"Yes sir," he told me, "I can throw good."

And, by way of justifying the statement, he reached down and picked up a rock about the size of a baseball. His big, brown, calloused fist closed around the stone and he shot it straight as an arrow at a fence-post fifty feet away.

I hefted another rock and said, "Let's see you do it again," tossing it at him.

He picked it out of the air the way you would a bean bag, and whipped it right at the target again.

Full of surprises, that kid!

When I introduced Danny to Kicker McGuire, the farmer blushed and stammered. McGuire, being a celebrity in the sports world, all but enchanted him.

McGuire took in the pink cheeks, the baby smile and the round cow-like eyes, and drew me aside. "Listen, Broadway," he said. "This is serious business with me. The papers have gotten hold of the story of Wade's scraps. They don't know he socked me, but they do know that he brags he can bully the whole team. They christened him 'Wallop' Wade, and he took the title seriously. The papers kid him for a blowhard, but he doesn't get it. He thinks they're giving him a serious write-up. He plays careless ball and talks of going in the ring. Half the fans give him a big hand; the others give him the bird. I've *got* to get him licked. Then you trot out this kitten-faced apple-knocker!"

I called one of the boys who outweighed Danny about twenty-five pounds, and told 'em to go in there and mix it. Kicker McGuire and I walked away as if we weren't interested, but we ambled back again after a few punches had been swapped.

Danny started slowly, as usual, but in a couple of minutes he had big Lamar backing away. Oblivious of us and everything else, the kid was having the time of his life, banging away with those funny, wide, hook-like punches.

And the warmer he got, the more steam he put into them. Lamar was entirely satisfied when I called time, and so was Kicker McGuire.

The kid saw we'd been watching, and started to blush.

"Listen," McGuire said suddenly, "this is perfect. When you first meet this kid, he's so shy and pleasant he fools you. Perfect for the part. You give him a couple of months' work. Take off the rough corners, then send him along. Wade will pick on him quick enough. Don't tell the kid anything much. Tell him you're farming him out with me for conditioning . . . anything you want. When he licks Wade, I'll give him his dough and you can have him back."

I went right to work with Danny. He had a grand pair of shoulders, wide and sloping; big, strong, work-hardened hands; and hardly any neck. There was still a soft ridge of pink flesh around his middle, sort of baby fat. His arms were thick and a bit too tightly-muscled, but in less than a month I had 'em loosened up and his mid-section looked like a nice hard washboard. And he began to warm up inside as soon as I pulled the gloves on him.

It was hard work trying to teach him to time his punches, and his foot-work was still pretty awful, but he was a healthy brute and had grand wind. He needed it to hold the pace he set for himself. I was beginning to have ideas about making something of him after McGuire's little stunt was pulled, and it occurred to me that the publicity he'd get from knocking over the famous Wallop Wade wouldn't hurt him a bit.

Then I told him. He wasn't a boxer and wasn't to get the idea that he was. In fact, if he told anyone so, I'd be through with him. But I was going to give him a chance. A friend of mine, the famous Kicker McGuire, would give him a try-out with the Grizzlies. And if he behaved himself and kept in shape, I might see what could be done with him. It's a good stunt not to let kids

think they're too good. Bring 'em along easy.

Well, he admitted he liked to play ball. What husky American kid doesn't? But he didn't think he was good enough to join the Grizzlies. It told him I knew what was best for him, and promised to keep in touch with him.

Then I sent him along to McGuire and waited for the fireworks.

THE papers were giving Wade plenty of space. It seems that he'd tangled with a player on the Bisons in the middle of a game and they'd decided to have it out. The two teams got together quietly and arranged it. They rode out to Boyle's Bluff, roped off a clearing in the woods, and the lads went to it.

Both teams were hoping that Wade would get hammered to a pulp, but the big stiff slammed the sawdust out of his opponent in one round! The papers got wind of it and spread themselves.

He was shameless in his bragging now, and I knew he couldn't miss picking on the farmer recruit.

Then I received a wire from McGuire to come, at his expense, as soon as possible. And he spilled the bad news.

True to form, Wade had started to boot the farmer recruit around, cussin' him out and picking on him. But the rube thought Wade was swell. He always had thought him a grand guy anyhow, and, since the spectacular one-round knockout at Boyle's Bluff, he'd been completely enthralled.

Every night when he said his prayers he asked the Lord to make him just like the great Wallop Wade.

The kid took all his abuse and came back for more; followed Wade around like a puppy with his eyes popping out. Wade was his idol, and he wouldn't think of resenting anything he said or did. McGuire had suggested to the kid that he take a poke at Wade, but Danny claimed that would be a sacrilege. And the end of the season was only two weeks off.

We had forgotten that hero-worship stuff in the kid's make-up.

I stuck around for a while, and after practice we went into the locker-room and Kicker told Danny he didn't think he was big league calibre and he was going to release him. Most of the team members were in the locker-room in various stages of dress. Mostly in B.V.D.'s.

The kid didn't say anything when McGuire told him, but you could see by the look in his face that he was hurt. He'd been trying hard. First I'd told him he wasn't a boxer, then Kicker had told him he couldn't play ball. It meant that he couldn't hang around all those swell guys any more. I shooed him out of my gym and now McGuire was giving him the blackball from the Grizzlies. Kids take those things hard.

His expression was so pathetic I made up my mind to tell him all about it later. Although he was such a simple rube that I anticipated a lot of trouble getting him to understand.

Big Snow, the catcher, came over and put his arm over the kid's shoulder.

"Never mind, Rube," he said. "This ball game business isn't so hot." That was pretty swell of Snow, because he was crazy about the game. He was only trying to cheer Danny up.

"Yeh?" piped up Wallop Wade. "Not for a guy 'at's slippin', it ain't. Or a punk farmer sap."

Danny just stood there in his underwear looking from one to the other.

Snow jumped up and called Wade, knowing full well that he was in for another licking. And Wade didn't disappoint him. He rushed at the catcher. Danny, who thought they were both grand guys, stood between and tried to keep them apart.

Wade lunged at the catcher. "Out of my way, punk," he shouted at Danny, and hit the rube a hard back-handed slap in the face.

I grabbed McGuire's arm and pointed. The kid's eyes were narrowing and the perspiration was standing out on his

forehead. His hands doubled up into big square fists, and his bottom lip shot out.

Before Wade knew what was up, Danny clipped him a belt on the shoulder that sent him spinning over a bench.

A strange, gurgling cry arose from that crowd of half-dressed, sweaty men in the crowded locker-room. Every man in the place hated Wade. Most of them had felt the smash of his fists. They'd all dreamed and most of them had tried to do just what the young recruit had done—knock Wade down.

My scalp tingled. I've seen a thousand scraps, but I knew instantly that this would be a real one. To the finish. Not a man in the room would raise his hand to stop it as long as there was a chance of Wade being licked. And I knew Danny well enough to realize that once he felt the weight of a few punches, felt his bare fists crashing into the other's face and body, he'd forget everything in the world but the thrill of battle.

CURSING, Wade leaped to his feet. He vaulted the bench that had spilled him and came at Danny. Bully or not, he was all fight. It wouldn't have made any difference to him if Danny had out-weighted him thirty pounds, instead of the other way around.

They met with a thud of swinging fists. Wade smashed Danny on the mouth and the rube jolted a wide hook into Wade's ribs with a crunch that drew a deep "Aah" from the circle of fascinated watchers.

Suddenly, Kicker McGuire shouted, "Stop! em! Snow, Wells, Dugan, all you guys—pull 'em apart!"

I stared at McGuire in sheer amazement. He'd planned this for months. I'd groomed Danny for the battle, and it promised to be one that would be long remembered. Two husky young brutes, killing mad, going at it with bare fists. A treat for the gods.

"Kicker!" I yelled. "What's the matter? Let 'em go!"

"No! Stop it!" he roared again and again. McGuire's word was law with those boys. They'd have given a year's pay to see the scrap go on, but they jumped in at Kicker's command.

Twenty brawny lads leaped on those two slashing gladiators, battling in the narrow space between two rows of lockers. Shouting, cursing, arms flailing, their undershirts torn to shreds, they seethed back and forth in a wild, milling mass. For a minute it looked like a grand free-for-all. One of those things that just happen when a lusty crowd is on edge and smells blood.

But McGuire's voice rang out like a top sergeant's, and the crowd finally pulled 'em apart. Wade, with two men on each arm and two more on his neck, was reviling Danny with blood-curdling threats.

Danny, with half a dozen athletes draped all over him, just stood there breathing hard, the sweat glistening on his naked torso. You could almost see the red blood pounding in his veins; the light of battle in his eye.

"Listen, McGuire," I rapped out. "If you changed your mind, why didn't you tell me about it?"

"I didn't change my mind, Broadway. I've got a swell scheme. We'll get this Wade licked where the whole world can see, newspapers and all. I'm going to smoke this thing up and have it put on in a ring—before thousands." And he grinned like a cannibal inspecting a nice fat missionary.

"The Grizzlies are finishing in sixth place on account of this guy's monkey business," McGuire continued. "With Wade playing real ball next year, he'll be the keystone for a first division team. I need him. A public licking is the only thing that will snap him out of it. Man, I'm out after the pennant. With the old harmony restored, I'll get it!"

"Yeah?" I remarked.

"Yeah. And the season is over in two weeks," smiled the wily old vet. "If

they want to stage a ring fight, who's going to stop 'em?"

Both McGuire and I felt that a first-class middleweight could take the two of them in succession, but there was all that color the press had built up around Wade and the public's natural desire to see a grudge fight. That was what McGuire counted on—making the public pay for Mister Wallop Wade's long overdue spanking.

THE Grizzlies' boss called Joe Price at the Lakeside Arena and told him that the well known Wallop Wade had tangled with a new player on the team and that their fight had been interrupted. Kicker suggested that Price go ahead and arrange a bout, keeping McGuire's name out of it. He felt that both boys would be satisfied, and at the same time he'd be doing a favor for his good old friend, Joe Price. McGuire had such a smooth line that you couldn't tell whether or not he meant all he said, but Price fell for it hard and thanked him profusely for the tip.

Shortly thereafter the papers had McGuire on the phone to verify the rumor that the great Wallop Wade was going to appear at the Lakeside Arena in a grudge fight with a Grizzly recruit. It was then we decided that I should stay in the background.

The thing was all on the up-and-up, but we didn't want Wade to get the idea that a boy had been specially trained for him.

And, if I appeared in Danny's corner, the wisecracks of sportdom would smell the well known rat.

The whole affair caught the public's imagination. A few hours after the papers were on the street Price was deluged with demands for tickets.

Then Price telephoned that Danny wouldn't sign up. Wade had been tickled to death, and had started giving out interviews and pictures.

McGuire found the dumb granger hanging on the edge of a crowd standing around Wade in the hotel lobby,

listening to the bully brag—and scared to death. It seems that, when he'd cooled off after the locker-room fracas and realized he'd belted the famous Wallop Wade, he became panicky. And, ever since, he'd been following Wade around—trying to apologize!

But Wade wasn't to be done out of his spot in the limelight. He told the world that the treacherous rube had hit him when he wasn't looking, and his ring debut would be in the nature of vindicating his reputation. Some of the fans believed him, but most of them were ready to dig down and put money on the line in the hope of seeing him knocked silly.

The whole team was behind Danny to a man. Those few socks in the locker-room had given them an insight into what to expect, and they were willing to mortgage their insurance to bet on the farmer.

McGuire got the kid up in his room and started to give him the needles, but Danny was sunk. An Aztec Indian brave who'd gotten plastered and taken a war club to one of his stone idols couldn't have been more awed by the realization of his depravity than Danny was.

"Honestly, Mister McGuire," Danny said, "I didn't realize what I was doing. Won't you ask Mister Wade to forgive me?"

Can you tie that one?

All the boys joined in with Kicker and tried to make Danny see the light, but he sat there in a daze, for all the world like a kid caught robbing the poor box. And that night, when the others were in bed, he hopped a train and beat it.

Two days later I drove past his dad's farm and there he was, following a plough. I stopped to say hello, and he started all over again to apologize for getting in trouble after Mr. McGuire had been so nice to him. It was on the point of my tongue to tell him the whole story, but I just told him to forget it and suggested that he drop over to my

place and fool around the gym if he wanted to.

Meanwhile, Price was stewing around in an effort to complete arrangements for the scrap. Kicker himself must have lent a hand, for a few days later Danny's father came over to my place with a newspaper under his arm.

"Mister Cook," he said, "should my boy fight this Wade feller?" He was built like Danny, wide and strong, but he had more chin and quick, gray eyes.

I started to tell him that they were fairly well matched and that Danny was in excellent condition, but he cut me short.

"What I wanted to know, Mister Cook, did this Wade feller hit Daniel first?"

I told him that Wade had most certainly hit his boy first. That seemed to satisfy him.

"All right, Mister Cook," he snapped. "Daniel will fight him."

But the kid's heart wasn't in it. The big clown wanted to be friends with the great Mister Wade. McGuire, who drove down to get him the day of the fight, said the kid almost blubbered about it.

OF course, I wasn't in his corner, although I'd have given a lot to be. And when I saw him sitting on his stool staring across the ring, gazing at the blustering Wallop Wade with mute appeal in his eyes, my heart smote me. Maybe he shouldn't fight him. But it was too late.

The fans were in a holiday mood. They weren't expecting to see a boxing exhibition. They were going to see a fight, a Roman holiday. Two gladiators, reputed by the press to be deadly enemies, were going to slam each other from bell to bell because they hated each other's insides.

The referee called them to the center of the ring, and, after the usual instructions, the kid hesitated and stuck out his hand, mumbling something. Wade brushed it aside with an ugly grin. "Too

late for that now, punk," he growled, loud enough to be heard in the balcony.

Bugs at the ringside went wild at that. Swell! No dancing contest, this. Gore would be spilled.

At the bell Wade pranced out, and he certainly looked good. Over six feet, hard and hairy. Undeniably, he had a certain animal grace in his movements—and confidence. Wasn't he the great Wallop Wade?

Danny ambled from his corner apologetically, and the crowd started to twit him about his baby face. The smarter ones looked at his thick arms and sloping shoulders and said nothing. But the ringside wits were in fine form.

"Don't hit him, Wade! Put him over your knee and spank him!" they yelled.

Wade went right to work. He lashed out with a good stiff jab that sent Danny back on his heels. Then he pounded the kid's ribs with a clubbing right. I've seen good scrappers do a lot worse. Danny was backing up. Wade smacked him again in the face, then started one from the floor that caught Danny flush on the chin. The rube hit the canvas with a crash.

The crowd was yelling for a knockout. But the kid was getting up. He'd been stung, hard. The sweat was running and his eyes were narrowing to slits. This big guy in front of him wasn't his idol now. He was just someone who'd banged the thrill of combat into him. And how that simple farmer loved to swap punches when he was stung!

His arms started to swing in that awkward, punishing, side-to-side chop, and each time they found their mark, the kid's baby-like face lit up in a grin of savage joy.

But Wade was game, and the end of the round found them standing toe to toe, slugging with hearty abandon. The referee had to part them at the bell. Danny was warmed up now. He wouldn't have backed up for the champion himself. And Wade would swap punches until he couldn't see rather

than give ground in front of all those fans.

You couldn't hear yourself think for the shouting of the mob. Here was one scrap that lived up to the ballyhoo.

At the opening of the second round both men rushed and came together like a couple of wild bulls. I'd given Danny some careful training, but he still looked awkward—unless you were in front of him.

Those short, jolting hooks of his were crunching into Wade's ribs, and every once in a while he let drive at Wade's head. The walloper slipped a head punch and caught Danny a hard crack on the ear. The kid went down again, but was up before the referee could lift his arm to start counting. I'll bet the kid didn't even know he'd been knocked down.

In he bored, left and right. A jolt to the belly and smash to the chin. Wade was throwing punches in Danny's face as hard and as fast as he could lift his arms. But the rube kept up his two-handed attack, and Wade started to give ground. Then—again—a left to the belly, a right to the chin, and Wade went down!

The bully, the loud-mouth, the braggart, was on his hands and knees!

You couldn't hear the referee count. The kid wouldn't stay in his corner where the referee chased him. He was leaning forward, blood running from his nose—waiting for that shape to get up from the floor so he could knock it down again. He didn't know the crowd was shouting his name. He didn't know there was a crowd. All he knew was that he wanted to smash and hit until he couldn't raise his arms.

Wade struggled to his feet at seven. Danny was on top of him again. A left

to the belly—a right to the chin. I found myself shouting at the top of my lungs. Me, Broadway Cook, who has slept through many a championship battle.

Danny's hooking left thudded into Wade's mid-section, but, when his right followed it, Wade's head wasn't there. Wade spun slowly around and crashed down on his face, like a felled tree. The fans went completely out of their minds.

But Wade didn't hear them. He had taken his punishment like a man—and he was out. Battered into unconsciousness by a kid who wouldn't hurt a fly until that battle thrill warms him up inside.

The papers gave Danny a write-up that a champion might envy. A green farmer boy comes out of the sticks and blasts the great Wallop Wade into the fistic discard. Before Danny left the Lakeside Arena that night, Midge Calhoun, boxing manager supreme, had signed him up. He's made. A headliner in his first ring fight.

Well, just the other day I was reading that Calhoun has arranged to have Danny meet the one stumbling block to the middleweight title. And one of these birds who runs a column in a newspaper had a little piece about him—and me.

"It seems," this owl writes, "that the astute Broadway Cook overlooked a bet in the new middleweight sensation. Broadway, who has conditioned a dozen champions, looked Danny Peters over not so long ago when the kid wanted to enter the ring, and told him he should make a good ball player."

I let it go. Even if I did tell these wise birds the truth, they wouldn't believe it. But it does sort of get my goat.

Well, that's how it goes.

Ram Guesclin gambled his wings away. Then staked his last play against a madman's squadron to carry on in the storm sky—sharing victory with the man he sent to Aces' Valhalla. Read F. N. Littens' complete air adventure novel, "Flight Order 13," in AIR STORIES, now on the stands.

Which Was the Greatest: Jeff, Fitz or Dempsey?

WINNERS IN *FIGHT STORIES* \$500 PRIZE LETTER CONTEST

First Prize (\$250.00)

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Honorable Mention: Roy Bell, Cincinnati, Ohio; J. S. Dewar, Medfield, Mass.; William Quinn, Brooklyn, N. Y.; John Lasky, Hamtramck, Mich.; P. S. Rigg, Mystic, Conn.; D. C. Campbell, Pittsfield, Mass.

ONE of the most unusual contests in the periodical literature of the ring drew to a close on July 20th, when the last surging torrent of letters poured into *Fight Stories'* offices in response to the query: "Which was the greatest—Jeffries, Fitzsimmons or Dempsey?"

Selecting, discarding and rating the mass of competent submissions to this contest was a task well worthy of the experts who had consented to act as judges—namely, Jimmy De Forest, Hype Igoe and Jack Kofoed.

While answers to a question of this nature are necessarily a matter of opinion, that opinion, if authoritative, can be arrived at only through a complete knowledge of the ring and of the fighters in question plus an imagination capable of picturing them against each other at their best.

Sounds like quite a task, doesn't it? Yet hundreds of letters among the great number submitted revealed not only a surprising ability in this regard but a marked facility in writing. Not a few of them—amateur efforts though they were—compared favorably with the work of expert sports writers.

Personal preference on the part of the judges for either Jeffries, Fitzsimmons or Dempsey was ignored in choos-

ing the winners. The point at issue—which was the greatest and why?—was decided on the basis of logical argument and the manner in which it was set forth.

It is interesting to note, however, the preferences on the part of the contestants themselves. Figured in units of a thousand, a summary of the letters submitted reads as follows:

DEMPSEY	JEFFRIES	FITZSIMMONS
2141	1663	1382
41%	32%	27%

Dempsey, you see, is the popular choice. He ranks first in the eyes of the modern fight fan. Jeffries, however, was a fairly close second, with Fitzsimmons, also strong in actual numbers, bringing up in the rear.

We haven't the space at our disposal to go into details concerning the interesting sidelights of the contest. That there were many goes without saying. The outstanding fact, we repeat, was the general excellence of the letters themselves. *Fight Stories'* readers are real fans. They know their ring and they know their fighters.

The gong clangs long and shrilly. The fight is over, and the announcer steps forward to indicate the winner. A brief silence falls upon the crowd; then a roar ascends as the right hand of H. H.

"Jumbo" Smith, of Elkhart, Indiana, is elevated in token of victory.

Give him a hand, fellows. He waged a grand battle against terrific odds.

First Prize Letter

Contest Editor, *Fight Stories*:

Which was the greatest—Fitzsimmons, Jeffries or Dempsey? My answer is Jack Dempsey, and here are facts that are indisputable:

First of all, we must recognize that the people on this earth progress. It is impossible to stop progress. Everything is continually made better in keeping with progress. This natural law pertains to boxing as well as to all other things. Athletic records are continually being bettered, and boxers as a whole are also continually growing better because they have the benefit of the experience of all those who have fought before them. Trainers guard against past mistakes and capitalize on the valuable qualities.

To emphasize the greatness of Dempsey, I find it necessary to make a comparison with fighters starting with John L. Sullivan. Sullivan was noted for his right to the jaw and bulldog tenacity. *So was Dempsey.* Next we come to Corbett, with his uncanny speed. In Dempsey's fight with Willard at Toledo, all sports critics admitted that Dempsey was one of the fastest heavyweights to ever grace the throne. So, when we say that Corbett had uncanny speed, we must also admit: *So had Dempsey.* Next we come to Fitzsimmons, with his famous solar-plexus punch, which was nothing but a right to the body. Where in ring history has there ever been the equal of the Dempsey roll and right hand to the body? In admitting that Fitz had a wonderful right to the body, we must again say, *so had Dempsey.* Next in line is Jeffries, with his famous left hook and crouch. We must admit that we have never seen the equal of the Dempsey left hook, and his rolling, bobbing and weaving far surpasses the Jeffries crouch for the very obvious reason that it is much harder to hit a moving target than a stationary one. So again, when we mention *the best that Jeffries had*, we must say *so had Dempsey*, and more.

In summing up all this evidence, we are forced to admit that Dempsey had the combined greatness of all the others, wrapped up into one piece of fighting machinery, which, when backed by the most aggressive, tigerish and ferocious fighting heart the world has ever known, makes Dempsey stand out as the greatest heavyweight champion of all time.

Let us also not lose track of the fact that many of the old-timers dissipated quite a bit, as was the custom in those days. Today the game is so fast and scientific that a fighter who dissipates is soon lost in the discards.

I will venture the probable outcome of Dempsey fighting the great ones mentioned:

Dempsey versus Sullivan—Dempsey, with his speed, weaving and tremendous hitting power, would have been an easy winner over

Sullivan because John L.'s dissipated body would have broken down under the Dempsey body punches. Besides, Sullivan, boxing in the old flat-footed style, could not have evaded Dempsey's punches.

Dempsey versus Corbett—A beautiful fight while it would have lasted, with Dempsey the winner. Corbett not rugged enough for the tigerish Dempsey.

Fitzsimmons versus Dempsey—Fitz, with his straight-standing style, would have been cut down hurriedly. No man the age of Fitzsimmons could have taken the body punches of a Dempsey, because they all live in the body.

Jeffries versus Dempsey—Dempsey again, after a hard fight. Jeff not aggressive enough for Dempsey. Jeff usually had to hammer them for many rounds to wear them down. Dempsey needed only one opening. So it really looks like Dempsey all the way.

I observe that you have all old-timers for judges. I like them all and believe in their sincerity, knowing them to be capable judges. I also sincerely hope that through loyalty to the good old times, they will not lose track of the progression of youth. I am also a sort of old-timer, having been a close student of the boxing game for the past twenty-three years, but I willingly and proudly bow my head to progress. It cannot be stopped and will always continue, so long as mankind has a brain with which to think.

H. H. "JUMBO" SMITH,
Elkhart, Ind.

Second Prize Letter

Contest Editor, *Fight Stories*:

"Which was the greatest, Fitzsimmons, Jeffries or Dempsey?"

It was my privilege to have known, personally and well, each of these three great gladiators of the prize ring—Robert Fitzsimmons, James J. Jeffries and Jack Dempsey, as well as to have observed them closely in action in encounters with the leading aspirants for their respective crowns. Having been actively connected with ring affairs in the "good old days" in almost every capacity pertaining thereto, I feel qualified to pass judgement upon the relative merits of the three champions mentioned above.

The world's premier heavyweight champion of champions was none other than good old freckled Bob Fitzsimmons, whose unmatched prowess in the prize ring made him invincible to all comers until the relentless grim reaper, Father Time, cut down his speed and endurance at the ripe old fighting age of fifty years. When Bob fought Jeffries and Jack O'Brien, he was but a phantom of his former self, possessed still of the marvelous fighting heart and spirit, but many years older than any boxing commission of today would consider as an eligible age for granting a license to box in public.

Jack Dempsey was a good, natural, two-handed fighter, and probably would have beaten Jeffries could they have come together

in the squared arena during their prime. Jack had his own peculiar weaving style of boxing, which enabled him to deliver heavy blows with either hand, and yet he knew very little of the fine art of self defense. Fitzsimmons would have landed his mighty blow upon Dempsey's chin almost to a certainty, and that would have been just too bad for the Man Mauler.

James J. Jeffries was a manufactured rather than a natural fighter. Because of his huge frame and strength, he was tutored and coached by Tommy Ryan to box in a crouched position with his left arm fully extended. His extraordinary reach made him unbeatable for a short while, and he was lucky enough not to meet Fitzsimmons in the ring until the latter's age had undermined his vitality and endurance.

Fitzsimmons had the true fighter's heart, and had no fear of the other fellow's punch. In defeating Corbett for the world's heavyweight title, he willingly accepted all the facial punches that a clever boxer could bestow, waited for the proper opening, then, with a double shift of the feet to give impetus to the blow, sank his left glove deep into the pit of Champion Corbett's abdomen, knocking him completely out and enlightening the world as to the effectiveness of the solar-plexus punch.

Believing that most of the old-timers will agree with me in pronouncing Robert Fitzsimmons as the greatest of the three, and Jack Dempsey as the second greatest, I await with much interest your endorsement of my sentiments as expressed above.

HOMER H. SELBY,
Tampa, Fla.

Third Prize Letter

Contest Editor, *Fight Stories*:

Fitzsimmons, Jeffries, Dempsey. Ruby Robert, Big Jim, Jack the Giant Killer. Magic names these, in pugilistic circles. Names that are emblazoned indelibly upon the records of ring history. Names to conjure with.

Boxing experts are almost unanimously agreed that these three are the greatest heavyweights of all time. A peerless triumvirate. But to enumerate them in order of greatness were a dark horse of the darkest hue; an exceedingly difficult task to say the least.

Each had some particular quality more highly developed than the others; each was peculiarly effective against a certain type of opponent; each has his own ardent supporters among experts and laymen alike.

Taken collectively, they are an epitome of boxing and fighting perfection; individually, they are not. It is highly improbable that any fighter of any weight ever attained to fistic perfection.

It is hard to compare and contrast the merits and shortcomings of fighters who performed in different periods of the game. The gangling Fitzsimmons' star of ascendancy was on the wane when he fell before the onslaught of the ponderous Jeffries. Dempsey never faced either Fitz or Jeff within the squared circle. Hence, any direct, authoritative statement as

to which of the three shall be accorded the accolade of champion of champions is apt to be "sicklied o'er with the pale cast" of personal opinion.

In my own humble belief, the Manassa Mauler gets the nod.

When a scowling, beetle-browed youngster came out of the West to annihilate Jess Willard at Toledo, July 4th, 1919, in one of the most spectacular, bloody, short-lived and one-sided title bouts on record, there was ushered in the reign of the most popular and most colorful heavyweight champ who ever donned a glove. For seven years this curly-headed, dark-visaged son of Colorado was to be the cynosure of pugilistic fandom. Even at this late date, nearing four years since his unsuccessful attempt to regain the crown from Gene Tunney, Dempsey is still much in the public eye. His travels hither and yon as an itinerant referee and his ventures as a promoter have served to add to his already widespread popularity. His democracy and amiability have endeared him to millions.

However, fighting and not personality, is the final basis on which pugilistic greatness must rest.

The Dempsey of private life and the Dempsey of the arena were as dissimilar as Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. When facing an opponent, the erstwhile genial Jack was transformed into a relentless fighting machine imbued with the killer instinct. It is the opinion of many that this innate ferocity and implacability was the factor that, more than any other single virtue, elevated Dempsey from the quagmire of mediocrity to the top rung of the fistic ladder. No other heavyweight, before or since, has possessed it in like degree.

Dempsey's physical equipment was inferior to that of Jeffries, in that Big Jim was much the larger. However, ring tradition has it that weight advantage in the heavyweight division is a negligible factor, provided a man tips the scales at as much as one eighty-five.

Fitzsimmons was in reality a heavy welterweight. With the torso of a full-fledged heavy, his legs might have graced a ballet dancer. However, he was extremely active in the ring.

In any classification as to physical qualifications, I would rank Jeffries first, followed by Dempsey and Fitzsimmons in the order named. What advantage soever Jeff may have had in weight and sheer power may have well been offset by Fitzsimmons' and Dempsey's superior speed.

Of the three, the lank Cornishman was probably the best boxer, although Jeff was no slouch, and Dempsey once out-pointed a master of science in the person of Tommy Gibbons.

Jeffries, because of his more heavily-muscled body, may have been more capable of assimilating punishment. Certainly all three were, upon occasion, the recipients of awful shellackings.

As to punching ability, all three were there with bells on. Fitz was essentially a body puncher; Jeff and Jack hit 'em anywhere; and all were ambidextrous sleep-producers. But for plain and fancy two-handed belting from

any angle, Dempsey never had an equal. It is doubtful if any fighter was ever hit as hard and as often as Jack walloped the Pottawattomie Giant at Toledo.

I think that Dempsey's win over Willard, Carpentier, Firpo, Brennan, Gibbons and Sharkey—all top-notchers—gives him a competitive edge over Fitz and Jeff that cannot be gainsaid.

True, Jack was twice out-pointed by Gene Tunney, but fighters do not last forever. A Dempsey slowed up by age, faltering underpinning and inaction, faced possibly the greatest of defensive heavyweights—a back-pedaler par excellent—failed to catch him, and lost.

Be that as it may, Dempsey has no need of alibis. His record speaks for itself.

Fitzsimmons, Jeffries, Dempsey, Ruby Robert, Big Jim, Jack the Giant Killer. Step up and take your choice. As for me—I give you William Harrison Dempsey, the greatest of them all!

C. R. PENNINGTON,
Tallahassee, Fla.

Fourth Prize Letter

Contest Editor *Fight Stories*:

Your offer of \$500 in prizes for letters as to which was the greatest, Fitzsimmons, Jeffries or Dempsey, is the best news printed since the "depression" started.

Having seen each of the three in action, I can give an opinion formed by actual observation of the men under fighting conditions. Without hesitation, I consider the greatest of all champions to be that grand old warrior James J. Jeffries. There is not a single blemish on his record; not a defeat or a foul blow marked on it. When I consider his record, I am doing so from the day he started as a fighter until he retired as undefeated champion of the world.

Throw out that so-called fight against Jack Johnson. That was not the champion in there fighting, but an old man against a young and vigorous one in the hey-day of his youth and power. I can't consider Jeff as the champion in that fight, but only as an old man fighting for the money he was to get.

Jeff's record is too long to enter into in detail here, so I am only going to take his two greatest fights as concrete examples of that greatness. I think most everyone will agree that those were his twenty-five-round draw with Tom Sharkey and his twenty-three-round knockout of James J. Corbett. These two fights against men of completely different styles give a good line on Jeff.

I had the pleasure of seeing both these fights, and I don't think there has been a fight in the last thirty years to equal either one. If so, I haven't seen or heard of it, and I've been to fights in many places since.

Let us consider the Sharkey fight first. There never was a fighter who could slug and slug, round after round, like old Sailor Tom. His only defense was his offense. His only worry in a fight was to hit the other fellow as hard as he could and not bother about how

often the other fellow hit him. Tom had supreme confidence in his own ability to take punishment. He honestly believed that no man could hit him hard enough to hurt him, and up to the night he fought Jeff I don't believe anyone did.

That night things were different, and for the first time in his life Tom met a man who could and *did* give and take more than himself. I can look back over the years and see those two marvelous physical giants under those blazing arc lights, which threw off so much heat that both men lost their hair a short time later as a result.

Sailor Tom, with the ship tattooed on his chest; 190 pounds on legs like pillars, and a fifty-four inch chest which looked like a big oak barrel.

Jeff, with his curly black hair and those powerful arms that looked as large as an ordinary man's thighs, and as grand a pair of legs as ever stood in the ring. Husky as Sharkey looked, Jeff, with his 225 pounds and greater height, made him appear small by comparison.

What a fight that was! Round after round the men tore into each other, both giving and taking blows that would have stopped any of the present-day crop of heavyweights. During the fight Jeff broke a couple of Sharkey's ribs with his terrific punches, and took plenty himself.

When the fight ended with both men on their feet at the end of twenty-five rounds, the draw decision was a fair one. It was plain, however, that Jeff was in the better condition, ready to keep on indefinitely, while Sharkey was pretty badly battered.

Fitz at his best would never have been able to stand up and keep going under the punishment Jeff absorbed that night. He would have been physically unable, with his spindle legs and light poundage. Dempsey did not absorb as much punishment in his whole career as Jeff did that night, yet threw off and kept going. Dempsey did take a couple of hard ones in the Firpo fight, and dealt out plenty of punishment in his day, but there is no record of his punches breaking any bones. When Jeff let go one of his real punches, there was always a chance of a broken rib or jaw if it landed right.

Now let us consider the Corbett fight. Here Jeff was up against the man who has been almost unanimously acclaimed the greatest boxer in the heavyweight class the game ever knew. For twenty-two rounds Corbett stabbed Jeff five blows to one and looked like a sure winner. Jeff kept boring in with his head behind his left shoulder in his famous crouch, and, when he did land on Corbett, there was more damage done than by Corbett's jabs. Jeff kept trying to corner the smoothly moving shadow in front of him, confident that, if he could land just one right, he would discount the lead already piled up by Corbett.

In the twenty-third round it happened. Although it is a general rule never to lead with the right, it looked to me that night as if Corbett started a feint with his right and then swung his left for Jeff's jaw. As fast as

lightning, Jeff hooked over to Corbett's jaw, and it was curtains for Pompadour Jim.

Corbett seemed to rise off his toes and slide across the ring, so hard and sure was that punch. He was completely out for over a minute, and it was difficult for his seconds to convince him that the fight was over.

Those two fights showed that Jeff had everything that goes to make a champion. Speed, punching ability and the stamina to take it and keep on going to win. Fitzsimmons never looked like the popular conception of a champion heavyweight. He could certainly hit like the kick of a mule with his right, but, when he did, the brittle bones in his hand crumbled up, and that hand was useless for months afterward. So I can't see Fitz as the greatest champ of all time.

Dempsey had a marvelous attack, a savage one for three or four rounds, but Tunney proved at Philadelphia that a clever boxer could make Jack fight himself out in that time and then be out-pointed for the decision. Dempsey was also easy to hit, coming in wide open, and I believe Jeff would have torn his head off with his terrible left hand. I saw the Firpo fight, and as I watched that big South American go down and get up off the floor time and again, the thought came to me

that he would have stayed down if Jefferies had been in there and hitting as he did in his prime.

So once more I say Jeff had everything. There was never a left hand to equal Jeff's, and very few were better with the right. He was also a fine boxer, much better than many gave him credit for being.

He also could think fast and change his style of fighting to suit the occasion. When you looked at Jim Jefferies on the street or in the ring, you knew you were looking at a champion. In fact, he was the original of that famous picture entitled "Der Champion," with the crowd following him. Fitz, with his awkward build and spindly legs, never looked the part, nor did Dempsey, with his soft voice and diffident manner in public.

But Jeff was the perfect type of champion as pictured by the average fight fan. In looks and deeds he was a real champ. So, before he passes out of life's picture out there in California, let the grand old warrior once more hear the thunder of the crowd as they mingle their cheers with mine for the greatest champion of them all—James J. Jefferies.

HARRY McCABE,

Somerville, Mass.

FIGHTERS AND RACE HORSES

KID CHOCOLATE has been a hard man to figure in the past. He was a strong favorite to beat Jack Kid Berg, Fidel LaBarba and Bat Battalino—yet he lost all those bouts. Then, when Benny Bass was looked on as a sure-thing to trim him, he came through with one of the greatest exhibitions of his career, and stopped the junior lightweight champion.

In that way he is like the great racehorse, Twenty Grand, which, backed to the limit in the Preakness and the Chicago Derby, was beaten by Pete Bostwick's Mate. Men, like thoroughbreds, are not always at the top of their form. Today they may be marvelous, and tomorrow the vital spark is dimmed. No one knows why.



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The Vagabond Slugger



By **PHIL
RICHARDS**

Author of "Has-Been"

Care-free tourists of sock were Hank and Jeff, traveling by way of side-door Pullmans in search of ring adventure. In Faint Hope, ruled by insolent-eyed Matt Clark and his henchman, Killer Kildare, they found it . . . coiled like a rattler and ready to strike.

THE rattler rumbled to a stop in the town of Faint Hope, and two furtive heads poked above the bulwark of a gondola to scan the landscape with eyes alert for a road bull. Except for a cowpuncher dangling his booted legs from the top rail of the station corral, a sleepy baggage-smasher gazing disgustedly at a trunk, a telegraph operator, and a shack signaling to the engineer, Faint Hope's depot was deserted.

"Come on, Jeff," said craggy, grizzled little Hank Grady, adjusting his expensive straw kelly over his left cauliflower ear. "Let's skin out of our private car."

"Okay," replied big Jeff McCarthy, vaulting over the side and landing with a springy, catlike movement.

Dirty, soiled, bedraggled, hungry looking, they were, though dressed in

the height of Broadway fashion. Jeff wore a blue-banded straw hat, and his gray suit had nicked his late bank roll one yard of the long green. Hank, too, was tricked out like a boilermaker on a holiday. Cleaned and groomed, they would have looked like dough, though now each could have done nicely with a plate of beans.

Just a couple of traveling men going nowhere, Hank and Jeff had long before met in a hobo jungle and come to an agreement whereby Jeff was to engage in ring fights, with Hank managing, so they could shuffle along the endless road free of worries concerning the next meal.

They encountered a difficulty. Jeff's dynamiting maulies were money-makers, and money brings prosperity, which neither of them could stand. With a

few century notes, they would loaf in a big way until the last dollar vanished and Jeff was so hog-fat that no match-maker would look at him twice. For months they had been in the cities, but now adversity had forced them out among the tank towns, hunting for trouble that would net them three squares a day.

Hank inquired the whereabouts of the Faint Hope Arena, and was told it was on the outskirts of the town, where he probably would find the promoter, because a program was scheduled for the following night.

"Mebbe we'll play into luck," mused Hank, "an' land a job of substitutin'."

"It's ham and eggs I want to meet, not ham-and-egggers," mumbled Jeff. "Sign me with nobody until I get me a sparring match with a side of beef. I lead with my right on some victuals before I shoot my left to anybody's mug!"

They found the thin-lipped, insolent-eyed Matt Clark, the promoter, in his office, indulging in a sitting fest with a couple of his cauliflowers. Clark looked up, sneered, and then concentrated again on his task of sitting.

Hank Grady hadn't managed to eat without working these many years without savvying the human equation. High-pressure stuff on Clark and a flying wedge would escort him from the office. You had to sneak up on this jasper.

Hank studied the fight pictures on the wall, stared a while out the window, and moseyed into the arena to gaze at the ring. After a time he sauntered back and advanced a pleasantry.

"Nice cozy place you've got," he commented.

"Yeah? Who told you?" snapped the promoter.

Well, maybe Hank was wrong. He tried again.

"Need any help tomorrow night?" he asked cautiously.

"Got my towel swingers," barked Clark.

Hang tugged at his cauliflower ear.

"Thought, mebbe, you might need some good light-heavyweight talent."

That struck a responsive chord.

"Huh!" grunted the promoter. "Who's your fighter? Bring him in. I need a light-heavy against my heavyweight. Can your tramp take 'em?"

Hank called Jeff. The fighter entered and shoved out his mitt, which Clark ignored.

"You've got a hungry look," muttered the impresario. "Guess you'll put up a fight. I need you tomorrow night against 'Killer' Kildare. If you cop the duke, you get a hundred bucks. If you don't—nothing. And you won't! Want the fight?"

"Sure!" exclaimed Hank jubilantly.

"All right." Clark scribbled something on a slip of paper, and handed it to Hank. "That'll set you punks up to grub down at my Golden Hour Food Emporium. You can sleep in the arena."

HANK and Jeff did themselves proud at Matt Clark's Golden Hour, the more pretentious of the two eating houses in Faint Hope. Lighting cigars after the festivities, the pair strolled around town. At the pool hall Hank inquired about Killer Kildare.

"Is he tough!" answered a cow poke. "Huh! That ranny onct dropped a three-year-old steer with his bare knucks."

Hank's jaw sagged. "Looks as if we'd stepped into something, hey?" he remarked.

But with full stomachs and fragrant cigars the pards never worried about tomorrow. After exhausting the points of interest, they returned to the arena and chose the ring as the likeliest spot to pound the ear. Hank discovered a broom and swept the resin dust off the canvas.

"This stuff gets in the eyes," he explained.

"Yeah," the fighter returned dryly, "so I've heard."

"Well, keep it out of your blinkers to-

morrow night," said Hank, grinning.

Jeff was not the sort to fiddle around when it was shut-eye time. Removing his kicks, he stretched his rangy body on the ring floor, and looked lazily at Hank.

"Gosh," he murmured, "pretty dog-gone comfortable."

"You'd better bear in mind," retorted Hank, "that a ring ain't built for comfort, or you may grow so fond of lyin' down in it that you develop the habit."

Though dog-tired, Hank Grady was beset by an overwhelming desire to snoop. Maybe he'd locate the hot-dog man's supply lockers. Still with a stack of postponed meals to check off, Hank could always eat.

In the dressing-room his groping hands found a cabinet. Feeling for the knob, he opened the door and struck a match, revealing an array of the usual ring accessories—bandages, cotton, colloid, antiseptics, rub-down liniment. But a row of neat little cartons presented a formidable aspect to Hank Grady. Plaster of paris!

It didn't take the cagey old hobo long to connect up facts. Fights ended here the way Clark ordained. And these cartons boded ill for the tramp fighter. To the Faint Hope promoter Jeff McCarthy was just a plug who had drifted in for a few set-downs and a flop. He didn't rate, whereas this Killer Kildare probably was Clark's chief drawing card.

Life hadn't taught Hank to ignore the dark clouds and search for the silver lining. Well enough he knew that Jeff was on the sucker list for tomorrow night, that the promoter wasn't risking his main source of income on a non-descript when dukes doctored with plaster of paris would remove the chance of a fluke.

As fond of his big clown as he was of regular meals, Hank wasn't going to sit outside the ropes and watch his pal murdered with a pair of concrete pile-drivers. Either he came to an understanding with Clark or the pair would grab a rattler to the next burg.

Being a smart manager and knowing that it was his job to do the worrying, Hank didn't confide in Jeff. No use giving the big boy something to think about.

Not until the next noon did Hank locate Matt Clark.

"Boss," began the old-timer in his most ingratiating manner, "just to have everything according to Hoyle, McCarthy and Kildare don the gloves in the ring. I always demand that. Okay? It'll give us each a chance to inspect bandages before the mob. Protection, see? No possibilities of gamblers pulling a phony."

For a moment Clark's eyes narrowed and he bit viciously into his cigar. Then he laughed and passed a cheroot to Hank.

"Sure," he said jovially, "sure! It's okay with me. That's the business. You know, Grady, that battler of yours looks good to me. Yeah! Get him in shape, and I'll throw some real trade his way. Been needing some new talent for my boxing shows. What do you say we drop around to Mike's place and discuss this matter over a few beers?"

Wise old head though he was, Hank didn't suspect anything amiss in Matt Clark's sudden change of attitude.

"Well, now," he said, "speaking of beers—"

IN the meantime, Jeff was hunched over the counter at the Golden Hour, performing a Houdini on a double order of ham and eggs. After that, he searched the town for Hank, and, not finding him, he dropped around to the pool hall to let the boys know how to lay their coin.

"Yeah?" grunted a cowpuncher. "Put our wages on you, huh?" The fellow laughed and turned to his companions. "What's going to happen to this dude, gents?"

A prolonged guffaw. Jeff was nonplussed, but no one knew better than he how to fashion a grin. The tougher the spot, the brighter the face. He never

allowed imagination to sock him down.

A bit angry over the disappearance of Hank, he strolled around town, and then found a cool box car on a siding, where he took a nap. Awakening at three, he stowed away an order of ham and eggs, a steak, a plate of hash, and then snoozed until seven, when he went to the arena. Matt Clark handed him his ring togs.

"Here's your funeral shroud, Joe Geez," he said. "It ain't a swimming suit. Don't practice any dives. Wait till Killer Kildare sinks you."

"What became of my manager?" demanded Jeff.

Clark shrugged. "You ask me that? How should I know? I ain't riding herd on the old fool. Go on and get ready."

Sullenly, Jeff sat in the dressing-room, staring at the floor, his gloved hands on his knees, while the preliminaries were run off. In the ring finally, he was fidgety because Hank wasn't in his corner. Thrown in with an ape, he needed the ring-smart veteran to pace him and yell up between the ropes. What had become of the old coot? It wasn't like Hank to take a run-out powder.

Three inches taller, the Killer outweighed Jeff thirty pounds. A beetle-browed giant with a million-dollar scowl, he was muscled like a Greek god. One fleeting glimpse told Jeff that the Killer was no man's set-up, and his tremendous physique made the tramp aware of his own flabbiness.

Kildare studied Jeff's paunchy middle and then turned to his manager, Matt Clark, nodding slowly, a gesture meaning that a good job would be done. He strutted over to Jeff and laid a brotherly glove on the light-heavy's shoulder.

"Try and take it, kid," he said loftily. "I want the fans to get an eyeful. I'll knock you stiff in the third, but don't lay down on me."

Used to goat-getting talk, Jeff raised his leathered fists and gritted. "See them, stumblebum? Only two, feller, but back in Podunk they called me the Centipede! I'm getting a hundred case

notes to trim you. I've got to give to get, and I ain't stingy. So come on, hot shot, let's cut the comedy and get to work."

At the bell Jeff rushed out to bob and weave under the Killer's long, flailing arms and step in close with short, left-and-right chops to the jaw. Kildare's knees hit together, and mingled pain and astonishment showed in his face. Slippery as an eel, the tramp writhed out of a clinch and circled the Killer like a cooper going around a barrel, snapping out his left to the face, yelling and whooping like a Comanche. It was a sorry moment when Jeff couldn't clown.

"Stay away from him!" cried Matt Clark.

"How's it done?" muttered Kildare, lumbering away frantically only to have Jeff pile into him again.

The hobo was letting them go at random. His rat-a-tat-tat on the midriff made the Killer's washboard stomach a purple blotch. Jeff could lay 'em in fast and hard. The endless fusillade had raised lumps over the kidney, split Kildare above the eyes, put his nose a quarter of an inch out of line. The tramp hit the Killer so hard on the right side of the jaw that the giant spat teeth from the left side. The battle was a duplication of the Dempsey-Willard go at Toledo. And then came the first knock-down.

"Take nine! Take nine!" shouted Matt Clark, as his fighter tried to rise.

It was a mighty slow count the referee gave the fallen gladiator, but it pleased Jeff, for he was in his element now, and, though he was puffing like a slow freight, he took advantage of the long count to beguile the customers with a clog dance.

When Kildare got up, Jeff was on him like a wasp, stinging him with stiff jolts and knocking him into position for another flop. Then the bell, and the tramp walked to his corner. Already he was figuring the items on his next meal. A hundred-dollar bill! Plenty of steaks in that!

IN the opposite corner Matt Clark drenched his fighter with a bucket of water, which streamed down the giant's arms and torso, running into and over his gloves. The big, battered hulk of a man was a sorry-looking mess, and in his eyes there wasn't the slightest gleam of the killer light. But he perked up under a verbal lambasting.

"Get out there and stall," Clark hissed. "Don't let him hit you. The stuff will set, and in the third you can give him a slamming that'll save my dough—and your neck!"

Jeff spent the entire second round chasing the fleeing Kildare around the ring, and nearly knocked himself out swinging at the air. The giant was in far better condition, and he was winning the race when the bell clanged. Back in the corner, Matt Clark felt his fighter's gloves and smiled.

"All right, big boy," he said, loud enough for Jeff to hear, "it's all set now. Go out and nail him to a ring-post. A cinch!"

Jeff answered the third-round bell as exhausted as a wind-blown horse. The Killer came at him with a businesslike rush. Okay with Jeff. If the big fellow wanted to fight, he'd toe-to-toe it, and somebody would go down. The tramp was optimistic.

He planted himself and let fly, catching Kildare a glancing blow on the cheek. *Swish! Bam!* The Killer reached him with a haymaker sweeping out of the air. Jeff stiffened, a most astonished look on his face. Then his eyes closed peacefully, and he sank to the floor. The Killer nodded at Matt Clark, who smiled and started to gather up his paraphernalia.

But Jeff McCarthy had a lion's heart. Up at seven, he tried desperately to hold his ground, to fight Kildare back on even terms. But somehow the Killer's fists had taken on added power. Each blow felt as though a bullet was tearing Jeff's head off his shoulders. Down and up, down and up, Jeff made the referee arm-weary swinging off the counts.

But Killer Kildare would not be denied, and he was the slugger who once had felled a three-year-old steer! Could there be but one end? Eight times Jeff pulled himself up off the floor, but after the ninth all had become strangely quiet.

When he came to blurred senses, he was in the dimly-lit dressing-room, and someone was patching him up. He opened his eyes and saw Hank Grady bending over him, deftly manipulating tape and gauze.

"Where you been?" Jeff demanded weakly.

"Lawdy, pard, I've been out listening to the birdies, too!" muttered Hank in a husky voice. "I acted dumb, and we both got it—you with loaded dukes, and knockout drops for me. I'm sorry, pard, sorry for you. Kildare handed you an awful wallop, and it's all my fault. He had plaster of paris in his bandages, and when the gloves got water-soaked, the stuff set—like concrete! I slipped in the window a few minutes ago and found you here on the rubbing table. The rats left you to take care of yourself, and you've been bye-bye for hours!"

He told Jeff about the cartons, of his talk with Matt Clark, and how the manager had played up to him. At Mike's place they had settled down to a pleasant hour with the beer mugs, but, after the second draught, Hank had passed out. He had been doped—doped so he wouldn't be at the arena to demand fair play! When the drug had lost its effect, he was lying in an alley. Not knowing what time it was, he had rushed to the arena—to find the fight ended and Jeff alone.

It was a tough break.

BY the time Hank had taken care of Jeff's cuts and bruises, daylight had arrived. They were hungry. Hank decided to act the dumbster clear through, in hopes that the guise might net dividends in the end. So he and Jeff sought out Matt Clark as though everything had

been in order, and humbly begged a meal.

"Feed you?" snorted the promoter. "Do I look like the Community Chest? You didn't go through with your contract. Your business was to knock Killer Kildare kicking. Did you? No—you dug your chin in the canvas!"

Jeff was all for an argument, but the astute Hank dragged him away. Their status in the town of Faint Hope was mighty low, and one thing the old tramp loved to do was to stay out of jail.

Like ants drawing toward a sugary morsel, they gravitated to the town's two restaurants—Matt Clark's Golden Hour and the lesser hash house across the street. At least, they could inhale the smell of cooking food. They stood on the edge of the plank sidewalk, gazing at the interior of Chunky Dodson's Refueling Station. Cowpunchers and lumberjacks were lined up at the counter, stowing down the food brought by a radiant, pretty little blonde in black-and-white uniform.

"Gosh," muttered Jeff, "I bet that's a wonderful girl."

"What?" grunted Hank. "Talkin' about gals when it's chuck that we need! Man, what I could do to that porter-house the big lummo on the end is chawin'!"

They stood there for an hour and then wandered down the street, only to return and gaze into the hash house again. Finally, when the restaurant was vacant save for the girl and the roly-poly, bald-headed old duffer who ran the place, Hank reached a decision.

"I can't stand it no longer. I'm going to eat! Mebbe they've got some spuds to peel. That ain't difficult."

He barged into the restaurant, Jeff trudging behind.

"And what'll it be, gents?" asked the genial Chunky Dodson.

Hank cleared his throat. "Well, you see, it's this way—" And then he told his sad story.

"Oh, you poor boy," exclaimed the girl, thrilling Jeff with a velvety gaze.

She was introduced as Chunky's daughter, Millie. "That scoundred should be put in jail!"

"All I need, lady," stammered Jeff, "is a return go."

Chunky was one of those rare old codgers who could see another man's point of view and wasn't suspicious of being baited for a sucker. He sat the boys down to all they could eat, and, though Jeff's jaw was too sore to handle a steak, he worked out on the beans, but blew a decision to Chunky after the sixth helping.

"I ain't got any love for Matt Clark, either, boys," said the hash-house man after the three of them had lighted cigars.

Millie Dodson had her arms elbow-deep in a pan of flour and water, mixing a biscuit dough. A wisp of curl trailed down her forehead and there was a dab of flour on either cheek. As she worked, she hummed a tune, while Jeff sat staring at her, oaf-like.

"Matt Clark," went on Chunky, "is just about bustin' me up in business with that Golden Hour Food Emporium across the street. People like Millie's cookin' and the service, but they got class over there, and that's what packs 'em in. Now if I had, mebbe, a thousand bucks, I could put in some fixtures and trimmin's what would make the Faint Hope citizens bat their eyes."

Hank grew thoughtful. Never slow to grasp an angle, he already had an idea revolving around in his canny old topknot. He gazed at the flour-dabbed Millie, squinted over at the Golden Hour Food Emporium. Like most hard-boiled eggs, when a person was nice to him, Hank wanted to repay the compliment a hundredfold. Besides, the element of revenge was strong in his make-up.

"Jeff," he said, "you can take Killer Kildare."

"Who says I can't?"

"Everybody," went on Hank. "But you can lick him. I've got it all figured and if my hunch is right, it'll be a pipe.

Chunky, how much can you raise on this joint?"

When occasion demanded, the old hobo could be magnetic and convincing. He was not likely to lead up slowly to a proposition if a straight drive would turn the trick.

"Why, I don't know," replied the restaurant owner, puzzled. "I reckon seven or eight hundred. But Matt Clark's the loan shark in Faint Hope, and I'd be playin' smack into his hands. He's got his eye on my place."

"Don't worry," said Hank in a burst of enthusiasm. You get the dough! I'll land a return tiff between Jeff and Killer Kildare, an' this time my boy will lay him like a carpet. I can spread your coin at three or four to one, an' you'll clean up. How can you miss?"

"What's the scheme?" asked Jeff.

"Never mind," retorted the old fellow. "You do the fightin'. I'll handle the schemin'."

Chunky Dodson was not satisfied, for his little hash house was all he had, and its loss would sink him. He wanted a few days to mull it over, but in the meantime he'd fix them a couple of bunks in the shed and supply their meals.

HANK put his fighter into immediate training. Road work, shadow boxing and calisthenics rapidly took up the slack in Jeff's muscles. After making a few inquiries about the town and studying Killer Kildare in a sparring match, the old manager was convinced that he had struck the right hunch. At night while Jeff and Millie discussed a thousand trivialities, he hopped up Chunky on the chances of a killing. At last the old restaurant man succumbed.

"Tell me your scheme," he said, "and mebbe—"

"Sure," cut in Hank. "Come over here so my rock-crusher won't get an earful."

Hank whispered the details and Chunky's moon face brightened.

"Say!" he exclaimed, slapping his thigh. "Can you—"

"Sure! I'll fix it!"

The deal was easily carried through. Chunky borrowed seven hundred case notes from Matt Clark, putting up his restaurant for security. Hank visited the promoter and asked for a re-match with Killer Kildare.

"Certainly," Clark sneered. "If your shock absorber wants another stiffening who am I to say no? Same terms, brother. A hundred if you win, nothing for losing. The Killer's been training hard, and he'll polish off your palooka in a round."

"We just thought we'd like to try again," said Hank softly. He was careful not to make any mention of bandage inspection.

"All right," clipped Clark. "Next Friday night, and no meals! Having you punks around the Golden Hour spoils business."

"You know, Hank," said Jeff, one evening as they were turning in, "I think there's money in the hash-house racket. I ought to settle down. Don't you think Millie's an awful nice girl?"

"Look here, you mug," exclaimed Hank angrily, "when this fight's over, you 'n' me is beatin' it. We've been in this burg too long, an' we're due in Oshkosh or Kalamazoo. Settle down! Huh! You're just a vagabond slugger, see? Me 'n' you have always got to be going."

Through friends of Chunky's, Hank laid seven hundred dollars at three to one without Matt Clark getting hep, though most of the money was placed against the promoter's. The fight was a sell-out, as every fan in Faint Hope was eager for another slaughter.

Thursday night Hank made a mysterious journey to the arena, and when he left he was satisfied with a job well done. The next morning Matt Clark strolled into Chunky Dodson's Refueling Station, greeting the fat little proprietor and the grizzled tramp-manager with a smirk.

"Hello, suckers," he said. "Your tramp ready for his shellacking?" he asked Hank.

He gazed over the interior. "Nice little dump. I expect to run it soon as an annex to the Golden Hour. Well, so-long, boys. Don't want to take any more of your time."

THAT night the arena was packed with punchers, lumberjacks and desert rats howling for the main event. Although the preliminary boys struggled hard to muss up one another, the fans were impatient for the Jeff McCarthy-Killer Kildare go.

The house rocked and rumbled with the din when the two contestants slipped through the ropes. For once in his life Jeff appeared nervous, glancing dubiously at the Killer and shuffling about the ring in a trance. Hank guided him to the resin box. The old manager himself had been apprehensive at first, but a visit to Killer Kildare's dressing-room and the sight of an empty carton on the rubbing table had reassured him. He had no doubts now.

"You think I'll level him?" Jeff demanded anxiously.

"Sure you will," replied Hank. "I got it all fixed. An' everything is fair an' above board, too. Think I'd risk the last dime in Chunky's sock?"

Jeff nodded. "That's all right then," he muttered. "You see, I couldn't stand losin' the jack belongin' to Millie's father. I—I sort of figure on being a member of the family, you might say. I haven't popped the proposition, but after tonight's scrap I'm going to tell her what a hard, steady worker I am." He gazed wall-eyed at the surging sea of faces. "Millie — Millie — a beautiful name!"

Hank snorted. "Ain't you over that punchin' Kildare give you? Man, you're slug-nutty for a fact. Sure, Millie's a beautiful name, an' so is the gal. She can cook biscuits like nobody's business, an' she thinks the sun rises an' sets on her old man's bald dome; but she ain't for you, see? You forget Millie an' remember that Killer Kildare packs a ducat to dreamland in his right duke."

The gong brought Jeff to his senses. The Killer lumbered out to deal death, but the tramp worked in close, ducked and weaved, and pounded a hard drubbing of blows to the giant's mid-section. Then he tied the big fellow up and laid his weight against him before Kildare could beat him at the game.

Out of the clinch, he snapped the Killer's head back with a left, stung him over the heart, and then wound up with a hook to the jaw. Matt Clark shouted for him to stay away, and the Killer back-stepped in hasty retreat. But Jeff was in condition and as fast as a lightweight.

He gloved the giant all over the ring, keeping the crowd in a continual uproar. Abundantly corded with muscle, the Killer could take it, and he managed to get in a few good shots, which Jeff easily shook off. At the end of the round the tramp went back to his corner in a fighting fury that betokened no good for Killer Kildare.

In the giant's corner Matt Clark was splashing water on his bruiser's head and body, and the streams ran over the gloves, soaking them. Acting on orders, the Killer exerted himself to keep away from Jeff in the second, and the fighters looked like candidates for a marathon. Not more than a dozen blows were struck, none of them damaging. The crowd booed and catcalled.

"Bring back the preliminaries!" shouted the ever-present fight bug from the gallery.

The round finished, Hank warned Jeff to be ready for a tough mill during the third.

"If I ain't cockeyed," he said, "there's going to be plenty of fireworks in this canto, and don't forget—'It's better to give than receive.' You ain't on no reception committee, so pop 'em in!"

Bong!

"It's all set now," shouted Matt Clark cryptically. "Let him have it, Killer. Put him away!"

The two clashed in a bloody exchange, clawing each other like hunger-mad-

dened gorillas, while the crowd came to its feet in a wild whoop. The fighters settled to a Pier Six brannigan, giving no ground, neither swaying nor dodging nor blocking, allowing a vicious offensive to be their defense. It was a slashing, grueling mix-up in which someone had to fall.

Jeff was unhurt, taking the Killer's hardest punches without a flinch or a bat of an eyelid. But Kildare wilted. That big musk-ox of a man slowly doubled from welting kidney smashes and the continual *bam, bam, bam* against his stomach. Matt Clark shouted frantically, desperately, but the Killer was gradually being chopped to the floor.

Hysteria swept the crowd. In the whole crazy mob only one man was cool and unperturbed. Hank Grady knew what it was all about. He had planned it thus, fairly and squarely, merely giving a crook rope to hang himself.

Of a sudden Jeff fetched a right to the button that floored the Killer, who climbed to his feet without taking a count. Jeff flayed and ripped him to the ropes, smothering him with a merciless clouting. Kildare's knees caved. Once more the giant fought his way upward. Jeff right-handed him to the canvas. Up again, and down! The tramp swept in an uppercut to the jaw that curled the Killer's toes. The job was done!

FOR a half hour the crowd milled around the victor. After Jeff had dressed and ditched the last glad-hander, he couldn't locate Hank. A search of the town proved fruitless. Chunky and Millie were missing, too. Puzzled, the scrapper seated himself on the edge of the plank sidewalk in front of Dodson's Refueling Station, trying to figure it out, when a ragged little Apache Indian lad rushed up and handed him a note. The fighter tore it open and read his partner's scrawl:

PAL:

Quick: I've got the money hidden—but they are taking me for a ride. Hurry! Beat

it for Trigger Gap, and try your best to find me before it's too late. They are taking me for a ride, Jeff. They plan to stop in Trigger Gap, and then to carry me on!

HANK.

Jeff leaped to his feet, his eyes as big as quarters, his mouth open. Taking his pard for a ride! Hank had cleaned up and the mobsters had got wise! They'd snuckle the dough and then blot him out! How could he save his old pard? Somehow, some way, he would have to sidetrack the crooks. But who—

There was no time to think. Without funds, only able to travel by freight, Jeff hurried to the railroad yards. Fifty trains a day passed through Faint Hope, and he had not long to wait. When a rattler puffed out of the station, he was snug on the rods.

Would he be too late? Would he find Hank?

He was in a cold sweat of apprehension an hour and a half later when he slid off the rods in the little cow-town of Trigger Gap. The first person he saw was Hank Grady, grinning and torturing a big cigar.

"What—how—" stammered Jeff. "I thought they was taking you for a ride!"

"Sure!" said Hank jovially. "They are. The engineers of the ol' S. P. line! Come on, we got pasteboards to Oshkosh. That note was just a stall to get you out of Faint Hope. I collected our winnings, paid Chunky his investment an' a thousand bucks to boot. Told Chunky to make Millie an' himself scarce till you was out of town."

"Huh! You—"

"Oh, shut up!" snapped Hank. "I'm your manager, ain't I? I do the talkin'. That gal was a wonder, but she ain't for you, kid. You're a travelin' man, just a vagabond slugger. I had to get you away because you'd been lost if you saw Millie again. You ain't settlin' down to no restaurant business while you can bowl over guys like Killer Kildare!"

Hank had to do a lot of arguing. Jeff sulked until they were on the train; but as soon as the wheels were grinding and

a continuous motion picture was flashing through the car window, he settled back and grinned.

"Guess you're right, Hank," he admitted. "Millie's a swell girl, but I ain't cut out for the hashing game. Say, where do we go from Oshkosh?"

"Oh," said Hank, "probably up to Canada for a glass or two of good rich ale."

Jeff nodded. "Great! But tell me, how did you fix it so you knew I was going to win?"

"Easy," said Hank, grinning. "I got the idea when I saw Millie with her arms buried in a bowl of flour. Flour, see? Killer Kildare, I found, is nothing but a big, husky palooka so muscle-bound he can't hit a knockout punch. He'd leveled that famous steer three years ago before he had knotted up. Well, Matt Clark put plaster of paris in

his gloves, an' when the water soaked in an' the stuff set, he could land a sleeper."

"I don't see—"

"The flour, stiff, the flour! I slipped into the arena last night an' substituted flour in the plaster-of-paris cartons Clark keeps in his cabinet. Mixed in a little powdered chalk to make the stuff look absolutely real. Kildare did his best to keep away from you for two rounds, an' in the third, when the plaster of paris should have been set an' hard, he came out to ruin you. But there was nothing but a squishy, squashy, doughy mass around his fists. He couldn't hit worth a Parker House roll!"

The candy butcher reeled through with cigars and cigarettes.

Hank raised his hand majestically. "Two Corona-Coronas, my boy—two fat, mellow, smooth Corona-Coronas."

THE FIRST "YOUNG CORBETT"

GEORGE GREEN, the first Young Corbett, met the best welterweights of his day and was able to score victories over men who had been champions in the old times and would still be kings if they were alive today. Joe Walcott, Mysterious Billy Smith, Tommy Ryan, Dan Creedon and other big figures swapped punches with the San Francisco boy who claimed the welter-weight championship when he defeated Billy Smith in 1897.

Green broke into the game at the age of seventeen as an amateur at the Olympic Club, getting his first training in the ring from Jim Corbett, who was the Olympic instructor at that time. He won the featherweight title at the club in 1889 and the lightweight championship in the next two years. Then he broke into professional ranks, beating Jim Whalen at 'Frisco.

During these days there was great interest in amateur boxing. Such clubs as the Olympic, Hayes Valley, Alliance, Acme, and others had large teams entered in the tournaments.

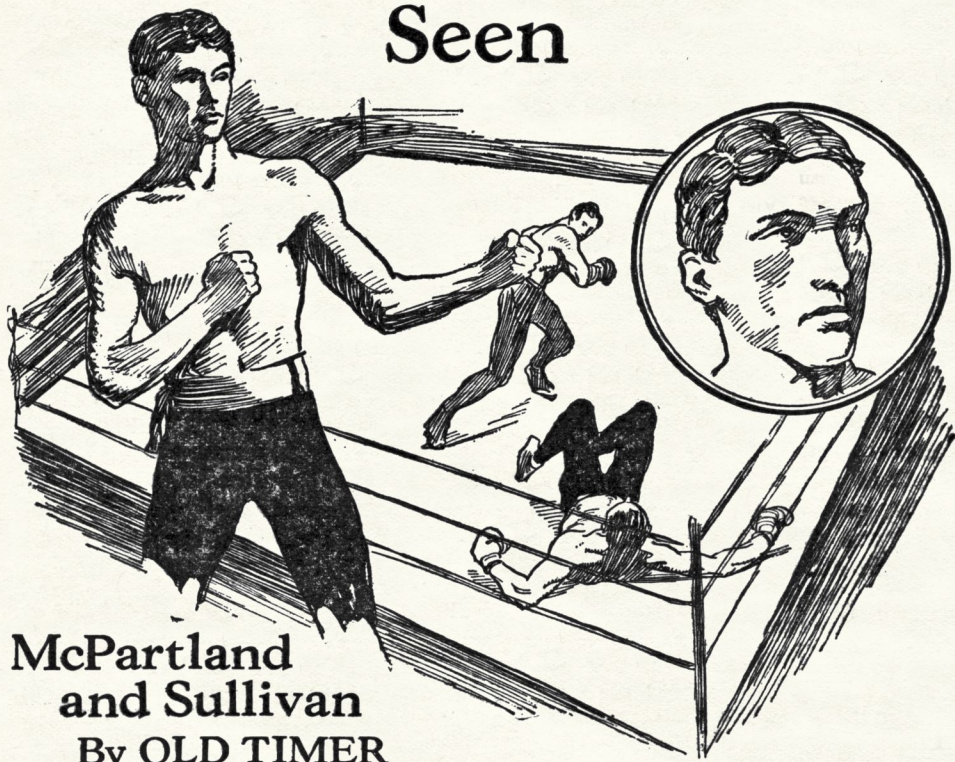
Boxing came back into its own in San Francisco in 1896 when Green beat Danny Needham in an eight-round affair. He followed this with victories over such great ring generals as Owen Ziegler, Tom Tracey and Charley McKeever.

When Bob Fitzsimmons defeated Jim Corbett at Carson City in 1897, Green and Mysterious Billy Smith were the added attraction. Smith had been winning regularly from the top-notchers, but Green beat him in a great fight. Late that year, however, he lost to Joe Walcott in the eighteenth, and the following February he was beaten by Tommy Ryan after a long battle.

Green remained in active competition for ten years, retiring in 1899, and then at various times he instructed in boxing at noon down at the Olympic Club, where he turned out amateur champions with great regularity.

George rates as one of the best middleweights of all time. He was not only supremely clever but an excellent puncher and as game as any man who ever laced on the glove.

Famous Fights I Have Seen



McPartland and Sullivan By OLD TIMER

The scene was the old Lenox Athletic Club, gray with tobacco smoke. The fans sat on the edge of their seats, staring. Drama was poking her head through the ring ropes. Action was ready to crowd up before their eyes, for Spike Sullivan and Kid McPartland—two wildcats—sat in opposite corners waiting the sound of the gong.

IN the days of the Horton Law, Kid McPartland and Spike Sullivan were among the leading lightweights in New York City. They had a high contempt for each other—a contempt not based on an under-estimation of the other's ability, but because each possessed the solid belief that he could whip any man in the world; that is to say, any man in his weight class.

They were Irish, these two, and inevitably game and stubborn. Each had run up a long string of victories over good men. Every fan in New York wanted to see McPartland and Sullivan fight. Every club was not only willing, but anxious to stage the match. In that

day wrangling was not as common as it is now, even when championships were involved. But these two simply couldn't get together. Every thing the other chap proposed was wrong. Nothing clicked. The match was on the fire for a long time. One of the hitches concerned the distribution of the purse. Each man considered himself the better drawing card and therefore entitled to the edge.

Now, as a matter of fact, both Spike and the Kid were intensely anxious to fight. These difficulties were principally due to the fact that the battlers believed any concession would be an admission of weakness. Eventually,

though, the match was made on a winner-take-all basis.

As a point of pugilistic history, it might be mentioned that this was the only boxing contract signed under the Horton Law with a winner-take-all clause. By that time the fighters were beginning to develop a business sense, and saw no use in having black eyes and bruises as their sole recompense if they were beaten.

McPartland was twenty-three years old, and had been at the fistic wars for five seasons. He had beaten Stanton Abbott, Owen Ziegler, Jack Daly and other lightweight stars. He had held Joe Walcott, Jack Everhardt and Matty Matthews on even terms. He had given Joe Gans a terrific fight for twenty rounds, and the only knockout on his record was placed there by Dal Hawkins. In effect, the tall, skinny New Yorker had all-around ability. He could fight, and he made no bones about admitting it. The Irish were never shy that way.

Spike was his senior by three years of active service. This lad had come from Knockmanoffe, Ireland. His career had been one of uninterrupted success. Early in his campaigning he had been out-pointed by Willie Keefe, and no one else had duplicated that feat. And, glory of glories, he had stopped Dal Hawkins in twenty-two rounds—and everyone knew what Hawkins had done to Kid McPartland.

In this year of 1899 each was continuously in the spot-light. Sullivan scored eleven knockouts—numbering among his victims Martin Flaherty, Otto Sieloff, Jim Popp and Joe Youngs. If you're one of the old breed, those names will mean something to you. If you're not, take my word for it that those fellows were real scrappers. Flaherty was almost as hard a hitter as Hawkins, and beyond that you can't go.

McPartland had done well for himself, too. Not rated as a killing puncher, he had stopped Jack Bennett, a first-rate man, and out-pointed Tommy

Broderick, Owen Ziegler and Otto Sieloff.

They were used to long fights, too. The Kid had engaged in fifteen battles that went twenty rounds or more. Sullivan had traveled that route a dozen times—his longest having been a 37-round knockout of Eddie Daly.

These records were brilliant. There were few lightweights who could match him. The interest in the match, consequently, was at a fever-heat.

A Right to the Chin

McPARTLAND and Sullivan were each so certain of victory that the winner-take-all condition pleased them immensely. The Lenox Athletic Club promoted the match, and, when the boys climbed into the ring, the house was packed to the doors with an enthusiastic mob.

Everyone was smoking, and since the ventilation was archaic, to say the least, the room was soon a gray mist of tobacco smoke. It swirled and eddied around the ring lights. If you weren't smoking yourself, it stung your eyes and made breathing difficult, but McPartland and Sullivan were so intensely engrossed in the impending contest that they hardly noticed this.

The Kid, tall and lean, with curly black hair and sharp eyes, stared fixedly at his sturdy opponent. A tough guy, a hard hitter and pretty clever. He'd seen Spike in action and knew just what he might expect.

The bell sounded, and McPartland came out slowly, with guard high, which was lucky, for Spike tore at him with a totally unexpected ferocity. Thereupon, McPartland decided that if Sullivan wanted a fight and not a boxing match, he should have it. So he waded in, fists swinging, and for a minute they walloped each other like a couple of stevedores with a grudge.

Then Spike nailed the Kid a terrific right-hander to the point of the chin. McPartland doesn't know yet why he

failed to go down. The punch would have knocked over a horse. But somehow or other the Kid kept his feet, though his knees felt as though they were made of sand, and all the strength went out of his arms. He wobbled dazedly, ducking and blocking by instinct alone.

Spike knew how badly he had hurt his opponent, and piled in viciously, determined to finish the fight at once. For two minutes he beat McPartland with a tattoo of blows, any one of which might have spelled defeat for the Kid. Blood ran into his ears; his ears were ringing. He was in bad shape, but was so brave and determined that even in the midst of that drubbing he didn't lose hope in the least. An offensive at that moment was out of the question, and his defense was shot through with holes. But he stuck to his guns and lasted out those terrible minutes.

Droop-shouldered and bleary-eyed, McPartland staggered back to his corner at the end of the round. Sullivan, vicious with disappointment at his failure to finish the Kid when he had had him on the very edge of oblivion, snarled and turned disappointedly away. If that darn bell had only kept still for another half minute he would have won then and there.

Spike's adherents were wild with joy. Those who had bet on the Kid were depressed and almost willing to quit. They didn't believe that a man who had taken the drubbing McPartland had in that first round could rally enough to sweep aside the superbly confident Sullivan.

But the Kid had always taken excellent care of himself. He was in splendid shape, and the sixty seconds under the hands of the wise men in his corner brought him around amazingly. He felt strong and able again. He wouldn't let Sullivan get him in that shape again; he would be on the lookout every moment. Wow, but Spike could hit! It wouldn't do to take another pasting like that. He wouldn't recover from it so

easily next time—but there wasn't going to be a next time. He'd make sure of that.

While McPartland decided what he should do in the succeeding rounds, Sullivan sat tensely on the edge of his stool, hardly able to wait for the bell that would send him back into action. He was so set on knocking out McPartland that he could hardly contain himself. He knew the way to beat this guy. It was to swarm over him so hard and so fast that the Kid wouldn't be able to stand up under the assault.

They'll tell you that the bitterest battles are fought between men of different nationalities—an Irishman and a Jew or an Italian. That's not so. Toss two Irishmen in against each other, and you have the ideal fighting match. They will punch away to the bitter end.

McPartland, at this particular moment, hated Spike Sullivan with all the boiling fury of an aroused heart. He would willingly have died then and there if he could put the Knockmanoffe slugger on the floor for the long count. No price was too high to pay for that privilege.

The blood pounded in his veins. He leaned forward, his eyes glaring.

His gaze was a bitter challenge. Spike met it just as savagely. They were like a couple of leashed bulldogs, waiting to get at each other's throats. Their teeth shone white behind their tensed lips. . . . Come on! . . . Let's go! . . . Why doesn't that bell sound?

Sullivan thought: "If I could knock out Dal Hawkins, this guy ought to be easy. He can't punch the way Dal can. . . . and it'll take a puncher to keep me off."

McPartland said to himself: "This guy ain't no Gans. I ought to be able to poke his nose in with a jab. He's tough, and can take it 'til the cows come home . . . but, by golly, I'll be able to give it to him longer than that."

The fans sat on the edge of their seats, staring. Drama was poking her head through the ring ropes. Action

was ready to crowd up before their eyes.

The referee moved toward the center of the ring. He was going to be ready for anything. With two wildcats like these fellows throwing 'em from the floor, anything was possible. He'd have to be on the alert. They weren't going to put him on the spot.

So . . . everyone waited through that infinitesimal bit of time that seemed so long . . . waiting for the sound of the gong.

Heroic Measures

WHEN the bell did ring, out swept Sullivan, wild-eyed, tempestuous, lashing away with his fists like mad. But McPartland had learned his lesson. He wasn't to be caught napping. He let Spike do the slugging and depended on counter hitting to even up the score.

It worked, by gosh, it worked! Sullivan, tearing in with all his might, fought blindly and wildly in his desperate effort to flatten the man he hated. McPartland lay back and shot straight lefts and rights in answer to the berserk attack. Before the round was over Spike was badly cut. Blood smeared his face; one eye began to puff in a threatening way. There was an ugly bluish tint encircling it. Sullivan was more furious than ever, and the minute's rest between the second and third round did nothing to cool his flaming temper.

Spike drove along at such a rate through the next half-dozen rounds that even McPartland's cleverness and caution were not enough to save the Kid from gruelling punishment.

Occasionally, when he was stung by some particularly hard wallop, the slim curly-head stopped boxing and surged into Sullivan with everything he had. Then they battered and slashed away at each other like madmen. Each was driven by a rock-hard bitterness. Neither would concede that defeat could come to him, so they ripped and tore and clawed, giving themselves unstint-

ingly in spite of the fact that there were still so many rounds left before them.

It would have been a good idea to coast once in a while, to take things easy and try to save themselves against the last terrible rounds. But both boys were burning hot after a knockout. They were perfectly willing to rip themselves to pieces in their efforts to get it.

By the end of the fifteenth round Spike was so battered that it didn't seem possible for him to go on much longer.

There never was a time when a good left hand would not beat a swinging right, barring an accident, and the Kid's long left had about the same effect as a sharp butcher knife. It cut Sullivan to shreds. It was not merely the sort of a jab that pushes and fends. There was muscle and weight back of it. It jarred and ripped.

Spike's nose was swollen and dripped blood. His lips were torn. Worse than that, his eyes were beginning to shut. The swelling was in the lids and forehead, and thick blue circles were gathering under them. In a short time they would be completely closed, and then the game would be up.

No matter how game and tough you are, no matter how hard you hit, if you can't see your opponent, you are done for . . . and that's all there is to it.

At the end of that fifteenth round Spike groped his way to his corner. Darkness had begun to settle down on him. He saw the ring lights only in blobs of orange and blue. He found it difficult to see lesser objects at all.

"Do something," he panted, when he had dropped on his stool. "What are you goin' to do . . . let this guy get away with it . . . win the fight because you don't know what it's all about?"

"Hold your horses," snorted his chief handler. "Give us a chance to do something before you gab. I'll get you fixed up."

Even while he spoke his deft hands were busy. Those eyes had to be kept open one way or another.

Heroic measures were needed, but

pain was a small consideration compared with the desperate necessity of beating Kid McPartland. Everything else must be subordinated to that end.

The chief second was a veteran who had been brought up under the rigors of the London prize ring, where the principal effort centered on closing the other man's eyes. This fellow didn't hesitate. He lanced the swellings, and the blood dripped profusely down Spike's face and onto his chest. Sullivan winced, but under that treatment the swelling miraculously disappeared. His eyes opened, a little blearily, but still he was able to see. His handlers were afraid to stop the flow, because if they did, the eyes might puff up again.

Well, McPartland watched that and he said to himself: "This guy can't go much farther. It'll either bleed him white or his eye'll shut. One way or the other, I'll get him and get him soon."

But he didn't realize just what a steel-hard man Spike Sullivan was. All the punishment he had gone through, all the numbing weakness that wrapped his arms and legs was not enough to stop this Irishman. He seemed able to whip himself on to unparalleled efforts. He kept charging and punching and, though McPartland fought back with the fury of a cornered cat and at times drove his opponent back and forth across the ring, he could not put over the finishing blow.

Hidden Reserves of Strength

THE sixteenth passed. In the seventeenth Spike came tearing out and threw an overhand right that landed on the Kid's nose, breaking that organ across the bridge. The pain was frightful. McPartland was blinded by it. He was hardly able to keep his feet. The pain pierced his head like a flaming spear, and then, as is nearly always the case with a broken nose, the swelling spread and included both eyes. They

began to puff shut, exactly as Sullivan's had a few rounds before.

Spike piled into McPartland furiously, banging away until he had opened cuts under and over both eyes. But the Kid was just as tough as Sullivan. He fought back with instinctive fury—a fury that was sufficient protection to keep him from being knocked out.

The spectators looked on in utter amazement. They didn't understand how these boys were able to go on and on, considering the punishment they had absorbed. Human nature must refuse to stand up under such a frightful strain. Yet each drew on his hidden reserves of strength and stamina, and kept going, shrouded in fogs of pain and weariness. It seemed to them that they had been fighting forever, yet at each brass-throated order of the bell they arose and continued to fight.

It wasn't only the fact that there was no loser's end, and that the fellow who was beaten wouldn't get a penny for his efforts. Money couldn't drive men quite that far. There was a deeper something behind it—a fighting spirit born and bred in the blood of each that would keep them going when they were almost unconscious and had barely enough strength left to move about.

That sort of courage makes the fight game worth while. It stimulates the spectators; makes them realize that there are other things than comfort and the softness of living to be sought after. You can't think of these fellows without a thrill. They gave so much of themselves, and received so little in a material sense. With them the game they played was the important thing, as it should be with all of us. Their financial reward was secondary.

When the bell sounded, the Kid and Spike scarcely heard it. They had to be separated by the referee; shoved forcibly to their corners.

McPartland, still in a daze, sat limply on his stool under the ministering hands of his seconds. The pain in his face and head and body was continuous. He was

weary to death. There was not an inch from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head that didn't ache and glow with a fire of anguish. But the boy was not concerned with this. It was part of the price demanded of men who succeeded in the ring. The fact that his nose was broken did not matter greatly either, except insofar that it would affect the results of this battle.

Of course, if his eyes swelled up and shut, his seconds could lance them as had Sullivan's. He was perfectly willing to have them do anything to him or for him so long as it would enable his tired and battered body to keep moving.

He had to beat Spike. Afterward, perhaps, it might seem as though he had over-rated the importance of this necessity, but at the moment it overwhelmed everything in his life. Death seemed a trivial thing compared with the job in hand. He had to beat Spike Sullivan! This thought kept drumming dully through his mind. He'd go on and on through the night, the succeeding days and years, but it didn't matter. Sooner or later he had to flatten that vicious, game Irishman.

They were scheduled to fight twenty-five rounds. He wondered what round this was. He asked, though his puffed lips could hardly formulate the words.

"It's the eighteenth coming up," said his chief second, "and you'd better get in there and do a little damage unless you want to lose. You told me what you were going to do to this guy. Well, let's see you go out and do it. So weak he can hardly stand on his feet, and you let him get away with murder."

"He may be weak," the Kid muttered, "but what do you think I am?"

"Forget that! Just get in there and punch."

Eight More Rounds to Go

THE bell for the eighteenth round sounded. McPartland arose stiffly and walked toward the center of the ring. The swelling from his broken nose

seemed like a huge, grotesque lump. He felt as though he were cross-eyed. He couldn't focus his gaze clearly on his opponent.

They had said Sullivan was just as tired as he. For a second before they went to work on each other, the Kid stared into Spike's face. It looked just as battered as his own. The eyes were dull. Sure, that was right. Spike Sullivan was just as tired and as sick as Kid McPartland. It wouldn't take much, one way or another, to decide this fight. Just one good punch in the proper spot; that was all.

This thought spurred the boy along. After all, he had given so much up to now that a little additional effort or punishment, no matter how painful, was well worth it. If he beat Sullivan, he might go on to the lightweight championship. That was worth getting; that was a prize worth a high price. But more important than the lightweight championship was the burning personal necessity of winning this fight. If he permitted Spike to beat him, he'd be ashamed to look himself in the face!

They went at each other like a couple of tired bulldogs, as desirous as ever and as determined as ever. But nature was close to the breaking point. You can go just so far and then you have to stop.

Not that they really stopped. They kept hitting at each other, but the action in that round was slower than it had been at any stage of the fight. Each was trying to store up a little of the vital energy he needed so much. McPartland thought: "Even if one punch is all that's needed, I've got to have some strength back of it. I can't knock this guy over with a feather duster, no matter how weak he is."

Apparently, Sullivan was thinking along the same general lines. So they stalled and clinched and used up as little energy as possible.

The spectators understood and applauded just the same. These boys had accomplished the impossible. They had gone on at an inhuman pace—a pace that

would have killed almost anyone else. One was bound to finish on the floor. The fight simply could not go on to the limit of twenty-five rounds.

They did get in a few reasonable jolts, but nothing to rave about. The climax ought to be just around the corner, however. It was a climax already pictured in the minds of Kid McPartland and Spike Sullivan. These pictures were alike in every detail except one, and that was the photograph of the man on the floor. Neither even admitted the possibility of losing.

Eighteen rounds gone! Seven more to come—unless that climax was realized.

A galleryite called down to them in an ecstacy of excitement and hope, "Come on, Mac! Come on, fight! Flatten the gossoon! Don't ever let it be said that an Irishman was licked."

"And I," said Kid McPartland to himself, "am one Irishman who won't be licked, not even by as good an Irishman as Spike Sullivan."

And Spike said the same thing under his panting breath.

Seven rounds more! Oh, lordy, lordy, how could they drive their tired arms and legs,—their straining lungs and beating hearts that far?

Looking ahead, it did seem beyond the pale of reason.

But, then . . . nothing is beyond the strength of those who refuse to admit the impossible.

One by one those rounds did pass. Each seemed as long as a year, as an eternity, but they passed. McPartland and Sullivan were both beyond the stage of knowing what it was all about. They were all in. Twenty . . . twenty-one . . . twenty-two . . . twenty-three.

A rally was needed. There had to be a fast finish . . . a destructive finish. If there was still any life and ambition in those battered frames, it must be brought out. The seconds gabbled furiously during the rest periods . . . urging . . . taunting . . . "You're goin' to let that big stiff get the decision, are you? . . .

Why, he's laughin' . . . Wipe that laugh off!"

There wouldn't be a knockout. There couldn't be one, unless one of the boys collapsed from exhaustion. They gathered themselves together.

McPartland seemed a little less worn than his rival, though his condition was bad enough. But he did have a bit more of the spark. He set the pace in those last two rounds. He forced his dead-weary arms to work. He didn't know whether he was doing any damage, or whether Spike was hurting him. As a judge of that fight, he would have been the worst in the world.

All there was for him to do was hurl himself into the fray and slug with what strength he had left . . . which wasn't much. Sullivan met him with his lesser armament, and, wobbling and shaking, they went on until the last bell.

Without hesitation the referee lifted the arm of Kid McPartland in the sign of victory.

The Kid had won one of the most savage battles written into the history of the lightweight class. The diminishing brigade of us who sat in the Lenox Athletic Club that night will never forget it.

It was an epic of courage and endurance, and never should be forgotten.

The Spirit of the Ring

THAT furious battle marked the high spot in the careers of both. They were never quite as good afterward.

McPartland continued in the ring for three more years. In 1900 he went out of his class to wage war with the welter-weight champion, Matty Matthews—and Matthews twice knocked him out, once in the first round and again in the seventeenth. Jack Daly outpointed him, and Elbows McFadden finished him in the sixteenth.

The following year the Kid won a number of bouts, but, after Joe Gans knocked him out in the fifth round at

Fort Erie, Pennsylvania, on October 13, 1901, he decided to hang up the gloves.

The lure of the ring still holds him. You can see his spare frame stepping about in his capacity as referee on the staff of the New York State Athletic Commission. He is a first-class referee, too, but I find it hard to believe him as good in that role as he was as a fighting man.

Spike Sullivan went on even longer. He meant to fight as long as he was able, and, since he lasted, altogether, fourteen years in the rings, it seems to me that he was quite successful.

There was a certain ruggedness about the fellow that attracted you. He hung on like a bulldog. Gans knocked him out, which was likely to happen to anyone who fought the Old Master, but Spike went on to England and tried unsuccessfully to win the championship of that country from Jabez White. He finally quit in 1904.

What fighters they both were!

It's a test of a man's love of his game when he can endure what those chaps

endured, and still go on . . . and on. They loved to fight. They were caught up by the turmoil of the ring as they were by nothing else in the world.

I can close my eyes and transport myself back to the ringside of the old Lenox Athletic Club right now. I can see Sullivan and McPartland torn and bleeding and weary unto death, going bravely through the endless succession of rounds—cheerful and hopeful and determined.

It's a fine thing, that spirit. You can't buy it with hundred thousand dollar purses. It isn't made by money. The thing goes deeper than that—yes, and higher. That kind of thing is born in a man. And I'm glad to say that this spirit hasn't died in the ring of today. Maybe it hasn't the same opportunity to show itself, because the bouts are shorter and not as primitively brutal.

But, under conditions that would demand it, I could show you many a lad made of the same fine stuff as were Kid McPartland and Spike Sullivan—Lord love their brave hearts!

BATTLING SIKI, CHILD OF IMPULSE

THE Berlenbach-Siki fight was so utterly one-sided as to arouse considerable curiosity on the part of the fans. Berlenbach beat upon the Senegalese with two tremendous fists. Siki made little effort to defend himself; less at attacking his enemy. At length the referee stopped the slaughter.

Siki was led from the Garden by Bob Levy, his manager. His wife was waiting in an automobile, and they drove away together.

For a while there was silence, then Levy said: "Louis, I can understand Berlenbach whipping you, but what I can't get through my head is why you didn't fight back. Why, you always fight back. But tonight you just stood up like a stuffed dummy."

Siki's teeth showed through his puffed lips. He pointed at his wife's uncompromising back.

"She to blame," he said. "You tell me if I beat Berlenbach I make half a meelion dollars, didn't you, Monsieur Levy?"

"Yes—maybe a million."

"*Oui*, so. Dis afternoon she call me a black baboon. I should make meelion for her to spend? *Non, non*. So I no try to beat Berlenbach."

There was a child-like grandeur about such a decision. Here was a man who would cheerfully give up a million dollars as revenge for his wife's impulsive words!

PALOOKA-PROOF



By ROGER GREENE

Author of "One Hard Boiled Egg"

His glorious golden days in the ring were gone; the come-back path was closed. So battle-scarred McGinty picked Wolf Larson for a meal ticket. . . . until the Wolf's bared fangs challenged his right to rule.

BIFF MCGINTY'S jaw muscles twitched; his eyes blazed hot anger.

"Washed up? Me a palooka?" he flared. "Say! I'd poke anybody else—"

"Easy, Biff, easy!" urged Tom Bannister, matchmaker of the Empire Boxing Stadium. "You know I'm only saying this for your own good."

"Yeah," growled Biff, "but you got a wrong hunch. I'm good for plenty more tough battles. Ain't I always handed the fans a double-barreled run for their dough? Why, anybody'll tell ya Biff McGinty stands f'r action—a whale of a two-fisted, old-fashioned scrap as long as the other mug's on his pins, or I am. On the level, Tom, I'll train hard. An' I'm broke. Stony. Even a prelim—" He faltered.

Tom Bannister eyed the battle-scarred veteran sadly. "Even a prelim, eh?" he said. "You see, Biff, that's just the trouble. You're through as a headliner

and you're through with the game. I can't let you slide back to be a punching-bag for the kids coming up through the prelims. Now's the time for you to quit while you're still walking on your toes."

"You're the one that's back on his heels," retorted Biff. "I'm only thirty-one. Look at Fitzsimmons, Dempsey, Jeffries—how old they were an' still on top of the heap. Gimme any of these tough young kids in my next fight an' I'll show ya I'm a long ways from through."

The matchmaker shook his head. "Sorry, Biff. If you were like some of the punks I know, I'd let you go ahead—down the toboggan—become a pork-and-bean stumblebum, a palooka. But you've always fought clean and hard and been a credit to the game. No, Biff, it wouldn't be fair to you or to the sport." His tone was kindly but final. "If you're broke—" He drew out his wallet and extended a hundred-dollar

bill to the one-time idol of the Cinema City ring crowd.

"I guess I ain't that down an' out," said Biff, and his jaw was clamped hard as he walked through the door.

Outside, it was raining. Hollywood Boulevard was a silver stream bright with the lights of motor cars slowly picking their way through the downpour.

Biff turned up his coat collar, pulled down his cap to an angle that made up in protection against the rain trickling down the back of his neck for what it lacked in jauntiness.

He paused in front of a brightly lit restaurant over which blazed the purple neon sign *George's Café*. For a moment he stared at the appetizing window display: a brown-crust shoulder of baked ham, a great roast of beef, a fat pig sizzling on a revolving spit over a crimson bed of coals.

Biff McGinty unconsciously licked his lips, consciously pulled his belt a notch tighter. Then he moved on in the drenching rain.

Bitterly, not against the world but against himself, his thoughts turned to George, the jovial, chubby-cheeked host of the popular boulevard café. Had he not been a fool, a "good sport," he might have walked in there now, sat down at one of the spotless white-covered little tables, ordered everything on the menu and signed the check: "B. McGinty, Proprietor."

For it was only a little over a year ago that he had taken a party of fifteen friends into George's Café with \$6,000 in his pockets, and laid \$5,000 of it in front of George.

"Swap?" he had said, half in earnest, half jokingly, indicating the roll of bills and the busy café.

George had blinked, nodded, reached for the money. But Biff had only laughed and withdrawn the roll. "Wait'll I win my next big purse, George, an' we'll close the deal."

But the next big purse had gone the way of the many before it. Others followed in its lavish wake. It costs money,

big money, to play the good sport. The golden notes of the piper tinkle only to the accompanying tinkle of golden coins.

Purses grew slimmer, fewer, until now he was—at least so Tom Bannister claimed—"all washed up."

"He's wrong," Biff murmured grimly. "I ain't through by a long shot. I'll show 'im."

He walked on in the rain.

IT was nearly six o'clock when he reached the Salvation Army soup kitchen, dog tired, soaked, cold, half starved. A block-long line was already formed ahead of him.

Slowly, waiting in the steady drizzle, he moved forward. The savory aroma of thick goulash and steaming coffee assailed his nostrils with a prickling sensation. Four more to go, three more, two more—he was next!

"After me, big boy!" A harsh, domineering voice.

Biff felt himself rudely thrust back. The intruder, a hulking young man with a black-stubbed chin, narrow-set eyes and a lop-sided nose, leered at him: "Any argument?"

For answer Biff slammed his right fist to the pit of the stomach; at the same instant something exploded on the point of his jaw . . . and he was sitting on the wet pavement gazing stupidly up at the circle of faces gathered above him.

He struggled to his feet, still woozey but raging to slash back at the tough mug who had tried to butt in without waiting his turn in line.

But he saw that the intruder was sprawled on the sidewalk too. Both had struck simultaneously, Biff to the solar plexus, the other man to the chin.

Biff helped him up. It was the first time he had ever engaged in a street brawl since he became a professional fighter, having always held strictly to the rule that no matter how powerful the average man might be, he had no chance against a trained boxer. The unwritten code of the ring.

Biff grinned at him. "Guess we're

about even, buddy," he said. "You sure pack a wallop in that right of yours. C'mon, let's eat. We'll go in together."

"I oughta slap ya t' sleep again," growled the other, darkly. "Soon as I've eaten I will!"

"Forget it," replied Biff, smiling. "I'm so hungry ya won't even hafta try. I'm gonna eat myself unconscious."

Together they received their bowls of ragout, chunks of bread and heavy mugs of coffee. Biff studied his new companion as the young man dug ferociously into his trencher.

Strong as a bull. Big, squared-planed shoulders. Round, hard Dempsey-like jaw. Huge, hairy fists. About twenty-four or five. Probably scaled around 175. A fighter, if Biff knew fighting flesh at all.

The only thing he didn't like about him was the ugly bully spirit he had shown in trying to force his way into line without waiting his turn. Well, hunger does funny things to men. Maybe that accounted for it.

"Ever fight much?" Biff asked when they'd finished eating.

His companion wiped smears of gravy off his thick-lipped mouth with the back of his hand. "Maybe ya ain't never heard o' me," he snarled. "I'm Wolf Larson, toughest slugger in the oil fields. An' ya'll find that out in a jiff when I git ya outside in an alley!"

"Wait a sec," advised Biff, easily. "Maybe you'd lick me. Maybe not. I'm Biff McGinty. Done some fightin' myself. That ain't the point. You say you can fight?"

"Yeah," growled the Wolf, "that's what I said. Plenty!"

"All right. If you can fight plenty, why not grab some dough out of it? You must be broke or ya wouldn't be workin' the grub-lines."

"Yeah, I'm broke. Picked too many scraps on my last job over to the Santa Fe Springs oil field. What about it?"

"If you're as good as you say," Biff told him, "we can clean up a lot of real coin."

"We?" sneered Larson. "Where d'ya get that 'we' stuff?"

Biff's fists knotted under the table. What he ought to do was slug the custard out of this big ham. But he held himself in control.

"You gotta have a manager to fight," he explained patiently. "I know the ropes an' all the matchmakers. You wouldn't get a tumble without somebody like me that savvies the angles."

Wolf Larson grumbled sullenly. "Maybe so," he admitted. "What's the deal?"

Biff explained his proposition as they walked over to the Globe Sporting Club, a small but thriving arena. The curtain-raiser was under way when they arrived. Biff nodded at the door-keeper, who let them pass free, and then sought out Doc Crowley, the matchmaker-promoter, hoping to get the Wolf a match for the following week.

Crowley greeted the veteran warmly. "I'm in a jam, Biff," he said. "Got to get a heavyweight an' get him fast. Here I've landed Sam Roberts, that fast-comin' young colored heavy, for the main event, an' the mug he was to fight has taken a run-out powder on me. Scared, I guess. Didn't like the way he acted when he signed. Happen to know any heavyweight around town I can get right away?"

"Sam Roberts, eh?" Biff mused. "He's plenty tough, all right. What's he weigh?"

"One ninety," Doc Crowley answered. "Why? Got somebody in mind?"

Biff paused. It would be a great chance for Wolf Larson to break in, a real test of whether he was shooting hot air about his prowess or really had the stuff. But—gee!—190 pounds to 175? He shook his head. The handicap was too great.

"No," he said slowly. "I don't think so—"

"I'll take 'im!" snapped Wolf Larson.

Doc Crowley glanced swiftly, eagerly, at the ex-terror of Santa Fe Springs. Then shook his head. "Roberts'd kill

you," he said. "He'd have fifteen pounds on you."

"Let 'im!" snarled the Wolf. "I'll slug his block off in two rounds."

Doc Crowley shrugged. "It's your funeral. Go ahead."

THE crowd roared a tumultuous greeting when they spotted Biff McGinty in the corner of the Wolf. They knew him for one of the greatest-hearted battlers in the game, and they thundered their admiration for the one-time idol.

Wolf Larson scowled blackly. "Think you're hot stuff, huh?"

"Never mind me," Biff returned, amiably. "Take it out on Roberts."

"I'll blow his bullet head off," boasted the Wolf. He glared across the crimson-splotched expanse of canvas at his sepia-tinted opponent.

Black Sam, his muscles rippling like a panther's poised for the spring, grinned widely and came out with a rush at the bell. He feinted, whipped a stingaree left to Larson's mouth, drawing a spout of claret.

The Wolf lowered his head and charged, hard-knit shoulders weaving and rocking as he thudded both fists in a savage, juggernaut bombardment.

Roberts, grinning, tied him fast in a clinch. The Wolf burst free. His blood-smearred lips writhed back into the wolf-like snarl that had earned him his nickname in oil field rough-and-tumble mêlées.

"Fight, ya yella-belly!" he roared, and tore in with a hurricane swirl of battering-ram smashes.

Roberts fell back, stung, bewildered at his failure to ward off the rain of leather. The smile faded. He flung his knowledge of boxing to the winds and was slugging furiously, toe-to-toe with the Wolf, at the bell.

The arena turned madhouse as the two gladiators rested. They had expected to see a slaughter, with Sam Roberts, touted as he was for a big-time main event the following month,

toying with his pork-and-bean opponent and then kayoing him in a round or two.

Instead, they saw a newcomer who was slashing him to ribbons!

The bell clattered wildly. Wolf Larson raged out, but Roberts circled cautiously, determined to box and let the Wolf wear himself out.

His left beat a crackling tattoo on Larson's face as he back-pedaled jabbing. But the Santa Fe Gusher, faster on his feet, bounded on top of him, uncorking pistol-shot jolts that ripped the colored heavyweight's body raw and puffed his lips.

Roberts winced at a terrific smash over the heart. Hurt, he forgot science once more and fought back madly. The Wolf whipped a right to the jaw that sent Roberts staggering back into the ropes. Then, on the rebound, Larson nailed him—a crisp right-hand shot flush on the button.

The Big Black tumbled into a heap on the canvas, motionless while the referee tolled the count of ten and out. His seconds had to drag him to his corner; his eyes were still glassy while they massaged the back of his neck and crammed the ammonia-bottle hard against his nostrils.

The pack rocketed cheers for the new sensation.

"HOW 'bout it, mug?" the Wolf demanded, when they reached the dressing-room. "Y' ever seen anything like me?"

"Not bad," Biff admitted casually, knowing that the surest way in the world to ruin a fighter is to feed him bouquets and let him get a blown-up hat-band "But you're wide open, Wolf. Roberts is young. He lost his head. If he'd kept cool, just stuck his left out, you'd broke your jaw runnin' into him."

"Yeah?" sneered the Wolf. "Maybe you'd like to try it?"

Biff's knuckles itched to reply. The blood leaped, pounded in his temples. "There's no use our scrappin'," he counseled mildly. "I'm tryin' to help you."

"Help me!" howled Larson, gleefully. Then his black brows clamped down, his narrow-set eyes glinted. "Say, mug, get this an' get it quick." He thrust out his jaw and leaned forward threateningly. "I don't need no help from a plug-ugly palook like you. I'll do the fightin', you do the managin', see?"

Palook! The word stung Biff like a whiplash. He trembled, seething with red-hot rage. Nobody had ever called Biff McGinty a palook before and gotten away with it. And, by the Lord Harry, they never would!

Suddenly he grinned. "Okay, Wolf. You do the fightin'. I'll do the managin'."

He wondered how long he would be able to keep his hands off Larson. But he knew that when the break came it would kill his plan of staging a comeback. He needed six months to whip himself back into tip-top shape for his final bid for ring laurels.

He hadn't fought for three months. Not since that last disastrous defeat at the hands of Red Yates. He'd loafed, dissipated, spent every cent.

He thought, suddenly, that maybe Tom Bannister was right. Maybe he was too old to try again. But in his heart he didn't believe it. He still had enough of the old flame left for one last spurt—say a six-month campaign, back up through the ranks if he had to, while he earned enough money to buy out George's Café.

He *had* to have it in him! He wasn't licked yet. He wasn't a palooka. He'd show 'em.

And, meanwhile, he'd have to knuckle down to Wolf Larson. The Wolf was his meal-ticket while he was training back to his old-time fighting trim. It was going to be plenty tough, but he'd have to do it.

The small purse Larson received for his sensational victory over Black Sam Roberts tided them over until the following week when Biff, on the strength of the ballyhoo which Larson was accorded, landed him a special event at the

big Empire stadium. Again the Wolf flogged his opponent senseless in two rounds with a red-leather onslaught that yanked the fans to their feet screaming.

BIFF rented a small beach cottage on Santa Monica Bay on the proceeds of the bout. He found the Wolf surly, belligerent, disagreeable to live with. The ex-oil driller had a nasty streak running from the ground up.

Biff avoided him as much as possible, and set about on a rigid routine to attain the peak of physical condition. While the Wolf lay abed, he hopped from the sheets at sunrise, donned an old pair of corduroys and turtle-neck sweater, and pounded along the shoreline, up Santa Monica Canyon and mile on mile through the woods in the mountain foothills.

At first his lungs burned; his legs ached cruelly; black spots danced before his eyes as he set his jaw and jogged on and on and on. Road work. Good, old-fashioned road work, he knew, was the one thing to bring him back.

He tried to get Larson to join him. The Wolf jeered. "That's okay for an old, washed-up palooka like you. Me, I bust 'em cuckoo before they get a chance to run."

Old, washed-up palooka! Once more Biff took it silently, his fists clenched so hard the nails bit through the flesh in the palms of his hands. Some day—some day, the Wolf was going to call him that just once too often!

But he had to admit that Larson apparently didn't need to train very hard. The Wolf stopped Gunner Lawson, a tough youngster, in three rounds in the semi-windup at the Empire arena a month after Biff first ran across him. Two weeks later he slammed the day-lights out of "Tiger" Bob Freeman in four.

Biff tried to get him to learn the fundamentals of self-defense . . . how to use his left, feint, pivot, how to rest when he was tired without letting his opponent suspect it.

"Me get tired?" sneered Larson. "Listen, mug, none of 'em's gonna last long enough to tire me. An' I don't need no fancy tricks to put the chill on 'em, neither. Not me! I ain't no palook, palook!"

Biff swallowed it . . . palook.

He had to admit that the Wolf seemed to be in superb physical trim. He was as fast as chain-lightning on his feet. His punches boomed against the big bag like cannon crackers. He slowed down scarcely at all at the end of sessions of shadow boxing and rope skipping for an hour every afternoon in Spider Webb's gym.

But roadwork? He scoffed at it. That was for old palookas, has-beens.

Biff envied him his youthful stamina—and plugged harder and longer at his arduous task of returning to form.

The weeks dragged by in agonizing slowness. Biff found it wasn't so easy to grind back into the pink as it once was. He was coming along, but slowly. Bit by bit.

He was handicapped in his training, too, by the business of handling Larson's affairs. Arranging matches, days of haggling, conferences that took him away from his own schedule.

The Wolf disposed of all comers in slaughter-house fashion. He bowled over Sailor Brawley, Dan Tilton and Mike Mitchell, all in main events, to loom as one of the most feared battlers on the West Coast.

The fight scribes began to ballyhoo the Santa Fe Terror for a match with Frankie Frisco, spectacular Mexican kayo sockdolager. And the day the match was signed, four months after Biff had bumped into Wolf Larson, word came that Billy Garrity of New York, a front-rank contender for the title, was coming West on a tour of the sticks.

Some of the ring critics claimed that Red Yates, who had started Biff McGinty on his downfall, deserved the crack at Billy Garrity, but when the contract was signed it was agreed that

the winner of the Wolf Larson-Frankie Frisco battle was to get the plum.

Biff continued his own training, and tried by cajolery, flattery and every other means to get Larson to accompany him on his long jaunts into the hills. The Wolf laughed at him. He'd stop Frankie Frisco in a couple of heats. It was a lead-pipe cinch. Yeah, Frisco was good, all right. But not good enough. He was confident of that. Almost, it seemed to Biff, too confident.

And, when the night of the fight came, he understood why.

EYES smoldering, his face grim, Biff paced the dressing-room floor waiting for the Wolf to show up an hour before the big battle.

The door opened.

"Hello there, palook!" greeted the Wolf buoyantly.

In the face of his new anxiety, Biff scarcely noted the hated taunt. "Just been talkin' with Frisco's manager, Pete Torres," he said casually.

"Yeah?" grunted the Wolf, starting to undress.

"Yeah!" snapped Biff, his voice suddenly harsh. "And what's all this about Frisco divin' to make a clean-up on bets?"

"How should I know, mug?" growled the Wolf. "If Frisco wants t' dive I can't help it, can I?"

Biff's eyes narrowed to cold slits of light. "Torres," he said slowly, watching Larson's face, "says you're in on the deal. That you're gonna fake the kayo punch."

The Wolf didn't answer. He took his boxing trunks and shoes from his locker and coolly proceeded to slip into them.

"What about it?" Biff demanded sharply.

"All right, what about it?" the Wolf leered. "Suppose I am. Then what? What a' ya gonna do about it, palook?"

"It ain't goin' through," murmured Biff. "Either Frisco changes his mind, or—"

"Ya'd squeal, wouldja, ya rat!" roared

Larson. "Well, get this! You're gonna sit still, an' the *deal* is gonna go through, savvy?"

He sprang up, his beady eyes blazing, fists doubled close to Biff's face.

"Savvy?" he snarled again.

McGinty shook his head. "I guess not, Wolf," he said softly. "Not in my corner. The fans know I'm square, dead on the level. And when I'm behind you, it's got to be on the up-and-up."

"It has, huh?" sneered the Wolf. "Keep your eyes peeled. Maybe ya'll learn diff'rent!"

Biff turned, started for the door. "I'm goin' to talk it over with Frisco and Torres," he said.

With a savage oath, the Wolf bounded after him. His fist smashed from behind under Biff's ear, and the veteran pitched to the floor. . . .

When he awoke, the room was in darkness. For a moment, sprawled there on the floor, he wondered where he was, what had happened. A shooting pain in his jaw reminded him. Faint, still dizzy, he staggered up, fumbled for the light switch.

He tried the door. Locked!

Without hesitation, he picked up the heavy-plank dressing bench and swung it like a battering-ram again and again until the door splintered. He tore away the wood with his hands, breaking a passage; squeezed through, then hurried up the stairs into the stadium.

A quick glance at the ring told him he was not yet too late. It was only the special event on now.

Roughly, he grabbed an usher. "Where's Bannister?"

The youth pointed out the matchmaker, standing near the main gate. Biff darted through the standing-room crowd to him.

"I gotta see you alone—quick!" he whispered fiercely.

"Sure, Biff. What's up?"

In the privacy of Bannister's office, Biff told him. The matchmaker's face darkened as the plot was unfolded. He bit the end of his cigar nervously,

drummed a paper-knife on his desk.

"It's hard to believe," he said slowly. "The boys know I won't stand for that stuff in my ring."

He punched a bell-button in front of him. "Bring Frankie Frisco and his manager up here," he ordered the attendant who answered the summons. "I'm not doubting your story, Biff," he explained, while they waited tensely. "But I want to hear both sides."

FRISCO, dressed in his ring togs, a flaming bathrobe thrown over his shoulders, suddenly appeared with his sleek-haired manager, Pete Torres.

"What's the riot about?" Torres inquired suavely.

"McGinty claims the fight is framed," the matchmaker said bluntly. "How about it?"

Torres paled. He stared in astonishment at Biff. "But I thought—I thought—" Words failed him.

"Y' thought I was in on it with Wolf Larson, eh?" assisted Biff. "That's why you talked it over with me."

Torres quickly regained his composure. His sharp Latin features assumed a look of injured bewilderment. "But he is mad!" he exclaimed, appealing to Bannister. "I know nothing of this. Nothing!"

"Why, ya double-crossin' greaser!" Biff roared. "Ya tryin' to tell me ya didn't get the Wolf to give ya a grand of his end of the purse f'r Frisco lyin' down an' then ya'd both clean up on side-bets?"

"You're a lyin' skunk, McGinty!" shouted Frisco savagely.

Biff stepped close. "What was that?" he asked in a steely murmur from between clenched teeth.

Frisco blanched; then put on a bold front. "Ya heard me, palook!" he snarled. "You're a lyin'—"

Wham! Biff's fist exploded in a pile-driving uppercut. Frisco's heels shot high off the floor as he was catapulted into a heap in the corner.

The matchmaker shrugged. "I guess

that finishes it," he said gloomily. "He's done for the night. Right or wrong, Biff, you've ruined the show."

"Sorry, Tom," said Biff earnestly. "Maybe ya coulda talked him into fightin' on the up an' up. Only, y' see, he called me a liar, an' that was bad enough, but when he said palook—"

"Wait! We fight!" shrilled Torres, frantically rubbing the back of Frisco's neck. "He's all right now."

But Frisco himself shook his head and groaned. "Nothin' stirrin'," he mumbled. "Not f'r a million bucks!"

Tom Bannister nodded. "We'll have to call it off. Give 'em back their money. And the house is jammed, too. What a break!"

"There must be somebody—a substitute," cried Biff. "Wait, I'll look around the ringside, see if I can spot anybody—"

"Not a chance, Biff," returned the matchmaker glumly. "The fans'll walk out unless we get somebody who could give Larson an argument—somebody they know would put up a whale of a fight, at least."

"Say, I've got it!" shouted Biff. "What about me?"

Bannister laughed sourly. "Don't be crazy, Biff. I told you four months ago you're washed up. I thought you understood that when you started managing Wolf Larson. Why, you're not even in training. You couldn't—"

"Hold on!" the veteran cut in. "You're all wrong, Tom. I'm not crazy. And I have trained. Trained like I never did in my life. I've worked like a truck horse—ten miles of roadwork a day, sparring, bag-punching, no booze or smokes."

The matchmaker shook his head. "Not a chance, Biff."

"Listen!" demanded McGinty, his eyes sparkling with eagerness. "An' that ain't all, Tom. I been itchin' f'r four months to get at Wolf Larson. It's been all I could do to keep my dukes off him, takin' his dirty cracks, lettin' him call me a washed-up palook. Then

t'night, like I told ya, he socked me from behind—down in the dressin'-room. Just gimme the chance, Tom. The fans'll stay to see me. They know I'll give 'em a battle, whatever happens. I'll even fight him f'r nothin'—"

His desperate plea was drowned out by the tumultuous roar of the crowd. An attendant opened the door. "End of the semi-windup, Mr. Bannister."

The matchmaker's eyes snapped. "You win, Biff," he said tersely. "Hop into your duds. If you win, you get six grand and a shot at Billy Garrity. The loser's end is twenty-five hundred."

BEDLAM rocketed through the stadium three minutes later.

Biff McGinty, crouched in his corner, tense, keyed to the breaking-point, listened as Matchmaker Tom Bannister finished his crisp explanation of the substitution.

Frisco, he said, had met with an accident at the last minute. Their old idol, Biff McGinty, had broken with Wolf Larson over some private matter. They must take his word for it that McGinty had volunteered to fight the Wolf for nothing. If they desired, their money would be refunded at the box-office. That was all.

It was enough. Not a man moved. They clamored wildly for the great-hearted, two-fisted juggernaut they had cheered in victory and in defeat many times past.

They knew old Biff McGinty would give them a fight, a whale of a battle, while he lasted!

And the additional grudge angle set them tingling.

The bell!

Wolf Larson hurtled from his corner like a shot, his face contorted with rage. In silent fury, he tore into Biff, battering, slashing, clawing at face and body.

For the first time in his life, Biff broke ground. He knew that he had to. His only chance was to box, wear the Wolf down. Even in his best days it would have been suicide to stand up in

an out-and-out slugging match with the Santa Fe Gusher.

Grimly, his teeth set, heedless of the stunning smashes, the trickle of claret that dripped on his chest from a bashed lip, he held to his plan, even though everything in him cried out to fight the Wolf at the Wolf's own game—to flog away until one dropped.

Weaving, feinting, circling, his left stabbing like a flash of flame, he played the waiting game. The bell came with its relief of cold water splashed on a fevered brow. Larson's sledge-hammer jolts had shaken him badly despite his defensive tactics.

In the second he back-pedaled on the run, jabbing, blocking, forcing the Wolf to lunge after him. The crowd groaned. Their old idol was "washed up," all right. Couldn't even stand and slug with the Wolf.

The bell saved him. He was hanging on the ropes in a corner, helpless, rocked by smash after smash as the gong clattered wildly for the rest period. He slumped on his stool, dazed, incredibly tired. His chest heaved; his legs trembled. The pep and drive seemed to have drained out of his system. The stamina he had slaved so hard to win back during the last four months was gone.

Wolf Larson glared savage hate across the ring at him. He grinned back. The crowd bellowed for him to paste the Wolf into a pulp, and knew that they were asking a miracle from the shell of a once mighty warrior.

He weathered the third and fourth, taking brutal floggings in each. His left bothered Larson, however, ripping his cheek and puffing one eye. Yet the Wolf was coming on as strong as ever, with never a sign of slowing up, as Biff had hoped.

And his own strategy seemed to have missed fire. He was as weak as a kitten. Couldn't find his second wind. He might better have gone out and slugged with the Wolf from the start; given the crowd a show, anyway. As it was, he couldn't hold up much longer.

THE WOLF smashed him to the canvas three times in the fifth. Biff took the nine count on each, resting. The crowd began to reach for coats and hats during the rest period. They stood up, waiting for the finish as Larson flung out in the sixth to blast Biff into oblivion.

A thunderclap left hook to the belly sickened Biff. A right drove him staggering back into the ropes. His lungs seemed paralyzed; he gasped for breath.

Larson bounced in for the kill, a snarl of triumph on his lips. But seeing that McGinty was groggy and all but helpless, he held him close and slugged him savagely with one free hand.

"Butt in, will ya?" he rasped in Biff's ear . . . *Slam!* a detonating thud in the kidneys . . . "On the up an' up, huh? . . . *Sock . . . "Ya cheap— . . . Wham!! . . . "—palooka!"*

At the last word he hauled off and smashed his right with every ounce of power in his shoulders—streaking like a comet for Biff's jaw.

But somehow the haymaker whistled wide. Biff was suddenly free . . . Biff was clear . . . and Biff had turned now and was flailing back at the Wolf!

The crowd went mad. Biff McGinty, the great-hearted, two-fisted juggernaut of old, had come back, crashing, driving, lunging, whirling, exploding shot after shot into the crimson-splotted face and body of the Wolf!

Old Biff had come back—and what a comeback! Plenty of tough battles in the old boy yet. "Who said he was washed up? A palooka? Boy, look at 'im go!"

Toe-to-toe, a grin on his face, the veteran was driving Larson helter-skelter around the ring, exulting in the fast-weakening blows flung at him by a chalk-faced, desperate Wolf. Suddenly, Larson's punches were powder-puffs; his knees sagged as he clinched weakly.

Biff feinted . . . a dull report of wet leather slamming on jaw-bone . . . and Wolf Larson tumbled awkwardly full length on the canvas . . .

"One!—two!—three—"

As though in a dream, Biff watched the referee's arm rise and fall, rise and fall. Heard dimly the thunder of cheers. Heard, "—nine!—ten and out!" Then collapsed in a heap on the floor.

When he opened his eyes, Tom Bannister himself was leaning over him. The matchmaker was cutting his gloves off and wringing his hand, and the roar of the crowd had mounted to pandemonium.

"Good old Biff!"

"Boy, what a heart!"

"Atta boy, Biff!"

"What a scrap! Wow!"

"They never come back—boloney!"

Tom Bannister helped him up while Biff, hands clasped overhead, acknowledged the clamorous ovation.

"Guess I was wrong, dead wrong, about you being washed up, Biff," the

matchmaker said. "You get that big shot at Billy Garrity, if you like."

Biff smiled faintly. His puffed lips moved. "No, Tom, lad," he said huskily. "You were right. I'm through—washed up. Only," he grinned painfully, "I ain't no palook! Not Biff McGinty, Tom. He had me until he said that. Then I just had to show him I was palooka-proof. But it's my last fight. Takes too long to get the old second wind."

"I'm glad, Biff," the matchmaker said. "You could go on. You're still a great drawing-card. But—" he paused.

"I know—but you can't go on forever. And it's too tough on an old-timer like me." Suddenly he chuckled. "Oh, by the by, Tom, the next time ya want some great chow, drop in at George's Café on Hollywood Boulevard. You know the place. Only it'll be havin' a big new sign over it tomorrow—McGinty's Shanty!"

FROM COLLEGE ATHLETE TO RING STAR

COLLEGE athletes who have made good in the ring are as rare as the proverbial day in June, yet right now the eyes of the experts are centered on a former Penn State star whose brief professional record to date includes more than a score of knockouts.

You've guessed it. The boy is Steve Hamas, ballyhooed by his admirers as a future heavyweight champion.

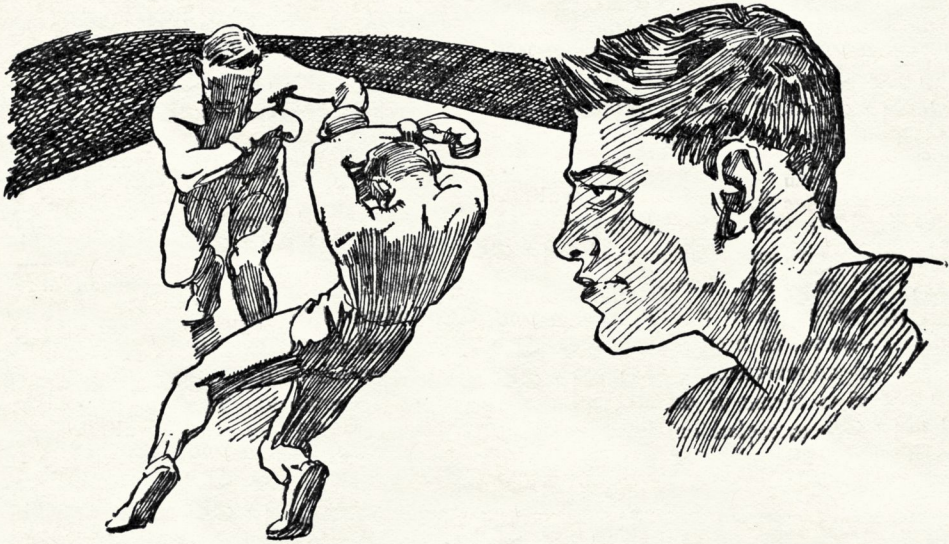
Hamas picked up his early lessons in leather-flinging from Leo Houck, boxing instructor at Penn State and himself a battler of no mean attainments in a day of great fighters.

After graduation, the ring beckoned, and Steve sought out Charley Harvey and asked Charlie to take him under his wing. Charlie was willing, but, after a fight or two, told Steve he wouldn't do. So Steve went West and built himself a kayo record. Upon his return, he again hooked up with Harvey, and the collegian has been going great guns ever since.

Keep your eye on Hamas. He may upset the old tradition about college athletes in the squared circle.

Unseen watchmen marked Terry Dulin's ride South, every step, every instant. From the Rio Grande to the Pass of the Buzzards, a grim lesson for prowling gringos was written in the bones of forgotten men. But the Texan refused to learn. Read Walt Coburn's complete Western action novel, "Señor Spy," in ACTION STORIES, now on the stands.

Bearcat of the Ring



By JACK KOFOED

At his peak, Jack Dillon earned the tribute of "the greatest middleweight in the land"; and now he tore through the heavyweights as relentlessly as he had swarmed over the men of his own class. He wanted Willard. Oh, how he wanted Willard! But the champ turned a deaf ear to all his challenges, and time passed with his greatest ambition unrealized.—Part II.

A RESISTLESS, tearing attack. A helter-skelter whirl of blows. That was Jack Dillon's method of fighting even when he was sixteen years old and won the championship of Maywood Farms by knocking out a burley stable-hand.

His real name was Ernest Price—but he adopted the *nom de guerre* of Dillon in tribute to the great trotting horse and pride of Maywood, Sydney Dillon.

He was a devastating slugger from the start. He drove through the middleweight class like a cyclone, and accepted bouts with bigger men without hesitation. The bigger they were the better Dillon liked it. The licking he dealt out to Frank Moran and Fireman Jim Flynn were proof of that.

Fighting the cream of his class—the 160 pounders—he met and defeated Hugo Kelly, Johnny Thompson, Eddie McGoorty, Frank Klaus and others. He

was on top of the heap, dreaming even of becoming heavyweight champion of the world!

Now go on with the story.

JACK DILLON laughed harshly. There was a dangerous light in his eyes.

"You want me to throw the fight, eh?" he said.

The greasy-skinned little manager thrust out his hands, palm upward.

"Why not? You'll be a 3-to-1 favorite, and there'll be a lot of betting. We can clean up. Then we'll give you a return match . . . and you can win that. I know my man can't lick you on the level. That's the only reason I'm making this offer. What do you say?"

Dillon did not move from his seat.

"There's one thing I'd like to know," he said, "and that's why you came to me with this proposition. You know I've

always been on the level, don't you? There's not a fight in my record that has anything cockeyed about it."

"Sure . . . sure," the manager agreed, "but I know this too: You're not makin' any fortune for yourself out o' this game. You could stand a little clean-up, couldn't you? You ain't rollin' with dough, are you?"

The Bearcat shook his head. He understood the philosophy of the "fixer." A man was honest only because temptation had not been thrust in his way. There was no such a thing, in such a fellow's mind, as honesty of purpose or pride of achievement. Everything was measured in terms of dollars and cents. You were successful only if you made a lot of money. Nothing else counted . . . Not with a chap like that, maybe . . . but other things counted with Jack Dillon.

He was honest down to his bones. No one had ever asked him to throw a fight before . . . and the proposition of this oily fellow was an insult. He had never paid anyone to lay down to him . . . because he was so thunderingly confident in his heart that he could beat anyone in the world. Aside from any point of honesty, why buy what you already have?

It had been Jack's first impulse to punch this proposition man on the nose, and then kick him out . . . But that wouldn't do. In the first place the guy was too little. Jack would feel like a bully, no matter what the provocation. In the second place a mere beating wouldn't be enough. He'd have to be punished in some more substantial way. The only way to reach a fellow like that was through his pocketbook. He could forget a blow, but not lost dollars . . . But Jack Dillon was no conspirator. Things like this were beyond his range. But Steve Harter might be able to think something out. Good old Steve ought to be able to out-guess this chump. And then some!

So he said: "You'll have to ask my manager about this."

"Can't we leave him out of it?" suggested shifty-eyes.

"And double-cross him, too? Not a chance."

"All right then. Talk it over, and I'll see you tomorrow."

Then shifty-eyes went away.

Dillon immediately went in search of Steve Harter, and told him of the proposition.

"What'll we do?" he demanded.

Harter laughed.

"We'll fix this egg so he won't try any more of his tricky stunts," he said. "Just call him up and tell him to bet the works on his man . . . Nothing else . . . Just bet the works. Then you go in and knock the stiff out in the first round."

That sounded like a good idea. There was only one way to treat these rats of the ring. That was to clean them out . . . So Jack did just that.

The fixer was suspicious.

"How am I to know you'll take a dive?" he wanted to know.

"What do you want me to do, sign a contract?" snorted Jack. "If I do this, don't you suppose I'll have my own money on the line? I don't care whether you're in it or not."

That apparently convinced the fixer. He said all right, and hung up. Steve Harter did a little investigating, and found a sudden flood of money ready to back the short-ender. Dillon really was a 3-to-1 favorite, so that meant the crooks were in the trap.

A Close Shave

THE night of the fight came soon enough. Jack was in splendid shape, and he was never more confident and determined in his life. This wasn't just winning a fight. It was a lot more than that. The Bearcat had pride in his profession. He wanted to see it clean . . . and the best way to clean it was to wipe out fellows like the chiseler.

Dillon's opponent that night was a hard-boiled old veteran with a distressing sock in either hand. He had slowed

up a lot, so much so that he could not keep pace with the fast young men, but there was still dynamite enough in his fists to knock out those on whom he landed.

When he climbed into the ring, the manager looked at him inquiringly. Jack grinned.

He planned to carry his opponent for a round or two, and then knock him over. It looked like a cinch.

When the bell sent the men into action, Dillon's opponent—whom we'll call Knockout Harris, because it isn't his name—charged at the Bearcat, and began to throw punches as fast as he could. Normally, it would have been Dillon's nature to meet that sort of an attack with a more bitter one of his own . . . but now he retreated and stalled. The gallery began to yell for a knockout. It's always pleasing to see the favorite in a tough spot. The chiseling manager, his chin on the ring floor, chuckled. This looked like the real McCoy . . . and plenty of easy money.

Jack began to enjoy the joke more and more. What an awakening it would be for the cheaters when he knocked their man out. . . . And suddenly a blast exploded inside his brain. Everything went black before him. Instinctively, he bracketed his arms in front of him. He felt the other fellow's fists pounding against them. He was dizzy and barely able to stand. . . . Too confident, he had allowed this tremendous hitter to land squarely on the button.

Groggy, almost out, Dillon still knew what had happened and what he had planned to happen. If he never won another fight in his life, he had to win this one. If he didn't, the cheating manager would nod and grin whenever his name was mentioned. . . . In that fellow's mind he would be a fighter who had betrayed his trust. . . . That would be the worst insult of all. Somehow or other, he must pull himself together.

He did. Jack Dillon was strong and hard-fibred. He was in excellent condition. He managed to last through the

round, and throw off the effect of that blow.

In his corner he told Steve Harter not to worry. He'd be all right. He'd get the fellow in the very next round. See if he didn't.

The men in the other corner were laughing and whispering to each other. They thought Dillon had deliberately stepped into the punch, and would do it again.

A man in top-notch condition quickly throws off the effect of a punch. The minute's rest was all Jack needed. When it had passed by, he was himself again; fresh as a daisy, eager to go.

The bell sent them into action. This was the old-time Bearcat. No stalling and running away now. He didn't intend to give the other fellow a chance to slip over a devastating wallop. The kayo for him as quick and hard as he could put it over!

They met in a savage slugging bee in the center of the ring. Knockout Harris, confident that Dillon would topple, let go with everything he had, and gave little attention to defense.

Then . . . Jack ripped in a left hook to the body. It was short . . . as were most of his punches . . . but it had a world of power in back of it. Down went Harris, grovelling in the resin. He was badly hurt. He could hardly breathe.

Even then Harris didn't understand that Jack Dillon meant to win the fight. He thought that blow an accident. . . . If he could get to his feet and make just one swing, the Bearcat would go down. . . . Sure he would. . . . Hadn't the manager said it was all arranged?

So . . . somehow or other . . . he managed to get to his feet. He was wobbly. His face was the color of chalk. But he was carried on by the thought that Dillon would quit to him. . . . He swung . . . weakly, but with all the determination he had.

Jack stepped inside it with another short hook, a vicious belt to the jaw. The man we know as Knockout Harris collapsed like a rag doll. He went down

. . . and out. The referee took one look at him, and, without bothering to count, motioned the seconds to come in and get their beaten fighter.

The Bearcat turned and looked at the chiseler. There was a grim smile on his lips. . . . The fellow who had wanted to fix the fight did not return the glare. His face was like putty . . . his eyes dull. He was broke . . . and it was good enough for him.

CHAPTER VIII

A Day of Great Middleweights

THERE never was a time when more good middleweights crowded into the picture. Dillon was at the top of the pack, but others like George Chip, Frank Klaus, Jimmy Clabby, Mike Gibbons, K. O. George Brown and others were only a pace or two behind. And, down in Australia, Les Darcy was making his presence felt in a big way.

Darcy is rated by experts as one of the greatest middleweights that ever lived—a man worthy of place with Ketchel and Papke and Dillon. In six years of fighting around Sydney and Melbourne he was unconquerable.

Some of the leading American stars went down there to take him over the hurdles. Frank Loughrey, that rough and ready Philadelphian, was the first, and, though Loughrey lasted twenty rounds, he was a badly-beaten boy at the finish. Jeff Smith tried, and lost on a foul in the second round. Clever Jimmy Clabby, who had claimed the title in the United States, lost a pair of twenty-round decisions to Darcy. Eddie McGoorty was knocked out on two occasions, and Buck Crouse, good as he was, lasted only two rounds. Eventually, George Chip went to Australia, and was stopped by the champion in nine rounds.

Though a bit ahead of the chronological sequence of this story, it might be as well here as anywhere to tell some of Darcy's tragic story. He came to

America in 1917, ballyhooed as the greatest fighting man from Down Under since the heyday of Bob Fitzsimmons. England had been neck deep in the World War for three years. The United States had entered only a short time before . . . and the hecklers went after Darcy as a slacker. How he was panned and roasted! It broke the boy's heart, and he died of grief.

Before this happened, Tex Rickard was anxious to arrange a meeting between Jack Dillon and the Australian wizard. All the details were smoothed out. The most intense excitement was stirred up. Then the Governor of New York, influenced by those who were heckling Darcy, refused to permit the match. It would have been one of the greatest in history beyond a doubt . . . but it never came off.

One of Dillon's most persistent rivals was George Chip. There never was a great deal to choose between them, even though the Bearcat had the better of the battles they fought. They met no less than nine times for a total of eighty-three rounds, and neither was able to stop the other.

Jack won two victories, and one bout was called a draw. The other six matches were of the no-decision variety, and in all of them Dillon had just a shade the better of it. Not enough to convince Chip that the Bearcat was his master, though. He was always ready to come back for more.

The first time they met was in a six-round no-decision bout in 1910. It was such a slam-bang battle that the fans were on their feet most of the time, tearing the roof to pieces with their shrill howling. The papers said Jack won. That irritated the Scranton Greek. Though a comparative youngster, he had fought such good men as Buck Crouse, Billy Berger, Tom McMahon and Cy Flynn, and had been beaten only once. There was no inferiority complex in his make-up. Beat Dillon? Sure he would!

Dayton, Ohio, was the scene of their next meeting. It was a sort of middle-

ground between the home-towns of the rivals, and, besides, fifteen-round bouts were in vogue there. It would take fifteen rounds to decide which was the better man. With two such rugged souls, six cantos was merely a warm-up.

Bear in mind that the George Chip who met Jack Dillon then was a better fighter than the battle-scarred one who was knocked out by Les Darcy in 1916. He was twenty-three years old, and at the peak of his physical prowess.

So, by the way, was the Hoosier slugger.

Dillon Versus Chip

DILLON sat in his corner, tapping his leather-padded right hand into the palm of his left. He wrinkled his nose in disgust and looked across the ring. Over there was George Chip, square-faced, steel-eyed. Chip was a great fighter—one of the best—but the Bearcat grinned to himself.

The right! When he let it go, the best of them went down, and that fellow Chip across the way wouldn't be an exception. He'd better keep his whiskers out of the way. He was tough, wasn't he? Well, he'd need all his toughness tonight.

The right! The right! Let George come tearing in if he felt that way. All Jack Dillon wanted was a chance to land that right fist of his, and the chatter would be over. True, the Greek was a hitter, too. He had scored a lot of knock-outs. But what of it? Dillon liked to be in there with punchers. There was a thrill to the game when your opponent was good.

The referee walked out and signaled the rivals with that little jerk of the head common to all referees. In a moment Jack stood in the center of the ring, shuffling his feet. He didn't look at Chip, and Chip did not look at him. He pretended an immense boredom. That was the veteran's way of showing he had been there before. His seconds were not so casual, however. They

crowded up to hear what the referee had to say, though everyone knew the instructions by heart.

"Ah, come on and get started," Dillon said. He was hot for battle. These last few seconds were just a little nerve-racking—even to the man who loves to fight.

The boxers returned to their corners. The seconds scudded out of the ring. A deep hush fell over the audience. The fans leaned forward in their seats, staring at the nearly naked men in the ring.

The bell!

Jack Dillon went out like a raving wild-cat. Chip tipped back the Bearcat's chin with a jab, but his well-meant right whistled off into nothingness. Chip caught himself, and like a good fighting man who never allows a hand to be idle, hooked a left to Dillon's stomach. The latter grunted, but instead of backing away, came in just that much harder, slamming both hands to the body. George blocked one with his elbows, but the other found its mark—and hurt.

Dillon shook his tousled head. His lips tightened. He unleashed another right-hander to Chip's jaw. But George Chip was as physically tough as Jack Dillon, and just as brave. He set himself solidly, and the two began to trade punches. Right . . . left . . . as hard as they could throw them. It was desperate work, and neither would give an inch.

When the round ended and they returned to their corners, Chip carried a slight cut over one eye and his face was reddened by the Dillon blows. Jack had been shaken a couple of times himself, but he bore no mark of the carnage.

The minute's rest passed as though it were a couple of seconds. Out they went for the next round. Chip had no intention of depending on cleverness, any more than Dillon had. He was proud of his strength and hitting power. He stood up to the Bearcat, and gave as good as he received. His seconds had tried to tell him to stall and tire Dillon out; the fight was scheduled for fifteen rounds,

and no one could keep up such a pace all of that time. But Chip disregarded their instructions. He had his own ideas of how to beat Jack Dillon, and for his own pride's sake would not back up and run away.

So they slugged their way through the second round; the succeeding one, too. They fought head to head, throwing punches to face and body with reckless abandon. The punishment they absorbed was just part of the hard game. It was nothing to dodge.

Whirlwind Finish

FIVE rounds went by — ten — and twelve. There wasn't much to choose between the warriors. Dillon would have knocked out most of the current heavyweights with the blows he had landed on George Chip. But the hard-chinned Greek appeared as aggressive as ever. He had begun to tire, though. Even his iron-bound frame felt the strain of this turgid effort.

On the other hand, Dillon, the superman, had suffered no ill effects. He was just as strong, just as determined as he had been at the beginning of the fight. He was going to whip George Chip if it was the last thing he did in his life. These last three rounds would be the test. He'd throw into them every ounce of reserve strength he possessed. And these last three rounds might well be written down as an epic of all the qualities that go to make boxing one of the greatest of all sports.

Dillon, who had gone through thirty-six minutes of a most gruelling struggle, set a pace that made his previous efforts seem tame by comparison. He ripped and tore at the courageous Greek like a man gone mad. Chip fought back bravely, but his arms were lead-heavy. He couldn't shoot his punches nearly as fast as he had before, and Dillon beat him to it time and again.

There were moments when George staggered under the bitter fusillade. There were times when it appeared im-

possible to keep going at all. But, just when it seemed he must collapse, he'd whirl out in a momentary rally that brought the fans shrieking to their feet. Bit by bit, however, he was driven back, herded into a defensive role by the relentless fury of Jack Dillon's attack.

When the last bell sounded, Chip was nearly all in. No man ever heard the sound of that final gong with more pleasure than he. It would have been impossible for him to have continued much longer.

Dillon shook Chip's hand.

"Boy," he said, "you gave me the toughest time I've had in years. It was a swell fight!"

And then the referee came over to Jack and lifted his right glove as the sign of victory.

George Chip — born Chipulonis — is worthy of being rated one of the world's best middleweights. That he was able to give Jack Dillon such a strenuous fight at a time when Dillon was at the peak of his form, is the best proof to be advanced to this statement. He had everything that Jack possessed in only a slightly minor degree. Were he in action today, we'd see a slugger capable of going to rout with almost any boxer of any weight. He was a puncher and he could take a punch. He's still around, not rich in a financial way, but rich in the possession of three handsome sons who may take up the fistic job their daddy has laid down.

CHAPTER IX

Gunning for Big Game

RECOGNIZED as the greatest middleweight in the land, Jack Dillon set his gaze on higher honors. He aimed at the light-heavyweight and the heavyweight crowns. He was certain he could whip anyone in the world. The bigger they were, the easier targets they made, and the harder they would find it to land on him.

First of all, the 175-pound division was the one to conquer. From there on would not be such a big step. Besides, there were certain physical restrictions that made a defense of the middleweight title too much of a strain.

In 1915 Dillon began to find that making the middleweight limit was more of a task than he had bargained for. His broad-beamed frame was putting on weight, solid muscle that could not be sweated off by the runs on the road or work in the gymnasium. Getting down to 160 pounds was out of the question without doing irretrievable harm to his physical organism.

The Hoosier Bearcat decided that he might as well revive the light-heavyweight title and claim it. It had been practically in abeyance for some years. The history of this class is rather interesting and certainly worth a word here.

It was established in 1903 by Lou Houseman, of Chicago, who at that time was managing Jack Root, considered one of the cleverest middleweights of the country. Root had beaten such good men as Alex Greggains, Tommy West, Ed Denfass, Dick O'Brien, Danny Creedon, George Beyers, Kid Carter, Australian Jimmy Ryan and Billy Stift. He also won over the famous Kid McCoy at Detroit in April, 1903, but found that the weight hurt him.

It was then that Lou Houseman offered to back Root against any man in the world that weighed 175 pounds and under. This was followed by Houseman's suggesting the new class and putting up a belt.

George Gardner was the first to challenge for the title, and he knocked out Root in the twelfth round at Fort Erie, Canada. Bob Fitzsimmons then defeated Gardner in twenty rounds in San Francisco, and claimed the championship. Two years later Fitz was whipped by Philadelphia Jack O'Brien in thirteen rounds. And in 1907, Tommy Burns won from O'Brien. Burns, however, was after the heavyweight title, and paid practically no attention to the 175-pound

crown. Between that period and 1915 the light-heavyweight crown lay rusting in idleness.

While Dillon was perfectly willing to fight all the heavyweights in the business—and his greatest successes were scored against big men—he saw no reason why he should not have a title of his own while questing for the one held by Jess Willard. There was no one to dispute his right, and the boxing critics were unanimous in hailing him as a worthy successor to Fitzsimmons and O'Brien and the rest.

Battling Levinsky was the outstanding figure among the cruiserweights, as the English call this division. He was one of the most supremely clever men from the point of view of style and defensive skill the game had seen in a long time. Levinsky was not a hitter. He didn't have to be. In five years of fighting against men like Jeff Clarke, Mike Glover, Leo Houck, George Ashe, Tony Caponi, Jack Twin Sullivan, Jim Coffey, Jim Flynn and Charley Weinert, he had never lost a decision. He was exactly the sort of boxer who figured to give a slashing puncher like Dillon the greatest possible trouble.

Levinsky suffered little punishment during his ring career, which lasted twenty years. He was too clever to take much punishment, and he looked after his condition with the most assiduous care. The Battler is still around New York and in excellent shape.

The Eternal Socker

DILLON and Levinsky met in a twelve-round match at Butte, with the light-heavyweight championship as the stake between them. The Battler, with his speed and shrewdness and great left hand, didn't see how he could possibly lose. A good many of the bettors, who string along with cleverness instead of ruggedness and a punch, felt the same way about it.

Through the earlier part of the match Levinsky kept Dillon away and out-

pointed him. But Jack kept tearing in, swinging eternally, never letting up for a single instant. He began getting to Levinsky's stomach, slowing him down to a walk. Dillon won the decision at the end of twelve rounds . . . and he deserved it.

There was no stopping the Bearcat now. He wanted the heavyweights. The bigger they were, the better. But the big fellows, it might be said, were none too keen about meeting Jack.

As a starter, though, he took on Al Norton, a big fellow from the Coast, and what a shellacking he handed the unfortunate Al. He added Sailor Petroskey and several others of less consequence to his list of victims, and then went East to meet Charley Weinert at Philadelphia.

They called Weinert the Adonis. He was a beautifully built six-footer, with a polished style that had caught the fancy of the experts. Charley was still a youngster, but he was well trained and had a natural flair for the game. Many fistic wise men said that he could not miss winning the heavyweight championship of the world. In their opinion he was another Jim Corbett. In a dozen bouts he had scored eight knockouts, so his punch as well as his skill was a subject of considerable comment.

Good as Dillon was, the smart guys expected him to be a pushover for Weinert. They didn't see how it would be possible for the Bearcat to get to Charley in six rounds. Nobody could do that, they said. At the sprint distance this youngster could hold his own with anyone, and it would be the best experience in the world for him to go on with a rugged veteran like Jack Dillon.

The Bearcat had a different idea. He went to the Quaker City with supreme confidence in his ability to flatten Charley Weinert or any other heavyweight in the game. His string of impressive victories had buoyed him up immensely.

The result of that fight astounded Philadelphia and every boxing expert who sat at the ringside. Weinert, "the

second James J. Corbett," was hacked and buffeted from one side of the ring to the other. His great boxing skill blew up in the face of the most determined attack he had ever seen.

Dillon literally crucified the Newark youngster. He tore the breath out of him with body blows, and then knocked him out in the second round with a thundering right to the jaw.

The town went wild over the Bearcat of the ring. If he could do that to Charley Weinert, he was headed straight for the heavyweight championship—size or no size. Jack Dillon could not miss.

No one had to tell Dillon that. He was convinced of it himself. He went to Denver and whipped Dick Gilbert, and then came back East. Philadelphia and New York were the hottest boxing cities in the country. It was there that he ought to be. Victories in those towns would get him a lot more publicity than anywhere else.

Six Rounds with the Dancing Master

PHILADELPHIA fans were anxious to see this ruiner of reputations again. He had given them a thrill they would not soon forget. But the promoters ran into difficulties right there. Dillon wanted some good heavyweight as an opponent. The heavyweights—after noting what had happened to Charley Weinert—were more shy than ever.

So, finally, just to get someone into the ring with Jack, they secured Young Ahearn . . . and Dillon learned a lesson that was to do him immeasurable good. He had been too successful. He had gotten into the habit of underestimating his rivals . . . and pride, you know, goes before a fall. Many another man has found that out to his sorrow, and, if he was wise, learned because of it.

Young Ahearn was an Englishman whose real name was Jacob Woodward.

They called him the "Dancing Master," and he was exactly that. No man, and I think we may include Young Griffio and Packey McFarland and other masters, knew any more about the science of boxing than he did. He couldn't hit a lick, but from the point of sheer skill he was a marvel.

Ahearn started as a lightweight. He boxed the best men in his class, including McFarland, Battling Hurley and other top-notchers of his time. Gradually he put on weight and left-handed his way through the welter and middle-weights. He did knock out a few good men in his day, including Soldier Bartfield, Paddy Sullivan, Henri Piet and Willie Lewis, but in general he was well content to coast along to decisions.

Dillon had the slugger's contempt for the fleet-footed fellow who evades punishment and wins his battles by sticking a jab in his opponent's eyes. He must have known that Ahearn was good. Such aggressive punchers as Leo Houck and Buck Crouse had failed to get to him in limited-round bouts. But as he accepted a six-round date with the Dancing Master in Philadelphia, and thereby hangs a tale.

Young Ahearn had much more respect for Jack Dillon than Dillon had for him. He went into the ring intending to take no foolish chances. For, while he could not hurt the Hoosier Bearcat with his punches, Jack certainly could hurt him.

Now, you would rather expect that a fighter who could whip powerful heavy-weights would have little trouble with a slim, powder-puff hitter like Young Ahearn. Gosh! One wallop and it would be all done—but Ahearn was not in there to let Dillon put that wallop over.

At the sound of the first bell Jack leaped out of his corner with all his usual ferocity of attack. He was no wild swinger. He came in close. His punches were comparatively short and possessed accuracy, as well as power. In this case he planned to soften Ahearn up with a couple of hooks to the body and then

bring him down with one to the chin. His strategy was sound enough, but making it work in practice was a far different thing than executing it in theory.

A Lesson Well Learned

YOU never have seen such a flitter of heels in your life as this fellow Young Ahearn, nor have you ever seen such consummate skill. I don't think the Englishman took a single forward step. He was going away continually, but he could go backward as fast as Dillon could go forward. He kept flicking his left glove to Jack's face, blocking the returns. When the Bearcat came in close and started to plug away at the body, Ahearn would tie him up in masterful style.

With three rounds gone, Jack hadn't landed a single punch. He was wild with rage. It was seldom that he let anger get the better of him, but it had the better of him now. He grew desperate trying to land a punch. His eyes glared, his heart hammered with fury—and all the time Mr. Jacob Woodward was galloping out of range and poking Mr. Jack Dillon in the eyes and nose with his skilled left hand.

Spectators howled with glee, not at Dillon's discomfort but at Ahearn's inimitable cleverness.

It wasn't until the end of the fifth round that Jack caught up with his enemy. One of his sweeping hooks landed on Ahearn's stomach. For a moment the Englishman was slowed down to a walk. Dillon was on top of him, banging away instantly. When the bell sounded, his big chance was gone.

Ahearn recovered quickly enough to keep out of range during the sixth and final round. It was a no-decision bout, so no black spot went down in the record books opposite Dillon's name. But he never forgot those eighteen minutes with the Dancing Master. It was the hope of his heart to get Ahearn in the ring with him again for ten rounds.

Then he'd knock the fellow out. Jack was sure of that. No man would be fleet-footed enough to keep out of his way for that distance. But the Dancing Master was content to rest on his laurels. He would not sign up for another battle with the Hoosier Bearcat. The memory of that body punch in the fifth round would stay with him for quite a while.

Dillon was no dumb-bell. He had learned his lesson. From then on he took no one lightly. You never could tell when the supposed pushover would turn out to be the toughest fellow you ever met in your life. Though it grated on Dillon's pride that he had been so ineffective against Ahearn, he realized that it had been the best possible thing for him. He had had this very important fact borne in on him in a match that did his prestige little harm. It was fortunate that he had learned it before going into some important battle when his overconfidence might have cost him all the laurels it had taken him years to acquire.

He'd keep on going ahead.

CHAPTER X

Onward and Upward

DILLON continued his chase after the heavyweights, though he ignored no one in the lower classes. He was a busy man, engaging in some twenty-five bouts a year and traveling continually from New York to Kansas City and way-stations.

Through 1914 and 1915 he didn't lose a decision. He knocked out Andre Anderson, to name one of his big opponents, and defeated Porky Flynn, Sailor Grande, Jim Savage, Billy Miske and Tom McCarthy among a lot of others. These were all warriors in the "White Hope" class. They had visions of winning the heavyweight title, too . . . but after sessions with Dillon most of their dreams faded.

I wish it might be said that Jack took good care of himself . . . but he didn't.

He was too ready for a jolly time; too careless of what the future might bring. You see, he had such supreme confidence in himself that he could not visualize a time when he might not be so good. He could not look into the future, and see a day when he would have slipped too far to keep pace with younger men. Others might go—but not Jack Dillon!

At this period of his career he was at his peak. He might have beaten almost anyone in the world. Certainly, he was good enough to have given any fighter in history a desperate time of it. He knew this . . . and he overlooked the damage that an easy life and the passing years would do to even such a great athlete as Jack Dillon. Too many others have suffered from the same lack of foresight.

Having scored a dozen bright victories in New York and Brooklyn, the Bearcat was a great drawing-card there. Finally, he was matched with Tom Cowler for the edification of the metropolitan audience. Like everyone else, the metropolitan goes for the "killer."

Tom Cowler, who was called the "Man Mountain," had come to America from England with more than a little hope of winning the heavyweight championship. He was a huge fellow, not very fast perhaps, but a tremendous thumper and a man who was regarded as being able to stand up under any sort of punishment. The very bulk of this invader scared off some of the other "white hopes."

Tom found it difficult to get matches. He was perfectly willing to take on anyone. Jack Dillon was suggested. Cowler laughed at the idea of fighting a man sixty pounds lighter than himself, but, after all, he couldn't make many American dollars by remaining idle. The match was made.

When they faced each other in the ring, Tom felt a little sheepish. He looked down from his great height on this chunky, hard-muscled little fellow, and felt sorry for the bloomin' blighter.

But his job was plain before him. There was nothing for him to do but whip Jack Dillon as quickly and soundly as he could. This he estimated, in his stolid English way, would take just about two minutes.

Jack the Giant Killer

THE bell sounded. Cowler came from his corner, left hand extended in the orthodox fashion, and his right cocked by his side all ready to flatten the Yankee. He hoped the crowd would not boo too much when he knocked Dillon to the floor.

The lithe giant killer sprang at him like a stag hound going after its prey. His right fist hit Tom Cowler in the pit of the stomach. The impact was like that of a projectile. Tom's breath spurted out in a great gasp. His lips assumed a bluish tinge; his eyes fairly popped from his head. He wouldn't have believed it possible that so little a man as Jack Dillon could hit so hard.

Instinctively, Cowler retreated. There was nothing else for him to do. But the crowd, siding with the smaller man, hooted him unmercifully.

Now, Tom was game enough. He was hurt, but was even more surprised. He covered himself against the battering fists of the Indiana Bearcat, but his big arms were not as quick in their movements as Dillon's. Jack beat him to the punch time after time. Cowler found it impossible to rally, to get hold of himself and overcome this attack by a more bitter one of his own. He was shaken and bewildered. A terrific rap on the jaw staggered him. He lurched into a clinch, leaning his great bulk on Jack's shoulders. But Dillon slashed at the body, and drove the Englishman off.

The bell saved Tom Cowler from a knockout in the very first round.

His seconds worked furiously over the Briton during the minute intermission. A stream of blood poured from his nose. His right eye began puffing ominously. His head spun like a top,

and a great weight of depression rested on his heart. If he should be beaten by as little a man as Dillon, the American public would not take him very seriously.

He mustn't be beaten. The thing was impossible. In the next round, by the Lord Harry, he'd go out there and pulverize the bloomin' blighter with one of the right-hand wallops that made him so greatly feared in England! He had to do it. There were no two ways about it.

The gong sounded for the start of the second round. Tom Cowler arose. To his horror he found that his knees were still weak and wobbly. He hadn't realized how much had been taken out of him by that first-round battering. How that Dillon could hit! He advanced slowly, keeping his right hand high, his eyes warily searching his enemy's face. He had never faced a fighter like Dillon before—and he hoped he never would again.

Most particularly he watched Jack's right hand. That's where most of the explosives lay. Tie that up and maybe the battle wouldn't be so tough. He would watch it carefully, anyway.

Others had made the mistake of thinking that Jack Dillon was a one-handed fighter, but none found more quickly how mistaken they were than Tom Cowler did that night. The Bearcat leaped in, as he had in the first round, but this time it was a vicious left hook that connected with the Englishman's jaw. Tom's knees buckled under him. He swayed. Dillon brought up his right under the heart. It seemed to Cowler that he was choking; he couldn't get his breath. His chest, and throat had suddenly constricted, as though a giant iron band were around him, crushing out his life. Over came that left hook again, and the lights went out completely. Tom pitched forward on his face, his forehead striking the ring floor with a sharp thud.

He didn't know that he had been knocked out; he didn't know anything. He lay there in placid sleep while the

referee counted over him and ended forever whatever hopes he might have entertained of winning the heavyweight championship of the world.

Dillon returned to his corner, grinning. "Gosh," he said, "if that big stiff Willard would only give me the chance, I'd do the same thing to him. These big fellows were made to order for me."

Twenty Tough Rounds

GUNBOAT SMITH was one of the heavyweights who tried to change Jack's mind on that score. He had a great persuader, the Gunner had. That was his right hand. There are thousands of fans throughout the country who still retain a vivid memory of Smith. And there are plenty of fighters who have an even keener one. You can see him around New York yet, agile, dapper. He has a number of interests, being chief runner for a brokerage house, a position with Madison Square Garden as a special officer, and frequently is a performer in the movies.

When Gunboat Smith signed to fight Jack Dillon, the Gunner had been in action for ten years against the best heavyweights in the world. Standing nearly six feet in height and weighing only a little more than 175 pounds, Smith was the raw-boned slugger whom Jack Dempsey said hit him the hardest right-hand punch he had ever sampled. Smith had knocked out Jack Jeffries, Jim Savage, Jim Stewart, Bombardier Wells, Jim Flynn, Tony Ross and Arthur Pelkey, and had beaten Frank Moran, Jess Willard, Sam Langford and Battling Levinsky. His record was equalled by few of his contemporaries, and most of the current heavyweights, with hopes of getting somewhere in their arduous profession, were unwilling to sample his wares. But Dillon, who aimed to batter his way through the whole contingent as quickly as possible, expected to take Smith in his stride.

Jack and the Gunner had boxed one ten-round no-decision fight, each claim-

ing to have had the better of it. Most of the ringside experts agreed that the Hoosier Bearcat had a shade. But this second meeting was scheduled for twenty rounds in New Orleans, and twenty rounds is a big enough test for anyone.

Smith was a confident soul, and the longer the fight the better he was pleased. He didn't believe Dillon or anyone else could stand up for twenty rounds under the walloping he would hand out. Gunboat had a world of vitality, too. He could go as long and as fast as any heavyweight. There seemed to be no tire in his big, lanky frame. Reach is an important factor in any fight. Long arms, properly handled, can hold off the stubby fellow, no matter how tough and aggressive he may be. But Dillon laughed that idea off. He had proved more than once that he could get inside the big fellows and wreck a world of punishment on their bodies.

Gosh, if Jess Willard would only agree to fight him! The Tall Pine hid behind the excuse that Dillon was too small. But Jack knew that the right-hand uppercut that was Willard's most effective weapon could do very little damage to him. He was too fast. He'd duck under it. Several years later, when Jack Dempsey fairly murdered the heavyweight champion of the world in that great embroglio at Toledo, Dillon shook his head sorrowfully. He might have done that himself, if Willard had given him the chance. The eighty pounds difference in weight would just be that much of a handicap for big Jess.

But Gunboat Smith was the problem now, and a tough enough problem for anyone. You see, the Gunner was used to fighting much bigger men than himself. Going on with a little fellow like Dillon seemed an easier assignment than he was used to, but the battle proved to very much the other way. Soft? Why, Smith never went through twenty tougher rounds in his life.

His right hand was a powerful piece

of artillery, but landing that right hand on Jack Dillon was something else again. When it did find its mark, the Bearcat showed his teeth in a grin that was half a snarl and came right back, fists flying.

Smith was used to rough going and was willing to trade punches with anybody. They slugged each other around the ring. There was no cessation in the pace. It seemed too furious to last indefinitely—and it was. But it wasn't Dillon who slowed down. The gaunt Gunner found that he had to. He tired under the furious pace.

Toward the end, he rallied, throwing all his stamina and courage into a desperate attempt to beat Jack down, but he failed, as so many other big fellows had failed to stop the resistless rush of the Bearcat of the ring.

The decision went to Dillon.

CHAPTER XI

The Turn of the Tide

JACK had reached the zenith of his form. In 1916 he scored some of his most impressive victories. In addition to Cowler and Smith, he defeated Battling Levinsky again, and scored his memorable triumph over Frank Moran that was recorded in the first installment of this story. He knocked out the veteran Fireman Jim Flynn, and beat phantom Mike Gibbons before Mike's home-town people in St. Paul.

But some of the fire was beginning to fade. Some of the old zest had gone. Perhaps it was because Jack realized that he would not be given a chance at the heavyweight championship. Perhaps it was the fact that the punishment he had endured for years was beginning to take effect on his superhuman frame.

The body is not fashioned to go on forever. It begins to slow down eventually—sooner for fighting men who pit stamina instead of skill against the fists of their rivals. By the end of 1917 Dillon had been in action for ten hard

years. He had engaged in two hundred battles against the best men in the game.

Jack agreed to another meeting with Battling Levinsky. This time the shrewd master out-pointed him, and won back the light-heavyweight championship of the world that he was to hold until Georges Carpentier knocked him out. Dillon wasn't able to get to Levinsky as he had before. There was a little dulling in the edge of his speed. Blows that once found the Battler's body were now blocked by forearms and gloves. It was not very apparent to the ringsiders, however. Jack hadn't slipped that much yet, but from now on the decline would be steady, even if it was slow.

I wonder why fighters find it so hard to perceive when they are on the downward trail. So few do. So few hang up their gloves in time to avoid the heartaches and punishment that is bound to come.

It would have been just as well had Jack Dillon quit the ring at the end of 1917. He was still good, a rip-tearing slugger who was feared by men, regardless of their size and weight. But his health began to decline. He lacked the old dash and fire, and the class of his opponents was not as high as it had been.

Through 1918 there were some high spots. He fought, among others, Harry Greb, Hugh Walker, George Chip and Al McCoy, but the rest of his eighteen rivals during that season were not aces by any means.

Jack met his perennial enemy, Hugh Walker, twice. Funny about this fellow. He stood up to Dillon many times and gave him a whale of a fight on every occasion. It wasn't that Walker matched Dillon in anything but stamina, yet, while he might lose to the fellows whom Jack could knock out with consummate ease, he could always hold his own with the Bearcat.

The story of their first meeting has been told in detail in the first instalment of this story. It was a savage battle in which Walker suffered the most unmer-

ciful punishment through the early rounds and then came back with an amazing rally, when it appeared that he should have been out on his feet. They boxed a ten-round draw in 1917, and another early in 1918. In April Dillon nosed out a victory over the hard-boiled Walker, and two months later took a trimming at Hughie's hands at Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Walker was one of the most amazing figures the ring ever saw. He rates with Joe Grim and Tom Sharkey as an iron man. He probably even deserves to be placed ahead of those steel-chinned sluggers. In several hundred fights Hughie was *never* stopped, despite the fact that he often suffered great punishment. In one way he was like Johnny Risko, for he finished up his ring career without the slightest sign of punch-drunkenness.

I don't know what it was about Hughie that made him such tough game to the Bearcat. He wasn't a good boxer nor did he hit as hard as many men whom Dillon defeated with ease. It is true that he was aggressive, but so were plenty of better men. It just happened that Hugh was a jinx for Jack Dillon, and nothing Jack could do about it changed the situation.

In addition to losing the verdict to Walker, Jack was also out-pointed by Frank Farmer in a six-round bout at Tacoma. He had stopped Farmer with ease only two years before, but the Dillon of two years back was not the Dillon of 1918. He had begun to slow up. There was still the old zing in his punches, but he wasn't as accurate as he might have been. An unknown, named Frank Hoe, and Jack Daily boxed draws with the erstwhile Bearcat, and he had his hands full with Steamboat Bill Scott, Gus Christie and Billy Ryan.

The Hope That Would Not Die

IN a twelve-round no-decision bout with Harry Greb at Toledo, Dillon had it borne in upon him for the first time how much he had slowed up. No

faster human being than Harry Greb ever wore fighting togs. He hit and slashed from every angle. He kept going every instant, never letting up to draw a breath. There had been a time when Dillon himself was fast, but now, though he kept plugging steadily and grimly, and several times hurt the rubbery Greb, he found that target far too elusive for him.

It was different with the rock-jawed, slugging George Chip. Here was a fellow who stood up to him and traded valiantly. Dillon felt at home with Chip, even though George hit a lot harder than Greb ever thought of doing. The rugged chaps who stood up to him were the only ones this ghost of the old Jack Dillon could find with his ready fists.

The newspapermen and promoters and fight fans soon realized that the great Dillon was no longer entitled to that prefix. When you're going down hill, you find the way greased. Jack took a long rest in the hope that it would bring him back somewhere near his old form. He had been fighting too much, burning up his energy in rings all over the country. He felt tired, let down.

When he was ready again, he decided to get started with some comparatively easy opponent and build his way up from that. The first fellow he picked was Battling Halstead, whom he met at Miami, Florida. Several years before, Dillon had knocked out Halstead in three rounds. Judging from his record, the latter had not improved particularly in the intervening period. He was just a good club fighter; one of those game men who will stand up and fight just as long as there is an ounce of strength in him.

Dillon couldn't get to Halstead this time. The supposed pushover walloped away at the tired-eyed veteran, and, while Dillon was entitled to a shade at the end of their ten rounds, the victory was nothing to brag about. Even Jack admitted that himself.

Incidentally, this was the Bearcat's

initial introduction to Miami. He found that delightful city his ideal. Some time in the future, when he had put the ring behind him and wanted to settle down to peace and quiet, he'd come back to Miami, build a house and live the smooth existence that always seems so perfect to the busy man who is traveling most of the days of his life.

There followed a succession of matches with men whose names meant comparatively little in the pugilistic field. Jack fought Halstead twice again that year, and Young Fitzsimmons three times. He went on with fellows Paul Roman, Bob Sweeney, Jack Riley, Pat Weiss, Jack Hall and Harry Foley. Just a couple of years before he would have gone through this group like a cyclone through a wheat field. None would have had a chance with him. They were local prides, second-raters, and yet in fifteen battles Dillon scored only three knockouts, tucking Sweeney, Riley and Moran away before the limit. The other matches were all no-decision affairs of ten or twelve rounds.

Jack was playing the small-time circuit now with a vengeance. New York and Chicago knew him no more. He was featured at such towns as Clarkville, Arkansas; Elrino, Oklahoma; and Kokoma, Indiana. So had the mighty fallen!

Yet the old hope continued to burn in Jack's heart. He couldn't see, as others did, that he was no longer the old-time terror. He had been at the top too long. The impression of mastery had been too deeply ingrained in his heart. He looked at the youngsters coming up, and, observing that they were not devastating sluggers of the type he had been in his youth, failed to understand why he shouldn't beat them.

There was a reason; the best in the world. It lay in Dillon's failing energies, in his lack of speed. There was nothing wrong with his fighting heart, and he could still throw over a wicked punch if the target wasn't too shifty, but these assets were not enough.

Jack Dillon had come to the parting of the ways—but he refused to recognize the fact.

CHAPTER XII

Fading Glory

DILLON'S health was bad, and was rapidly growing worse. He became heavy-handed, slow of foot. He was only a shadow of the once great giant killer, but the ring still had a tight grip on him. He refused to quit, no matter what his condition. His friends urged him, argued with him. What was the use going on when strength and speed and punching ability had been left behind? But Dillon insisted that he would yet find himself. He was only thirty years old, and a man wasn't necessarily beaten at that age even through illness.

The Dillon name still held the old fighting glamor. Jack was a drawing card, though he could no longer stage the thundering assaults that had made him known to every boxing fan in the country. He wanted to keep busy, and the promoters were willing.

On January 25, 1921, Dillon fought 'Frisco Knockout Brown in Louisville, Kentucky. In comparison with his old style, his shuffle into action was like that of a rheumatic old man. He didn't function as he had in the past, but he knocked out Brown in the sixth round, after taking no small measure of punishment himself. After that fight, Jack's mind was a little fuzzy. He couldn't seem to concentrate. Even he had to admit that there was something wrong with him now, but—quit? Not a chance! He'd stick to it. He'd come back and show these gabbling nincompoops that the old Bearcat was still there.

Two weeks later he was at Alexandria, Virginia, in the ring with Billy Edwards. Fistic history has told us little of Billy. He was just one of the great army of the unnoted. A big shot

in his home town for a while, perhaps, but unknown to the wider reaches of the country. Slow as Jack Dillon was, he didn't find it very difficult to get to Billy's body and knock him out in the third round.

Four days later he bobbed up at Atlanta, Georgia, against Jack Denham.

Worn from his illness and tired by travelling, Jack looked pale and sick when the bell sent him into action against the Southern boy. He shuffled in painfully, head low, hands well up before his face. Denham poked at him with a left hand. It was no Loughran-like job, either. But Jack couldn't bob away from it and couldn't block it. It flopped against his nose and eyes with painful accuracy. The giant killer's head bobbed under the impact.

Dillon kept walking in because it was the only method of attack he understood. At this late stage he couldn't clinch and maul. He'd fight. He'd go down fighting if he had to.

Jack appeared to be in a fog, a fog shot with red streaks of pain. He knew he was being beaten, and thoroughly beaten, by a second-rater. In the old days he would have popped this fellow over with one contemptuous punch. Now, he just couldn't seem to get going. He missed and missed again. The target was too elusive for him. His speed was gone. But he plowed on doggedly. His eyes squinted against the rain of blows that sprayed over his face.

The rounds passed by, one like the other. Denham out-boxed Dillon with no apparent effort. He hit the veteran as he pleased. But, though Jack was punch-weary and apparently hopeless, he kept trying. He would keep on trying until the last bell. There wasn't an ounce of quit in his battered body.

A Characteristic Finish

THE sixth round came. How Dillon had been able to go this far was a surprise to the spectators, who had seen him wobbling and shaking almost from

the first. There was something pathetically brave about the great hitter of other days. If you were sentimental, it would have brought a bit of moisture to your eyes. Here was a man who had once been great, but who didn't realize that he was great no longer.

Denham kept up his jabbing through the early part of the sixth. It was just as effective as it had been before. It made Dillon seem slow and awkward. But then the young Southerner was years his junior and much the faster man.

Mid-way in the round, something happened—an explosive, dynamic something. For an instant Jack Dillon was the Bearcat of the ring once more. For a few fleeting seconds he was transformed into a flailing, punching fury. He drove Denham before him in a tornado of blows. A whistling punch to the pit of the stomach doubled the tall youngster; a terrific right to the chin straightened him out again and hurled him flat on the floor.

For the last time in his fighting career Jack Dillon stood by the ropes and looked down at an unconscious form at his feet. It had been a finish characteristic of him. Characteristic, at any rate, of the Dillon of some years back. The old thrill returned to his tired heart. Who said he was through? There was the proof—lying twitching and helpless on the canvas. He wasn't through. He had found himself. He would go on! He would show the doubters that Jack Dillon could still hold his own with any of them.

Dillon thought that, but the spectators at the ringside knew better. They knew that the Bearcat was through, despite this dramatic finish. He still had a punch, probably would have as long as he was able to stand on his feet. But he was only a shell of the once great fighting man he had been. There was no speed and little of the old-time stamina left. Knocking out Jack Denham was a hollow victory, for Denham, after all, had no standing in the fistic world. Don't

kid yourself, Jack, this knockout doesn't mean a thing. Be wise and quit now, before the steady stream of punishment drains you of all the reserves you have left.

This was the earnest advice of Dillon's friends and family. They didn't want him to go on. Gradually the pressure of opinion swayed Jack, too.

The old Bearcat of the ring went home. Perhaps they were right. He sorrowed to think that he could no longer climb through the ropes to score dramatic victories of the sort that had studded his nights for more than a dozen years.

The Bearcat's Farewell

THE fighter who had quit his profession and has none other to take its place is a tragic figure. He doesn't know what to do with himself. The days drag. He visits the gymnasium and watches younger men going through the boxing and training evolution that he used to enjoy. The hours are long. Nothing interests him very much but the fight game, and now he is on the outside looking in.

Dillon found himself in exactly this fix. He still had his old love of horses, but he hadn't saved enough money to acquire a stable. Certainly, he wasn't bad enough off to have to go to work as a stable-hand. Occasionally, he'd ride out to the farm where Sydney Dillon had kicked his heels, but that famous horse was dead and gone, and none of its successors succeeded in filling the empty niche in Jack Dillon's heart.

The spring and summer and fall flicked by and left the Bearcat bored and unhappy. He started working out again, tentatively, in the gymnasium. He felt better than he had in several years. The rest had done him good. The home cooking and easy atmosphere had contributed to his improvement. When winter came, Jack Dillon decided to try his hand at the old game once more.

Those who had his welfare at heart

protested. What was the use? He might win some fights, but they wouldn't mean anything. He was too far along the path to ever dream of a championship again. But it wasn't a question of titles now. It was merely that Jack felt he had to do something. He had to keep himself busy, and, after all, the only way he knew was with his fists.

So, on January 10th, 1923, the shabby old bathrobe around his shoulders, he climbed into a ring to face an awkward tyro named Joe Walters. Joe wouldn't have even qualified as a sparring partner for Dillon in the old days—but the old days were gone forever.

The Bearcat struggled through ten slow and painful rounds with Walters. Neither revealed much ability; Dillon, because he had been burned up in the furnace of effort; Walters, because he was too young and inexperienced to have mastered the tricks of his trade. No decision was rendered, but there was little to choose between them, and, with ten rounds of work behind him, Jack Dillon was almost on the edge of exhaustion.

He had gone through the ropes for the last time in his life. His knees trembled, his whole body shook with fatigue, and he realized, just as clearly as his friends, that he was done; that there was no sense in ever going to the wars again.

That was nearly nine years ago. Jack Dillon has never appeared in formal combat since. He dabbled with this and that in his effort to make a living. He was never particularly successful, but managed to get by as so many other fellows do.

Several years ago he opened a restaurant near the Hialeah race-track outside Miami, Florida. During the racing season, when the sporting crowd is on hand, he does a lively business. Many of the old-timers remember Jack Dillon. When they're in the neighborhood, they stop in to see him and spend their dollars. Even the younger generation

has heard of the giant killer, and they come, too. But the racing season is short. During the other months of the year Hialeah offers little in the way of business.

The sun beats down from a cloudless sky. Youngsters play on the lawn. Their shrill cries are carried into the semi-darkened building where one of the ring's ex-champions sits, waiting for trade. There is little for him to do but dream of the past. He can think of Moran, of Levinsky, of Klaus, of Gunboat Smith and Harry Greb and all the other top-notchers with whom he traded punches.

I guess he's a little lonely. It must seem rather drab to one who has trav-

elled the high roads to sit placidly there and talk of the ring with a few veteran sportsmen who happen to drop in.

And so Jack Dillon passes out of our ken. He no longer means anything to the ring—because the ring quickly forgets a man once his career is done. It doesn't matter how brilliant that career may have been. It dies just the same.

But nobody can take his glory away from the quiet, middle-aged man of Hialeah. Nobody can deny the fact that he was one of the greatest fighters that ever laced on a glove—and that his name deserves to rate with those of Bob Fitzsimmons and Stanley Ketchel.

There can be no higher praise than this.

THE END

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF DEFEAT

TWO of the greatest disappointments the heavyweight class has ever seen are Knute Hansen and Ted Sandwina. Physically, these men have the build of champions. They are tall and lithe and are packed with 200 pounds of iron muscle on their big frames. They possess more than a little degree of boxing skill and a good punch, yet each has failed dismally. They have become distinct third-raters when they should have been close to the top of the heap.

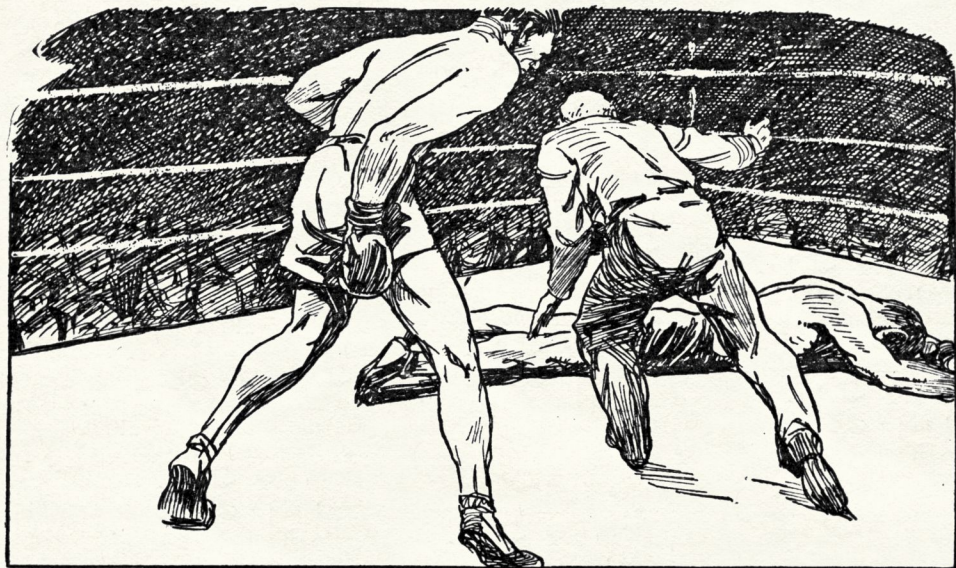
In late July each suffered a knockout defeat to add to the numerous ones that already marred their records. Hansen was stopped in a round by Primo Carnera, and Sandwina was knocked out in three rounds by that promising ex-collegian, Speed Hamas.

Why have they failed? The answer to this question might be given more accurately by a professor of psychology than by a student of the ring. Some observers will say that these boys lack gameness and that they can't stand up under punishment and do not possess real fighting instinct. All these things may be true, but the reason for them lies deeper than mere surface indications.

Both Hansen and Sandwina come of hearty fighting stock. They have run into many situations in life outside the ring that have required some degree of courage to face, and they faced them bravely enough. Yet each has shown a complete lack of fighting courage. At the first sign of rough going they recede into their shells. They play a defensive roll. Neither Knute nor Ted has ever pulled a fight out of the fire after having suffered a trouncing in the earlier rounds. At the start of their careers they were highly ballyhooed, but in the past few seasons they have been little more than stepping-stones for ambitious youngsters.

It's too bad, but, after all, that situation is not unfamiliar to the prize ring, and the explanation can be found only in the curious recesses of the human mind.

The BARNEY BUSTER



By JOHN T. McINTYRE

Author of "Red"

A clinch; the referee struggling to break it. Muttered words: "You socked me around when you thought I was a poor simp and had nothing." . . . "I don't think you've got anything now." . . . "You're a great fixer, aren't you? And you took me on because you thought you had a joke." . . . "I still think I have. Hang on tight and listen to me laugh."

JIGGS FOLEY had his heavyweight, Ed Brennen, signed up to fight Big Dan Putts; and as soon as they arrived in New York Jiggs rushed his man around to Plodner's gymnasium.

"It's a great place," said Jiggs. "I've known Plodner a long time. So step right into it, kid, and work out good. I've got a little business to do, and I'll see you later."

"What kind of business?" said Ed, as Jiggs was all for hurrying away.

"Listen," said Jiggs. "I got enthusiastic yesterday and wired a bet on Frolic in the third race this afternoon. See what I mean? And so, I want to run down to the track and see what kind of a shake I get for my dough."

"I want to say," Ed told him, "if you're in the pony racket you ought to

go in it right. Why bother with managing a fighter?"

"Above everything else, Ed," said Jiggs, "don't get sore. This is only a little afternoon off."

"Okay," said Ed. "But what's the matter with a little attention? Here we jump from the train to the gym; I ain't got no boarding place or nothing."

"As for that," said Jiggs, "any of the boys'll show you where you'll be treated right. I'll eat supper with you," he said, "and then we'll go further into everything."

"I make a long jump out of Sioux Falls to meet this here Putts guy," said Ed, protesting—but Jiggs stopped him.

"I got you the fight, didn't I?" said Jiggs. "As soon as I heard they were shaping Craddock up to meet the cham-

pion I makes a squeal. 'Craddock ain't ready for the big work,' I says. 'They's two birds that can make him say Uncle,' I says. 'That's my man, Ed Brennen, and Big Dan Putts. What's the matter,' I says, 'with matching Brennen and Big Dan?' I says. 'The winner can fight Craddock,' I says. 'And the winner of that can make faces at the title.' The commission," said Jiggs, "takes my advice, and here you are all set to take a shot at one of the biggest hams that ever took a smear in the eye."

Jiggs, in his hurry to get away to the track, made one mistake. If he'd taken a little more time he'd found that Big Dan was also working out at Plodner's. Not that Ed, as a rule, would have cared for that; he'd often worked side by side in gyms with men he was going to fight. But Big Dan was a loud and ready talker, and Marty Blake, Dan's manager, was as cunning as a rat; and when they learned Ed was in the building they both began to work at their stuff with no loss of time.

"So the Western war-horse is going to champ his bit on these premises, is he?" sneered Big Dan, in a tone that Ed couldn't help but hear in his dressing-room as he was getting into his togs. "Well, that's okay with me. But if he's scouting, and trying to find out inside stuff, maybe I'd better cover up a little. I wouldn't like to go into the ring with a big, dangerous guy like that who's onto all my dope. He might try to slap me down. Some of these kicking horses from away out there ain't never been haltered, and you gotta right to be afraid of them."

But Marty Blake winked, and told Big Dan to lay off.

"The guy's a stranger here," says Marty, "and we'll not string him any. Give everybody a chance; that's my motto."

Ed heard this, as Marty meant him to, and he said to himself: "Well, the little bozo sounds all right. Looks like he's willing to see everything done on the up and up."

ED had a good work-out; he was accustomed to strange gyms, for he'd done a good deal of going about the country since he'd signed up with Jiggs Foley. He shadow boxed and pulled at the chest weights; he punched the big bag and skipped the rope. And while a rubber was working on him, Big Dan's manager came into the room.

"You're in good shape," said Marty, trying to make his ratty little eyes look genial. "I noticed you, out there."

"Yes," said Ed, "I do a good bit of fighting, and always keep at the work."

Marty nodded his head. He studied the Westerner. The big, supple body looked dangerous to him; and the way Ed had whanged the heavy bag around was nobody's business.

"I always like to see parties, who are fighting my boys, in good condition," said Marty. "That makes it a fine show; the crowd's pleased, and when the boy's name goes up again people turn out to see him."

"You got to give the public something for its money," said Ed. "If you don't, it gets sore, and that hurts the game."

While Ed was dressing, Marty Blake spoke of Jiggs.

"I guess the old boy's out getting some money on the bangtails," he said with a grin. "Great fellow. I'll have to run around and see him tonight. Where are you stopping?" he asked.

"I ain't got a place yet," said Ed. "Jiggs swung me in here as soon as we got to town. We're two days late, and he wanted me to get limbered up. He'll be around after a while, I guess, and then we'll get set."

"I know a good place," said Marty. "Right around the corner, too; nice and handy. One of the boys'll show you where it is. Plodner'll tell Jiggs where you are."

Ed found the hotel very third-rate, but it was all right for him; he seldom thought about such things.

"A good bed," he said, "and the right kind of grub, and I ain't worrying none."

Jiggs, when he arrived, also thought it was all right.

"It's a low rate," said he, "and that's always something to think of. The way I've been dropping money is a crime," he said, "and I got to be tight for a while."

Because of the Craddock angle, the fight between Ed and Big Dan Putts was getting an excellent play in the newspapers; and the Arena management was well satisfied with the advance sale. Ed had never fought in New York before, but he'd been touring the Coast, and the North, and Southwest for a half dozen years. His reputation was good; a steady, dependable workman, with never a kayo against him; he'd beaten some men who'd been in line for the championship, and he'd saved his money.

"He's got oodles of it!" Jiggs Foley told his friends, enviously. "Just stacks of it, in banks. And the property he's got in Los Angeles'd make you open your eyes! I often talk to him about ways and means of turning it into twice that much; but Ed ain't got any sporting blood. He just goes along, makes it, and puts it away."

AT ten o'clock on the second morning, Ed was at work in Plodner's place. He'd knocked off ten miles in the park, and felt good. A porter was mopping up the floor near by; he was a tall young fellow, big boned and with a good-natured grin.

"Boy," he said to Ed, "you sure can make that little bag sing."

"I ain't ever been able to get it into my head it's any use at all," said Ed, who was a democratic soul, and always stood well with porters, bell boys and such. "The big bag is my idea of something to punch."

The floor at the side of the room where the porter was working was slippery with soap and water when Big Dan came along. The temper of this gentleman was never sweet, but in the morning it usually had more of an edge on it than at other times.

"What's the idea of having the floor all slopped up when I gotta work on it?" he demanded. "Ain't you got some other time to do this in?"

The big-boned youth smiled.

"It'll be all right in five minutes."

"You're always in somebody's way," said Big Dan, scowling. "I don't see what Plodner's got you for, anyhow."

The porter grinned good-naturedly, and said something in reply; Ed didn't hear what it was, but Big Dan aimed a wicked blow at the young man's head.

"Wait a minute!" said Ed, and was at the big fellow's side in a moment. "Don't do that."

Big Dan turned on him with a snarl.

"What are you cutting in for, cowboy?" he said, his eyes ugly, his hands shut. "This ain't got nothing to do with you."

"Only this," said Ed, "the boy's going along about his job, and what's the use of getting nasty with him?"

Big Dan replied in no careful choice of words, and Ed's usually quiet eyes began to glint. But just then Marty Blake came in.

"The ring's the place to show your stuff," said Marty to his champion. "Where you get some dough for it. Bare hands, too," he said, greatly distressed; "you might break a bone and it might lose us this shot at Craddock."

"It's okay with me," the tall young porter said to Ed. "I don't mind these babies. He couldn't do nothing to me. But I'm obliged to you, just the same."

Jiggs had not appeared at eleven o'clock, and Ed spoke to Plodner.

"I'd like to get somebody to box with me," said he. "Any of the boys around the place'll do."

Plodner spoke to several who were working out; but they all eyed Ed, and shook their heads.

"Looks like they're all leary," said Plodner, with a wink. "But let Slim put them on with you this time; later on I'll get someone better."

The porter grinned; he put aside his pail and mop, and pulled on a pair of

gloves. Ed went through his usual routine of shooting the left, side-stepping, ducking and shifting. And to his surprise, Slim proved to be an exceedingly elusive target.

"You've boxed before," said Ed.

"A little," said Slim. He avoided a straight left, crowded in and drummed briskly on Ed's stomach with both hands. Ed tied up the long, lean arms and was surprised to find how much power was in them.

"I'll bet," said Ed, "you hit pretty good, too. You've got the right kind of shoulders."

AFTER going six rounds, and as good a six as Ed remembered having in some time, they stepped into the shower.

"I came into this place first to get some boxing to do," said Slim. "I thought maybe there'd be a preliminary somewhere I could get. Plodner said there wasn't a chance unless I had a manager. As I hadn't none of those, I asked him if I couldn't get on with somebody to help in their training. This fellow, Marty Blake's standing there, and he says Big Dan wanted a man to work with if I had the nerve to jump in with him.

"'Man alive,' I says, 'I'd jump in with a lion.' That's just how bad off I was," said Slim. "I hadn't even smelled anything to eat for two days. Well, I gets in with this guy, Big Dan, and what he did to me'd just make you mad. I was so weak, anyway, I couldn't keep my legs under me.

"'A little easy, guy, for the time being,' I says to him. But would he listen? Not so. He knocks me cold, and they have to lug me out and throw water on me. After that Plodner thinks I'm a tramp, and no good. But he did give me a job as porter." Slim rubbed himself with a towel and grinned at Ed. "I hope," he said, "I can stick around until some time when I get a chance to put them on with Big Dan again."

Ed looked at the powerful, rangy

frame; there were no rounded muscles, no symmetrical shaping of body or limbs; but there was tremendous strength and snapping energy; the shoulders sloped, and the driving muscles lay in supple folds behind them.

"Think you could handle the big boy?" asked Ed.

"I could knock him cock-eyed," said Slim. "Some day I'll show him, and that rat, Marty Blake, too. Not here: no big training gloves, and with somebody to stop us. I'd like to get him in a ring somewhere and slap him into rags."

Ed worked out a couple of hours in the afternoon; it was about five o'clock as he left Plodner's, and he saw Slim in the hall.

"Where to, kid?" asked Ed, good-naturedly.

"I'm going after the coffee and cakes," said Slim. "And then I'm coming back. I've got a night shift here, too, you know."

"Come on around to the hotel and eat with me," said Ed. "And let's talk."

Slim seemed surprised when he found where Ed was quartered. They sat at a table in the corner, and the big-boned youth looked around.

"How'd you come to land here?" he asked.

"This fellow, Marty Blake, said it was okay," said Ed. "It'll do," he added, nodding. "I'll only be in town four or five days longer."

"Ossie, the boss here, and Marty are great friends," said Slim. "And in some ways Ossie is just as big a rat as Marty. Anyway, that's what they say."

"He never bothers me any," said Ed, in his easy-going way. "And Jiggs thinks he's all right."

"This manager fellow of yours takes things pretty quiet, don't he?" said Slim. "No sparring partners; don't get you a hotel and only drops in once in a while to say 'hello' to you."

"Jiggs is a good fellow," said Ed. "But, lately, he *has* let the ponies run away with him; and he ain't giving as

much attention to business as he ought. But, listen, I don't say anything because I don't think it worth my while. This is my last season in the ring. I ain't told anybody that, outside Jiggs; but it's my last."

"But suppose you flatten this Big Dan; and suppose, afterward, you out-step Craddock?" protested Sam.

Ed gestured.

"I'll take my money and call it a day," said he. "I'm going to settle down in California and get married. I've got some investments out there, and I've got an orange grove."

Slim's eyes sparkled.

"Great!" he said. "Couldn't be better. It's a nice idea taking care of the dough when you're making it, ain't it? Any time you want to step down, you can do it."

THAT night in a conversation with Jiggs Foley, Ed mentioned Slim.

"You didn't hire no sparring partner for me," said Ed, "so I took on the porter."

"Honest," said Jiggs, shamefacedly, "I never gave it a thought. This race-track game's running me ragged, kid, and I can't think of anything."

"Well," said Ed, "it happens it don't make much difference, because the porter's a whale. He's got a jab, Jiggs, that's a pip, and he's lightning with a right-hand uppercut. Drop in in the morning for a change, and look at my work-out. You'll see him."

Jiggs did so. Ed boxed six rounds with Slim, and Jiggs, as he watched, felt his interest grow greater and greater.

"What's he doing, washing up floors?" demanded Jiggs, afterward. "That baby can put the prune on most of the heavy-weights I see as I go around."

"So he can," said Ed. "And, listen: sign him up so's you'll have him after I quit. See? But, listen again: if you manage him you'll have to pay attention. He'll not be as easy to get along with as I've been. And he'll not want to stay in the sticks like I been willing to do. This

boy, if he ever gets in, will want to go on up. And I think he'll do it."

"He's good," said Jiggs. "There's dough in a young guy like that. He can hit, too," thoughtfully. "I'll have to get talking to him."

But the fact that Ed had taken on Slim for his sparring partner greatly amused Big Dan.

"Honest," he said, taking great care that Ed could hear him, "the way that boy spends his money is terrible. The regular guys won't do for him to box with; he's got to have somebody special." There were a number of sports writers in the gym at the time, and Big Dan winked at them. "Right away he's got to have Slim. He makes him put away the pail and the mop and put on the gloves. He wants a good hard work-out."

Slim was cleaning a window near at hand and grinning cheerfully; Big Dan drew him over to him by hooking one arm around his neck; then he brought his right hand, encased in a glove, up smartly. It caught the young man under the chin, and he fell to the floor.

He arose to a sitting position and regarded the pugilist, one hand at his jaw.

"Hey, big boy, play light on that rough stuff," he said. "I gotta get this work done."

"Yes, sir," said Big Dan, and roared with laughter, "the boy picks out the tough ones, and he fights them hard. I've stood here and watched him do it. You know, a guy just takes his life in his hands when he jumps into a ring with some of these eggs. Honest, sometimes I wonder how I get away with it."

This was two days before the fight. Ed paid little attention to Big Dan's remarks for, oddly enough, he felt heavy-headed and slow. The room, now and then, seemed to be turning around, and his mind was functioning badly. By and by Marty Blake, who had been watching him, crossed the room.

"What's a-matter?" said Marty, a ratty look in his eyes. "You don't seem to have much pep."

"I don't feel so good," said Ed. "Haven't all day. But I'll work out of it, I guess."

"Sure," said Marty. "A boxer often gets that way. And the best way is not to pay too much attention to it. These things always come out all right."

But, as Marty turned away, he had a look of glee in his mean, sharp little face. Slim, who had resumed with the window, noticed this and shook his head.

THE next day Ed was worse; he sat in a chair by the window at Plodner's and made no effort to work. And Jiggs Foley, tying a sporting-looking four-in-hand in front of the mirror in his room at Ossie's a little later, paused to answer the telephone.

"Hello," said a voice, "is this Foley? Well, this is Slim—you know, I've been sparring with Brennen at Plodner's. I want to run around and have a little talk with you before you go out."

"Okay," said Jiggs. "I'll be here if you're not too long."

Slim arrived while Jiggs was brushing his derby with the sleeve of his coat.

"Listen," said Slim, "Ed's sick."

"What of?" said Jiggs, pausing, the derby in his hand, and a surprised look on his face.

Slim lifted his brows; one finger stabbed at the floor.

"I don't know," he said, "but it's some kind of dope."

"What!" said Jiggs, sitting down, and going a little green around the mouth. "What's that you say?"

"Listen again," said Slim. "You know the bird that runs this rat-trap, don't you? Ossie? Well, him and Marty Blake are as thick as thieves. And, if you think back a little, it was Marty who got Ed in here. I've been hearing Marty talk for a couple of days: he says Ed is a strong-looking bird; he thinks maybe he's over-matched Big Dan. Marty," said Slim, "acts like a rat, but he's got the heart of a mouse. If you want to know what I think's happened to Ed, I'll say Marty got scared his man

was going to take a licking; he talked to Ossie on the side, and Ossie's slipped a little something in Ed's chow."

"Holy smoke!" said Jiggs, his blood running cold. "They wouldn't do a thing like that, fellah!"

"It wouldn't be the first time that trick's been pulled—in the ring, on the race track, and other places."

Jiggs had to admit the truth of this. Rather shaken, he went around to Plodner's and found his fighter in a bad way. Plodner suggested that he be taken to a hospital.

"He's got something," said Plodner. "There's a lot of germs around, and he's picked some of them up."

At the hospital, Ed was carefully examined.

"I can't say what it is until I've had a chance to observe him," said the physician. "But I'd venture the trouble's with something he's eaten. We'll be able to tell in a couple of days."

Jiggs protested.

"A couple of days!" he said. "My gosh, doc, he can't stay here a couple of days. He's got to jump into the ring tomorrow night and fight."

"He'll not fight tomorrow night, or tomorrow night a week," said the doctor. "He's a sick man, and will have to be taken care of."

Jiggs consulted Ed.

"It's a loss of three grand," said the manager. "And that shot at Craddock means ten more. Try and step on it a little and we'll get out of here. A good night's sleep'll maybe make you all right."

But Ed, looking white and pretty well down, shook his head.

"All I want to do," said he, "is to fold up and lie still."

Jiggs left his fighter at the hospital, and walked through the door much perturbed. On the sidewalk he met Slim.

"I thought I'd follow on out here and have some more talk with you," said the youth.

Jiggs eyed him narrowly.

"What about?" he said.

"It's too bad about Ed," said Slim. "That fight'd get him a nice piece of money."

"So it would have," said Jiggs. "But he's on his back on a cot, and he'll stay there for a week, maybe."

"Right away, after you left," said Slim, "I heard Marty Blake on the telephone. He had Coogan's office, and he was telling about Ed."

"What's he want reporting about my fighter for?" demanded Jiggs. "That's my business. Coogan's chairman of the boxing commission, and he's got to be told, but I don't want no Marty Blake hornoring in."

"He said that now Ed was sick somebody ought to take his place," said Slim. "He said they ought to get that Kansas heavyweight, that's been boxing around Boston lately—Mule Dacy—and he said Mule and Big Dan would put up a whale of a fight."

"What!" said Jiggs, aghast. "Why, I saw that fellow Dacy at the hotel last night, talking with Marty. It's a frame!"

"The whole works is a frame. And they are trying to frame Coogan, too." Slim paused for a moment. "I didn't know when you'd be around," he said, "and so I thought I'd better barge into the thing a little. I called Coogan and threw a little light on things. And you'd better believe he's sore. He said," and Slim looked inquiringly at Jiggs, "you and me had better run around and see him."

"Okay," said Jiggs. "Let's go."

IT was somewhere in the neighborhood of three o'clock, and Marty Blake and Big Dan were still at Plodner's when the telephone rang. It was Chairman Coogan of the commission, and he desired to speak to Marty.

"I've just got official word from the hospital that Ed Brennen's out of the fight," said the chairman.

"He's a pretty sick guy," said Marty, winking at Big Dan. "And, now, commissioner, what about substituting this

Mule Dacy? He's a good man and he'll give Dan a great battle."

"I've been looking him up," stated Coogan. "He don't show as well as I'd like to have a man show that's going into a fight with a chance to meet Craddock."

"Listen," protested Marty eagerly, "he can give most of these boys a pasting. He has licked—"

"I don't want him," said Coogan, "and the Arena people don't want him, either. He's out."

"But—" said Marty. And again Coogan interrupted.

"Jiggs Foley's suggested a man to take Brennen's place," said he. "I'm satisfied with him, and the Arena is, too."

"Who is he?" asked Marty, fright in his cunning eyes. "What's his name?"

"Foley says to see him at his hotel," said Coogan. "He's there right now. He'll tell you. And if you're willing, we'll send the news of the substitution out to the afternoon papers right away."

"Holy Ike!" said Marty as he hung up. "They must have some guy as big as a house."

"Listen," said Big Dan. "It must be somebody I know about, or I don't fight. And mark that down so you'll not forget it."

Marty and Big Dan hurried around to Ossie's hotel and there they found Jiggs Foley in warm conversation with the proprietor.

"Ed's in the hospital with a nurse and a doc," said Jiggs. "And I'm here to get my bags and make a getaway. I don't mind saying," and he looked unblinkingly at Ossie, "I'd just as leave not go up in the elevator; you might have it fixed so's to drop me into the cellar."

"I keep a respectable hotel," said Ossie, nervously, "and I'll not have you say anything against it. Don't forget that's slander, and I can have you in court for it."

"All right," said Jiggs, "have me there. And when I pull this dope stuff on the judge, we'll see who gets the worst of it."

"What do you mean, dope?" de-

manded Big Dan, menacingly. "Tell me that, fellah."

"And tell it to me, too," said Marty, bristling. "What'd anybody do a thing like that for? If there's no fight I stand to lose a hatful of dough, don't I?"

"There's going to be a fight," said Jiggs. "That is," and he looked at them with an air of not valuing them any too highly, "I got a man to take Ed's place—a guy from the sticks."

"What name?" asked Marty, anxiously. "What's he done?"

Just then the elevator shot down and Slim stepped out of it, loaded with bags.

"I've got Ed's," he said. "Want me to go up and get yours, too?"

"Okay," said Jiggs: And, as the elevator ascended once more, he said to Marty Blake: "That's him. If you're willing to take him on, he'll fight in Ed's place tomorrow night."

Marty's eyes all but popped out of his head.

"Do you mean it?" he gasped.

"There's the phone; let Coogan know," said Jiggs, pointing.

Big Dan had begun to laugh; but Marty quieted him with a look, as he crossed to the telephone.

"This is Blake," said Marty, after he'd got Coogan. "I've just seen Foley. This boy, Slim, is okay with us, if you want him."

"All right," said Coogan. "Step around some time this afternoon and sign up. I've already got Foley's signature."

After Jiggs and Slim had left the hotel, Big Dan and Marty sat down and laughed.

"How they ever talked Coogan into that one, I'll never tell you," said Marty. "And how Foley ever got the idea that this Slim guy can do any fighting is something I'll never guess. But there it is, all fixed and ready. All we've got to do is step into it."

"The comic part of it is," chuckled Big Dan, "I can knock this guy on the level. With the Mule I'd had to be awful careful to make it look right."

The afternoon papers carried the announcement that Ed Brennen had been suddenly taken ill and was in a hospital, and that Slim Nelson, a noted heavyweight from the West, who had been training in the city, had agreed to take his place. When this was called to Big Dan's attention, he said:

"Noted heavyweight, eh? That's the kind of boloney to peddle. It may bolster up the attendance."

"Listen," said Marty Blake. "Be careful and don't show him up too much, see? You gotta make this look like something."

"I'll make it look like a battlefield," said Big Dan, greatly entertained. "I'll carry the tramp along for three rounds, and then I'll pull the wheels off him."

Slim disappeared from Plodner's place that day, and worked out smartly, under Jiggs Foley's direction, at another gymnasium.

"This fellow you're fighting's a bone-breaker," said Jiggs. "Keep inside on him; don't let him get set."

"He's a right-hand puncher," said Slim, not at all disturbed. "And I've never seen one of those boys yet that were dangerous. I've watched him, and know what he can do. He's an easy bird to keep off balance, and when things ain't going his way he loses his head."

Jiggs studied the big-boned youth with cautious eyes; Slim talked confidently, and the manager wasn't sure just how to take it.

"Dan's no dub," said Jiggs. "Don't make a mistake there. He's knocked off a lot of pretty good battlers."

"I know," said Slim. "I've been looking him up."

Jiggs hesitated a moment; and then he said:

"Do you think you can stick with him for ten rounds?"

Slim grinned.

"Listen," he said. "What's the use in me doing that, when I can flatten him in three?"

Jiggs' eyes snapped.

"Okay," he said. "Let's see you do it."

OF COURSE, the change in the wind-up did the bill at the Arena no good as a draw; nevertheless, there was a fair attendance, and, the preliminaries being good, the house warmed up quite well. In his dressing-room Slim read a message from Ed:

You've got a good chance. If I was up and around I'd put some money on you, for, from what I've seen of your work, I liked it. And here's something I'll pass on to you. Maybe you'll use it and maybe not. Fight this boy around the body. A couple of rounds of that and he'll go soft. Then you can make the finish anything you please.

"Ed knows the job," said Slim to Jiggs. "The old cupboard's the place for operations on a good eater like Dan Putts."

"Last P. M. he was booked in with a couple of pals at a night club," said Jiggs. "A little supper and a few drinks. Marty, so I heard, didn't want him to go, but Dan laughed it off. He thinks," said Jiggs, "he'll lay you easy."

"Good enough," said Slim, grinning. "I'm glad he looks at it that way."

Slim paraded down the aisle behind the bucket bearer, with Jiggs Foley bringing up in the rear. A moment later Big Dan appeared with Marty Blake. Dan waved his hand in reply to the applause, and stepped into the ring where Slim was grinding his feet in the resin.

"Great stuff to have on the feet," said Big Dan, with a sneer. "It helps to keep them under you."

"Well, you'd better get working with a lot of it," said Slim quietly. "Because your footing's going to be awful bad in a little while."

"Say," said Marty Blake, as he picked among the two sets of gloves in the middle of the ring, "you got some gall, fellow, using the big talk when everybody knows you're a ham-fat."

"If I'm a ham-fat," said Slim, "maybe I'll grease the slide for this baby. You never can tell."

"Let's get through with the chatter," said Jiggs Foley, a glove under his arm and loosening the laces of the other one. "We're here for business, boys."

"I'll call it play, if you ask me its name," said Big Dan. "A game of tag," grinning. "I'll tag him, and then you can ship him away wherever you please."

Then the gloves were laced on, and the announcer introduced the men.

"Big Dan Putts, of Akron," he shouted, pointing to that gentleman, who arose and waved his hand. "Slim Nelson, of San Antonio."

There was a buzz of interest from the audience. Joe Price, boxing reporter of the *Evening Herald*, who was seated directly below Marty Blake and Big Dan, began a staccato dictation to his operator.

"Slim Nelson, though little known in these parts," said Joe, "is the fighter who began like a whirlwind in the Southwest, went to Chicago for a fight with Jim Laporte, the Cicero heavyweight, had a decision against him when he'd plainly won the battle, struck the referee and was set down by the National Commission. After that he faded out of the picture and nothing was heard of him until tonight. It seems that the ban on him was lifted some time ago, because it had been definitely established that he'd been the victim of a corrupt set of officials. This man Nelson has the stuff. . . ."

Big Dan, overhearing, questioned Marty Blake with a look; and Marty's ratty little eyes took on an expression of panic.

"Hey, listen," he said to Dan, "are they putting something over on us?" He went to the referee, a stout man with a bald head, and a short manner. "What's this about this fellow being Nelson of San Antonio?" he said. "Nobody didn't tell us that."

"Always find out who you're fighting," said the official briefly. "Then you never have anything to bother you when you get in the ring."

Coogan sat at the ringside with some political friends; and Marty hastened to him.

"When I signed I wasn't told this fellow was the Nelson of San Antonio," he

protested. "And then right at the last minute I find that he is. I don't call that square treatment."

Coogan looked at him bitterly.

"Listen, young fellow," he said, "the less you say about square treatment the better. After this fight I want to see you at my office; I've telegraphed the other commissioners to be on hand; and there'll be a stenographer to take down what you say. This hotel-keeper, Ossie, will be there also. And Big Dan. We'll have quite a session of it."

Gray around the mouth, Marty went back to Big Dan's corner.

"We're framed," he said. "They've put this up on us."

But Big Dan was made of tougher fibre than Marty.

"Let 'em frame," he said, with a sneer. "I can sock this bird out, no matter who he is."

THE bell rang. The two men stepped swiftly into the center; and almost instantly Slim's left hand poked into Big Dan's face.

"So you're the Nelson of San Antonio, eh?" said the Akron man, sneering. "Well, well." The left poked him once more, and a spot of red showed at the corner of his mouth. In a fury, Dan hooked his left and brought the right around like lightning. "That makes you step away, does it?"

Slim snapped in an uppercut and drove a short left into Dan's body as they clinched.

"You knocked me cuckoo when I'd not had anything to eat for two days," said Slim into his ear. "I'm going to get even with you for that."

The referee broke them. Big Dan swung his left, then shifted and his right crashed into Slim's face. Blood dripped from Slim's nose and lips, and Big Dan grinned.

"Make *that* even!" he said. "And when you do, I'll give you something more."

"You socked me around when you thought I was a poor simp who had

nothing," said Slim, as they clinched again.

Big Dan wrenched his right hand free and drove it upwards. It caught Slim under the chin and snapped his head back.

"I don't think you've got anything now," he said, malice in his eyes.

"You doped Ed; you had it all fixed with Mule Dacy to take a dive for you. And you took me on because you thought you had a joke."

"I still think I have," replied Big Dan. "Hang on tight and listen to me laugh."

The referee was calling on them to break; he squirmed in between them, trying to push Slim away. But Slim, the blood dripping down his face, stuck to Dan.

"You were to get big money and a chance with Craddock," he said. "Well, that's all off. I'm in here tonight to spoil that."

Big Dan laughed.

"Holy smoke!" he said. "You're there with the talk, ain't you, kid? And speaking of spoiling things, step back a little, and I'll guarantee to spoil you so nobody'll ever get you right again."

"I just wanted to tell you this," said Slim. He stepped back warily, his guard high. "And now that I've told you, that's all, except the pasting."

Steadying himself as Big Dan came plunging in, Slim hooked his left to the stomach; then he stepped in quickly and drove his right under the heart. Big Dan gasped and his face went gray. Like a hawk, Slim was upon him; but the bell rang, and the referee came between them.

Jiggs Foley sponged the blood from Slim's face.

"Listen," said Jiggs, "what was the idea of all the conversation? If you wanta talk, big boy, wait till the fight's over and you can talk to me."

Slim smiled.

"There were a couple of little things I wanted to tell him," said he. "But I've got them all to him, now; and

there's nothing more to do except take him apart."

"Okay," said Jiggs. "And I'm glad to hear it. Talk in the ring never got anybody anything but a bent pan. So keep away from it."

Big Dan came out for the next round, cautiously.

"Fight him clever," Marty Blake had advised him. "Don't take no chances. He's bad doings, Dan, so make him come to you."

Big Dan snarled at Slim, but he kept his guard high and moved about. Slim stepped in, bobbing. He feinted with his left, for the head, and again drove the right under the heart. Big Dan went down on one knee, and Slim stepped back. The Akron man was up at four. Like a leopard, Slim was upon him. Again a left and a right went to the body, and Big Dan tottered. Marty Blake was shouting warnings, but his voice could not lift above the roar of the crowd. Once more the left shot out,

aimed for the body; Big Dan's guard came down; and then Slim's right, like the snap of a whip, went across and Big Dan fell on his face.

Marty was in the ring at the count of ten, followed by the Akron man's other handlers. They dragged Dan to his corner and began pouring cold water on his head, as the referee raised Slim's hand in the motion of victory.

"We're gonna protest," angrily bel-lowed Marty, through the shouts of applause.

"All right," said Jiggs Foley, as he sponged his man skilfully. "And, while you're doing that, I'm going to walk Slim Nelson into that fight with Craddock."

"I'm not going to take the case to Coogan," said Marty, excitedly, and shook his fist in Slim's face. "I'm going higher up than him."

"Okay," said Slim. "But don't go too high. When you get away up there, the falling's something terrible."

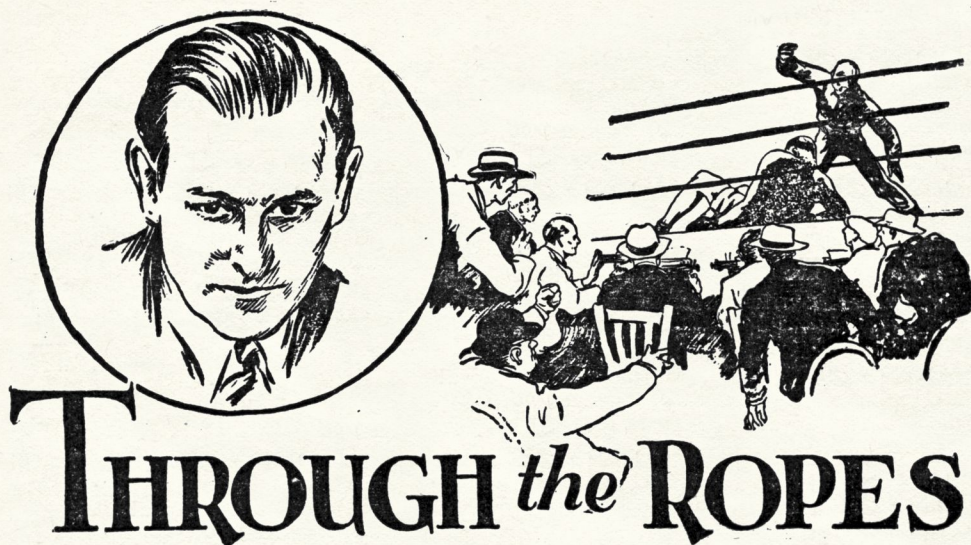
STRIBLING'S CAUTION

THE future of W. L. Stribling seems to hold no hope that the handsome Georgian will ever reach championship possibilities again. In spite of his long record of knockouts, his skill and speed, he failed in his four big chances.

First, he was expected to win the light-heavyweight championship from Paul Berlenbach, and, instead, took a frightful lacing. On the upward path again, he was decisively whipped by Tommy Loughran. Matched with Jack Sharkey at Miami, he fought in mediocre style, and was outpointed. Then came the debacle at Cleveland, where he was stopped in the fifteenth round by the Black Uhlan, Max Schmeling.

In spite of his artistic failures, however, the Georgian has been a conspicuous financial success. He is a rich man. His good looks have not been marred by punishment. He has a wonderful family, and is a great flyer . . . a transport pilot with an A-1 rating. In every personal way he has been an asset to the ring.

It seems agreed that, with all his natural abilities, the only thing that prevented him from gaining preëminence was the insistence of his family that he shouldn't get hurt. Had some hard-boiled manager taken him in hand at the start, and insisted that he tear in regardless of consequences, it is not unlikely that W. L. Stribling would have won the heavyweight championship of the world. He had it in him to do that, had not the family caution held him back.



THROUGH *the* ROPES

By HYPE IGOE

Racing typewriters telling their stories at first hand; clicking telegraph instruments relaying each move to the waiting presses; the swift shuffling of feet in the resin; the smack of wet leather on flesh; the heavy breathing of the combatants—that's ringside. And there's Hype Igoe! Up through the ropes he has watched each blood-tingling charge of all the great

fighters since John L. Sullivan. There his keen, appraising eyes have gathered together the threads of fistic drama. Meet Mr. Igoe, friend of champions and master story-teller of the ring. Each month in this department he will sit down with you, figuratively speaking, and tell you many a rare, first-hand tale of the squared circle and its followers.

JOE WALCOTT, a squat little Barbadoes negro, amazed the world of sport by his "giant killing."

He was a tiny fellow, and, when I used to visit his training camps in California, I was astounded to find that he could walk in under my chin. He was only one inch over five feet. Just imagine! And his arms were so amazingly long that his ponderous fists almost touched the floor. In the ring he was such a furious little ball of dynamite that his size didn't mean a thing to him—but how it counted *against* the big fellows!

Joe hit like the devil. He could punch from any angle, and those angles, seemingly, were from the floor. He'd reach up and pop the tallest of them right on the chin, of course doing a little vaulting up at his victim to make sure of the aim.

Strangely enough, his size never struck you until he had listened to the referee give his orders. Then he always

looked so ridiculously small that the crowd usually began to "ride" the unhappy big man, and the ride continued right through to the end, which, nine times out of ten, was a victory for Joe.

Not all of Walcott's battles went the distance. Joe was always in too much of a hurry to catch a train, and, when he was close to leaving time, it meant disaster to the fellow he had in front of him. Joe Walcott and Sam Langford probably caught a hundred late or last trains out of a town, even as they were carrying the hapless victim to the dressing room.

Giant killing seemed to go out with Joe's passing. He had Joe Choynski as a rival in the giant killing business in his day. Long after, Jack Dillon filled the boots of these two, and Battling Levinski followed them.

Therefore, when Mickey Walker began tackling the big boys, I wasn't amazed. I had seen Walcott fight many

big men. I saw Choynski fight Jefferies and Joe McAuliffe, the Giant Mission Boy in San Francisco.

What these two Joes could do, Walker could do, especially as he is heavier right now than anyone of the others ever dreamed of being. Battling Levinski was the only one of the lot of giant killers who weighed as much as Mickey.

When they matched Mickey with Jack Sharkey, there was a wild bellowing about the folly of such a match. The present generation hadn't been treated to any such spectacles, and it was hard for them to believe that Walker could play the role of giant killer.

Sharkey, it was pointed out, would out-weigh him at least thirty pounds. Such a slim handicap would make Joe Walcott die laughing. Thirty pounds! Joe used to spot them a *hundred*.

Joe didn't invent the old wheeze, "The bigger they are, the 'arder they fall," but ~~it was his creed~~, nevertheless. They credit that one to Bob Fitzsimmons, but I suppose that some backwoods sports editor fed it to Fitz one bright day. It might have been one of Bob Davis's wise cracks. If not, then it is the only golden *bon mot* that I ever knew to fall from the Ruby one's lips.

When Mickey Walker set out on the task of killing the giant sharkey, he didn't have many friends tell him that he would not walk away with victory and glory. And he, didn't triumph officially, but, when he wound up with a draw after fifteen rounds of letting Sharkey's best punches flick through his flying name, he was the hero.

He didn't kill the giant, but, by the same token, the giant didn't kill him.

Of the two, Sharkey was the one to be humiliated.

Taking into full consideration the fact that Sharkey had been out of actual competition for a year, and that he had fought but ten rounds, all told, in three years, it was to be expected that he was going to miss a few shots. Those few shots kept piling up until I suppose that

Jack missed one hundred healthy belts for Mickey's jaw.

Sharkey tried every trick he ever knew to draw Walker into position to be socked, but Walker can *box*.

At his training camp he told me that he was going to out-box Sharkey, and he did. I think Mickey made Jack miss almost every punch he started. True, one of Jack's left hooks cut Mickey's eye in the fifth, and Jack re-opened it in the last two rounds. Had it not been for this blinding accident, I think Walker would have piled into Sharkey with such fury that Jack would have been driven back on the defensive, to lose the decision by a narrow margin.

But decision or no decision, Walker proved that he is not a false alarm as a giant killer. He has earned the respect of the public for his courageous fight against the real contender for Schmeling's crown, and, while Jim Farley and General Phelan, of the New York boxing board, still may insist that Sharkey get his balked chance to redeem himself against Schmeling, the public will yelp for a Walker-Schmeling bout. Jack had his chance, Stribling his. Having held Sharkey to an official "draw," but with four out of five critics naming Walker as the actual winner, Walker has earned popular acclaim. He will be nominated for the position of challenger, and, with William Muldoon, the grizzled "Red Lantern Man" of boxing and the third member of the New York commission, going over to the Walker side, the bout may yet be realized.

Schmeling's Crude Left

WALKER would have a more even chance against Schmeling, since the German is ten pounds lighter than Sharkey and is smaller in every way. Walker didn't find Sharkey impossible to hit with lefts or rights to the head, so he must hit Schmeling.

Schmeling knocked out Stribling. All due credit to him. He had to wait patiently until he nailed Stribling in the

final round. He never would have scored a knockout had George Blake, the referee, allowed the bout to go a few seconds longer. Blake stopped it, and I think he was right. Stribling was almost helpless, but, had Pa Stribling signaled his son that there were only fourteen more seconds to go before the end of the battle, I doubt that Max could have finished him. It is a cinch that the groggy Southerner would have grasped Max in his arms and would have stalled out the remainder of the round, even if he happened to be on the floor when the final bell rang. It was a desperate finish for Max, a sorrowful one for Billy, as it was the first time in over four hundred fights that the boy had ever been stopped.

Candidly, I was not over-impressed with Schmeling's work in that fight. He was sadly out-pointed by a cringing sort of chap who jabbed, hooked and clinched much after the fashion employed by Harry Wills. Harry used to feint, grab and then belt his foeman's head with his free right hand. The Stribling-Schmeling fight was the same thing, one round after another. Stribling seldom varied his tactics. When he tired, he resorted to a wide, looping right hand uppercut for the body. It was a clubbing blow, but far more terrorizing to the eye than to the man who received it.

Schmeling's work with his left was crude, and, when I try to compare that left with Sharkey's and then remember how little Mickey beat Sharkey to left hooks, jabs and leads, I must confess that I see plenty of trouble ahead for Schmeling if he and Mickey are matched for the world's heavyweight title.

It takes a great left-hander to out-left Walker, and that would be Schmeling's weak point if they were to meet.

Walker is a faster man with his right than Schmeling, and he lands it far more often. Mickey doesn't hit as sharply nor as short as Max, however.

The punch that floored Stribling at Cleveland was a beautiful, short, inside

right. It came while they were at close quarters, and I'll say for Schmeling that he dropped it down with the neatness and dispatch of a Joe Gans.

Walker doesn't deliver right-handers like that. He has a more open and free delivery. He simply out-times the other fellow and lets it fly. He hit the clever, agile and ever-watchful Sharkey right on the lug with it many times, which proves my contention that Walker, in his own particular way, is a far more busy hitter than either Sharkey or Schmeling.

Here is a Walker-Schmeling bout as I see it in the offing: Schmeling is going to set the pace as he did at Cleveland against Stribling. He will have to do that. If he doesn't he is going to find Walker climbing all over him. Walker set the pace against Sharkey, much to Jack's and every critic's surprise. They figured that Sharkey, on the face of things, would set the pace, but he didn't. He found Mickey making **such a headlong, steady advance that he was forced to break ground repeatedly.**

If Schmeling comes to Walker there will be trouble for the German. This is the very good reason why: Walker is adept at using his left hook, for body or head. If you hold your left and your right high, he'll rip into your ribs with the left. If you hold your left and your right low, he'll pop you on the chin with either right or left. He has a bewildering way of delivering either blow.

How Sharkey Was Misled

THEY thought at the Walker camp that they had solved Mickey's manner of fighting. I suppose that some of Sharkey's better-versed scouts had taken in Mickey's work at Orangeburg, where he trained for the bout. Gus Wilson's muscle foundry is a wide open public place, and it would have been an easy matter to tab Mickey's movements.

He never made a secret of it. The public paid and saw his workouts. Not all of them, however. There were times

when Mickey, Teddy Hayes, the trainer, and Doc Kearns, the manager, worked out special moves in the privacy of the rubbing room. That's always the case. But his intensive work was right out there on the line for all to see who cared to take the trouble.

Here is one reason why I know that Sharkey received an inside tip on Mickey's boxing peculiarities: After the fight with Walker, Sharkey called me aside and went over into a corner to explain why he had hurt his left hand on Mickey in the first round. For those who might have thought that Jack "carried" Walker, a charge that is absurd, might I say right here that Sharkey walked out and deliberately shot a felt hook for Mickey's chin, intending to *knock him out with the first punch!*

"They told me that, when Walker came out of his corner and edged toward the right, he was going to shoot a left hook for the head or body. If he edged toward the left, it meant that he was going to try a right for the head or body. I had worked on that a bit. The bell rang, and Walker first came toward me on a bee line, then he moved slightly toward his right. According to our knowledge of his methods, that meant he was going to shoot a left. Moving toward his right would bring his head toward my left. It was left for left, and I tried to beat him to it. I hooked my left for his jaw with everything I had, but didn't he fool me! Even with the move toward the right, he quickly side-stepped toward the left and, instead of my landing solidly on his jaw, his pulling toward his left and my right spoiled my aim, and my left only glanced off his jaw. I landed with the point of my left fist with such force that I dislocated the large knuckle of my little finger. That was a beautiful outlook, with a tough little hombre to whip!

"Hype, you never saw me miss so many left-hand punches since you've known me, did you? Well, that was the reason. My knuckle was dislocated, and I didn't even mention it to Buckley

in my corner. I didn't want my manager to fret and fuss about the injury. I kept it to myself and had to stand their jawing because I was muffing so often with my left hooks. I couldn't bear down with it for fear of ruining my hand forever. Naturally, I didn't know how bad the dislocation was. I have future use for those hands, and I've got to watch myself. I pulled the knuckle back into place only a few minutes before you came into the room. I let the hot shower pour on it, and then snapped it back into place. You can see how swollen it is."

Contrasting Sharkey, Walker, Stribling and Schmeling

I MENTION this interesting little incident for the purpose of showing that Walker is a clever fellow in his own way and that there is no chance of planning to whip him beforehand. Had not Sharkey gone into the ring with that second-hand knowledge of how Walker was supposed to "telegraph" his blows, he might have scored far more effectively in that first round. He was watching for something that didn't crop up. The man who carried that information to Sharkey didn't do him any favor. It might have left him open for a knockout himself. As it was, Walker whipped his right to Sharkey's jaw and shook Jack to his toes. This tid-bit also serves to show that Walker is hard to hit.

Walker, in his camp, insisted that he was "going to out-box Sharkey." Personally, I think he did in a great measure. Not once did Sharkey land a staggering blow on Walker, and nine out of ten persons who were any distance from the ring failed to solve the mystery of it.

Walker was "rolling" with every blow that Sharkey sent over. Sometimes he rolled completely out of range, but, when Jack landed, they were merely glancing blows.

Thirteen years of intensive fighting have given Walker that knock.

In my opinion, this rolling and pulling away from punches will be the one factor which will bring the title to Walker if ever he meets Schmeling.

In the first place, they've tried to manufacture a left for Schmeling. It is pitifully inadequate when brought into play against a seasoned and experienced man like Walker. It takes an educated left to reach Walker, and Schmeling's is only an after-thought in his career.

It was a joke in the Stribling fight, so much so that the Georgia Peach had little trouble out-pointing the German in the first ten rounds. Had the fight taken place in Chicago, for instance, where ten-round decision bouts are in vogue, Stribling would be the world's heavyweight champion today. After the tenth, however, the Peach faded to nothing.

In all those fifteen rounds, Schmeling landed his right effectively but three times: in the sixth, the tenth and in the final chapter. Stribling is adept at getting away from them, but he was so weak from body punishment after the tenth that he was easy prey for the final crusher.

Stribling is not a Walker. He can't slip punches like Mickey, and he can't "take it" like the Toy Bulldog. His last fight made that all too plain.

Schmeling kept poking his left out at Stribling, trying to "find" him, "measure" him, keep him off. It would take more than mere finding, measuring and such to keep Walker away. Mickey would come in fighting, something that Stribling couldn't or wouldn't do.

The Story Behind the First Million Dollar Gate

WALKER has his heart set on winning that title. He wants to win for Jack Kearns' sake, and I don't know of anything that would be a more invigorating cocktail for boxing in general than to have old Doc Kearns up on top with a heavyweight champion once more.

Kearns means big business. He spreads the million-dollar-gate idea.

Had it not been for Kearns's genius, his foresight his keen appreciation of what constituted a "battle of the century" there never would have been the million-and-a-half Dempsey and Carpentier gate.

Kearns actually shoved Tex Rickard into that project. When Kearns began to talk about a \$500,000 purse, Charles Cochran, the English promoter who had a contract on Carpentier's services, and Billy Brady, the New York producer, who was his partner, took to the tall timbers in holy horror.

Kearns was broke. Rickard was broke. Brady and Cochran had plenty. They must have thought that Kearns was trying to "take" them.

Rickard couldn't understand how they were going to get Carpentier. "Offer him \$200,000 flat," said Kearns, seriously, as he jingled a pants button in his pocket.

When Rickard agreed to dig up the Carpentier guarantee, Kearns turned to Cochran, Brady and Rickard and said, "Well boys, we've decided to give Carpentier two hundred thousand dollars. We've agreed to build an arena especially for this battle. This and that has been figured out, but, up to now, not a word has been said about what you are going to pay Dempsey. That is one little item which I consider quite important."

"What do you want for Dempsey?" asked Rickard. "Three hundred thousand dollars flat," said Kearns, coolly. He still was toying with the only thing in his pocket, that vagrant pant's button.

"You're crazy," shouted Brady, striding from the room. Cochran followed, and, looking over his shoulder, chirped, "What Mr. Brady says, sir, is God's truth, sir."

This left Kearns and Rickard alone. Kearns urged Tex not to get cold feet.

"We can't miss. If Carpentier wants a forfeit, we'll dig it up. I've got the champion of the world, and that's what

counts. We'll make out somehow."

And did they make out? Sweet papa! The gate went over a million and a half. It took both Kearns and Rickard right off their feet at the finish. Three months before the bout, Tex told me that it wouldn't go over \$700,000 at the most, and when I vowed it would hit \$1,250,000, Tex tapped his head and said I was thattaway.

Afterward, Rickards often laughed about the wily Kearns missing a guess himself. Tex made good the guarantee of \$300,000, but, before the fight, he wanted Kearns to agree on a 35% cut of the receipts, minus the \$300,000 guarantee.

Kearns wouldn't have that. He did offer to take both.

Rickard said no of course, but he chuckled when he figured up a 35% cut of the gate receipts. It would have brought Dempsey's share up to *over \$600,000*.

I never knew of anything that tickled Rickard more than that. Of course, Kearns mistake was in not bargaining for Dempsey's earnings beyond the \$300,000 mark. Carpentier's manager made the same error. You didn't catch Mr. Gene Tunney taking a flat guarantee at Chicago. He was paid according to the draw, over and beyond his flat guarantee.

Walker the Next Champion?

PERSONALLY, it is my notion that, with Kearns ballyhooing Walker for a Schmeling title-match, we'll again see a million dollar gate. It might go to two million. You've got to hand it to Kearns for bringing a little welter-weight right up to the throne-room door of the King of the Queensbury Realm.

I'm frank enough to admit that I hardly believed Kearns when he said that Walker could whip Dempsey for the heavyweight championship just before Tunney gathered in Jack's crown. Now I'm sure he would have whipped Dempsey. Jack had so little left that Tunney had no difficulty in outboxing

him in two fights, and Walker *can box!*

It isn't the graceful, footy, Jim Corbett kind of grace, but Walker can box, and, if he ever meets Schmeling, the spectators are going to sit open-mouthed when they see how little Mickey outspars, out-wits and maybe out-lasts Schmeling, to win the heavyweight title.

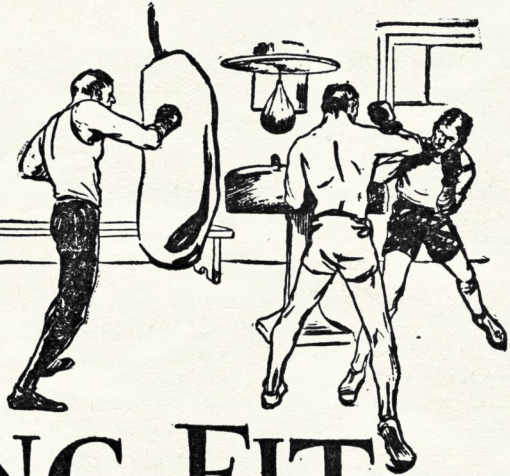
Doc Kearns said the other day, "Why, he'd flatten that Dutchman." I wouldn't be one bit surprised at that. It would mean that Schmeling would go in there to fight Walker with *one* hand. His kind of an uneducated left would be no match for Walker's, one of the best in the business. Walker doesn't hit as hard with his right as Schmeling, but he hits far more often, and he keeps it busy.

It may be that Walker's showing against Sharkey will lead some of my readers to believe that Walker and Kearns have hypnotized me. Not a bit of truth in that. I didn't see how it was physically possible for Mickey to stay the limit or hold his own against Sharkey, but he did, and, knowing how thoroughly Sharkey thrashed Schmeling up to the point where Schmeling claimed a "foul," I can't escape the conclusion that Walker would have a walk-over against the German.

Johnny Risko had Schmeling well whipped when Max dropped a right on his chin and stopped him. Risko has always claimed "carelessness" as the cause of that upset. Walker twice whipped Risko, and had him on the floor to boot.

Risko whipped Sharkey. Sharkey had Schmeling well whipped when the foul robbed Sharkey of the title. Walker, according to the referee, had *ten* rounds to his credit, Sharkey five. My own score sheet showed ten for Walker, four for Sharkey and one even.

Is it any wonder that I can see little Mickey Walker—"Sam, the Giant Killer," they called him around the training camp—winning the world's heavyweight title? In any case, it is a fascinating outlook for a fray that would fire the imagination of the whole world.



KEEPING FIT

By JIMMY DE FOREST
Trainer of Champions

Jimmy De Forest knows every phase of the fight game. In his career extending over a period of more than thirty years he has served as a match-maker for various clubs, as manager of fighters and as a trainer and conditioner. In this latter work he is world-famous, having trained champions in every class, including Jim Jeffries, Jack Dempsey, and many others. Perhaps his most notable work was his preparation of Jack Dempsey for the Willard

fight, when Dempsey won the championship. In this department in *Fight Stories* he will give you the benefit of his extensive knowledge on matters of physical fitness. He will answer your questions, advise you of correct training methods, exercises, diets, etc. Young men who pride themselves on a clean, healthy body, high school and college athletes, men in all walks of life, in fact, may turn to him in these columns for help.

A GOOD many years ago, a young man by the name of Kid McCoy was bidding for fame and fortune in the ring. A cocky youngster he was, too, with strength, courage and an unshakeable conviction that he could hold his own in a rough and tumble with any man of his size and age.

He was matched with McCormick, a grand battler of the past generation, and the fight world began to give serious notice to this up and coming youngster, McCoy.

The Kid went into training with great gusto. McCormick was rated as a hard puncher, the Kid intended to show the fans that he was a match for the veteran at the veteran's own game. He whaled away at punching bags with one idea in mind, the development of shoulders, arms and fists.

Then came the fight. The Kid's plans were daringly ambitious. He had determined to force the fighting, meeting

punch with punch in glorious abandon.

It was a wild battle for the three rounds it lasted, the sort of mix-up the fans always hope to see. Two tough men battering at each other with all they had, shoulders, arms and gloves stained with crimson from the very first flurry of blows. Toe to toe the fighters stood, slugging away at body and jaw, with the Kid taking his chances in a style of fighting in which McCormick was a recognized master.

McCoy, not yet possessed of the terrific corkscrew punch which made him a terror in later days, paid for his recklessness in the third round, when he went down for the count.

A year later, at the Lenox A. C. in New York, McCoy again found himself facing McCormick in a return engagement, with the fans set for another fierce, gory battle.

As the gong for the opening round still echoed through the auditorium,

McCormick charged from his corner, grim and determined on a quick knockout, and expecting only another rough, give-and-take battle. He swung viciously with both fists, fast hard blows, the second starting before the first had completed its arc.

Neither blow landed. A lightning side-step, a duck of his head, and McCoy was out of danger. Dancing on his toes, he cut in with a counter blow to McCormick's unprotected stomach.

Momentarily off balance. McCormick struck out wildly. Another quick duck of the head, and the Kid had stepped in close, his arms working like pistons. One, two, three blows in succession, then another side-step and the Kid was away.

McCormick shook his head in bewilderment. Here was a new McCoy, a strong young man who no longer depended upon fists alone but who, in a year's time, had learned something of science and patience.

For the next few rounds McCormick fought a game but tiring battle. Again and again he charged, struggling to get in close and nail the Kid in a free-for-all. Each time McCoy side-stepped safely, dancing back and forth over the canvas and allowing his slower rival no opportunity to set himself for a real blow. The end came when the Kid stepped in on his foe and landed a left hook to the body. This time it was McCormick who was counted out.

In the year between fights with McCormick, McCoy had learned one of the ring's most important lessons. He had come to realize that no fighter, no matter how powerful, can depend on arms and fists alone. His feet must be as educated as his fists, his legs as carefully developed as the muscles of his shoulders and arms.

Legs the Foundation of Power

AS a close observer of recent bouts in New York, I believe it necessary to devote an article to the importance of a fighters' legs. McCoy had to suffer a

knockout before he could be told that agile feet and powerful limbs are as valuable in the ring as the most expert pair of hands. Judging by performances I've seen at the Garden and various other arenas in the Greater City, a good many present-day youngsters need to learn McCoy's lesson.

I'll step for a moment outside the fight game itself to cite an example for the point I hope to bring home to our young fighting men.

Babe Ruth is the mightiest hitter in baseball. With the torso of a giant and the shoulders of a stevedore, the Babe can co-ordinate into his swing at the plate a trained power unequalled, I believe, in baseball's entire history.

The nearest rival to the Babe is Hack Wilson, a man possessing the muscles and build of a champion wrestler. Physically, Hack is far more powerful than the Babe, but Hack never has been able to pack his full strength behind his bat. He isn't a natural hitter. The Babe is a natural, as the saying goes, and every ounce of his weight and every fraction of his force are concentrated in the rhythmic sweep of his war-club. Few men in baseball ever have approached the physical strength of Hack Wilson, but in his best year at the bat he was nine sort of the Babe's home-run record.

Yet the unrivalled, superlatively trained Babe Ruth can be hamstrung by a slight strain at the ankle. Sudden but minor twistings of a foot, such as the average man would fail to notice, can cripple the Goliath of baseball. Nature played a sad joke on the Babe, bestowing slim, weak limbs upon a man with a giant's body. As a result, the Babe must be on guard every moment he's on the field.

I take off my hat to the Babe, for he's made a magnificent showing against great odds. His case is as unusual as his build, but it serves to emphasize strikingly the impotence of an athlete whose legs won't stand the pace.

To be sure, there's a wide difference between the requirements of the fight-

ing man and the baseball player. The batter always has time to set himself at the plate, planting his feet deliberately to allow for his best swing. In the field, the ball player uses his legs for quick dashes or bursts of running, all more or less normal movements.

The fighting man seldom has a chance to set himself firmly on his feet. He must be able to hit hard while balancing on his toes. His legs must be supple and iron-muscled, to allow for instant side-stepping and feints. The baseball player wears spikes which give a leverage for his spring or run. The fighter wears smooth-soled shoes and must operate on canvas often slippery. Yet the fighter must move with greater quickness and even more sureness than the ball player.

Babe Ruth couldn't last a round in the ring. His strength and co-ordinated hitting power would be unavailing against an agile man half his size. And I will add that no fighter, even one who appears a Samson above his waist, can hope for ring success unless there is cunning, endurance and soundness in legs and feet.

The power of the legs is the foundation of almost every athlete's prowess. The runner, the track man, the ball player, the football man and the rower require sure, powerful legs. No other class of athlete has greater requirements in this respect than the fighter, and only the track man and runner have a need as great.

I've always believed, with a good many other veterans, that while the fists are the fighter's best offensive weapon, the best defensive method lies in feet and legs. I've watched scores of fighters save themselves from defeat by their skill and agility on their feet. I've watched many fighters win battles against stronger men because of their ability to move more swiftly and surely.

It may not be generally known, but I sent Firpo in to battle against Willard with these instructions:

"Don't try to fight Willard. Just tire

him out. His legs are weak. Keep him on the move. Keep backing away from him so he'll chase you. Dodge in and out as much as you can to lead him into a charge. He'll never stand the gaff if you keep him moving."

Firpo obeyed instructions and he won his fight—won when Willard collapsed in his corner, his legs so worn out by Firpo's tactics that the mighty ex-champion of the world simply couldn't stand up. Perhaps it was an undignified, unconvincing form of victory for Firpo, but just the same the record books credit him with a technical knockout over a former world champion.

I'll go further and say that many veteran handlers frequently base the tactics of their fighters upon the known strength or weakness of an opponent's limbs, not upon the opponent's ability with his fists—a point which should be remembered by every youngster who aspires to ring success.

Conditioning the Legs

NOW let's get down to practical problems of leg conditioning.

Road-work is the foundation of a fighter's wind and limb endurance, shadow boxing the foundation of suppleness and agility on his feet. The legs are strengthened by running and dog-trotting on the open road, quickness is developed by the twisting, dodging, shifting and side-stepping of the gymnasium work.

Whenever a new fighter comes to me for training, I start first on the legs. If he's young and strong, I prescribe five or six miles of road-work a day, a half-mile of running alternating with a half-mile of dog-trotting. A half-pound weight in each hand helps to give a sure balance to the man on the road and aids, as well, in keeping the forearms in position and in exercising other muscles of the body as the runner swings his arms.

A new fighter must be watched closely at road-work. If he tires too rapidly or the heart shows the slightest

strain, the distance must be cut to three or four miles. If he develops a pain in his side from the exertion, there must be a lay off of two or three days. The rest usually ends the trouble, but, if the pain remains, the fighter might just as well quite the game. His body simply isn't equipped to endure the strains of the ring.

A month of road-work finds the average fighter sound of wind and strong of limb. Then comes two or three weeks of shadow boxing (five or six rounds a day) depending upon the man's strength, with the road-work cut to a mile or two.

There's an art in shadow boxing. For the first two rounds the fighter should move slowly, so as to loosen up the muscles of the legs. The last three rounds, however, should find the man moving as fast as he is able, weaving his body to develop the stomach and spine, and turning the head from side to side in the movement so necessary in slipping punches. All the time, of course, the feet are shifting, with the fighter springing or slipping from side to side as swiftly as he can.

It shouldn't require an expert to know just how beneficial such exercising can be. The ligaments and tendons are toughened to withstand any sudden, severe strains. The interior tissues of the legs are strengthened for the long pull of a fast ten-round go. Ankles become supple and feet are trained for instant change of direction with the body's balance undisturbed. In a word, the entire body becomes a co-ordinated unit.

There are other methods of aiding the conditioning. The legs of a fighter should be rubbed morning and night—in the morning to remove any stiffness, and at night to restore muscular flexibility after a day of work. A good rubber or masseuse is a valuable man around a training camp, but the young fighter if necessary can do the job himself. All he has to remember is to rub upwards so that the blood always will flow back toward the heart.

Then, it never hurts to knead the calf of the leg. A simple process, this. A brisk rubbing of the calf between the hands does the trick.

The Legs of Famous Fighters

SOME of the wisest men of the ring have placed their greatest training reliance in shadow boxing. Among them, surprising as it may seem, was the powerful Jim Jeffries, who also went in for rope-skipping.

For all his bulk, Jeffries could move with the speed of a welter. He knew that the fighter who was fast had a fifty per cent edge on his rival every time.

"The fighter who's swift on his feet can keep a slower foe off balance with ease," Jeffries once remarked. "The slow man never gets a chance to set himself for a blow while the speedy boy can land oftener and get more of his force into the punches."

This from a fighter who could crack a man's ribs with his fists.

Jim Corbett was another who knew the value of speed. In fact, the basis of Corbett's game was clever foot-work, and he depended chiefly upon shadow boxing for his training.

I've seen Corbett move around the ring with the dash of a bantam. It was his speed that brought victory over John L. Sullivan. In a slugging match, of course, Corbett would have been no match for the terrible John L., but John was helpless against a man who could tire him out and keep out of range when he swung his mighty fists. Most of John L.'s punches were wasted in that historic match, and every missed punch is a serious drain on a fighter's endurance.

Benny Leonard, rated by many experts as one of the cleverest lightweight champions the ring has ever known, spent as much time on foot-work as he did on his fists. In every fight he worked the side-step steadily, aiming to make the other fellow miss a punch. Usually, Benny succeeded.

Perhaps the most striking modern example of the necessity for leg power came in the second Dempsey-Tunney world championship match at Chicago.

Those of us who were at the ringside at that "battle of the century" heard the smash of Dempsey's glove when Gene Tunney went down. It was a blow few fighters could have taken.

When Tunney, still somewhat dazed, clambered to his feet, expert observers were convinced he couldn't last another round. But they'd forgotten the Tunney legs.

Instinct warned Tunney to back away from the gloves of "Tiger Jack," and his legs didn't betray him. Even while his mind was still befogged from the shock of the knockdown blow, Tunney was side-stepping, shifting and feinting. Instinct, yes, but instinct fostered by years of long, careful training and conditioning.

"Get a bicycle," jeered a Dempsey fan at the ringside.

"Come on and fight," shouted Dempsey.

In the few dangerous minutes of Tunney's grogginess, Dempsey charged desperately to get in close for a finishing blow. But the Tunney legs were strong and supple—and the title remained in his hands.

The endurance in Tunney's legs was his mainstay in his greatest ring crisis. Evidence enough for any intelligent young fighter.

Correspondence

WE'LL now consider the problems of individual readers.

DEAR JIMMY:

My measurements are as follows: height, 5 feet 5 inches; weight, 115 pounds; chest expansion, 3 inches; biceps, 10; waist, 30. What sort of training do you advise? I am nearly 17 years old.

D. Ross,
Henley, Holywood, Ireland.

You're a little young for heavy exercising, and there isn't much you need to do at your age. Your waist is too large by four inches, but simple bending exercises and deep breathing should help. Keep out in the open as much as possible.

DEAR JIMMY:

Fight Stories has given me great enthusiasm for the game, and I wonder if I'm built for the ring. I'm 15 years old and weight 125 pounds. My other measurements follow: height, 5 feet 6 inches; neck, 13 $\frac{5}{8}$; biceps, 12 $\frac{5}{8}$; forearms, 13; chest, normal, 34; expanded, 36 $\frac{3}{4}$; waist, 26 $\frac{1}{2}$; thigh, 19; calf, 13 $\frac{3}{4}$; ankle, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$; reach, 65 $\frac{3}{4}$.

If there's anything wrong, how should I improve myself? I would like to gain weight.

JIMMY BARD,
Waterbury, Conn.

Always glad, Jimmy, to hail an enthusiast. As to your build, you're plenty big enough for your years. However, even a husky youngster like you can well afford to wait a few years until you reach a fuller general development before starting to work in earnest.

DEAR MR. DE FORREST:

I'm strong for boxing and would like to enter amateur contests next year, but right now my waist and hips are too big for a boxer. What should I do?

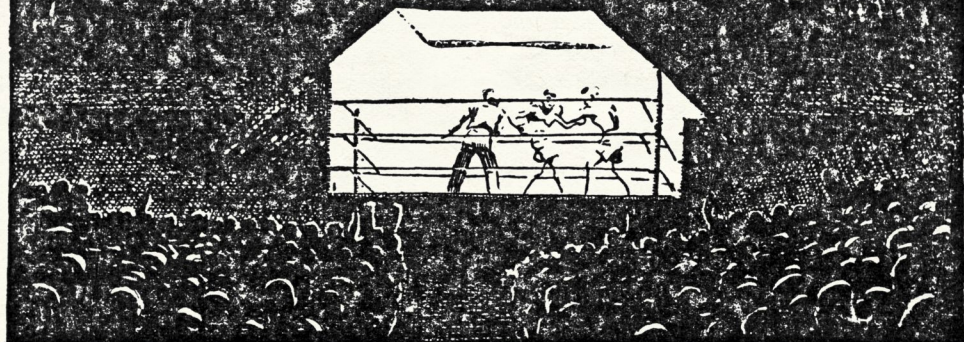
Every other night I punch a light bag for three rounds. Every day I take exercises, and at school I run the mile for track. I also wrestle.

I'm 16 years old and weigh 147 pounds; biceps, 13; forearm, 10 $\frac{3}{4}$; reach, 72; height, 5 feet 9 inches; waist, 30 inches; wrist, 7 $\frac{1}{2}$.

BILL DOHERTY,
Omaha, Nebraska.

I think you're doing well enough as it is, Bill. You have a champion's reach and the promise of a big frame. Don't be in a hurry, however. No boy should enter any sort of boxing contest until he first knows how to handle himself. Find a youngster of your own age and size, untrained like yourself, and practice with him. I'd also suggest that you consult a good trainer in your home city. Time enough for you to start serious ring work when you're a year or two older.

The NEUTRAL CORNER



The Neutral Corner is the meeting place for all fight fans, boxers, promoters, readers, authors and others interested in the red-blooded sport of the ring. It is the department of Fight Stories wherein you

may air your views, ask questions, indulge in some timely gossip of scrappers and spin a yarn or two out of your own experience. The Neutral Corner is your corner! Make yourself at home in it.

THE junior lightweight class, which recently saw a new ruler crowned in the person of Kid Chocolate, is a quiet division compared with what it was seven or eight years ago. In those days Kid Sullivan, Pepper Martin, Mike Ballerino, Allentown Johnny Leonard, Mickey Brown, Tony Bacarelli and a few others like them made up the fightin'est class that has been seen in many a long day.

This was particularly true of the four-cornered rivalry between Sullivan, Ballerino, Martin and Brown, which kept the New York clubs full of action. None of these boys went in very strongly for skill, and they weren't such terrific hitters, either. But they could keep up a whirlwind pace, no matter how long or how short the fight might be.

Pepper Martin fought Sullivan no less than six times, and there wasn't much to choose between them at the finish. Sullivan and Ballerino met on four occasions, the latter winning two decisions and the Kid scoring one knockout. Mickey Brown's most serious rival was Pepper Martin. They met four times, each winning twice, and Pepper scored the most decisive victory when he knocked Mickey cold in eleven rounds. This was one of the most furious battles ever staged in New York.

The junior lightweight division would be helped a lot if there were more fellows like the members of this quartette in action today. It might be that a polished boxer like Kid Chocolate would be able to beat any of them. He probably would. But none of the current 133-pounders put on such exhibitions of slam-bang slugging as was current around 1924.

Kid Sullivan, incidentally, is a prosperous real estate man now, with offices in Brooklyn. Poor Pepper Martin is dead, and the other two have drifted out of sight. But we'd all perk up our interest if they were back in action again.

The Rumson Bulldog

MICKEY WALKER'S decision to abandon the middleweight championship and go cruising after heavyweights was a wise one. The Rumson Bulldog found so much difficulty making weight that he seldom defended his title, and was in the bad graces of many state commissions because of this lapse.

Accepting the Sharkey match was also a wise business move. Mickey figured that, as a small, fast moving, hard-hitting target, he had more than an even chance to whip the Boston sailor. Nor would failure hurt his drawing power

to any extent. They'd say Jack had too great physical advantages, and Walker could go on to fight any light-heavy-weight or heavyweights the promoters chose to put against him. As it turned out, his draw with Sharkey was almost as good as a win.

It's too bad that so fine a fighting man as Walker was out of the limelight for so long, but it was his own fault and no one else's.

For several years Mickey had a decided disinclination for training. He liked to take it easy and have a good time.

Then, too, he is managed by a fellow who figures all the angles, and who, when Mickey was on the middleweight throne, didn't want him to meet any man who had an even chance to beat him. Doc Kearns had one lesson in the Walker-Latzo fight that he never forgot, and didn't intend such a calamity to happen again. It did not occur to him, apparently, that it is part of a champion's job to defend his title against the best men available, and that, if the head man is lax, the division falls into disrepute.

However, the possibility of a match with Schmeling may alter Mickey's viewpoint as regards training.

The Rumson Bulldog is ambitious to win more championships than any other boxer in history. He already has two to his credit—the welter- and middle-weight. Whether, at this stage of his career, he will be able to add any more to his string is quite another matter.

Likes "Famous Fights"

EDITOR, *Fight Stories*:

I have read your magazine for a long time, but have never written you or any of your writers, and now I should like to pen an appreciation for the many hours of pleasure your magazine has given me.

Congratulations to you on your staff of writers. Congratulations to them on the goods they put out. I always enjoy Jack Kofod, Jimmy De Forest, Hype Igoe and Old-Timer.

I'm rather an old-timer myself, and his "Famous Fights" hits me just right. Here's to your magazine and its writers! May they live long and prosper.

O. A. RHINARD,
Yakima, Wash.

Questions and Answers

EDITOR, *Fight Stories*:

Just a few lines to ask you to settle an argument for me. Did Dempsey get more money than Tunney out of their two fights, and, if so, how much?

YOUNG KILBANE,
Miami, Florida.

The 1926 fight at Philadelphia netted Dempsey \$711,868.00, and Tunney \$204,000.00, while the Chicago fight in 1927 netted Dempsey \$425,000.00 against Tunney's \$990,445.00. Dempsey's total for the two battles was \$1,136,868.00. Tunney's total was \$1,194,445.00. So, you see, Tunney had the financial edge to the extent of \$57,577.00.

THE NEUTRAL CORNER:

(1) What was Bob Fitzsimmons' age at the time of his last fight with Jim Jeffries?

(2) What was Jeff's age at the time of his attempted comeback against Jack Johnson?

(3) What was Jack Dempsey's age at the time of his last fight with Gene Tunney?

(4) What were the other two world's titles held by Fitzsimmons besides heavyweight champion?

W. F. TARRANT,
Norfolk, Va.

(1) Forty years. (2) Thirty-five years. (3) Thirty-two years. (4) Middleweight and light-heavyweight.

EDITOR, *Fight Stories*:

I am somewhat mixed as to the heavyweight champions since John L. Sullivan. I know that Corbett won from John L., but, after that, my memory plays me tricks. Was Fitz the next champ, or was Jeffries? And did Fitz lick Corbett twice before Corbett fought Jeff? Please give me the dates of Corbett's fights with Fitz, and also of his fight or fights with Jeffries. I would also like the names of all the heavyweight champs from Sullivan on.

W. E. KING,
Toledo, Ohio.

The order of the heavyweight titleholders is as follows: Sullivan, Corbett, Fitzsimmons, Jeffries, Burns, Johnson, Willard, Dempsey, Tunney, Schmeling.

Corbett and Fitzsimmons fought only once, and that was at Carson City, Nevada, on March 17th, 1897. Corbett's fights with Jeffries were on May 11th, 1900, and on August 14th, 1903.



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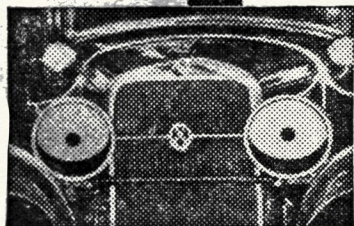
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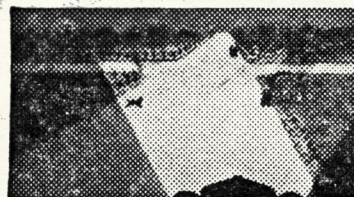
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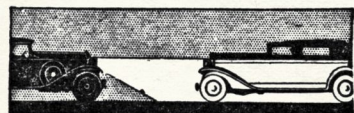
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STRAIGHT TO THE BULL'S-EYE



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Action Stories, daddy of all the Fiction House magazines, leads the good-reading parade this month with a big, meaty Western novel by the cowboy genius, Walt Coburn. "Señor Spy" is a moving, human story of Yankee renegades who laugh at death in the sun-broiled interior of Mañana Land. The writin' cowboy leads a fast spread of other top-hand pen-pushers, including Harry Olmsted, Foster-Harris, Dex Volney and other well-liked *Action* authors. . . . *Frontier Stories* hits the trail with a gripping gun tale of frontier days in that hard-boiled strip where Texans met and clashed with the lawless whites of the Indian Nation. "The Red Deadline" is the sort of novel you'll long remember. It's only one of the many savory tales of hard-riding, hard-fighting men that feature this issue.

Air Stories rides point for the Big Three of air-fiction magazines with an unusual novel of fighting men a-wing on the sky-high trails of deadly conflict—in peace-time skies! "The Dumb Bird" by Frederick C. Davis, will make you grip your chair arms; it's that kind of a yarn. *Wings* soars to new heights of dramatic war-air action in "Forked Lightning," George Bruce's big new novel of battle-ripped skies above the Western Front. *Aces'* three-novel flight is also led by George Bruce, whose "Sons of Thunder" is one of the truly remarkable air-battle stories of the year.

Lariat Story Magazine fogs the gun trails of cattle land with a line-up of top-hand

writers that are making Western fiction history. Beside the big cowboy novel, "The Quick Six" by Eugene Cunningham, there are bang-up stories by Wm. F. Bragg, Buck Stradleigh, T. W. Ford, Dabney Otis Collins, Michael Tilden and others.

North-West Stories, the magazine devoted to our sand and snow frontiers, features fine man-stuff yarns by such famous writers as William Colt MacDonald, J. Allan Dunn, H. S. M. Kemp and many other fiction aces. Don't miss MacDonald's great novel, "The Bar-X Maverick."

Action Novels forges ahead of the field with four complete novels in one magazine. The line-up: "The Coronado Kid," by John G. Pearsol, "Magic Cargo" by Dex Volney, "Texas Tiger" by E. S. Pladwell and a swift-moving adventure novel by Colin Cameron.

Fight Stories wants to remind you of the gripping life story which Jack Kofoed brings to the pages of this issue—"Battling Benny Leonard," the glamorous, true-life story of the little man who fought his way up from the Ghetto. Also stories and features by Hype Igoe, Jimmy De Forest, Bill Cook, John T. McIntyre and Pete Martin. The best ring writers of the present day contribute regularly to this, the outstanding magazine of the prize ring.

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Begin with trail marker No. 1 in the small circle at the left. If you can follow this trail through the tangle you will see it leads to the car marked "E." Some of the trails go from left to right, others from right to left. When you have done your best with each trail, write your answer like this: "Trail No. 1 leads to car 'E'." "Trail No. 2 leads to car . . ." and so on with all the trails. If you prefer, you can draw straight lines from each marker to the correct cars.

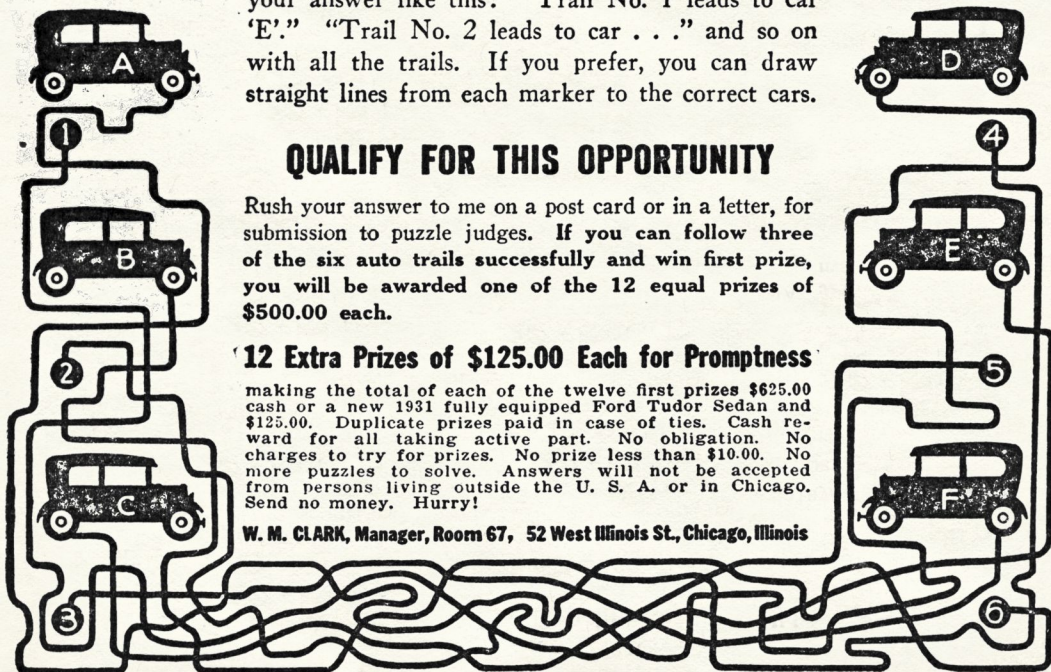
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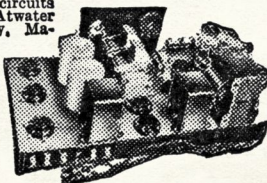
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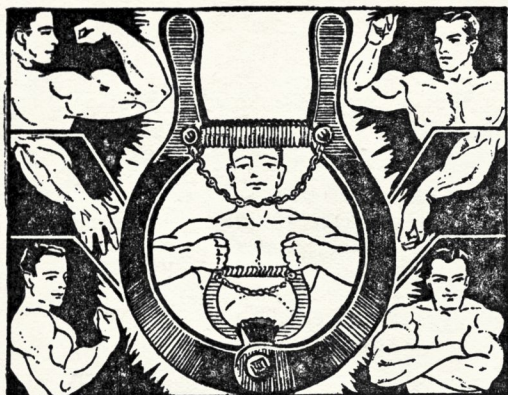
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84x34	3.50	30x4.50	2.50
83x34 1/2	3.20	30x4.50	2.50
83x34	3.20	30x4.50	2.50
84x34 1/2	3.45	30x4.50	2.50
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28x5.25-18"	2.90	1.35	32x4	2.95	1.15
30x5.25-20"	2.90	1.35	32x4	2.95	1.15
31x5.25-21"	3.20	1.40	34x4 1/2	3.45	1.45
30x5.77-20"	3.20	1.40	30x5	3.60	1.75
31x6.00-19"	3.20	1.40	32x5	3.60	1.75
32x6.00-20"	3.20	1.40	32x5	3.60	1.75
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Let us prove our claims. We'll send a Director for trial. If you don't get results you owe nothing. You don't risk a penny. Write for trial offer, doctors' endorsements and letters from users . . . Mail the coupon NOW!

The "Director" will give you a waistline like this

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Gentlemen: Without cost or obligation on my part please send me details of your trial offer. Dept. F-4

Name

Address



"How we saved our first \$500"

"MARY and I had been married four years, but we couldn't save a cent. Fact is, we were constantly in debt and I was always worried for fear I would lose my position.

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this gland

Can Often Be Re-stimulated

Say Physicians

Thousands of men—who have given up hope because of the decline of a certain gland—will now learn that science has at last developed an amazing corrective method. This gland—called the prostate—cause of so many of the distressing symptoms that scourge the lives of older men—sciatic and rheumatic pains, foot and leg pains, broken sleep, bladder distress, nervousness, ebbing vitality, etc.—can now be reached by a method so simple that every man can have its benefits, right at home.



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If you are a victim of prostate gland disorder—if you have tried medicines or old, disappointing treatments without relief, this is the message you have long wanted to hear. Or if you are one of those men, who, though getting along in years, have not realized how the tiny prostate gland brings about unpleasant changes and health faults, you likewise will want to hear of this vitally important discovery. Without cost, without obligation, either type of man may learn full details of this scientific achievement by simply mailing the coupon—printed herewith for the convenience of the readers of this publication. The book mentioned will come to you directly from the office of the President of the International Institution sponsoring the method—mailed in a plain wrapper, marked Personal. Address W. J. KIRK, President, 6646 Morris Avenue, Steubenville, Ohio.

If you live West of the Rockies, address The Electro Thermal Co., 303 Van Nuys Building, Dept. 66-Z, Los Angeles, Calif. In Canada, address The Electro Thermal Co., Desk 66-Z, 53 Yonge St., Toronto, Can.

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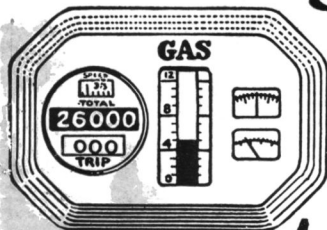
Please send me, without cost or obligation, a copy of your informative booklet (mailed in plain wrapper) which gives full details of this new treatment.

Name.....

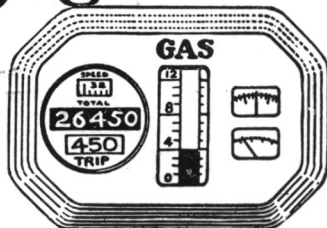
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450 MILES on a gallon of gas



*startling
statement
of famous
Automotive Engineers*



How to increase gasoline mileage has been a problem that Automotive Engineers have been trying for years to solve. Recently a world famous engineer made the statement that the energy produced by burning a gallon of gasoline would run an auto a distance of 450 miles. Other well known authorities go on record as saying that eventually it may be possible to get over four times as much out of gasoline as in the past.

Amazing Whirlwind Device Saving Millions of Gallons of Gas for Auto Owners

The Whirlwind Carbureting device embodies scientific features which conserves part of the gasoline that formerly went to waste.

Whirlwind users, reporting the results of their tests, are amazed at the results they are getting. Letters coming into the office tell of record mileages resulting in a saving of from 25 to 50 per cent in gas bills alone.

Mark H. Estes writes: "I was making 17 miles to the gallon on my Pontiac Coupe. Today, with the Whirlwind, I am making 35 5/10 miles to the gallon. Am I glad I put it on? I'll say so!"

M. J. Blaski: "I have had my Whirlwind for two years now and am getting 30 per cent more mileage. I drove my old Oakland 28,000 miles and did not touch the motor. The plugs are always clean and dry."

R. J. Tulp: "The Whirlwind increased the mileage on our Ford truck from 12 to 26 miles to the gallon and 25 per cent in speed. We placed another on a Willys-Knight and increased from 12 to 17 miles per gallon."

Arthur Grant: "I have an Oakland touring car that has been giving me 15 miles to the gallon average, but I can see a great difference with the Whirlwind, as it climbs the big hills on high and gives me better than 23 miles to the gallon of gas, which is better than 50 per cent saving in gas."

Car owners all over the world are saving money every day with the Whirlwind, besides having better operating motors. Think what this means on your own car. Figure up your savings—enough for a radio—a bank account—added pleasures. Why let the Oil Companies profit by your waste? Find out about this amazing little device that will pay for itself every few weeks in gas saving alone.

FITS ALL CARS

In just a few minutes the Whirlwind can be installed on any make of car, truck or tractor. It's actually less work than changing your oil or putting water in the battery. No drilling, tapping or changes of any kind necessary. It is guaranteed to work perfectly on any make of car, truck or tractor, large or small, new model or old model. The more you drive the more you will save.

SALESMEN AND DISTRIBUTORS WANTED To Make Up To \$100.00 a Week and More

Whirlwind men are making big profits supplying this fast-selling device that car owners cannot afford to be without. Good territory is still open. Free sample offer to workers. Full particulars sent on request. Just check the coupon.

WIRLWIND MANUFACTURING CO.
Dept. 691-A, Station C Milwaukee, Wis.

GUARANTEE

No matter what kind of a car you have—no matter how big a gas eater it is—the Whirlwind will save you money. We absolutely guarantee that the Whirlwind will more than save its cost in gasoline alone within thirty days, or the trial will cost you nothing. We invite you to test it at our risk and expense. You are to be the sole judge.

FREE OFFER COUPON

Whirlwind Manufacturing Co.,
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Gentlemen: You may send me full particulars of your Whirlwind Carbureting device and tell me how I can get one free. This does not obligate me in any way whatever.

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() Check here if you are interested in full or part time salesmen position.

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This Year Give Yourself
**Lifelong Fun
Profit and
Popularity**



PARENTS!

What greater gift can you confer on your children this year than lifelong fun and entertainment?

Love of music means love of home, an appreciation of the finer things in life. Here is a chance to give your boy or girl that love without the tedious practice that most instruments require. The Xylorimba is easy to play. No teacher is needed. Practice is actually a joy.

Remember, the Xylorimba is the guaranteed product of a company established nearly half a century ago—a company that stands back of every promise it makes.

THINK of the best gift you have ever received. Multiply the pleasure it gave you by ten, and still you have only an idea of the joy you can give yourself right now if you act at once!

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Haven't you, like millions of others, envied the fellows who "bring down the house" with snappy xylophone or xylorimba numbers? Haven't you longed to create your own music, to be looked up to wherever you go, to be able to make real money in spare time? If you have, this ad spells O-p-p-o-r-t-u-n-i-t-y. The xylorimba—wonderful for home, in demand at dances and gatherings—is nevertheless the *easiest of all instruments to play*. In fact, on the very day you get yours you play simple melodies, even if you can't read a note of music right now. In a few weeks you astonish your friends and family. *All your life* you have the joy that comes to those who can entertain.

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Ralph Smith, Chicago, played twenty minutes at wedding; his "pay" was \$20. Harry Breuer, New York, has

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And now J. C. Deagan, Inc., (world's largest manufacturer of xylophonic instruments) has made it so easy to own a xylorimba that nothing stands in your way. Sizes and styles to fit every age and pocketbook. A five-day free trial that eliminates risk. Free, easy lessons that make teacher unnecessary—and, best of all, such easy payments that they are hardly noticed.

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Everyone wants to be popular. Everyone wants to make extra money. Everyone wants to be center of attraction at gatherings. But these advantages don't come by themselves. Opportunities must be seized. This is *your* opportunity—will you pass it up without investigation? The accompanying coupon will bring our big FREE book to your door. It tells all about the Deagan line, the free trial, the easy payments. Remember, no cost or obligation! Simply fill in and mail the coupon—but do it before it slips your mind. Today is as good a day as any. Do it NOW!

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