

RABBITSKINS.

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We have been notifying our Country Clients since 26th March that our Home and American Agents anticipated a serious decline in Rabbitskins. We passed this on to you for what it was worth. At yesterday's local sale prices declined 75 per cent. We therefore would like to write us for revised price list. At the same time we would again advise you to accept ruling prices, as our Agents anticipate a further decline in the next London sales in June.

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TO THE PUBLIC IN SEARCH OF TOWN PROPERTIES.

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But let us get down to the plains. Here we find the real land that will yield up its hidden treasure to the man who seeks it.

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THE BATHROOM DOOR.

(Continued from page 2.)

"Well, I told you you would never find one. Gimme back my scooter!"

"Let's have just one more go on it."

"All right then, but only one more."

Half an hour later he handed the scooter back to its rightful owner.

"Think I'll go back now," he said virtuously. "My dad will be getting cold and tired of waiting for me, I spect."

Clarence was right. His father was cold; he was also tired of waiting for the return of his offspring.

Though it was summer, a chill wind had sprung up, and Samuel's teeth were chattering like castanets.

No one had ventured near the house since his son had departed. His feelings towards Clarence were too deep for utterance, and in fact Samuel had relapsed into a sort of dull apathy.

Did ever mortal man have things go so utterly wrong with him?

Fate was too cruel.

But hark, there was the sound of the key in the front door lock!

His wife had returned at last.

Samuel waited for the bang which told that the front door had closed on his wife, and then he pounded long and vigorously on the panels of the door with the handle he had wrenched from its place.

The immediate result was a piercing scream from his wife.

"Help!" she cried. "Thieves! Murder!"

"No, it isn't!" roared Samuel. "It's me—Sam."

But the distracted woman did not hear him. She had long made up her mind that the place would one day be broken into by thieves, and now they were here in very truth.

Still shrieking, she rushed from the house.

Once more Samuel sought the cold, hard, uncomfortable edge of the bath. Even his wife had failed him.

What would happen? Would she run away for good in sheer terror? Or would she summon assistance?

He was in a state now when he really did not care much what happened to him.

But soon hope revived again. There came the sound of a pounding on the front door. What had happened was that his wife had put her keys down when she came in, and then in her terror had rushed out without them.

But the lock of the front door was soon forced, and then came the sound of heavy footsteps.

"You say the noise came from upstairs madam," said a man's voice.

"Yes, I'm sure I heard it. It was a terrible banging."

Samuel gave a loud bang on the door with the handle, and then he nipped into the bath.

"Why, there it is again," said Mrs Bird's voice. "There's someone in the bathroom."

"Yes, mum. We'll precious soon see who it is, too," said several voices.

The bathroom was furiously attacked from the outside now, and with lusty truncheons.

At last came the ominous crack which told that the stout lock had at last given way. The door swung cautiously open.

"If he attacks you, brain him!" cried Mrs Bird.

And the next instant the door was opened sufficiently to permit the face of a man to appear.

It was the face of P. C. Cecil Havelock!

For a moment he stood transfixed as his eyes fell on Mr Samuel Bird.

Then he turned to the men who were with him.

"Keep back," he said quietly. "I can deal with this."

Then he came back to the bathroom.

"Sorry to intrude, sir," he said quietly, "but would you mind telling me what has happened?"

"Can't you see?" snapped Samuel. "I came in here to have a bath, and the accursed lock slipped and made me a prisoner. I should think I've been here yelling for help for about fifteen hours. Go down stairs and get me my clothes, and bring them up here. And mark my words, if you ever let a word of this get about the neighbourhood, I'll send my daughter to Timbuctoo. Do you understand?"

"Quite, sir," said Cecil, without allowing a ghost of a smile to grace his lips.

Then he retired, and Samuel heard him tell the men with him that the affair was only a case of someone being locked in a room, and that they wouldn't be wanted.

Then he whispered to Mrs Bird, who simply said:

"Dear, what a fright I've had, and all for nothing at all."

"He's got some sense, that young fellow, after all," growled the waiting Samuel. "Mavis might do worse."

Within a few minutes Cecil had opened the bathroom door once again, and had

deposited a complete outfit of clothing on the floor.

In a waistcoat pocket was a watch, and Samuel found that, although he would be terribly late for his appointment, yet there was a chance that he might still find the customer he wished to see at home.

And he did.

The great man was terribly incensed at his late arrival, but Samuel took the right course with him as it happened.

He simply told him the truth of the whole story, and the customer laughed till the tears came into his eyes.

And having succeeded in getting his man into an excellent temper, of course Samuel was able to do his business to considerable advantage to himself and the bank.

So all ended well.

Cecil Havelock is now a District Inspector of Police, and Mavis is perfectly happy as his wife, as she always knew that she would be.

The house where Samuel lives has been brought more up-to-date, and Mrs Bird has got over most of her grievances.

Samuel is a church warden and a member of the district council. He is also firmly in the confidence of the two lords and the six baronets, and therefore he is a happy man.

For Cecil Havelock never let a word escape him as to the episode of the bath, for which Samuel is grateful.

He sometimes fancies that Cecil has mentioned something of the incident to his wife though, for when Samuel good-humouredly twits her with having married a common policeman, she is apt to reply that they may come in uncommonly useful on bath nights.

(The End.)

SENSATIONAL KNOCKOUTS.

BY "COUNT."

Carpentier and Billy Wells. Wells and Moran. Knocked out without receiving a blow. Wells' better form against Beckett. Wells and Sunshine. Goddard's amazing remark. Carpentier and Dick Smith. Johnson and Jefferies.

Since J. L. Sullivan first discovered the effects of a blow upon the chin, boxers have concentrated upon that blow, and are doing so now, in spite of all sorts of grotesque attempts to show that new punches are being found out by physical scientists and specialists upon nerves.

The other day I read something about Dempsey having been taught a new blow by some medical man, and the doctor or the writer, or both, wanted to make the public believe that it was a result of that discovery when Willard was rendered helpless. Willard was not unconscious whatever may be said by the referee; he was rendered helpless.

If we are to get anything new in the way of a knock-out blow, the nation most likely to introduce it is the Japanese, who, in their sports, have learned more about nerves and physical equilibrium than any other dwellers upon the universe.

One great handicap to the infliction of the many hurtful presses and knocks which are the speciality of the Japanese, however, lies in the presence of boxing gloves upon the hands. The Japs do their work in this direction by incisive pressure from thumb or fingers upon particular nerves, the paralyzing of which means the collapse of the body and mind. It is possible that, so long as our boxing referees fail to bar the rabbit punch, a time will come when some foxy little fellow from the East will teach some boxer how to apply the heel of his hand to the brain nerve at the back of the neck, which the Japanese wrestler presses upon by the aid of the vest which is used in the sport.

NOTHING NEW.

In the way of a direct punch, there is nothing new just now in the way of knock-out blows. They land on the chin, which causes pressure of the brain by that small, paper-like bone near the temple; or the mark which expels the breath from the body and makes it impossible for a few seconds for a man to get his lungs in working order again, and underneath the heart. In the last-named case, an upward blow with the right to the body is the kind of punch which brings about the downfall of the opponent.

All those parts of the human body are so vulnerable, so susceptible to hurt, that they suffice to render incapable almost any boxer who is hit there by anyone who has punching power commensurate with his weight.

Take for instance Bombardier Wells, when he collapsed after less than eighty seconds of boxing against Carpentier at the National Sporting Club. After that contest, Carpentier illustrated to me how he accomplished the knock-out. In his

description of the blows he was quite right. (Excuse this seeming condescension on my part in stating that Carpentier was correct; but it is a fact that boxers do not always know how they have knocked their men out.)

THE REASON WHY.

Remarkable as was this sudden downfall of Britain's heavy-weight hope against the then brilliant French boy, I do not believe that it was brought about entirely by force of blow or blows. It was collapse of nerve force—the wrecking of the moral fibre of a man who went into the ring convinced that he would be hurt.

Wells guarded his body with both arms as soon as the bell was rung, and he had never even got his arms and fists into attacking pose before Carpentier, changing the direction of his punch, sent his fist to the chin, and Wells sat upon the floor of the ring, incapable of rising.

Now, Wells is of that sensitive—refined, if you like—disposition which gives to a blow every credit for being hurtful. He has none, or very little, of that quality which causes a man, though hurt, to say to himself: "I'm not going to let that trouble me;" rather does he seem to think that he has been hurt more than may be the case.

I am confident that he was not hurt so much as he thought he was when Carpentier knocked him out, and yet I am prepared to swear that Wells himself thought that he had been hit just about as hard as anyone could be.

It will be long before I forget the deathly silence that went round the National Sporting Club as soon as people realised what a forlorn show had been made by the British champion against the best in France. Men who have followed boxing for tens of years sat still in wonderment, trying to convince themselves that it was all a dream, and that Wells would get up and continue the contest.

A few seconds served to convince them of the hopelessness of that wish; and men, hardened to boxing and the sight of men being knocked out, sat there and sighed, as you who were in England must have sighed when you heard of the British troops being driven back by the Germans in March of 1918. We had a glorious July 17th to follow, however; but it was not so with Wells, and it seemed as if that knock-out blow had not merely finished off a British champion, but had knocked the bottom out of British boxing for ever.

SEMI-CONSCIOUS.

In a manner of writing, I have seen this boxing curiosity, Wells, knocked out without receiving a blow. It was in his contest with Frank Moran at the London Opera House. In a minute from the start of that affair Wells walked from the middle of the ring to his corner, as if under the impression that the round had finished. As they were three-minute rounds, it seems almost reasonable to say that Wells even by then was reduced to a state of mind that meant semi-consciousness.

Wells was much better, however, in his bout with Beckett; I mean, much better from the point of view of keeping possession of his senses after he had been hit. He was hurt badly, but he took his time well and properly on the floor, and rose with determination on his face, as if he meant to go on and win.

Unfortunately for Wells, however, he could not keep cool enough to remember all that he had been taught in the gymnasium by Jim Driscoll and others, with the result that, in one of the clinches, he left his chin sticking out from Beckett's shoulder, and in perfect position for one of the present champion's best blows with the left. That blow went along, and the business was all over.

To show you what a quaint, psychological thing boxing is I will recall the contest between Wells and old Sergeant Sunshine at the King's Hall, Blackfriars, just after Wells returned from India. The older soldier knocked the boy down three times, and on each occasion Wells was unconscious, just so long that he had to be called to his senses by his seconds who shouted to him to get up. Three times Wells got up, and eventually knocked out Sunshine.

A SURPRISE FOR MOIR.

Wells is a fruitful subject when knock-outs are being dealt with, but his experience at Olympia when he lost to Gunner Moir is so fresh in your minds that I will only recall to you the fact that a lot of people left the building quite early in the contest, expressing disgust at the fact that a fellow like Moir should have been matched with Wells. "It was a shame to put the poor old fellow up against a man with whom he had no possible chance!" You will all remember how, before those people could get out of the building, Wells lay on the floor, stretched out by means of a body punch, the delivery of which seemed impossible to Moir, so much had the latter been punched about to different parts of the ring.

Goddard was knocked out because of his

(Continued on page 6.)

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