

(Continued from yesterday.)

"Ah! might as well give in now, and take 'is thrashin' and ha' done wit' it."

"That my ruse had succeeded with the crowd was evident; they—to be a man—believed I did not say my best, and eagerly regarded me as hopeless—beaten. My chance of winning depended upon whether the smith, deuded into a like belief, should content himself with just beating my latest throw, for, should he again exert his mighty strength to the uttermost, I felt that my case was indeed hope-

wi' a look, go. 'Ah! she'm proud on be, an' pro—"What," said ter, Simon?" "Ay, for su—"And your i—"Ay, that he—"Why, ther son." "I've seen wo—"And now," and you shall as you shall "Wee!"

It was with a beating heart, therefore, that I watched him take his place for the last throw. His face wore a confident smile, but nevertheless he took up the hammer with such a businesslike air that my heart sunk, and, and, feeling a touch upon my arm, I was glad to turn away.

"I 'be goin' to fetch a sponge and water," said Simon.

"A sponge and water!"

"Ah! Likewise some vinegar—

"...pathy 'ike vinegar—and re-

men—the chin, a little to one side
prepared.”
“So then you think I shall be beat-
en?”
“Way, I don’t say that, but it’s best
to be prepared, are n’t it now?”
And with a friendly nod, the In-
keeper turned away. In that same
hour, the crowd arose another shout from
the crowd as they greeted Black
George’s last throw, and Job, striding
up, announced:
Then, while the air still echoed with

their plaudits I stepped into the ring, and, catching up the hammer, swung it high above my head. Then, with the length of my arms, began to wheel it. The iron spun faster and faster till, settling my teeth, with the whole force of every fibre, every nerve, and muscle, I hurled it at the man.

The blood was throbbing at my temples and my breath coming fast as I watched its curving flight. And now all voices were hushed. That now, as the hammer fell, I might have struck the hard road, and all eyes watched Job, as he began pacing towards us. As he drew nearer I could hear him counting to himself, thus:

"Ninety-one, ninety-two, ninety-three, ninety-four, ninety-five, ninety-

cried, starting up.

"Yes! I have counted to ninety-five. It might easily be ninety-six."

"But the man has said he has 'have it to be ninety-seven.'"

"Why, I have counted to ninety-seven."

"Peter, I don't think you wouldn't be better to count to ninety-eight."

"I am counting to ninety-eight."

"Now where he breathed his last in his chair."

he replied

"Heard him

[illegible]

ing into each other's eyes, and once again I saw the hairs of his golden beard curl up, and outwards.

What would have been the end I cannot say, but there came upon the stillness the sound of flying footsteps, the crowd was burst asunder, and a girl stood before us, a tall, handsome girl with raven hair, and great, flashing black eyes.

"Oh!—you, Jarge, think shame on yourself—think shame on yourself, Black Jarge. Look," she cried, "point a finger at him who has done the great, strong man—as I am a coward!"

I felt the smith's grip relax, his arms dropped to his sides, while a deep, red glow crept up his cheeks. All it was lost in the dithering curls of gleaming, yellow hair.

"Why, True —" he began, in a strangely altered voice, and stopped. The fire was gone from his eyes, as they rested upon her, and he made a movement as though he would have reached out his hand to her, but checked himself.

"Why, True —" he said again, but checked suddenly, and, turning away, strode back towards his forge without another word. On he went, looking neither to right nor left, and I thought there was something infinitely woe-begone and pitiful in the droop of his head.

Now as I looked from his forlorn figure to the beautiful, flushed face of the girl, I saw her eyes grow wonderfully soft and sweet, and brim over with tears. And, when Black George had baken himself with his smithy, she also turned, and crossed swiftly to the inn, vanished through its open doorway.

"She's a fine spirit, 'ave that darter o' yourn, Simon, a fine spirit. Oh! a fine spirit, as ever was!" chuckled the Ancient.

"True aren't afeared o' Black Jarge never was," returned Simon; "he