

Thorne was not much liked among the elder boys; though he and Edward were sufficiently near each other in age, to make the fight one that could not be objected to as unfair, it was felt that the odds were heavily against Edward. His friends among the "Knights" were divided as to whether they should not on this ground prevent the fight, but Tremaine overruled all objections, considering that it was best for Ned in his present position to shew fight on the very first opportunity given to him.

"You may be beaten," he said to Ned, as they walked over to the bridge, "if you are, it is no disgrace to you, provided you make a good fight for it. But mind me, I don't think you will. Thorne always goes in hotly enough at first, but he has no wind, and soon loses temper—don't attempt to parry his blow so as to get the full weight of it on your guard; spring back well; throw your head back, and when he has struck out, duck down under his guard, and then up to his face with your one, two."

"Well hast thou advised, oh smoker of the pipe of peace and speaker of the words of wisdom. I shall do my best of course."

A large number of the boys had gathered under the covered bridge—those of the upper school securing the best places, and the smaller boys crowding around wherever space afforded. Thorne was there already, in excellent spirits, surrounded by a select group of his followers, and

"To those that sought him sweet as summer."

The ring was formed, and Tremaine took charge of Ned as his second. "Keep cool, my boy, and remember my advice," he whispered, as Ned, having taken his place, stood ready to begin. In the first round, Thorne had the advantage, he beat down Ned's guard, and struck him with some force on the forehead. Elated with this success, he dealt a blow with his right at Ned's face, which, however, Ned avoided by springing back. Seeing that from the length of his opponent's arms it would be hard to get a direct hit at him, Ned in the next round waited till Thorne had struck out, then suddenly stooping, he brought both hands to play on his face, pounding his nose, and causing the "claret" to flow over his vest and shirt, many dollar priced, new, a labour of shirt makers. Whereon Thorne recovered himself and smote Ned on the chest, so that he fell against the wooden ridge in the centre of the bridge road. But Thorne had been more hurt by his punishment, and began to strike out less carefully, and once Ned, getting a good opening hit him full between the eyes with his left, and next brought his right heavily upon his mouth, whereon the teeth of Thorne rattled as rattled the arrows of Apollo in the first book of Homer. And with his eyes he beheld stars and constellations unknown to astronomers. On his recovery he made a rush at Ned, which was met by a blow aimed by that champion, with a force he could not have believed himself to possess, full in the face. Just at this crisis of the battle alarm was given that one of the masters was approaching; and though Ned offered to go