

cursed; and 'ad right to 'ave cursed savagely, coolly says, 'don't take it so badly, Nichol.' Man alive, Jimmy, cannot you see 'tis a deathblow to our racing! 'Aan't the Arnolds kept race-'orses for generation unto generations! Bah! is this queer world turning topsy-turvy?"

Frank burst out laughing at Nichol's long speech, while Jim, quite serene, coolly puffed at his old clay.

"Are ye mute, Jim?" said Nichol, in loud tones.

"I am not aware of the fact, friend Nichol. Neither do I see why I should be cursing o'er the loss of our local race-'orses. I am proud to say I'm as keen a sport as ever. To prove it, my friend, I'll take a wager with you, Frank can hold the stake, any amount ye like, from one shilling up to a pound, and give ye two to one on to it, that our new Lord Cecil Arnold, will be a wedded man within a year."

"What are you giving us?" said Dick Nichol scornfully, "There ain't much of a risk in that. Everybody knows that in all likeliwoods he will be. It's that among other things that has brought this thing about. Dick Nichol has not been cowman come this twenty years for Lord Arnold, without knowing what's going on at Ravendale Manor!"

"Gentlemen!" exclaimed the landlord, "I think a good glass of ale around would kind of liven up things a bit. Come into the bar parlor. Though it is springtime it's a bit cold. But it does no good to croak! I shall propose the health of our new Lord of the Manor and his lady to be."