

tleman. He would take no unfair advantage. He laid aside his gun, took off his shot-pouch and his game-bag, stripped himself of his coat, and made ready on equal terms with his antagonist.

But if the spirit of an English gentleman was in the young Squire, the spirit of an English yeoman was in the young woodman; they were both sons of the same tough, much-enduring stock, their forefathers had fought side by side upon many a well-won field, and it would have been dreadful to men of hotter blood to watch the cool preparations they made for the impending conflict.

"I'll tie the rabbit up in my smock," said Edward, "till we've settled who is to 'ave 'im."

And then they fought. Evenly matched they were. The young Squire had been trained "in the noble art of self-defence," as was then the custom, and his little science now stood him in good stead. But he had unhappily become a drinker already, and his flushed face and beclouded vision more than counter-balanced his skill. Edward, on the other hand, had no advantage save those which sprung from a hardy nature and a burning sense of wrong. So, through the deeping twilight and amid the shadows of the ancient woods, they fought on.

"Oh, the combat, long and fearful !
Oh, the strife, so blood and tearful !
Oh, the agony and anguish
Borne through all the lonely places ;
Where they fought with flashing faces
For the mastery and possession !"

But let us veil the scene, it has no attraction for us. Suffice it to say that after an hour's fierce struggle the young Squire fell heavily, his head striking a fallen tree, and lay senseless upon the ground. When Edward stood still and gazed upon the prostrate form of his old playmate he felt unutterable things. Passion fled, and remorse now occupied her seat. What a sight ! The moon was just rising and as she sent her slanting beams through the timber—

"One ray of moonlight falling,
Through the outer gloom appalling,
Crept upon the young man's forehead,
Glittering like a coat of mail,
On his cheeks and closed eyelids.
On his lips so lovely pale."

Edward stooped over him, called him by the names of childhood, bathed his temples with water from the brook, and when signs of returning consciousness drew near, laid his head gently down, stole silently away, and gat him up and fled.

The Squire's son was soon afterwards found by his father's gamekeepers, and led home but little worse for the events of the hour.