

On this particular night, old Will Warr, the landlord, stood in the passage for a moment and rubbed his hands. A crony who passed into his smoke-room stopped to greet the old hero of the prize ring, now turned into a plump and prosperous Boniface. He wanted to talk of a nobby dog he had just seen killing rats at Westminster.

Warr waved his hand to check the flow of talk.

"Later on," he said; "later on. The 'One Tun' is busy to-night." He rubbed his red face with his apron. "The 'One Tun' is dining the finest collection of sporting swells in England, and it's all hands to the pump."

With a twinkle in his eye, the old landlord, his battered face red with exertion, bustled amongst the waiters in the passage, and egged them on to efforts of quicker attention. As they rushed in and out of the public rooms at the end of the passage, from the open door came the sound of men talking loudly, the clatter of plates, the smell of cooking, and now and again a burst of strident laughter. Occasionally there was to be heard the crash of a falling mug, while ever there mingled with the noise the voice of a half-drunken man trolling one of the street catches of the year.

The curious feature about the house was that amid all the noise and revelry each room seemed preoccupied with a common subject. Every voice that spoke scarcely used half a dozen words without introducing the word "fight." The word was mumbled, shouted, or whispered, but it was always there. It seemed to linger in the very air. The lights, catching the prints of battered old-time