

one hand and Jack Humphries on the other, had also attracted a group of admirers, who were chiefly drawn to him by sheer curiosity. The men rapidly journeying across the park found Bill Gibbons waiting by the ring, and took possession of it. No attempt was made to separate the classes. Noble, pugilist, night-bird, and creature of the street stood side by side and cheek by jowl eagerly canvassing the chances of the coming fight. Apart from the crowd were two little groups of men which marked where the principals were performing their ring toilets. In their direction the eagerly expectant company at the ringside cast impatient glances.

A change had come over the company from the "One Tun." The early morning walk had sobered and quietened them, and now, pale and blasé, they looked somewhat languid in their excitement. They stood about in groups, and the more excitable bystanders kept passing quickly from one to the other gleaning opinion on the coming fight and the state of the odds.

"I like this youngster," Sir Henry Tempest said to Sir John Dering.

Sir John, looking more handsome and dignified in a caped coat and fawn-coloured hat as he stood in the clean morning sunlight, awakened from a reverie which had but little in common with the rabid scene in which he played his part. He nodded his head slowly.

"He is the right stuff, this Johnny Raw—a good plucked 'un. But after all, age and experience count against green youth. The odds are on the black, who is a punishing fighter and a proved game man."