

III.

AT PRENDERGAST'S.

The royal feasts of other days! I am afraid that they have sadly degenerated since, but eight years ago they were among the institutions of our sporting world. What a roar and crush in the saloon below, to begin with. Everybody recounting his adventures, detailing the ludicrous and exciting incidents of the tramp, or a few of the happier ones chaffing others over their little discomfitures. What a flow of animal—and artificial spirits! What thorough good nature! What healthy manliness amid occasional rough displays!

Then the supper up-stairs. Four long narrow tables of deal, parallel to the walls, laden with solids that might make even Gargantua groan—ranks of cold fowl, pyramids of headcheese, coils of sausage, mountains of bread, oceans of cider. And such appetites! Keen as the gales that toss the plumage of The Pines.

This evening in question, there was special enjoyment, because, as has been said, a grand season was just opened and the Club was looking forward to it with eager scent. There was the initial speech by the Captain, laying down the programme of the winter's campaign, and a rolling fire of toasts and responses followed for upward of an hour. Then, at the suggestion of the younger fellows, who could not speak themselves and were getting tired of hearing others, the party returned to the parlor below for dances and music. The main incident of this part of the evening