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Chapter 19 - Close On It

THE object of the invasion of the library by the party in the garden appeared to be twofold.

Sir Patrick had entered the room to restore the newspaper to the place from which he had taken it. The guests, to the number of five, had followed him, to appeal in a body to Geoffrey Delamayn. Between these two apparently dissimilar motives there was a connection, not visible on the surface, which was now to assert itself.

Of the five guests, two were middle-aged gentlemen belonging to that large, but indistinct, division of the human family whom the hand of Nature has painted in unobtrusive neutral tint. They had absorbed the ideas of their time with such receptive capacity as they possessed; and they occupied much the same place in society which the chorus in an opera occupies on the stage. They echoed the prevalent sentiment of the moment; and they gave the solo-talker time to fetch his breath.

The three remaining guests were on the right side of thirty. All profoundly versed in horse-racing, in athletic sports, in pipes, beer, billiards, and betting. All profoundly ignorant of every thing else under the sun. All gentlemen by birth, and all marked as such by the stamp of "a University education." They may be personally described as faint reflections of Geoffrey; and they may be numerically distinguished (in the absence of all other distinction) as One, Two, and Three.

Sir Patrick laid the newspaper on the table and placed himself in one of the comfortable arm-chairs. He was instantly assailed, in his domestic capacity, by his irrepressible sister-in-law. Lady Lundie dispatched Blanche to him with the list of her guests at the dinner. "For your uncle's approval, my dear, as head of the family."

While Sir Patrick was looking over the list, and while Arnold was making his way to Blanche, at the back of her uncle's chair, One, Two, and Three--with the Chorus in attendance on them--descended in a body on Geoffrey, at the other end of the room, and appealed in rapid succession to his superior authority, as follows:

"I say, Delamayn. We want You. Here is Sir Patrick running a regular Muck at us. Calls us aboriginal Britons. Tells us we ain't educated. Doubts if we could read, write, and cipher, if he tried us. Swears he's sick of fellows showing their arms and legs, and seeing which fellow's hardest, and who's got three belts of muscle across his wind, and who hasn't, and the like of that. Says a most infernal thing of a chap. Says--because a chap likes a healthy out-of-door life, and trains for rowing and running, and the rest of it, and don't see his way to stewing over his books--_therefore_ he's safe to commit all the crimes in the calendar, murder included. Saw your name down in the newspaper for the Foot-Race: and said, when we asked him if he'd taken the odds, he'd lay any odds we liked against you in the other Race at the University--meaning, old boy, your Degree. Nasty, that about the Degree--in the opinion of Number One. Bad taste in Sir Patrick to rake up what we never mention among ourselves--in the opinion of Number Two. Un-English to sneer at a man in that way behind his back--in the opinion of Number Three. Bring him to book, Delamayn. Your name's in the papers; he can't ride roughshod over You."

The two choral gentlemen agreed (in the minor key) with the general opinion. "Sir Patrick's views are certainly extreme, Smith?" "I think, Jones, it's desirable to hear Mr. Delamayn on the other side."

Geoffrey looked from one to the other of his admirers with an expression on his face which was quite new to them, and with something in his manner which puzzled them all.

"You can't argue with Sir Patrick yourselves," he said, "and you want me to do it?"

One, Two, Three, and the Chorus all answered, "Yes."

"I won't do it."

One, Two, Three, and the Chorus all asked, "Why?"

"Because," answered Geoffrey, "you're all wrong. And Sir Patrick's right."

Not astonishment only, but downright stupefaction, struck the deputation from the garden speechless.

Without saying a word more to any of the persons standing near him, Geoffrey walked straight up to Sir Patrick's arm-chair, and personally addressed him. The satellites followed, and listened (as well they might) in wonder.

"You will lay any odds, Sir," said Geoffrey "against me taking my Degree? You're quite right. I sha'n't take my Degree. You doubt whether I, or any of those fellows behind me, could read, write, and cipher correctly if you tried us. You're right again--we couldn't. You say you don't know why men like Me, and men like Them, may not begin with rowing and running and the like of that, and end in committing all the crimes in the calendar: murder included. Well! you may be right again there. Who's to know what may happen to him? or what he may not end in doing before he dies? It may be Another, or it may be Me. How do I know? and how do you?" He suddenly turned on the deputation, standing thunder-struck behind him. "If you want to know what I think, there it is for you, in plain words."

There was something, not only in the shamelessness of the declaration itself, but in the fierce pleasure that the speaker seemed to feel in making it, which struck the circle of listeners, Sir Patrick included, with a momentary chill.

In the midst of the silence a sixth guest appeared on the lawn, and stepped into the library--a silent, resolute, unassuming, elderly man who had arrived the day before on a visit to Windygates, and who was well known, in and out of London, as one of the first consulting surgeons of his time.

"A discussion going on?" he asked. "Am I in the way?"

"There's no discussion--we are all agreed," cried Geoffrey, answering boisterously for the rest. "The more the merrier, Sir!"

After a glance at Geoffrey, the surgeon suddenly checked himself on the point of advancing to the inner part of the room, and remained standing at the window.

"I beg your pardon," said Sir Patrick, addressing himself to Geoffrey, with a grave dignity which was quite new in Arnold's experience of him. "We are not all agreed. I decline, Mr. Delamayn, to allow you to connect me with such an expression of feeling on your part as we have just heard. The language you have used leaves me no alternative but to meet your statement of what you suppose me to have said by my statement of what I really did say. It is not my fault if the discussion in the garden is revived before another audience in this room--it is yours,"

He looked as he spoke to Arnold and Blanche, and from them to the surgeon standing at the window.

The surgeon had found an occupation for himself which completely isolated him among the rest of the guests. Keeping his own face in shadow, he was studying Geoffrey's face, in the full flood of light that fell on it, with a steady attention which must have been generally remarked, if all eyes had not been turned toward Sir Patrick at the time.

It was not an easy face to investigate at that moment.

While Sir Patrick had been speaking Geoffrey had seated himself near the window, doggedly impenetrable to the reproof of which he was the object. In his impatience to consult the one authority competent to decide the question of Arnold's position toward Anne, he had sided with Sir Patrick, as a means of ridding himself of the unwelcome presence of his friends--and he had defeated his own purpose, thanks to his own brutish incapability of bridling himself in the pursuit of it. Whether he was now discouraged under these circumstances, or whether he was simply resigned to bide his time till his time came, it was impossible, judging by outward appearances, to say. With a heavy dropping at the corners of his mouth, with a stolid indifference staring dull in his eyes, there he sat, a man forearmed, in his own obstinate neutrality, against all temptation to engage in the conflict of opinions that was to come.

Sir Patrick took up the newspaper which he had brought in from the garden, and looked once more to see if the surgeon was attending to him.

No! The surgeon's attention was absorbed in his own subject. There he was in the same position, with his mind still hard at work on something in Geoffrey which at once interested and puzzled it! "That man," he was thinking to himself, "has come here this morning after traveling from London all night. Does any ordinary fatigue explain what I see in his face? No!"

"Our little discussion in the garden," resumed Sir Patrick, answering Blanche's inquiring look as she bent over him, "began, my dear, in a paragraph here announcing Mr. Delamayn's forthcoming appearance in a foot-race in the neighborhood of London. I hold very unpopular opinions as to the athletic displays which are so much in vogue in England just now. And it is possible that I may have expressed those opinions a little too strongly, in the heat of discussion, with gentlemen who are opposed to me--I don't doubt, conscientiously opposed--on this question."

A low groan of protest rose from One, Two, and Three, in return for the little compliment which Sir Patrick had paid to them. "How about rowing and running ending in the Old Bailey and the gallows? You said that, Sir--you know you did!"

The two choral gentlemen looked at each other, and agreed with the prevalent sentiment. "It came to that, I think, Smith." "Yes, Jones, it certainly came to that."

The only two men who still cared nothing about it were Geoffrey and the surgeon. There sat the first, stolidly neutral--indifferent alike to the attack and the defense. There stood the second, pursuing his investigation--with the growing interest in it of a man who was beginning to see his way to the end.

"Hear my defense, gentlemen," continued Sir Patrick, as courteously as ever. "You belong, remember, to a nation which especially claims to practice the rules of fair play. I must beg to remind you of what I said in the garden. I started with a concession. I admitted--as every person of the smallest sense must admit--that a man will, in the great majority of cases, be all the fitter for mental exercise if he wisely combines physical exercise along with it. The whole question between the two is a question of proportion and degree, and my complaint of the present time is that the present time doesn't see it. Popular opinion in England seems to me to be, not only getting to consider the cultivation of the muscles as of equal importance with the cultivation of the mind, but to be actually extending--in practice, if not in theory--to the absurd and dangerous length of putting bodily training in the first place of importance, and mental training in the second. To take a case in point: I can discover no enthusiasm in the nation any thing like so genuine and any thing like so general as the enthusiasm excited by your University boat-race. Again: I see this Athletic Education of yours made a matter of public celebration in schools and colleges; and I ask any unprejudiced witness to tell me which excites most popular enthusiasm, and which gets the most prominent place in the public journals--the exhibition, indoors (on Prize-day), of what the boys can do with their minds? or the exhibition, out of doors (on Sports-day), of what the boys can do with their bodies? You know perfectly well which performance excites the loudest cheers, which occupies the prominent place in the newspapers, and which, as a necessary consequence, confers the highest social honors on the hero of the day."

Another murmur from One, Two, and Three. "We have nothing to say to that, Sir; have it all your own way, so far."

Another ratification of agreement with the prevalent opinion between Smith and Jones.

"Very good," pursued Sir Patrick. "We are all of one mind as to which way the public feeling sets. If it is a feeling to be respected and encouraged, show me the national advantage which has resulted from it. Where is the influence of this modern outburst of manly enthusiasm on the serious concerns of life? and how has it improved the character of the people at large? Are we any of us individually readier than we ever were to sacrifice our own little private interests to the public good? Are we dealing with the serious social questions of our time in a conspicuously determined, downright, and definite way? Are we becoming a visibly and indisputably purer people in our code of commercial morals? Is there a healthier and higher tone in those public amusements which faithfully reflect in all countries the public taste? Produce me affirmative answers to these questions, which rest on solid proof, and I'll accept the present mania for athletic sports as something better than an outbreak of our insular boastfulness and our insular barbarity in a new form."

"Question! question!" in a general cry, from One, Two, and Three.

"Question! question!" in meek reverberation, from Smith and Jones.

"That is the question," rejoined Sir Patrick. "You admit the existence of the public feeling and I ask, what good does it do?"

"What harm does it do?" from One, Two, and Three.

"Hear! hear!" from Smith and Jones.

"That's a fair challenge," replied Sir Patrick. "I am bound to meet you on that new ground. I won't point, gentlemen, by way of answer, to the coarseness which I can see growing on our national manners, or to the deterioration which appears to me to be spreading more and more widely in our national tastes. You may tell me with perfect truth that I am too old a man to be a fair judge of manners and tastes which have got beyond my standards. We will try the issue, as it now stands between us, on its

abstract merits only. I assert that a state of public feeling in this, that it encourages the inbred reluctance in humanity to submit to the demands which moral and mental cultivation must inevitably make on it. Which am I, as a boy, naturally most ready to do--to try how high I can jump? or to try how much I can learn? Which training comes easiest to me as a young man? The training which teaches me to handle an oar? or the training which teaches me to return good for evil, and to love my neighbor as myself? Of those two experiments, of those two trainings, which ought society in England to meet with the warmest encouragement? And which does society in England practically encourage, as a matter of fact?"

"What did you say yourself just now?" from One, Two, and Three.

"Remarkably well put!" from Smith and Jones.

"I said," admitted Sir Patrick, "that a man will go all the better to his books for his healthy physical exercise. And I say that again--provided the physical exercise be restrained within fit limits. But when public feeling enters into the question, and directly exalts the bodily exercises above the books--then I say public feeling is in a dangerous extreme. The bodily exercises, in that case, will be uppermost in the youth's thoughts, will have the strongest hold on his interest, will take the lion's share of his time, and will, by those means--barring the few purely exceptional instances--slowly and surely end in leaving him, to all good moral and mental purpose, certainly an uncultivated, and, possibly, a dangerous man."

A cry from the camp of the adversaries: "He's got to it at last! A man who leads an out-of-door life, and uses the strength that God has given to him, is a dangerous man. Did any body ever hear the like of that?"

Cry reverberated, with variations, by the two human echoes: "No! Nobody ever heard the like of that!"

"Clear your minds of cant, gentlemen," answered Sir Patrick. "The agricultural laborer leads an out-of-door life, and uses the strength that God has given to him. The sailor in the merchant service does the same. Both are an uncultivated, a shamefully uncultivated, class--and see the result! Look at the Map of Crime, and you will find the most hideous offenses in the calendar, committed--not in the towns, where the average man doesn't lead an out-of-door life, doesn't as a rule, use his strength, but is, as a rule, comparatively cultivated--not in the towns, but in the agricultural districts. As for the English sailor--except when the Royal Navy catches and cultivates him--ask Mr. Brinkworth, who has served in the merchant navy, what sort of specimen of the moral influence of out-of-door life and muscular cultivation _he_ is."

"In nine cases out of ten," said Arnold, "he is as idle and vicious as ruffian as walks the earth."

Another cry from the Opposition: "Are _we_ agricultural laborers? Are _we_ sailors in the merchant service?"

A smart reverberation from the human echoes: "Smith! am I a laborer?" "Jones! am I a sailor?"

"Pray let us not be personal, gentlemen," said Sir Patrick. "I am speaking generally, and I can only meet extreme objections by pushing my argument to extreme limits. The laborer and the sailor have served my purpose. If the laborer and the sailor offend you, by all means let them walk off the stage! I hold to the position which I advanced just now. A man may be well born, well off, well dressed, well fed--but if he is an uncultivated man, he is (in spite of all those advantages) a man with special capacities for evil in him, on that very account. Don't mistake me! I am far from saying that the present rage for exclusively muscular accomplishments must lead inevitably downward to the lowest deep of depravity. Fortunately for society, all special depravity is more or less certainly the result, in the first instance, of special temptation. The ordinary mass of us, thank God, pass through life without being exposed to other than ordinary temptations. Thousands of the young gentlemen, devoted to the favorite pursuits of the present time, will get through existence with no worse consequences to themselves than a coarse tone of mind and manners, and a lamentable incapability of feeling any of those higher and gentler influences which sweeten and purify the lives of more cultivated men. But take the other case (which may occur to any body), the case of a special temptation trying a modern young man of your prosperous class and of mine. And let me beg Mr. Delamayn to honor with his attention what I have now to say, because it refers to the opinion which I did really express--as distinguished from the opinion which he affects to agree with, and which I never advanced."

Geoffrey's indifference showed no signs of giving way. "Go on!" he said--and still sat looking straight before him, with heavy eyes, which noticed nothing, and expressed nothing.

"Take the example which we have now in view," pursued Sir Patrick--"the example of an average young gentleman of our time, blest with every advantage that physical cultivation can bestow on him. Let this man be tried by a temptation which insidiously calls into action, in his own interests, the savage instincts latent in humanity--the instincts of self-seeking and cruelty which are at the bottom of all crime. Let this man be placed toward some other person, guiltless of injuring him, in a position which demands one of two sacrifices: the sacrifice of the other person, or the sacrifice of his own interests and his own desires. His neighbor's happiness, or his neighbor's life, stands, let us say, between him and the attainment of something that he wants. He can wreck the happiness, or strike down the life, without, to his knowledge, any fear of suffering for it himself. What is to prevent him, being the man he is, from going straight to his end, on those conditions? Will the skill in rowing, the swiftness in running, the admirable capacity and endurance in other physical exercises, which he has attained, by a strenuous cultivation in this kind that has excluded any similarly strenuous cultivation in other kinds--will these physical attainments help him to win a purely moral victory over his own selfishness and his own cruelty? They won't even help him to see that it _is_ selfishness, and that it _is_ cruelty. The essential principle of his rowing and racing (a harmless principle enough, if you can be sure of applying it to rowing and racing only) has taught him to take every advantage of another man that his superior strength and superior cunning can suggest. There has been nothing in his training to soften the barbarous hardness in his heart, and to enlighten the barbarous darkness in his mind. Temptation finds this man defenseless, when temptation passes his way. I don't care who he is, or how high he stands accidentally in the social scale--he is, to all moral intents and purposes, an Animal, and nothing more. If my happiness stands in his way--and if he can do it with impunity to himself--he will trample down my happiness. If my life happens to be the next obstacle he encounters--and if he can do it with impunity to himself--he will trample down my life. Not, Mr. Delamayn, in the character of a victim to irresistible fatality, or to blind chance; but in the character of a man who has sown the seed, and reaps the harvest. That, Sir, is the case which I put as an extreme case only, when this discussion began. As an extreme case only--but as a perfectly possible case, at the same time--I restate it now."

Before the advocates of the other side of the question could open their lips to reply, Geoffrey suddenly flung off his indifference, and started to his feet.

"Stop!" he cried, threatening the others, in his fierce impatience to answer for himself, with his clenched fist.

There was a general silence.

Geoffrey turned and looked at Sir Patrick, as if Sir Patrick had personally insulted him.

"Who is this anonymous man, who finds his way to his own ends, and pities nobody and sticks at nothing?" he asked. "Give him a name!"

"I am quoting an example," said Sir Patrick. "I am not attacking a man."

"What right have you," cried Geoffrey--utterly forgetful, in the strange exasperation that had seized on him, of the interest that he had in controlling himself before Sir Patrick--"what right have you to pick out an example of a rowing man who is an infernal scoundrel--when it's quite as likely that a rowing man may be a good fellow: ay! and

a better fellow, if you come to that, than ever stood in your shoes!"

"If the one case is quite as likely to occur as the other (which I readily admit)," answered Sir Patrick, "I have surely a right to choose which case I please for illustration. (Wait, Mr. Delamayn! These are the last words I have to say and I mean to say them.) I have taken the example--not of a specially depraved man, as you erroneously suppose--but of an average man, with his average share of the mean, cruel, and dangerous qualities, which are part and parcel of unreformed human nature--as your religion tells you, and as you may see for yourself, if you choose to look at your untaught fellow-creatures any where. I suppose that man to be tried by a temptation to wickedness, out of the common; and I show, to the best of my ability, how completely the moral and mental neglect of himself, which the present material tone of public feeling in England has tacitly encouraged, leaves him at the mercy of all the worst instincts in his nature; and how surely, under those conditions, he must go down (gentleman as he is) step by step--as the lowest vagabond in the streets goes down under his special temptation--from the beginning in ignorance to the end in crime. If you deny my right to take such an example as that, in illustration of the views I advocate, you must either deny that a special temptation to wickedness can assail a man in the position of a gentleman, or you must assert that gentlemen who are naturally superior to all temptation are the only gentlemen who devote themselves to athletic pursuits. There is my defense. In stating my case, I have spoken out of my own sincere respect for the interests of virtue and of learning; out of my own sincere admiration for those young men among us who are resisting the contagion of barbarism about them. In their future is the future hope of England. I have done."

Angrily ready with a violent personal reply, Geoffrey found himself checked, in his turn by another person with something to say, and with a resolution to say it at that particular moment.

For some little time past the surgeon had discontinued his steady investigation of Geoffrey's face, and had given all his attention to the discussion, with the air of a man whose self-imposed task had come to an end. As the last sentence fell from the last speaker's lips, he interposed so quickly and so skillfully between Geoffrey and Sir Patrick, that Geoffrey himself was taken by surprise,

"There is something still wanting to make Sir Patrick's statement of the case complete," he said. "I think I can supply it, from the result of my own professional experience. Before I say what I have to say, Mr. Delamayn will perhaps excuse me, if I venture on giving him a caution to control himself."

"Are you going to make a dead set at me, too?" inquired Geoffrey.

"I am recommending you to keep your temper--nothing more. There are plenty of men who can fly into a passion without doing themselves any particular harm. You are not one of them."

"What do you mean?"

"I don't think the state of your health, Mr. Delamayn, is quite so satisfactory as you may be disposed to consider it yourself."

Geoffrey turned to his admirers and adherents with a roar of derisive laughter. The admirers and adherents all echoed him together. Arnold and Blanche smiled at each other. Even Sir Patrick looked as if he could hardly credit the evidence of his own ears. There stood the modern Hercules, self-vindicated as a Hercules, before all eyes that looked at him. And there, opposite, stood a man whom he could have killed with one blow of his fist, telling him, in serious earnest, that he was not in perfect health!

"You are a rare fellow!" said Geoffrey, half in jest and half in anger. "What's the matter with me?"

"I have undertaken to give you, what I believe to be, a necessary caution," answered the surgeon. "I have not undertaken to tell you what I think is the matter with you. That may be a question for consideration some little time hence. In the meanwhile, I should like to put my impression about you to the test. Have you any objection to answer a question on a matter of no particular importance relating to yourself?"

"Let's hear the question first."

"I have noticed something in your behavior while Sir Patrick was speaking. You are as much interested in opposing his views as any of those gentlemen about you. I don't understand your sitting in silence, and leaving it entirely to the others to put the case on your side--until Sir Patrick said something which happened to irritate you. Had you, all the time before that, no answer ready in your own mind?"

"I had as good answers in my mind as any that have been made here to-day."

"And yet you didn't give them?"

"No; I didn't give them."

"Perhaps you felt--though you knew your objections to be good ones--that it was hardly worth while to take the trouble of putting them into words? In short, you let your friends answer for you, rather than make the effort of answering for yourself?"

Geoffrey looked at his medical adviser with a sudden curiosity and a sudden distrust.

"I say," he asked, "how do you come to know what's going on in my mind--without my telling you of it?"

"It is my business to find out what is going on in people's bodies--and to do that it is sometimes necessary for me to find out (if I can) what is going on in their minds. If I have rightly interpreted what was going on in your mind, there is no need for me to press my question. You have answered it already."

He turned to Sir Patrick next

"There is a side to this subject," he said, "which you have not touched on yet. There is a Physical objection to the present rage for muscular exercises of all sorts, which is quite as strong, in its way, as the Moral objection. You have stated the consequences as they may affect the mind. I can state the consequences as they do affect the body."

"From your own experience?"

"From my own experience. I can tell you, as a medical man, that a proportion, and not by any means a small one, of the young men who are now putting themselves to violent athletic tests of their strength and endurance, are taking that course to the serious and permanent injury of their own health. The public who attend rowing-matches, foot-races, and other exhibitions of that sort, see nothing but the successful results of muscular training. Fathers and mothers at home see the failures. There are households in England--miserable households, to be counted, Sir Patrick, by more than ones and twos--in which there are young men who have to thank the strain laid on their constitutions by the popular physical displays of the present time, for being broken men, and invalided men, for the rest of their lives."

"Do you hear that?" said Sir Patrick, looking at Geoffrey.

Geoffrey carelessly nodded his head. His irritation had had time to subside; the stolid indifference had got possession of him again. He had resumed his chair--he sat, with outstretched legs, staring stupidly at the pattern on the carpet. "What does it matter to Me?" was the sentiment expressed all over him, from head to foot.

The surgeon went on.

"I can see no remedy for this sad state of things," he said, "as long as the public feeling remains what the public feeling is now. A fine healthy-looking young man, with a superb muscular development, longs (naturally enough) to distinguish himself like others. The training-authorities at his college, or elsewhere, take him in hand (naturally enough again) on the strength of outward appearances. And whether they have been right or wrong in choosing him is more than they can say, until the experiment has been tried, and the mischief has been, in many cases, irretrievably done. How many of them are aware of the important physiological truth, that the muscular power of a man is no fair guarantee of his vital power? How many of them know that we all have (as a great French writer puts it) two lives in us--the surface life of the muscles, and the inner life of the heart, lungs, and brain? Even if they did know this--even with medical men to help them--it would be in the last degree doubtful, in most cases, whether any previous examination would result in any reliable discovery of the vital fitness of the man to undergo the stress of muscular exertion laid on him. Apply to any of my brethren; and they will tell you, as the result of their own professional observation, that I am, in no sense, overstating this serious evil, or exaggerating the deplorable and dangerous consequences to which it leads. I have a patient at this moment, who is a young man of twenty, and who possesses one of the finest muscular developments I ever saw in my life. If that young man had consulted me, before he followed the example of the other young men about him, I can not honestly say that I could have foreseen the results. As things are, after going through a certain amount of muscular training, after performing a certain number of muscular feats, he suddenly fainted one day, to the astonishment of his family and friends. I was called in and I have watched the case since. He will probably live, but he will never recover. I am obliged to take precautions with this youth of twenty which I should take with an old man of eighty. He is big enough and muscular enough to sit to a painter as a model for Samson--and only last week I saw him swoon away like a young girl, in his mother's arms."

"Name!" cried Geoffrey's admirers, still fighting the battle on their side, in the absence of any encouragement from Geoffrey himself.

"I am not in the habit of mentioning my patients' names," replied the surgeon. "But if you insist on my producing an example of a man broken by athletic exercises, I can do it."

"Do it! Who is he?"

"You all know him perfectly well."

"Is he in the doctor's hands?"

"Not yet."

"Where is he?"

"There!"

In a pause of breathless silence--with the eyes of every person in the room eagerly fastened on him--the surgeon lifted his hand and pointed to Geoffrey Delamayn.