

and leave each torch's circle of light. Skir-r-r-r! A toboggan flashes past, leaving the merry hail of its crew far behind in a swirl of shining dust.

You mount step by step, till you are above it all, and can look down upon the spear-like point of a goodly tree. Away below run the lights, dipping, dipping, like lessening golden heads on a viewless cord. Bright eyes flash, and soft voices murmur all about; teeth that have caught something of the frost's gleam show between lips so warm that Winter dare not touch them lest he perish. A manly voice says cheerily: "Get on; sit tight," and away you go!

Was it not grand, that marvelous swooping flight? And you will try again? I thought so! This air is like

wine without the evil of it. You are on fire. Nothing now too high, fast, or far—you are a victim of intoxication, and, like its other victims, you will continue to go down.

"Look out—they'll run you down!" How that pair flew past, she leaning far back, and he as far forward, steering by instinct, eyes fixed upon her face. Another version of the old, old story.

"You saw him kiss her? Impossible—his mustache is full of frost!"

"You saw his cheek touch hers anyway?"

"Well, sposen you did? He's mortal, and this air *is* like wine. Truly may he say—and with better grace than did his old father Adam—the woman tempted him."

SELF-DEFENCE WITH A CANE.

BY JUSTIN BONNAFOUS.

THE carrying of a cane, or walking-stick, is so much a fashion and is such a universal and ancient practice, that it would almost seem to be the survival of an instinct implanted by the habit or necessity of carrying some more substantial club for self-defence. The game of single-stick was formerly well known and practiced, and it is surprising that whilst all other

Single-stick practice has indeed fared even worse than the foil. Canes are carried just as much as ever by the sterner sex, but in the main they are



1.—THE WRONG WAY TO STRIKE.



2.—THE RIGHT WAY TO STRIKE.

merely carried as mute companions. The usefulness of the cane as a weapon is overlooked.



3.—POINT AGAINST RUSH.

branches of sport in and out of doors, have their conspicuous positions in the world of athletics, the art of single-stick up to the present date is so little understood in this country.



4.—CUT AGAINST KNIFE.

In view of these facts, I am prompted to write upon the subject and explain, as clearly as it is possible to do in writing, what a trustworthy friend a walking-stick becomes in the hands of one who knows how to use it.

Few persons who carry canes or umbrellas realize that they have at hand at once an effective and, in the hands of a skilled fencer, a formidable weapon for protection against assault.

Even in the hands of a novice it may be so wielded as to stand off and subsequently subdue a "gang" of roughs when no other weapon, except possibly a revolver, would avail.

The principal advantages of the cane are these: First, your opponent is kept at a distance, and therefore you get a free opportunity to defend yourself against the attacks of others. Next, your weapon is always "loaded" and is equally effective at long or short range. Last, but not least, there is no law against carrying a cane, while most stringent regulations govern that of revolvers.



6.—NECK CUT AGAINST SIDE RUSH.

During my stay in Paris I witnessed the use of the stick in repelling attack on several occasions, and the user of it always came forth victorious from the *mêlée*. In Europe the use of the single-stick is cultivated both for itself and as a preliminary training for sabre fencing, as the use of the latter heavier weapon requires that the wrist should be trained to withstand the strain. It is also a compulsory exercise in the army.

Now to explain how the cane is to be used for self-defence. Although it is not possible to attain as much proficiency in its use without the aid of a competent instructor, as with that aid, nevertheless by close inspection of the illustrations herewith published it will be possible to learn the method of delivering the cuts, and, by practice, become fairly adept.



5.—POINT AND BUTT AGAINST TWO.

The most formidable of the cuts used are the two head cuts (see Figures 1 and 9). For the right and left face and the shin cut, see Figure 8. The point thrust is most effective in close quarters (see Figure 3), as it attacks the "solar plexus" of recent pugilistic notoriety, and no matter how powerful a man may be it is a "knock-out" blow.

Let us suppose one is attacked by three thugs. Turning your attention to the nearest you play for the head, if possible, but if that is too well guarded resort to the shin cut (as in Figure 8), using all the force that you can command. If properly delivered that means "one man out." In the meantime your other assailants will probably rush at you front and rear; then is the time to call into play the point and butt thrusts (see Figures 5 and 3). Should, however, one of the opponents try, by bending

down, to get under your cane, either use an upper cut or a blow on back of the neck (see Figure 6). Should he straighten himself plant your point for the stomach—all this can be done in an instant.

If an assailant comes at you armed with a knife or razor, cut for the arm, and, on his dropping it, proceed with treatment as before (see Figures 5 and 9). The thrust for the eye is sometimes used, but should only be resorted to as an extreme measure, for it might prove fatal.

There is no reason why a lady should not cultivate the use of the stick, for while it is giving her a healthy and invigorating exercise, it is training her in a means of protecting herself in case of emergency.

As to the cane it should be of thoroughly seasoned, straight-grained hick-



7.—BULL DEFENCE.

ory, tapered like a billiard cue, about one and a half inches at the butt, down to three-fourths of an inch at the point. The butt should be surmounted by a knob of silver or other heavy metal, and the point protected by a heavy ferrule. Under no circumstances should a crook handle be used, as it is apt to become entangled in the clothing at the critical moment, and in such *mêlées* every second counts.

In conclusion, let it be said that it is not the intention of this article to prove that, so armed, one is invincible, but that, if used with precision, the cane outranks any other weapon, with the exception noted, as a means of protection.

It might be well to say also, in the event of an encounter, see that, if possible, you have a clear space on all sides so that you may have ample opportunity, by quick advances, retreats,



8.—LEG AND FACE CUT AGAINST TWO.

and side-steps most advantageous, to wield your weapon.

Another point of great value is to maintain a safe distance from the assailants by executing retreats, advances, and side-steps to the right and left according to their position when attacking. Do not forget that all movements must be executed with rapidity and precision. This is where the knowledge of handling your cane comes in.

Play for the face when the opportunity offers, but always employ the point thrust for the stomach, and the cut for the shin. After you have punished one or two out of a crowd, the rest will often take to their heels.

In delivering the cuts make sure that your cane is in the proper position in order that the blow will have the necessary amount of force to prove effective. (See Figures 1 and 2.)

Finally, my advice is, keep out of quarrels if possible, but if the encounter is inevitable keep constantly moving, not only your body but the stick, and remember, the first blow very often decides the outcome of the battle.



9.—RIGHT FACE CUT.