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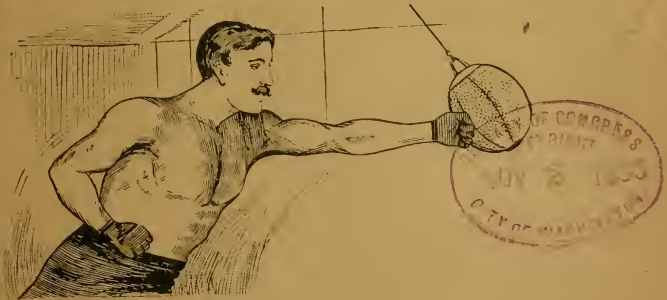
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# BAG PUNCHING



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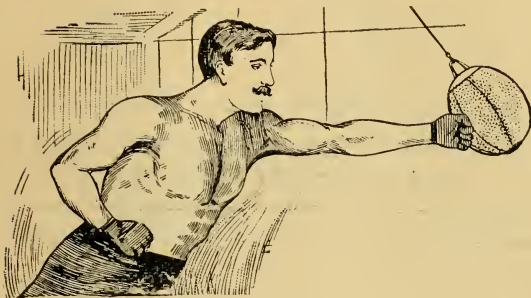
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# Bag Punching.

BY

JULES FRANKS,

*Champion Bag Puncher of America.*



FULLY ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS SHOW-  
ING CORRECT ATTITUDES.

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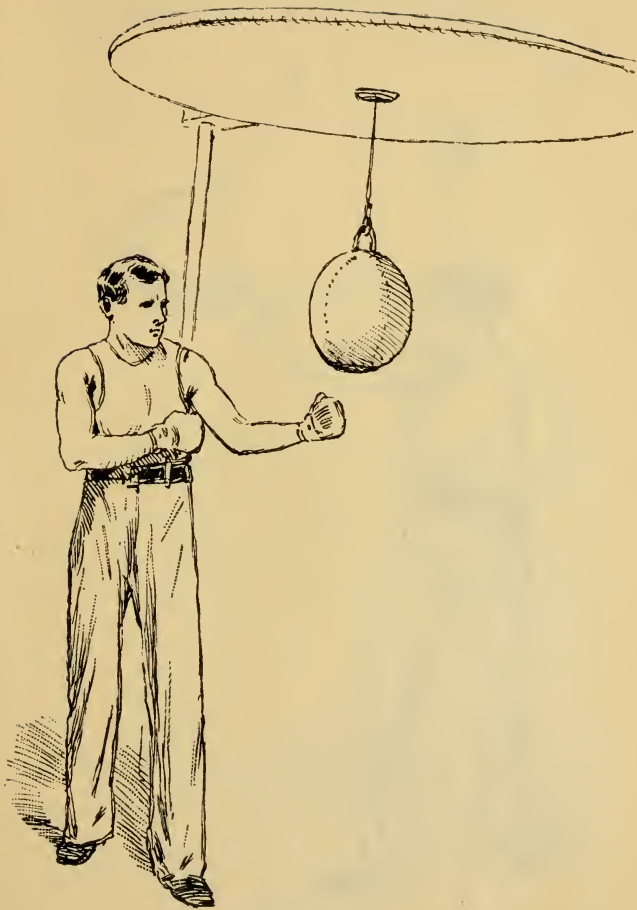
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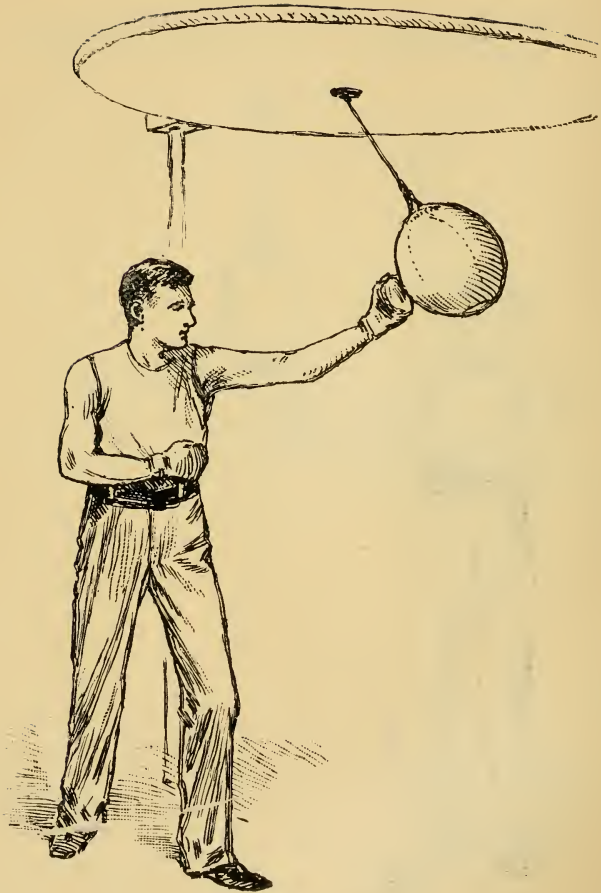
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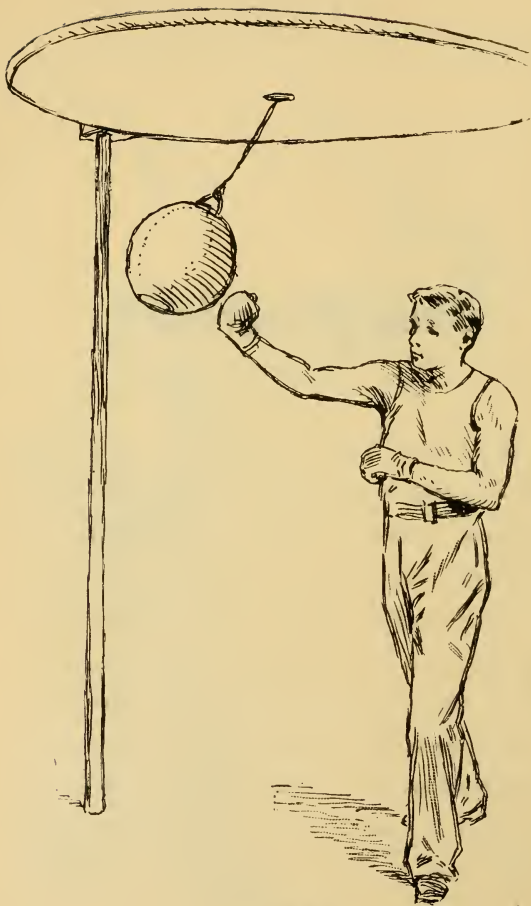
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No. 2.

## Bag Punching.

Every sport has its utility. Swimming, Rowing, Track Athletics, Foot Ball and Boxing have their unquestioned advantages, and each contribute in different forms a benefit to the human physique. But while these sports develop the muscle and invigorate those that indulge in them, the accidents and mishaps attendant on them partly counterbalance the good to be derived. The footballist is more often laid up with shattered limbs than playing on the foot ball field ; the track athlete is a study in bandages and plasters all the year round and his ruptures and strains an unending theme ; the swimmer and oarsman, although never in position to suffer any violent wrench, are momentarily apt to furnish a sensational fatality story, and finally the devotee of the manly art is universally decorated



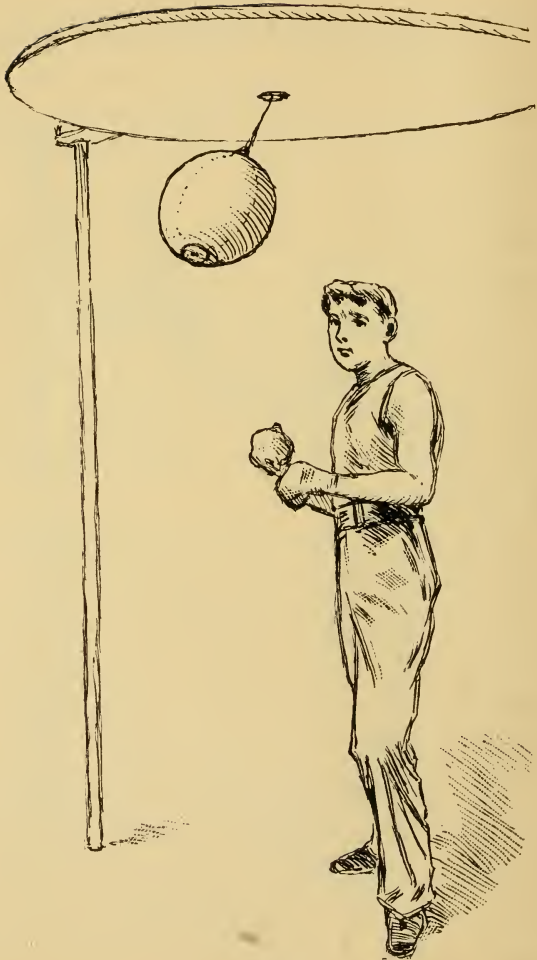
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with the escutcheon of his calling—a battered physiognomy.

But the exercise in which are constituted all the promulgated benefits of field sports, aquatics and boxing, without incurring any of their dangerous features, is the simple calisthenic of “Punching the Bag.” This pastime consists in hitting an inflated leather bag about the size of an Association foot ball with the naked fists or with gloves manufactured for the purpose. To such a pitch of popularity has the game now reached that it has become a recognized fad among professional boxers, and the indulgence in the exercise, too, among people in general who want an appliance for home training is gaining general favor and making rapid advances.

And here a word of advice might be offered to those who are desirous of procuring the necessary apparatus for fixing a bag in their own homes. As might naturally be expected at first sight, the cost of a bag and ceiling would appear to be very great, but for a few dollars anyone can comfortably provide himself with a bag and striking gloves should he need them. A punching bag that seems to meet all requirements is the A. G. Spalding No. 18. It is the one endorsed by Corbett and Fitzsimmons, and their testimony ought to be a sufficient guarantee of its qualities. Its cost is \$10.00, but a capital one can be had for just half the money. Another style is the double



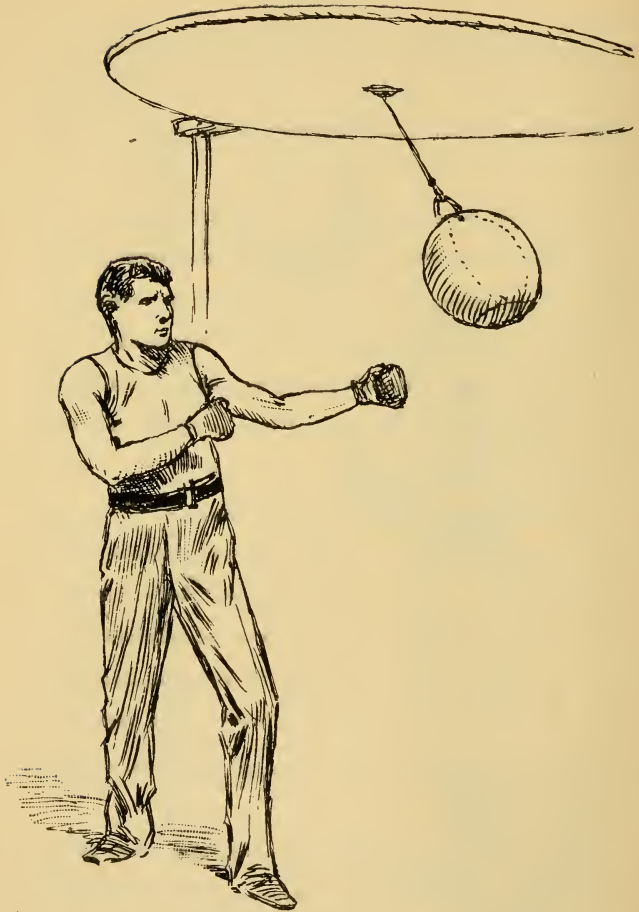
No. 4.

end and a good one can be had for \$4.00. A very fine pair of striking-gloves can be purchased for \$2.50. They are a great protective for the hands, and beginners should at all times use them.

As an exercise, punching the bag is very fascinating. There is a wonderful temptation even in the very appearance of the ball as it hangs suspended in the air, because no matter how weak the physique or imagination the most puiſne cannot fail for a moment to fancy himself facing an antagonist, and will immediately start to put his powers into execution and drive viciously at the leather sphere.

To the professional and amateur athlete, especially the ambitious boxer, this form of exercise is by no means easy of attainment, and it requires careful study and plenty of work to become proficient. All the noted boxers pride themselves on their skill as bag punchers. Corbett, Fitzsimmons, Choyinski, Ryan, Dixon, Plimmer, Smith and Barry assert superiority over each other and claim to be the originator of the different methods of hitting.

Like most of its contemporaneous relatives, the early history of this pastime is shrouded in mystery and the real originator of the game will never be known. The English boxers of a few generations ago were familiar with a bag, an article about

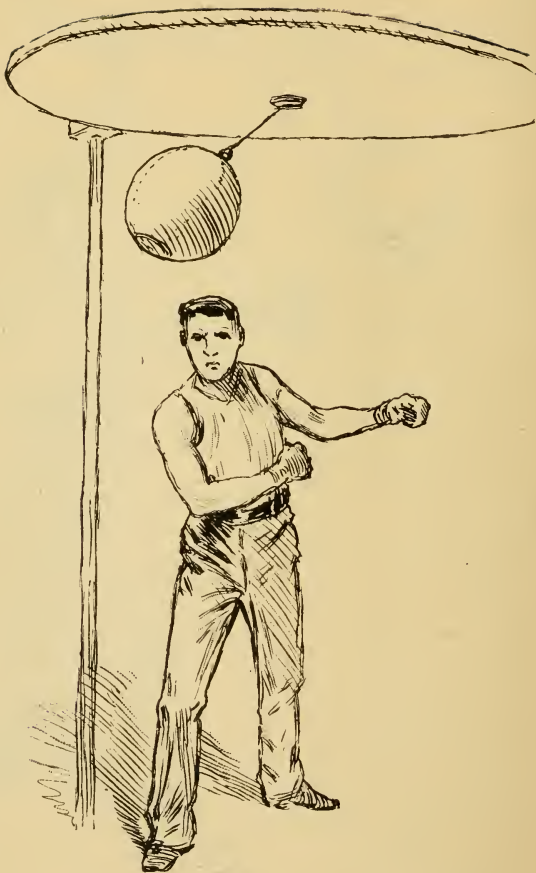


No. 5.

the size of a man. This affair was usually swung from the crossbeam of a barn or other roomy edifice. It generally weighed about sixty pounds—a horseskin wallet filled with bricks, old horseshoes and the like.

The Americans used a modified form. During the fighting days of Arthur Chambers, Billy Edwards and Billy Madden, Arthur Chambers had one in his Philadelphia gymnasium, but, like its British predecessor, the workmanship was crude and the exercise attained did not cause any amount of comment or lead anyone to believe that it would one day become the peer of all indoor exercises. This was during the Centennial of 1876.

In all public gymnasiums during that period the twelve, fifteen and thirty pound bags, made of canvas and stuffed with chamois, oakum and excelsior were sometimes used. They were generally suspended from beams about twelve or fourteen feet high and any one who could knock them over the beam earned the reputation of a hard puncher. Apropos of this a story is told of John C. Heenan. The great fighter was traveling around England and was then but in poor condition from the effects of high living and other luxuries. He chanced to ramble into the old gymnasium at Oxford college, England, where an old-time bag was hanging. Some of the students recognizing the Benecia boy, asked him to give the bumper a



No. 6.

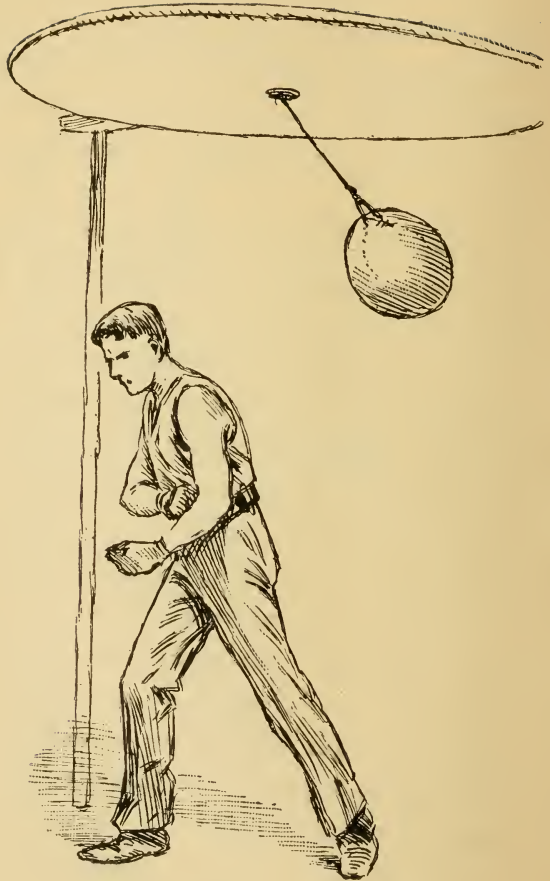
shot, and the once king of the prize ring quickly removed his silk coat and squared off before the bundle. After tapping it a few times to limber up he let fly at the bag. The whack it received resounded through the building and the bag sailed twice around the crossbeam before the sound of the punch died away.

But this style of bag proved the most dangerous appliance in the gymnasium, for anyone who had not the proper idea of punching surely came to grief by spraining their wrist.

However, as time wore on, the prize ring was undergoing a revolution, but no one seemed to pay attention to the punching bag until, in a moment of sublime reverie, Professor Mike Donovan, of the New York Athletic Club, thought a lively leather bag was the thing, and to the genius of the genial professor the followers of fistic science are indebted for the punching bag.

In 1876 Donovan was training for his fight with McClelland for the middleweight championship of America at San Francisco, and as a part of his exercise used the punching bag. There were no India rubber bladders in those days and Mike kept his trainers busy securing cow bladders from the slaughter houses in the vicinity of Frisco.

Cook made bags of calf and sheepskin, round and pear shaped. He used rubber bladders and his bags became popular.

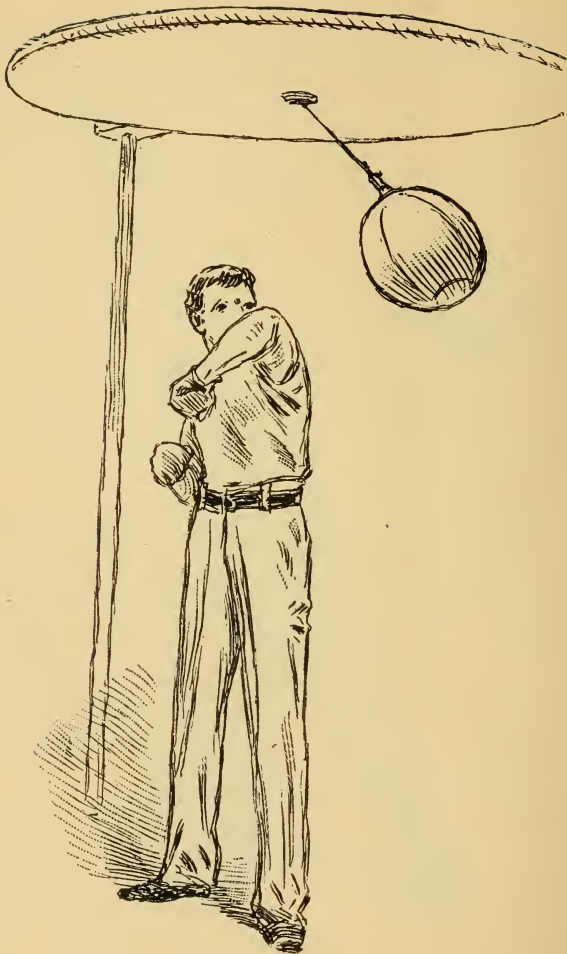


No. 7.



John Rumsey, of Cleveland, Ohio, manufactured a double end bag. It was oblong in shape, made of fancy canvas and attached to the floor and ceiling. The attachment from floor to bag was of rubber and from bag to ceiling common rope, so that the bag could be lowered or raised to suit the trainee. Of course there have been a great many improvements in the composition of the ball. The contrast and result of the heavy bag of the old days and the late improved style is great. The new one makes a man quick while the old one made a man slow. If you do not guard or duck with the one of to-day you are liable to get countered, for they are quicker than nine-tenths of the men of the present day.

There is a secret in bag making like everything else, and out of the number who have tried but very few have been successful. Only selected skins can be used and only the choicest part. The leather is cut on forms, after being thoroughly stretched, and the grain of the leather should all run one way. This will ensure a uniform roundness and the stitches will draw out evenly after the bladder is inflated.



No. 8.

## A CORRECT METHOD OF STRIKING AND THE DIFFERENT POSITIONS THOROUGHLY EXPLAINED.

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Regarding the best method of punching the bag, Mr. Jules Franks, the acknowledged champion bag puncher of America, kindly allowed himself to be photographed and the accompanying cuts are strongly recommended to all who care to be proficient in the art. To boxers these attitudes should be of the most vital interest.

Professor Donovan says: "The most important thing is the punching ball; practising with it quickens the eyes, develops the hitting muscles and makes a man a two-handed hitter. Punch it as much as possible alternately with left and right; this style of hitting is good practice for two-handed in-fighting, and two hands are always better than one.

"By frequently using the bare knuckles on the ball it will harden the hands and give you a greater variety of blows, I



No.9.

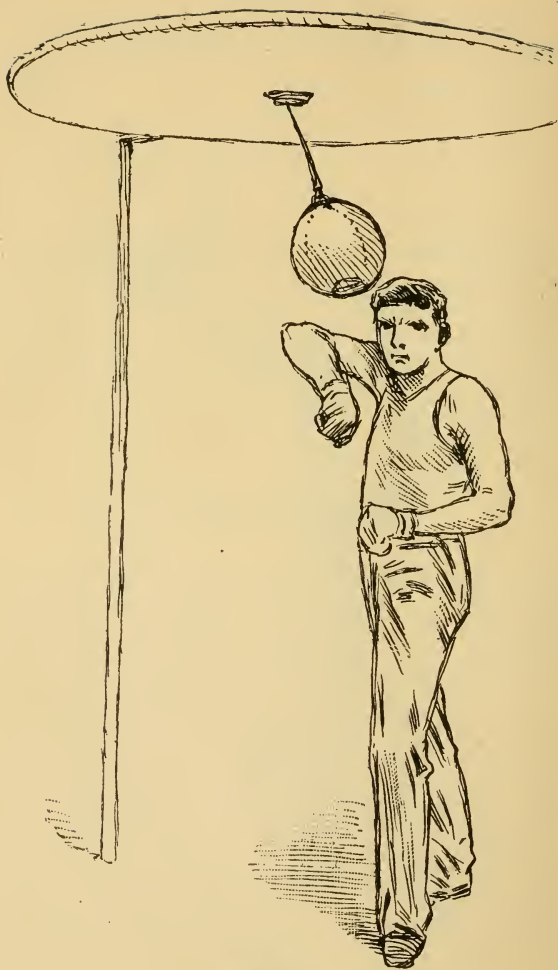
regard the punching ball as the most valuable mechanical assistance to a fighter in training."

#### No. 1.

The first position in punching the bag should be much the same as in sparring. The centre of the ball should be a little below the level of the eyes and the distance from the loop of the ball should not be more than three feet; any greater length makes too much swing.

#### No. 2.—LEFT LEAD.

Step forward with the left foot and instantly strike out straight from the shoulder with your left hand, aiming for the centre of the ball and throwing the weight of the body into the blow. In striking thus turn your head slightly to the right and hold your right forearm across the breast a little below the nipples. Avoid a counter from the bag. Be careful and avoid all slapping and do not strike at the ball in a downward direction, as such motions only shorten your reach, gives an unpleasant twang to the elbow and lessens the force of your blow. Do not miscalculate the distance and overbalance your-



No. 10.

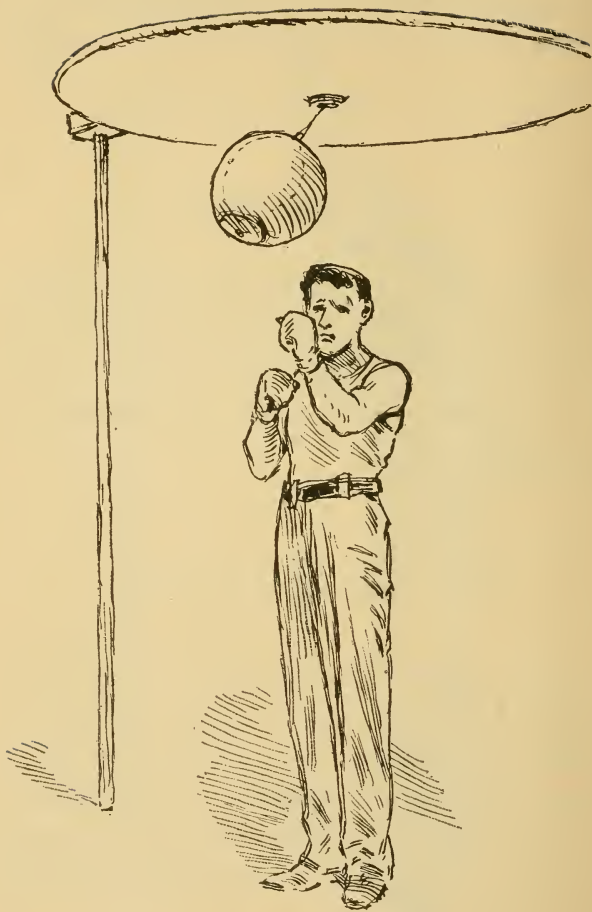
self, and after delivering the blow spring quickly back into position, guarding yourself at the same instant and repeat the lead.

### No. 3.—RIGHT LEAD.

Face the bag as you would an opponent, at about the distance you could land effectively. Strike out and step in slightly with your left foot and throw all your weight into the blow. Duck your head slightly to the left to avoid counter and immediately spring into position again.

### No. 4.—RIGHT HALF ARM SWING.

Step to your left from the regular position with your left foot, bending both knees and twist your body, throwing all the weight you are capable of in the one direction, and make as near a one movement of it as possible. In executing the blow you follow on a direct line with your left foot and place the left hand in such a position as to guard the face, which should be bent toward the left shoulder.



; No. 11.



## No. 5.—LEFT SWING.

Hold yourself well together, keeping your left arm well back, spring quickly forward on the left foot and swing your left with a half circular motion and a swing of the body, and pivot on the balls of both feet, and, at the same time duck your head well to the right.

## No. 6.—RIGHT SHIFT—LEFT SWING.

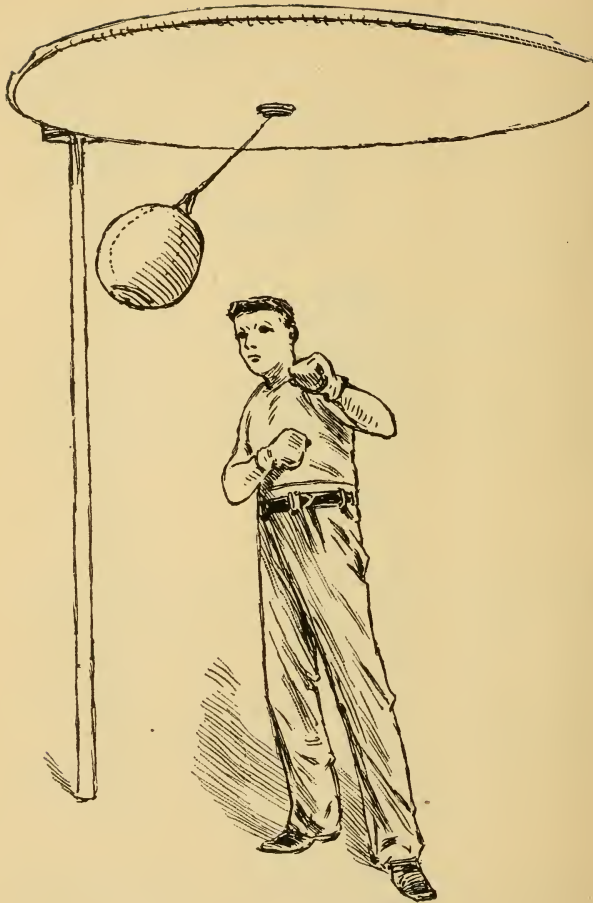
This blow is delivered after stepping out of the regular position. With the right foot swing the arm and body in one move.

## No. 7.

Duck or side step after swinging the left. After gaining position instead of repeating the blow, simply step forward slightly to the right with the left foot. Duck and throw your head out of harm's way. This is a good move to make one shifty and should be practised as much as possible.

## Nos. 8 AND 9.

Continuous elbow and short arm swings. This is one of the best movements for developing the shoulders and back. Stand



No. 12.

directly under the bag and hit it with the right elbow and right hand, then reverse and land with the left elbow and left hand. It is a good way to become proficient by commencing with the right and left and occasionally use the elbows.

#### No. 10.

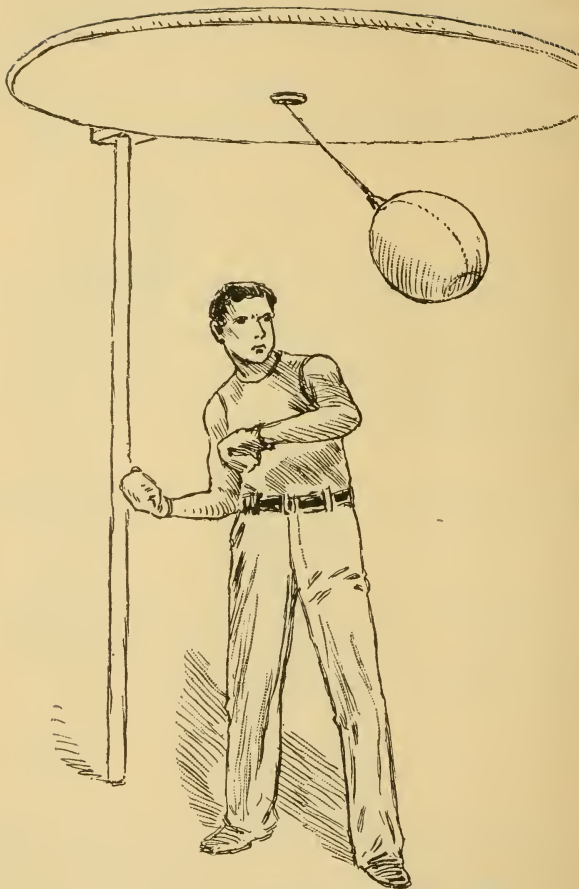
Forward and backward and elbow movement ; that is, with one arm only. The backward stroke with the elbow and the forward one with the right hand. The position can be changed and the left hand used.

#### No. 11.—ONE-TWO CONTINUOUS—LEFT AND RIGHT STRAIGHT.

Stand directly in front of the bag and punch straight from the shoulder. Care should be taken to direct the blows for the centre of the ball or a counter is liable to occur.

#### Nos. 12 AND 13.

This movement is one of the best and can be used as a right or left single hander continuous blow. Stand directly in front of the ball and hit a hook blow. It will have a tendency to



No. 13.

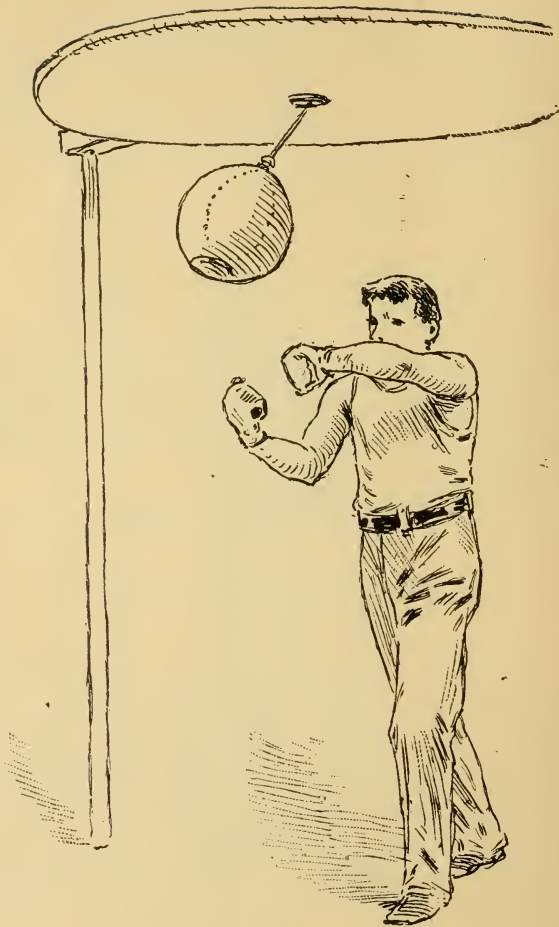
send the bag over the opposite shoulder and the return will be in exact position to land with great force as you hit. Swing the shoulder, and, after practising, the learner will easily follow the bag's movements and in the end become very proficient as a judge of time and distance.

#### No. 14.—UPPER CUT.

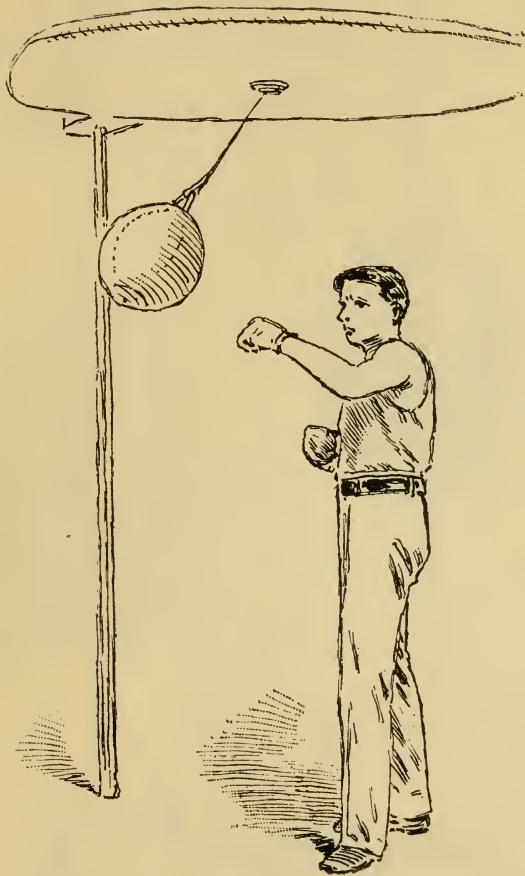
This is seldom or ever executed in bag punching, but it is a good blow to practise. In delivering the blow draw the right arm well back, and, as you do so, swing it in about a quarter circle and strike upward for the bag.

#### No. 15.—RIGHT HAND HALF SWING.

This has long been regarded as one of the best moves in boxing and when it lands generally proves effective. Place yourself immediately in front of the bag with the left guard protecting the face. Raise on the balls of both feet and swing the body and duck the head to the left shoulder, lowering it at the same instant, and shoot out the right and follow the direction of the body, putting all its weight into the blow.

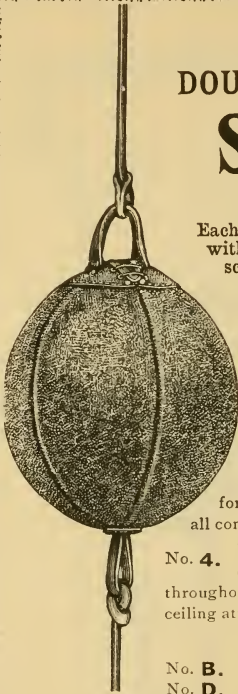


No. 14.



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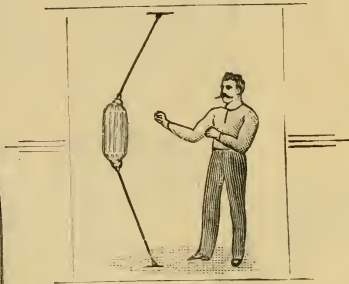
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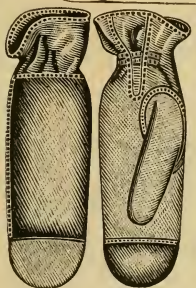
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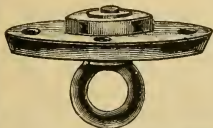
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Fig. 2.

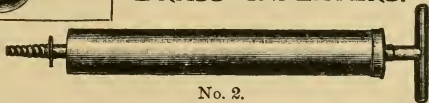
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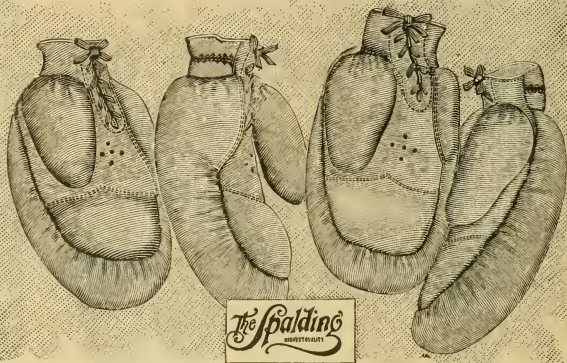
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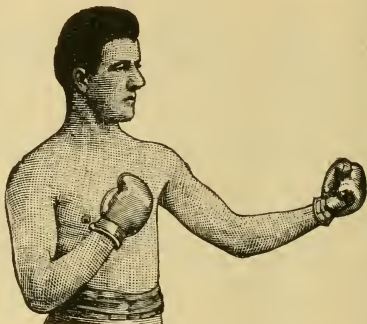
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Yours truly,

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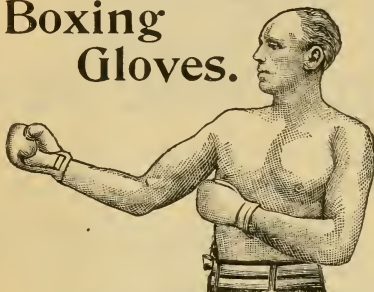
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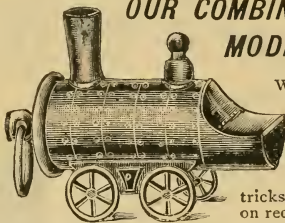
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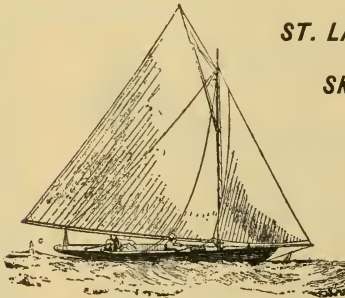
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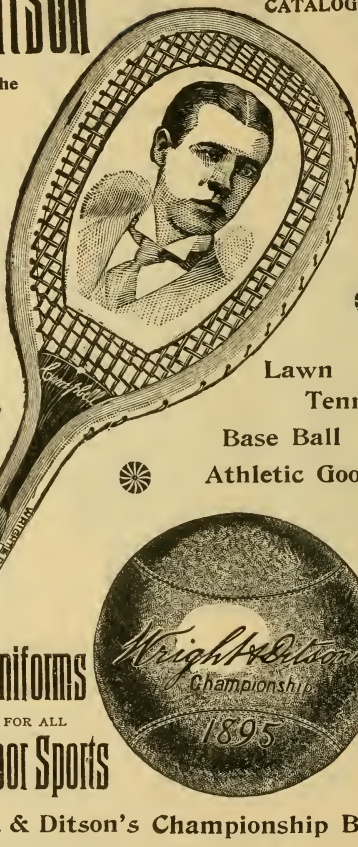
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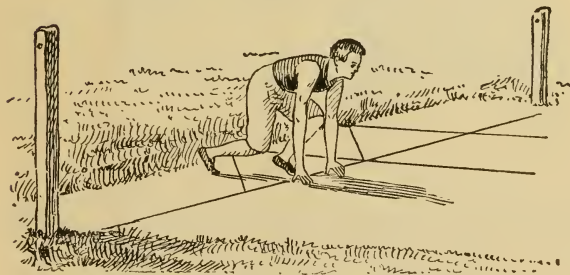
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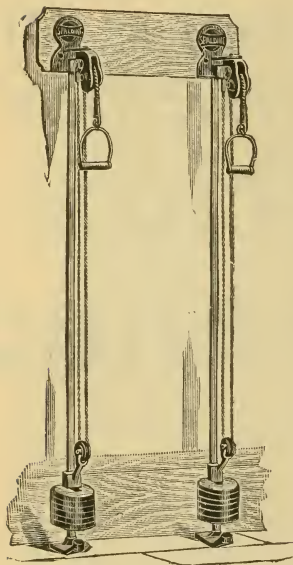
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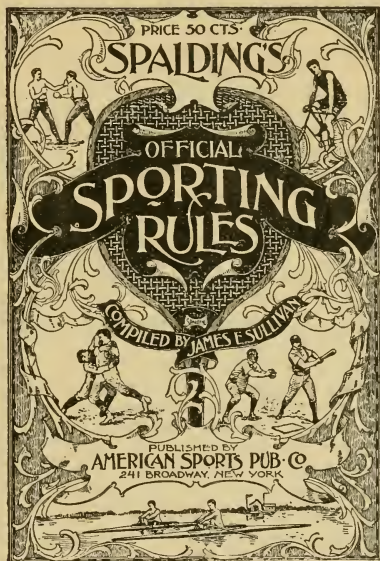
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