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* "HEADS OR TAILS" *
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By Verda Matteson Joyce
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"Hello"—challengingly.

"Hello yourself"—suspiciously.

Thus two young men of Irvington, meeting, almost collided at a hedge and tree-environed corner of the country village.

"New tennis racket?" projected the first speaker, Albion Merkle, after a critical stare at the paper-enveloped parcel the other carried and clearly outlined as to shape.

"Oh, yes," was carelessly nodded, with a free swing of the article in question. "Yours a golf club?"

"That's it," acquiesced Merkle, casually. "See here, aren't we working at cross purposes?"

"What do you mean?" questioned Ned Dallas.

"Nellie—Miss Warren. Oh, come now, Dallas! You're thinking of a game at tennis with that charming young lady."

"I am going to her home this afternoon, yes."

"So am I," coolly asserted Merkle. "You see, it comes to a problem of precedent. I'm the oldest. I've known her longest, and her venerable father pleasantly told me that my company was acceptable."

"Why!" flared out Dallas, "he said exactly that same thing to me."

"Yes, he is a liberal minded old fossil and wants to give his lovely daughter a chance. Here's three of us and the best man wins."

"Three?" questioned Dallas.

"I'm including Roy Elston."

"You needn't. His cake is dough."

"How do you know?"

"Old Warren told me so. That is, he entertains a suspicion that Elston is a fighter. Those scars on his face make the old fellow suspect he was a prize fighter once. You know Mr. Warren is almost Quakerish in his dislike for fighting."

"H'm!" muttered Merkle. "Then

it's between you and I. See here, we both want to see the charming Nellie this afternoon. I'll toss you to see who goes."

"Done!" acquiesced Dallas.

The shrewd eyes of his companion twinkled cunningly as he thrust his hand into his pocket. He fumbled two coins there.

"One guess," he said. "Heads or tails?"

"Heads."

"Throw."

Merkle smiled to himself as he fin-



He Produced One.

gered those ready coins under cover. He produced one. Dallas tossed.

"Lost," announced Merkle cheerily as it came down tails.

As the precious twain—who had risked their chances if it ever came to the ears of Nellie Warren that her company had been bargained for as if she were a prize package—went their way, just behind the hedge there arose in view a smiling, bright-faced young fellow,