

“Five’s the Main!”

At the Grafton Police Court last week Lionel Jacobs and Kelly Mansfield were charged with larceny in company, the alleged victims being two Russians. According to the story of Harry Baff, aged 20, a North of Russia native, and a worker on the railway line he came into Grafton from the North Coast line on July 8th with £5 in his pocket and £233 in the bank. With him was his mate Kekoff. During their stay in town they met accused, and were introduced to a little room above Kirkpatrick’s establishment. Jacobs said: “This is a good place. No one knows we play here. We played here last year with over 20 bookmakers. There are two tables in the room. Money has been on the table that high (holding his hand about a foot high). The room was full, and you could not get a seat. I won over £100. I rowed with a fellow, and I fought him and beat him.” The game began, and witness lost £40 before it was over. He never won once. However, he went again next day on Mansfield’s invitation. Jacobs had another run of luck, when “five was the main,” but he (Jacobs) changed the dice. Witness and Kekoff saw him. Kekoff stood up and said: “Catch him by the hand.” Jacobs started to make the main, when witness caught his hand. In the other hand he had dice, which he threw on the table. On the hand that was caught he made a wrench, and put the dice which was in the box in his pocket. Kekoff said: “Get the dice,” and Mansfield said: “Keep quiet, or I’ll knock your head off.” Kekoff said: “I don’t want to speak to you; I want to speak to Jacobs.” Kekoff pulled out a revolver. Witness asked the dice from Jacobs, who replied that he had no dice. Mansfield said: “Don’t you make a noise, or you will have the police on.” Witness

you will have the police up." Witness said: "Let the police come up, I want them to." Jacobs said to witness: "How much did you lose to-night," and witness replied: "I don't care how much I lost to-night; you robbed me yesterday." Jacobs said: "You have lost £6 or £7; I will give it back." Witness said he didn't want it. Jacobs tried to give the dice to Mansfield, and witness saw him. Kekoff said: "Don't let Jacobs get too close to Kelly Mansfield," and witness pushed Jacobs back. Then the police came and secured the dice. The second exhibit of dice was marked from one to six. In the first exhibit of dice there were two sixes, two twos and two threes. Then Sergeant Swan said to Jacobs: "I am informed that you have taken down two Russians at hazards, one for £10 and the other for £18, and Mansfield was with you at the time." Jacobs said: "We had a game; it was fair enough; they are squealing because they lost." Witness said: "Is it your idea of fairness playing with dice like these?" (showing him the dice). Jacobs did not look at them, but he said he never had them. Witness said: "You did, you were seen to drop them in the room." He replied, "No, I never had them at all." Witness said: "Well, I am going to arrest you and charge you with stealing money by a trick."

After a three days' hearing accused were committed for trial on a charge of obtaining £40 from a Russian named Harry Baff by means of a trick, to wit playing with a dice. The accused were remanded on a second and similar charge.