AN INNOCENT PARSON.

HIS ATTEMPT TO DESCRIBE A RAM FIGHT IN RING VERNACULAR.

The Bride Ventured a Suggestion Which Caught On—The Preacher Didn't Fully Succeed In Appearing Unsophisticated The Little Ram's Ring Tactics.

A preacher told this story at a wedding supper on the South Side the other evening:

"I was riding along a country road near Bloomington," he said, "when I noticed a group of sheep in a pasture. There was a large open space in the midst of the flock, and at either end of the space stood a ram. In the center, but standing a little at one side, was a third ram. The two rams had evidently had a falling out about something, or else they had come to settle in a friendly contest which was the better ram. Ram No. 3 seemed to be acting as—judge, umpire—what do you call it? Referee? Yes, that's it, the third ram was the referee. I don't know under what rules the meeting took place. It may have been Queensberry or Rosebery. You see I am not up to these technical matters.

"When all the preliminaries had been arranged and both contestants had been cautioned apparently that there was to be no 'fouling'—I think I have seen that word in the newspapers occasionally, and therefore I suppose it is a correct word to use in this connection—each backed off to the farthest limits of the circle, which, by the way, was not a squared circle. The referee stepped out of the way, and the rams dashed toward each other. When their heads came together, there was a terrific crash, and the force of the concussion threw them as far apart as the length of this table."

All the guests looked the full length of the table from the passion flowers at one end to the bride's cake in the far perspective, and then at the preacher in the middle distance, but nobody said anything.

"Then," continued the preacher, "they took their places, apparently none the worse for the encounter. Again, evidently at a preconcerted signal from the referee, they dashed together. This time the shock was even more terrific than the first, and I noticed that as one of them went back to his—ah, what do they call it, corner?—he was a little unsteady on his legs."

"Groggy!" ventured the bride.

"I believe that is the technical term," replied the preacher, "although, as I have intimated, I am not at all familiar with sporting phraseology. When time was called for the third round—ahem—that is, I mean to say when the rams had recovered strength for a third collision—there was another rush, a crash, and one of the rams, the one you so aptly described as 'groggy' (with an acknowledgment to the bride) fell to his knees. His adversary did not seem inclined to follow up his advantage, but possibly he may have been restrained by the rules of the meeting. At any rate, after contemplating his fallen foe gravely for a moment he walked back to his place. The other ram, after resting briefly, struggled to his feet. The third ram—the one I have called the referee—looked at him rather inquiringly, as it seemed to me, but the warrior showed no sign of recognition. He ambled to his side of the ring and faced about. A murmur of some sort seemed to go through the flock. The odds were apparently 3 to 1 in favor of the other ram—that is to say, it seemed to be the general opinion that the ram with the weak knees had been outclassed, as the other one was decidedly the heavier of the two.

"However, the smaller ram seemed to have wonderful recuperative powers. When the proper interval had elapsed, he came up smiling, as it were. I even thought I could see a twinkle in his eye, for I was quite close to the fence, and this thing took place only a little distance away. As the referee stepped back from the center of the ring, where he kept his position between the meetings, the other two rams drove at each other pellmell. At the very instant when their hard horns would have met, however, the smaller ram suddenly changed his course to the right, and the other went through the ranks like a catapult.

"Just as he turned about, evidently boiling over with indignation at the trick which had been played on him, the other one, with the added force given by a longer run from one side of the circle to a point several feet outside of it, where the larger ram's momentum had carried him, shot at him like a cannon ball, striking him full in the face and driving him several feet away, where he lay limp and helpless. The third ram, who was promptly on the spot, as I suppose every competent referee should be, nodded his head several times—indeed it looked to me as if he was counting—and then the fallen ram failing to rise the whole flock marched away toward a knoll in another part of the meadow with the victorious ram at the head. Presently the defeated ram got on his feet and made his way to a secluded spot down by a little run, where I saw him reclining in the shade of a large willow tree as I rode away."

"What an interesting study natural history is," said the bride's grandmother as she adjusted her glasses.

"It is indeed," said the groom's father, coughing behind his napkin.—Chicago Tribune.

An Irish Student's Reply.

An Irish student, who some years ago attended the university of Edinburgh, called upon one of the most celebrated teachers of the German flute, desiring to know on what terms he would give him a few lessons. The flute player informed him that he generally charged 2 guineas for the first month and 1 guinea for the second. "Then, by my soul," replied the cunning Hibernian, "I'll come in the second month."

A DROP OF WATER.

The Wonders That May Be Seen Therein Through a Microscope.

To the ordinary mortal a drop of water is what the primrose was to Peter Bell, a drop of water and nothing more, but to the student of nature, armed with a high power microscope, it immediately becomes a world teeming with living creatures, the most minute representatives of animal life. These thoughts were suggested by reading Professor Grace's description of a battle he once witnessed while examining a collection of rotifers, which were amassed in a single drop of fresh water. Among others, Mr. Grace noticed a fine specimen of infusorian, which was swimming back and forth among the rotifers, as if intent on mischief. On the following day it was noticed that the rotifer colony had lost several of its members, and that the infusorian's form had rounded out until he resembled a miniature St. Louis bartender. Mr. Grace now resolved to watch the infusorian's movements and ascertain if possible the modus operandi whereby the capture of such expert swimmers as the rotifers are known to be was effected. A few minutes' wait sufficed. Soon it was noticed that the infusorian was slowly and continuously working his way around the foot of a rotifer, which was resting on the glass slide.

Around and around he went as slyly as a mouse in an oats bin, and when he had finished it was noticed that the rotifer's foot was firmly cemented to the glass. The infusorian, seeming to know his victim was secure, began to goad the tethered creature and torment it in all the ways that devilish ingenuity could suggest. He would jump upon its back and bite it in several places with lightninglike rapidity and then spring off and seize a leg and pull it almost from its socket. Mr. Grace says that he watched this unequal combat for nearly a half hour, when it was noticed that the rotifer was dying from exhaustion. Noting the death of his victim, the infusorian proceeded to devour his prey, as he doubtless had done the others that were missing.

Mr. Grace next examined a small body of water, consisting of four drops, in which there were several infusoria and rotifers. The former proved the enemies of the latter, just as in the single drop previously examined. It was also noticed that the infusorian, having devoured a victim, would almost immediately divide into two or four new animals, each of which would quickly swim away in search of prey, just as its parent had done before.—St. Louis Republic.

BISMARCK'S BIG HEAD.

Measurements Showing That the Space For Brains In It Is Extraordinary.

Bismarck's head, says a correspondent of L'Anthropologie, has been carefully measured according to the rules of anthropometrics by the sculptor Schaph of Berlin, who made the statue of Bismarck set up at Cologne. The measurements prove that Bismarck has a head of extraordinarily large size. Measured horizontally from the frontal bone to the occiput the head is 212 millimeters, or more than 8.35½ inches. The distance from temple to temple is 170 millimeters, or a trifle over 6.69 inches. Bismarck's cranium has a capacity of 1,965 cubic centimeters, and his brain should weigh 1,867 grams.

These figures become especially significant when compared with the measurements of other heads. Of 2,500 heads measured at Baden Baden only one exceeded 200 millimeters horizontally from front to back, and that one measured 206 millimeters, or six millimeters less than Bismarck's. The mean measurements of 30 members of the Natural Science society at Carlsruhe were 195 millimeters from front to back by 155 millimeters from temple to temple. The biggest of these heads measured 205 by 162 millimeters. The cubic measurement of 245 German heads was nearly 500 cubic centimeters under Bismarck's, while the estimated weight of Bismarck's brain is 35 per cent above that of the average adult European brain. In fact, Bismarck is a man not only of blood and iron, but as well of brains.

He Knew Her Perfectly.

The outspoken ways and caustic sayings of Dr. Jephson of Leamington, celebrated in the forties and fifties, have furnished the kernel of many anecdotes. One day he was called on by one whom Brantome would have called "une grande dame de par la monde," the Marchioness of ——. Having listened to a description of her malady, the oracle pronounced judgment:

"An egg and a cup of tea for breakfast, then walk for two hours; a slice of cold beef and half a glass of madeira for luncheon, then walk again for two hours; fish, except salmon, and a cutlet or wing of fowl for dinner, with a single glass of madeira or claret; to bed at 10 and rise at 6, etc. No carriage exercise, please."

"But, doctor," she exclaimed at last, thinking he was mistaken in his visitor, "pray, do you know who I am? Do you know—ahem!—my position?"

"Perfectly, madame," was the reply. "I am prescribing for an old woman with a deranged stomach."—Nineteenth Century.

The Poitou Jack.

From the day he is born to the day of his death no brush or comb is ever allowed to be used on him, and as, from the unnatural condition in which he is kept, he is prevented in a great measure from shedding his coat the functions of the skin become suspended, and the animal gradually assumes year after year an accumulation of coats, all matted together with stable filth, till at length they almost trail on the ground. When he has assumed this extraordinary and bearlike appearance, he is pointed to with no little pride by his owner and is termed bourailloux, or sometimes gueniloux. Such is ignorance and prejudice. —From "Horses, Asses, Zebras, Mules," by W. R. Tegetmeier.

THE RETIRED BURGLAR.

Work Easily Prosecuted in the Tumult of a Thunderstorm.

"Speaking of cinches," said the retired burglar, "the easiest, softest, smoothest snap I ever struck was in a house in a small town in Rhode Island. There was a thunderstorm coming up as I went along toward this house, and just as I got there it began to sprinkle. By the time I'd got inside it was coming down pretty hard, and I was glad to be under shelter, for I hadn't brought any umbrella with me. I hadn't had any supper either, and when I got into the dining room I thought I'd get something to eat. The sideboard was locked and the key carried up stairs, but a little jimmy opened the door as easy as a knife would open a pie. I set out a little snack on the table and sat down and ate it comfortably, with the rain pouring down outside. If there's anything I like, it's to hear a storm a-raging outside when you're settled down all snug and comfortable within.

"But here was something I hadn't counted on. The thunder was roaring and plunging like a dozen earthquakes busting down through the sky, and it kept the house in a tremble all the time. I knew nobody could sleep in that thunder. They'd be sure to be all awake, but here I was, and I hated to lose a night, and after I'd waited a little and the storm didn't show any signs of letting up I thought I'd go ahead an see anyhow. The very first room I looked into up stairs settled the whole business.

"Over in one corner of this room, beyond a bed, I saw a woman standing in front of an open closet door. Two children hopped out of the bed, and the mother pushed them into the closet, and then crowded in herself and pulled the door shut tight. It was all very simple. Husband away, no help; two children sleeping in another room, woke up by thunder, come into their mother's room, all scared; mother puts children in closet and gets in herself, as lots of folks do in thunderstorms. And then I walk over and turn the key in the lock, and there you are. No danger of their coming out till the storm is over anyway, but just as well to be sure about it, and then I just quietly go through the house. It isn't big, and it doesn't take long, and I come back before the storm is over and unlock the closet door again and skip, and that's all there is to it."—New York Sun.

THEY DEVELOPED YOUNG.

Two Famous Poets, Oliver Wendell Holmes and William Cullen Bryant.

Oliver Wendell Holmes received the degree of doctor of medicine in 1836, being then 27 years old, and in that year he also published his first volume of poems. Nothing of Dr. Holmes' has been more popular than "The Last Leaf," contained in this early collection, and none has more richly deserved to please by its rhythmic beauty and by its exquisite blending of humor and pathos so sympathetically intertwined that we feel the lonely sadness of the old man even while we are smiling at the quaintness so feelingly portrayed.

Dr. Holmes was like Bryant, who composed "Thanatopsis" and the "Lines to a Waterfowl" long before he was 20, in that he early attained full development as a poet. Although each of them wrote many verses in later life, nothing of theirs excelled these poems of their youth. In their maturity they did not lose power, but neither did they deepen nor broaden, and "Thanatopsis" on the one side and "The Last Leaf" on the other are as strong and characteristic as anything either poet was ever to write throughout a long life. What Bryant was, what Holmes was, in this, his first volume of poems, each was to the end of his career.

To neither of them was literature a livelihod. Bryant was first a lawyer and then a journalist. Holmes was first a practicing physician and then a teacher of medicine. He won three prizes for dissertations upon medical themes, and these essays were published together in 1838. In 1839 he was appointed professor of anatomy and physiology at Dartmouth, and the next year he married Miss Amelia Lee Jackson. Shortly afterward he resigned the position at Dartmouth and resumed practice in Boston. He worked hard in his profession and contributed freely to its literature, and in 1847 he went back to Harvard, having been appointed professor of anatomy and physiology, a position which he was to hold with great distinction for 35 years.—St. Nicholas.

Domestic Architecture In Chicago.

The inhabitants of Chicago are the least curious and observing people in the world. According to their own newspapers, they permitted one H. H. Holmes to construct in their city a house so extraordinary, so full of hidden doors and secret passages and acid proof vats that it would have attracted thousands of curious visitors had it been built anywhere else. But the guileless Chicagoans suspect nothing. Neither the man who issued the building permit nor the men who did the building saw anything unusual about the house. What is the matter? Is all Chicago blind, or are acid proof vats and secret passages part and parcel of the ordinary Chicago dwelling? Perhaps there is an interesting chapter to be written about domestic architecture in Chicago. — Milwaukee Sentinel.

Suiting the Action.

"Jamie," sharply called out his mother, "you've been loafing all day. Satan always finds some work for idle hands to do. Take this basket and bring in some kindling."—Chicago Tribune.

The fool is always dead sure that his own way of doing things is the best, if not the only way, but the wise man wonders if there isn't a better way than the one he has adopted.

What an admirable recipe for happiness to know how to do without things! —Victor Jacquemont.