IBSEN'S PECULIARITIES.

THE GREAT MAN HAS SOME THAT ARE VERY STARTLING.

His Devotion to Certain Drinks Very Remarkable. He is much Bothered Now-a-days by British Tourists—His Strange Experiences.

Henrik Ibsen lived for several years in Munich, and during that time he was a familiar figure at one of the cafes on the principal street. He came there regularly every day, sat always at the same table, and read the foreign newspapers. He did not confine himself entirely to this literary diversion, and if the stories of the black-clad kelinerrins are to be believed, possessed an extensive and varied taste in the matter of drinks that seemed quite out of keeping with his character. One of the waitresses who had heen attending him for several months said that he seemed to be seeking a drink that was wholly to his taste without ever appearing able to find one.

That was at least the motive that his conduct suggested She said that for weeks at a time he would drink only cognac and then suddenly change his tipple to absinthe and continue that with equal persistence until some other liquor struck his fancy. He was at all times addicted to only one and he clung to that, drinking in great moderation, but with unfailing regularity. He attracted then a moderate amount of attention from visitors to the cafe. Apparently he never noticed them, and he took his place at the table without speaking to anybody, always sat alone, and left when he had finished his reading. Occasionally he was approached by strangers and his conduct was then polite and reserved. One of the women who had seen him almost daily for many months said that she had never seen him refuse his autograph to anybody who asked for it or reply rudely to the considerate advances of persons who desired to speak to him. But it was also true that at that time he was never approached in any but a respectful and dignified manner.

Ibsen's fame has grown greatly, however, during the past few years, and many persons who had never heard of him several years ago now konw at least that he is one of the most famous men in literature. That knowledge may account for a story that comes from Christiania concerning the worry and inconvenience which the English visitora to Norway now cause him.

They go to Norway in shoals during the summer months, and it is said that they have come to look upon Ibsen as the great curiosity of the Norwegian capital. He continues his habits of going daily to a cafe and there is said to be a line of staring Britishers always awaiting his arrival. He is evidently as indifferent to the interest he awakens as he used to be in the Munich days, and never notices it. But the action of a party of English tourists a few weeks ago is said to finally called out a protest.

He was on his way to the Grand Cafe in Christiania when he encountered six travellers. Three were men and three were women. They stretched in a line across the sidewalk. In vain the dramatist tried to continue his way. The line of six effectively barricaded his way. But the flying wedge was to much for him. Suddenly he spied a seventh Englishmen. This one carried a camera and was struggling to get Ibsen in an attitude that would make a good picture. That was to much. Remembering probably that George Bernard Shaw is an Irishman and Elizabeth Robbins an American he delivered himself of this outbreak·

'Those miserable English!'

A still stronger protest against their conduct followed. He turned back, went home and missed his cafe for the first time since his return to Christiania.

Ibsen pictures were not always as much appreciated in England as they are to day. During the German exhibition held several years ago at Earl's Court, a portrait of the dramatist by a Munich painter hung in the main gallery. One night two typical English girls with thier sailor hats mountted on a pile of puffs and frizzes entered the room.

'Oh, I say,' said one to the other as she pointed to Ibsen's portrait, 'that old gentleman's had a bad fright, hasn't he?

Therefore Unnecessary.

Jose Maria, a Spanish brigand who had received pardon from the government on condition that he renounced hie exciting and unlawful profession, used to tell most entertaining stories of his past. On one occasion he said he had robbed an English gentleman and his servant of there horses and everything they possessed, save their clothes. The Englishman was a pleasant attractive youth, and submitted to the robbery with great good humour. This appealed to Jose Maria, and as they were forty miles from Seville, whither the traveller was going, he determined that he should not walk that distance, and gave him back his servant's horse and a doubloon—a little over £1—out of the two hundred he had taken. The youth thanked the robber warmly, and added that he had till a great favcur to ask. Will you not return me my watch? he said. 'It was the parting gift of my father.' Is your father alive,' asked Jose Maria, 'and does he love you very much? 'Oh yes,' said the youth be lives and loves me.' 'Then,, said Jose Maria, ' I shall keep the watch, for if your father loves you so dearly he is sure to present you with another.

SOUTH SEA RATS.

Hunting Them Was One of the Sports of Chiefs in Islands of the Pacific.

The rats of the South Sea Islands are of a species different from the domestic pests of civilized communities. They are rarely seen about the houses, possibly for the reason that Polynesian dwellings offer little to attract such marauders: put the fields are full of them, and it results that gardening suffers from thier ravages. Watermelons suffer most conspicuously for the rats wait until the melon is just right for eating and then the morning shows a carefully excavated rind. The only way a white man in the South Seas can make sure of a melon is to box it up in an old biscuit tin just as soon as it has attained its full size.

Nor are the rat restricted to a vegetable diet. Eggs and young chickens vanish overnight unless protected by wire nets. In the absence of prepatory birds and mammals which might keep down the numbers of the rats, they overrun the Islands so completely that they leave regular paths through the woods as plainly marked as it trodden for years by human teet

When the rainy season sets in the rats appear about the houses and may render some service in reducsng the numbers of insects, which become particularly annoying at that season. But in the houses of white people the beuifit is bardly great eneugh to coupensate for the noise swhich the rats make all night long scampering over the roots and floors and squeaking.

That the Polynesian rat is indigenous needs scarcely the testimony of naturalists. It enters into the ancient stories of the islanders in countless fables. According to one tale, the rat was not the astue animal which he is held to be in other folk lore. Long ages ago the rat had wings and flew by day among birds, while the bat was confined to earth. By flattery the bat cajoled the rat into lending him his wings. They were never returned. and since that time the rat has never deen able to get back to his flying kind; yet the bat, in fear that the birds would punish him for his theft, never ventures to fly until night has fallen. Another tale credits the rat with the invention of the canoe. He was little content that the bird and the cuttlefish, his constant companions, could pass from island to island in the elements in which they were respectively at home while he was confined to solid ground. He set his wits at work and gnawed a rude canoe out of a tree trunk. In this he invited his companions to sail with him. They had not gone far before a wave tipped the canoe over and spilled the passengers. The bird was safe because a flap of his wings raised him into the air, the cuttlefish was at home in the water, but the rat would have drowned had it not been for the cuttlefish, which took him on his head and ferried him to shore. The proof of this is that the bead of the cuttlefish shows to this day the marks made by the rat as he clung to the slippery perch. After this initial failure at navigating the rat spent much thought on the problem, and at last hit upon the device of attaching an outrigger to the left-hand side of his canoe. This was found an immediate success, and thus was made the first island canoe, which has never changed its pattern in any particular since the rat first gnawed it out and made it stable.

All over the Pacific islands the nrtive rat has been a favorite article of food. The rat being for the most part a vegetable feeder, the flesh is dainty and has no strong flavor. Large hunting parties were often sent out from the different native villages to hunt the rat with spear and bow and arrow. The whole Polyneaian race never advanced to the use of the bow and arrow for the desperate purposes of war, hut confined its archery entirely to the rat hunt.

In Hawaii and also in Tonga the rat hunt was a sport confined to chiefs, who frequently showed great rivalry in the making of high records. The chiet tollowed up a well-marked rat path, while his beaters scouted the bush for long distances on each side and by shouting and thrashing the clumps of shrubbery drove the game in the dirrection of the path. At the close of the sport the rival hunters dined on the catch and settled the bets, often amounting to a large number of choice mats, So extensive was the gambling on these rat hunts that the missionaries both in Hawaii and in Tonga found it necessary to suppress the sport.

A Sure Sign of Death.

From time to time we are horrified by learning that some person has been buried alive, after assurances has been given of death. Under these circumstances the opinion of a rising young physician upon the subject becomes of world-wide intrest; for since the tests which have been in use for years have been found unreliable, no means should be left untried to paove beyond a doubt that life is actually extinct before conveying our beloved ones to the grave. Doctor Marinot asserts that an unfailing test may be made by producing a blister on the hand or foot of the body by holding the flame of a candle to the same for a few moments, or until the blister is formed, which will always occur. If the blister contains any fluid, it is evidence of life, and the blister only that produced by an ordinary burn; it, on the contrary, the blister contains only steam, it may be asserted that life is extinct. The explanation is as follows: A corpse is nothing more than inert matter, under the immediate control of physical laws which causes all liquids heated to a certain temperature to become steam; the epidermis is raised, the blister produced; it breaks with a little noise and the steam escapes. But it, in spite of appearances, there is any life, the organic mechanism continues to be governed by physiological laws, and the blister will contain serous matter, as in the case of ordinary burns. The test is as simple as the proof is conclusive. Dry blister: death. Liquid blister: lite Anyone may try it; there is no error possible.—Opinion Nacional de Caracas.

Bird Bicyclists.

At the Empire, London, last year a wonderfully clever cockatoo was exhibited, which not only rode a bicyle, but performed tricks on it and also rode on a tight wire suspended across the auditorium. This marvellous cockatoo-cyclist—the property of Monsieur and Madame Belloni—rides a silverplated bicyle, which he mounts with the greatest ease and unaided. He drops his feet on the pedals' takes the handle-bar in bis beak, and goes off with a regular flying start. A round table, measuring innumerable laps to the mile, in bis track. He is hoisted on to a tight wire and sprints along, making a curve as gracefully as any human being. The other cycling cockatoo was trained by Mlle. Irma Orbasono, and rides a tricycle. Both these birds use their beaks for the purpose of steering their machines, and pedal with their claws. American cyclist are utilizing triches for pacing; a study of these birds having been trained for the purpose.

Anxious to get rid of their pastor a congregation were considerablely perplexed how to do it without hurting his feelings. After considerable discussion, they concluded to inform him that they were obliged to reduce bis salary. A delegation was appointed to wait on him and notify him of the fact. 'Brethen.' was the reply. I have been with you in prosperity, and I 'will never desert you in adversity.'

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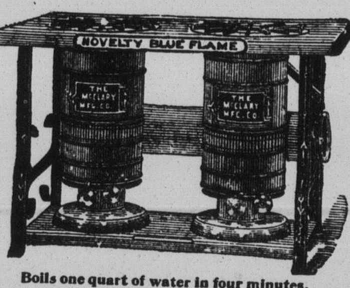

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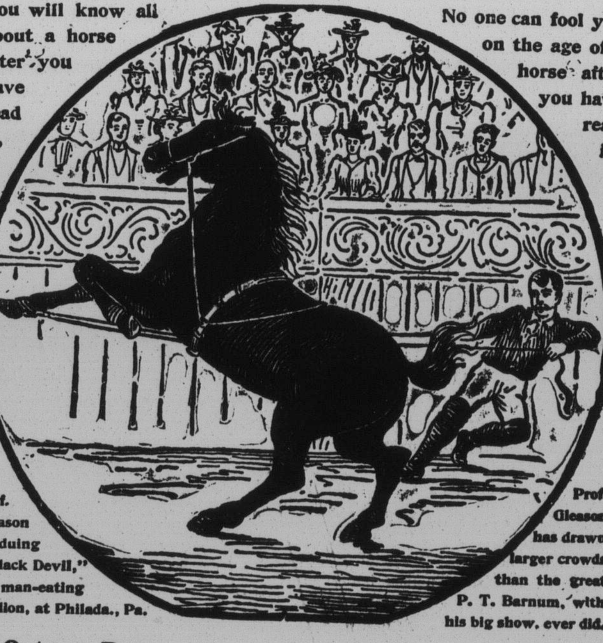

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