

SPIDERS IN BATTLE.

THEY CONDUCT THEMSELVES WITH ALMOST HUMAN INTELLIGENCE.

A Fight to the Finish Between a Black Tiger Spider and a Pair From the Gray Hill Tribe—The Bout by Rounds—All "Put to Sleep," Though the Black Won.

In the quiet laboratory of a Ninth street chemist the other day there was enacted a little tragedy which afforded a demonstrated lesson in the etiquette of dueling as it is conducted among the spiders. Few realize the intelligence these inconspicuous little creatures often display, and in fact few people besides scientists go to the trouble of spending an hour or so watching them.

The doctor espied a spider in the corner of the laboratory window sill. He procured a wide mouthed jar, and with a stick endeavored to push the spider into it. The insect turned savagely on it and darted quickly up the stick toward his hand. Stick and spider were dropped immediately on to the sill, from which in another instant the creature was scooped into the jar.

He lay sullen and bunched up at the bottom. His body was fully three-quarters of an inch long, the thorax mottled black and green, the abdomen purple, round and marked with well defined stripes of black and yellow; the legs not very long, but stout, hairy and ending in unusually strong, double claws, while the head was armed with a pair of shining black mandibles that looked like small steel pinchers. One of the neighbors said afterward that it was a "tiger spider," and there was no question as to the aptness of the name. His behavior was so ugly and fierce that he made a good subject for testing the pungency of spiders with their kind.

The doctor was familiar with his own home, and having made the capture he went up into his own garret, where the walls and corners were profusely decorated with "will you walk into my parlor" contrivances. He singled out a typical web and proceeded. The mouth of the web was opened over quite a considerable area and ran back as a narrow tube, the whole being like the most delicately woven gray white silk. Throwing a tempting bait into the web in the shape of a fly, the doctor had no difficulty in sweeping two gray spiders into another jar.

He got a deep sided salad bowl and dumped the gray spiders in. They at once began running around the flat bottom, making wild dashes up the sides and tumbling over each other in their excited efforts to escape.

As soon as the tiger spider was shaken out of his pickle jar into the bowl the gray spiders ceased their wild actions and took up a crouching position at one side of the bowl bottom. The tiger spider made no effort to escape, but after one or two rapid reconnoiters of his surroundings squatted just across from and facing the hill tribers.

The first offensive movements came from the gray spiders. These were in the nature of slow advances and retreats along the circumference line of the bowl bottom, with the evident intention of taking the tiger spider on the flank. At each advance, however, the tiger spider sat up, resting on his four posterior and middle feet, while the two anterior legs were stretched out like the arms of a wrestler, and the strong caliper shaped jaws were opened to their fullest extent.

Suddenly one of the spiders made a characteristic but fatal dash. He seemed actually to leap at the big spider. But quick as the hill spider was, the tiger spider was equally so. As the long drag spider darted in, the big black and yellow fellow sprung up and faced him. The next instant they closed, and in a moment three of the hill spider's legs lay on the glass, and the tiger spider, holding his enemy in a bearlike hug, was burying his mandibles in the other's throat.

The killing had not been done, however, without receipt of injury on both sides. One yellow and black leg lay with the three drab ones, and there were two drops of black juice on the purple abdomen of the tiger spider, which showed where the gray spider had planted his jaws in the rush.

Meanwhile, too, the second gray spider had not been idle, but was circling round and about the struggling pair. Then, seeing his opportunity, he dashed in, only to be faced by the burly fighter, who, to meet the new attack unnumbered, threw the body of the dead combatant from him with a gesture that was almost human.

The clinch did not follow so quickly this time. The gray spider succeeded in getting in and away, clipping off another yellow and black leg as he did so, but in the second rush he was caught, and the tiger spider's jaws were locked in his throat.

So ended the fight. The tiger spider held on to his second corpse so long and quietly that I thought him dead also, until I stirred him with my pen, when he staggered furiously against it, opened his jaws and rolled over, a corpse.—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

The New Woolens.

The winter's woolens are handsome and varied. Iridescent effects, rich heather mixtures and boncle effects are numerous, having, for example, a medium or dark woolen ground variegated by contrasting threads of silk, or the foundation is a blue or deep red, for instance, with a very shaggy raised design of glossy black wool on the surface. These materials will be much worn, with the small addition, perhaps, of a corded silk vest to match the silk intermixture or else the background. Very little decoration is needed for these showy textiles.

Not Embarrassed.

"Is it true that Pidge is financially embarrassed?"
"He is awfully in debt, but it doesn't seem to embarrass him any."—Chicago Record.

BICYCLE GRIPS.

The Habit of Holding the Handle Bar at the Center.

Assume, if you please, that the grips are properly placed at the ends of the handle bar, from 12 to 18 inches apart, and that the proper place for the rider's hands is on the grips. The fact remains that the average rider seldom touches his grips in riding, but grips the naked bar on either side of and close to the top of the steering head. Are we to infer from this that the standard of handle bar construction is all wrong and that the grips should be at the top of the bar and not more than eight inches apart, or that the bar should be left long to meet the exigencies of rough riding, while the material of which the grips are made should cover the entire bar up to within an inch or two of the center, or that it would be well to have a pair of supplementary grips at the place indicated by the position assumed by the rider, or what?

Undoubtedly the present standard handle bar is correct. The average rider, for one thing, has his grips dropped so low that he cannot reach them conveniently, so that his easiest position is with his hands on the top of the bar, and again many riders, with level or up-turned bars, who are able to reach their grips comfortably, have acquired the habit of grasping the nickel in deference to the popular idea. We think that every rider is obliged at times to use his grips. Full handle bar leverage is necessary whenever steering is rendered difficult by rough surface or otherwise. At such times every rider finds that the standard bar comes in handy. Supplementary grips would detract measurably from the trim appearance of the handle bar, and it may be doubted whether cyclists as a class would tolerate them. A bar entirely covered with cork or other grip material would speedily become soiled and make a sorry looking object in comparison with the bright nicked bar.—American Cyclist.

MARRIAGE FOR MONEY.

Dr. Parkhurst on the Tendency to Degrade Marriage to the Level of Commerce.

"I cannot dismiss this matter without deprecating the tendency so conspicuously operative among us to degrade marriage to the level of commerce," writes the Rev. Charles H. Parkhurst, D. D., in The Ladies' Home Journal in a paper on "The Young Man and Marriage." "This is not denying that there are material considerations that in this matter, as in all others, require to be respected. A poor young man marrying a poor young girl, with only the prospect that their life will become more and more complicated as time goes on, is a fool. I have had affectionate couples wait upon me to be married and then ask me to trust them for the wedding fee. I think that we who are clergymen ought to refuse to marry applicants who cannot show to our satisfaction that there is no likelihood that either they or their possible offspring will ever come upon the town.

"Nor, on the other hand, does my objection lie against any amount of contingent assets with which either or both of the contracting parties may chance to be endowed. My only contention is that in every marriage not essentially unholy the basal element is love, and that marriages which are 'arranged,' marriages which mean, first of all, an affair of perquisites or a barter in commodities, are a distinct infraction upon the spirit of the seventh commandment. The voluminous displays with which we know such unions to be sometimes celebrated only aggravate the mischief and operate to teach our young people in all conditions of life that marriage may be reduced to a species of traffic, differing from the dealings on the Stock or Produce Exchanges only in some of the details with which the bargain is consummated. Such examples are distinctly alien to the entire genius of the institution of marriage."

Consistency.

She was just 5 years old, but she was capable of emotions which in their intensity would strain the capacity of much larger breasts than hers.

"I am mad as a bull," she cried. "I am going to grow me some horns and run everybody out of the house."

Her grandmother overheard the remark and called the little one to her side.

"You wouldn't run your grandmother or out of the house, would you?" she asked.

"N-no," the tot replied, relenting under the personal appeal. "You could hide."

"Would you run your mamma out?"

"No. She could hide too."

"Your papa and Aunt Mary and Jack—what about them?" persisted the grandmother.

"They could all hide."

"But, my dear, what use would your horns be if we could all hide?"

"Oh," she replied with delightful inconsistency, "but I could find you, though."—New York Mail and Express.

Mountain Climbing.

In a sketch of Sir William Martin Conway, the mountain climber and explorer of the Himalayas, The English Illustrated Magazine says that he has the "climber's walk"—that is, a gentle roll of the body, with no unequal steps, but swinging his legs with rhythmic precision. He is a slim man, but tough, full of energy and with iron muscles. When climbing the Himalayas, he spent 84 days on snow and glacier. During that time he traversed from end to end the three longest known glaciers in the world outside the polar regions and landed on the summit of Pioneer peak, 25,000 feet high, the greatest height yet reached by man.

Mail from New York to Batavia will be delivered in 41 days from the date of mailing.

A rainbow in the morning foretells rainy weather during the day.

The Ever Hungry Russia.

Peace or war, Russian aggression never stands still, and it is most characteristic of her patient and farsighted diplomacy that she reaps more in peace than at the close of her most successful wars. To explain this ceaseless and pauseless advance upon all her neighbors they tell us that she wants an open port on an open ocean—that it is absurd to ask an outlet to the sea that is blocked by ice four months in every year. But that is no answer to the accusation, if accusation it be, of universal aggression. The possession of such a port is not the end, but the means.

There is no end to Russian ambition. Each point won is a stepping stone to the next. Eastern Siberia has no glut of merchandise struggling for a vent at Vladivostok, nor would Constantinople be any better fitted for the export grain trade than Odessa. The port may foster a trade as yet in its infancy, but this is just another reason for saying that it is not the goal of Russian aspiration, but only a milestone on the road. If not for empire and for competitive trade why seek an open port at all? Still less can the constant absorption of new territory be explained by any superfluity of population in the old. It is nothing, after all, but the genuine earth hunger, the lust of unlimited dominion.—Blackwood's Magazine.

The Advantages of Rest.

There is no better preventive of nervous exhaustion than regular, unhurried, muscular exercise. If we could moderate our hurry, lessen our worry and increase our open air exercise, a large proportion of nervous diseases would be abolished. For those who cannot get a sufficient holiday the best substitute is an occasional day in bed. Many whose nerves are constantly strained in their daily avocation have discovered this for themselves. A Spanish merchant in Barcelona told his doctor that he always went to bed for two or three days whenever he could be spared from his business, and he laughed at those who spent their holidays on toilsome mountains. A hard worked woman, who has for many years conducted a large wholesale business, retains excellent nerves at an advanced age, owing, it is believed, to her habit of taking one day a week in bed. If we cannot avoid frequent agitation, we ought, if possible, to give the nervous system time to recover itself between the shocks. Even an hour's seclusion after a good lunch will deprive a hurried, anxious day of much of its injury. The nerves can often be overcome by stratagem when they refuse to be controlled by strength of will.—Housewife.

The Life of a Clam.

The clam's body is completely encased in the mantle, except for two openings, through one of which the foot can be pushed out. The other is for the siphon, or what is commonly known as the "neck" of the clam. In some respects the clam may be better off than we are, for he has a little brain in his foot and also a gland for secreting strong fibers. With this he spins a byssus by which he can attach himself to whatever he likes. He does not even have to search for his food, but waits for it to come to him. He makes a burrow in the mud or sand, attaching himself to the bottom by the byssus. Then he thrusts his siphon up through the mud and water until it reaches the surface. The siphon is made up of two tubes, the water flowing in through one and out through the other.

When the infowing current, laden with minute plants and animals, reaches the gill chamber, some of these are sifted out and retained for food, while the water and waste matter flow out through the other tube.—Margaret W. Leighton in Popular Science Monthly.

The Dark Side of Christian America.

"We have now in America a population of 70,000,000 of people, and yet 750,000, we are told, belong to the criminal class," writes Dwight L. Moody in his paper in "Mr. Moody's Bible Class" in The Ladies' Home Journal. "And this in Christian America. It is said that in six months 80 graduates of two large European universities were found by one rescue mission in New York city. Nor are the American colleges without representatives in the great city slums. Our daily papers are but a living chronicle of the fearful held which sin has upon us as a nation. A man must have lost all his senses who says that sin is not inherent, that it is only a physical weakness which culture may ultimately overcome. Venerating the outer man will make him no better within."

Amateurism's Demerit.

One feature rather surprising to an American is that every park is made for use. There is no fear lest the grass may be injured, but in every ground adapted for them are cricket and football fields, picnic grounds, croquet lawns, tennis courts, bowling greens, the use of which is permitted for a merely nominal payment. Every park, large or small, has one or more concerts each week during the summer, paid for by a neighborhood subscription. Less need exists for large parks than in American cities of the same size, because the better class of houses all have ample gardens.—George F. Parker's Century.

Diplomatic.

"Yes," she said, "we had our first fight yesterday. Charley was real mean, and he talked awfully cross. I should have talked cross, too, but I happened to think that I wanted to go to the theater. So the trouble was all over right away."—Boston Transcript.

The blue violet is symbolic of love and the white of modesty. In Germany either is considered as symbolic of reticence. A Silesian lover can make his sweetheart no more acceptable present than a bunch of violets.

Rats and mice are generally very active and noisy just before a storm.

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