

THE ANIMAL IN HUMAN NATURE.

THE people of the United States were more agitated over the recent fight between Sullivan and Kilrain than about any other public event, national or international. Everybody wanted to know who gained the victory. Men of refinement and culture as well as the ordinary and unlettered classes, manifested an interest in the result, no matter how much they may deprecate the pugilistic spirit and the support given to professional sluggers.

It is proof that there yet is a good deal of the animal in human nature notwithstanding its advancement and the influence of religion and learning. Power, force, virility of any kind creates involuntary admiration, and success, however achieved, is sure to receive applause. But it is pleasing to know that there is a growing sentiment against such vulgar exhibitions of brute strength and vicious violence as these prize encounters, in which men's faces are battered out of recognition and the biggest bruiser is the hero of the hour. Athletic sports, for the development of the physical powers, are to be encouraged within reasonable limits. But these do not necessarily include professional pugilism and can well dispense with all the concomitants of the prize ring.

The laws against such encounters ought to be rigidly enforced or they should be swept from the statute books. There should be no vain pretense in legislation; statutes ought to mean what they say and be executed accordingly. If public sentiment is really against pugilism as an evil to be suppressed, there should be no dallying with it. If this purported opposition be only a sham the sooner the laws against public fistcuffs are repealed the better.

But whatever may be argued on this point, human nature shows that it is still very animal and that it will take many more years and much more training before the feeling which is exhibited in the anxiety to know the result of a great battle between two noted sluggers is eradicated from the masses of mankind.

A NEW FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH.

EVER since the romantic and fanciful career of Ponce de Leon in quest of the fountain of youth and perhaps occasionally before, the idea of prolonging life indefinitely

by extraneous means has taken root and had fixed advocates. But it has remained for a man of high repute as a physician and chemist, one whose reputation is co-extensive with civilization, to announce boldly and seriously in this practical age the actual discovery of an elixir whose function is the lengthening out of vitality's span. This person is Dr. Brown-Sequard, of Paris, and in order that the announcement of his alleged discovery may go forth without a shadow upon its authenticity, the Doctor hands it over to a French scientific body, by whom it was formally promulgated and published as from them in the *Courrier des Etats Unis*, the French daily journal of New York City.

The elixir is to be administered hypodermically, and with this brief announcement we are to receive the conclusion which follows it, namely, that the decrepit will be made as strong and the aged as youthful as of yore. How long this representation can be continued in the face of natural opposition is not stated, and we are therefore left to infer that the period is indefinite, that so long as the hypodermic injections continue the prevailing or returning weakness, as the case may be, will give way to vigor, vitality and virility.

This kind of thing coming from Jules Verne, or even Victor Hugo, would not occasion much surprise or comment; the source would enable the reader to put the proper valuation upon what he had read, and he would regard it as one does the fanciful phantasms worked out on the stage in a fairy spectacle—quite a diversion and very pleasing while it lasts, but not worth thinking over afterwards. But this elixir of life story does not come from such a source, nor from a man who is at all prone to sensationalism or to viewing life and the things of life in any other light than that of intense reality. Thus knowing and thus understanding, what are we to think of so strange and, as we can but view it, so absurd a proposition?

Supposing for a moment that the doctor's claims are correct, that his discovery will do all that he says it will, it would and could only amount to an unmixed evil in the end, just as would anything else which interferes actively with the great plan upon which humanity has life, progress and death. It was not intended by the Giver of mortal life that it should be protracted to

great lengths, albeit the time might be greatly extended beyond its present duration by observance of the laws laid down for our guidance. To give to anyone who desired it the power to indefinitely prolong his existence would be to almost entirely abolish death, since only those of suicidal disposition and who were too tired of life to make an effort to prolong it, or victims of violence, would die at all; with this state of things in full sway the capacity of the earth for the sustenance of its inhabitants would be taxed more and more severely as time advanced until at last the "elixir" would be defeated by general starvation, which of course it is not claimed it can overcome.

Dr. Brown-Sequard is only another instance of how a man can make a great and honorable name by dint of study, research, hard work and wonderful natural abilities, and in an unguarded moment tarnish his bright record by conceiving an absurdity and working upon it as though it were entirely feasible until he persuades himself that it is. He may also induce some few friends and acquaintances and numbers of those who either think not or are so enmeshed in the cause of science that they believe anything from a scientific source, to believe and even advocate his idea; but we look upon all such assumed discoveries as the "elixir of life" as so many vagaries of a disordered brain or one rendered feeble by having been drawn upon too much. They belong in the domain of those who invent perpetual motion.

THE SCHOOL ELECTIONS HERE.

THE particulars regarding the school elections held in this city July 8 appear in this issue. The result shows a considerable gain for the Liberals. They succeeded in carrying the elections in eight districts, and claim a victory in nine. With the exception of those of the one in dispute (the 20th), the proceedings in the districts generally seem to have been conducted in a spirit of fairness, although in a number of cases some lively phases were presented. Generally speaking the defeat of the People's Party in the eight districts gained by the Liberals was inevitable, but in some instances it was the result of the voters of the People's Party being asleep to their own interest, the majority being with them if they had turned out in a body. This is a deplorable fact and it is