

previous dishes. The final course was three pen-knife blades minced together, at the conclusion of which the unique diner rose from the table.

The performance aroused the greatest attention, and many of the doctors of the college regarded the feat with undisguised wonder. One of the most prominent surgeons present declared that he had "never seen the human system subjected to such marvellous misuse." in which statement he voiced the opinion of the majority of people who have witnessed the spectacle.

But several members of the profession were sceptical. Doubts on this point were soon allayed, however, by Dr. Nihran K. Kassabian, who requisitioned the X-ray apparatus to photograph the stomach of the human ostrich. Harrison has good cause to recollect this part of the proceedings, since he was so burned by the application of the rays that he was incapacitated for nineteen months, and has ever since experienced a certain weakness.

When the negative was developed a dark spot was present in the region of the abdomen, showing the location of the various

articles of hardware that Harrison had swallowed. This proof was incontrovertible, and the sceptics immediately speculated as to how it was the man could so abuse his system without suffering injuries of any description. Their theories were as deficient,

however, as those of the other physicians who had previously, and have since, examined Harrison, and they were reluctantly compelled to acknowledge the futility of their diagnoses.

The human ostrich has an extensive collection of pocket-knives, the blades of which he has consumed, and he naturally regards this assortment with a certain touch of pride. When he obtains a knife from a spectator he makes it a *sine qua non* that he retains the handle, which after the blade has been removed is relegated to his museum. Harrison has also swallowed on several occasions doses

of powerful poisons such as strychnine, without experiencing any ill-effects. He proposes to pay a visit to England shortly to display his wonderful gastronomical proclivities, and doubtless they will create as much interest in that country, both among the ordinary public and the medical profession, as they have done in America.



THE BLADE OF A KNIFE FORMS HIS DESSERT.
From a Photo. by The Helios, New York.

XVI.—'POSSUMS AND 'SIMMONS.

WHEN Indian summer paints the Missouri woods with red and gold and the ground is white with frost to the morning sun, the persimmon is ripe. Among the hills and valleys the trees abound, laden with the orange-coloured fruit, and the opossum grows fat and sleek with the coming of plenty.

Inherited instinct makes the opossum nocturnal in his habits, and he dreams the day away in cosy hollow tree or log till the night falls. Then he awakes. Full of woodcraft, and equipped by Nature for fierce battle, the opossum is the bully of the woods among the smaller quadrupeds, but in man and dog he recognises his superiors in craft, and yields up his life without battle.

Go out into the woods on a frosty autumn night with lantern and axe. Far off in the darkness the dog ranges ahead casting to and fro, testing the fugitive air-currents for scent of game. Under foot the leaves, softened by the white frost, scarcely rustle and the smell of the woods rises pungent. Above the stars prick out the blackness of the sky with glittering points of light and the wood birds twitter uneasily at the invasion of their solitude. Borne up from the cool ground, the scent of the opossum rises and drifts through the woods on vagrant air-currents. In his persistent hunt the dog breathes it in and traces it to the very spot, then with head up he roars out his find. Far in the blackness of the woods the roar is thrown

back from the hills till the air vibrates. The sound falls on the alert ears of the game, and starts him into mad flight. Up among the broken hills is a rocky den that means safety, and forgetful of his woodcraft in his sudden fear the opossum flees noisily.

Down the trail comes the dog, a whirlwind of sound, and far behind the hunters yell encouragement. Through the uproar the patter of swift feet comes to the back-turned ears of the quarry, and he scales the nearest tree, perching far up in the darkness. With a rush the dog reaches the end of the chase and tears at the rough bark of the tree till his



From a]

"TREED."

[Photograph.

mouth bleeds; then through the sudden stillness rings his sharp yell telling that the game has "treed."

Probably the most wonderful governing trait controlling any animal is the instinct that makes the opossum curl up inert and grinning "'possuming," a horrible picture of death, at the approach of the only enemies he fears. With lips drawn back from needle teeth and eyes half open; glazed with the semblance of death, the opossum is far from it. Possessed of enormous vitality and the patience of ages, the first opportunity for escape is swiftly seized, and with a rush the dead is alive.



From a]

"POSSUMING"—I.E., FEIGNING DEATH BEFORE AN ENEMY.

[Photograph.