

Venom of Serpents.

Dr. Gilman has recently been making a series of investigations upon the habits, &c., of poisonous serpents in the interior of Arkansas, a place which he says "appears to him to be the paradise of reptiles." We give below an account of some of these researches, communicated to the St. Louis Medical and Surgical Journal. It will be found interesting, and the results stated at the close of the article are quite instructive, especially the 5th section, in regard to alcohol. Other accounts verify the statement, that a free use of alcohol, internally and externally, has a very powerful counteracting effect upon the poison of a rattlesnake.—[Am. Agriculturist.

There is much in the history and habits of the reptile tribes, however repulsive they may be in appearance, that is very interesting. During a sojourn of two or three months in the interior of Arkansas, which appears to me to be the paradise of reptiles, I paid some attention to that branch of natural history called ophiology. I found four distinct varieties of rattlesnakes, (crotalus), of which the Crotalus horridus and Crotalus kirtlandii, are by far the most numerous. The former is the largest serpent in North America. The family of moccasin snakes (Coluber) is also quite numerous, there being not less than ten varieties, most of which are quite as venomous as the rattlesnake.

By dissecting great numbers of different species, I learned that the anatomical structure of the poisonous apparatus is similar in all the different varieties of venomous serpents. It consists of a strong frame-work of bone, with its appropriate muscles in the upper part of the head, resembling, and being in fact, a pair of jaws, but externally to the jaws proper, and much stronger. To these is attached, by a ginglymoid articulation, one or more moveable fangs on each side, just at the verge of the mouth, capable of being erected at pleasure. These fangs are very hard, sharp, and crooked, like the claws of a cat, and hooked backward, with a hollow from the base to the near point. I have occasionally seen a thin slit of bone divide this hollow, making two. At their base is found a small sack, containing two or three drops of venom, which resembles thin honey.

The sack is so connected with the cavity of the fang during its erection, that a slight upward pressure forces the venom into the fang at its base, and it makes its exit at a small slit or opening near the point, with considerable force; thus it is carried to the bottom of any wound made by the fang. Unless the fangs are erected for battle, they lie concealed in the upper part of the mouth, sunk between the external and internal jaw-bones, somewhat like a penknife blade shut up in its handle, where they are covered by a fold of membrane, which encloses them like a sheath; this is the vagina dentis.

There can be no doubt that these fangs are frequently broken off or shed, as the head grows broader, to make room for new ones nearer the verge of the mouth; for, within the vagina dentis of a very large crotalus horridus, I found no less than five fangs on each side—in all stages of formation—the smallest in a half-pup or cartilaginous state, the next something harder, the third still more perfect, and so on to the main, well-set, perfect fang. Each of these teeth had a well-defined cavity, like the main one. Three fangs on each side were frequently found in copper-heads, vipers, and others.

The process of robbing serpents of their venom is easily accomplished by the aid of chloroform, a few drops of which stupefies them. If, while they are under its influence, they are carefully seized by the neck, and the vagina dentis held out of the way by an assistant, with a pair of forceps, and the fang be erected and gently pressed upward, the venom will be seen issuing from the fang, dropping from its point. It may then be absorbed by a bit of sponge, or caught in a phial, or on the point of a lancet. After robbing several serpents in this manner, they were found, after two days, to be as highly charged as ever with venom of equal intensity with that first taken.

During the process of robbing several species of serpents, I inoculated several small but vigorous and perfectly healthy vegetables with the point of a lancet, well charged with venom. The next day they were withered and dead, looking as though they had been scathed with lightning.

In attempting to preserve a few drops of venom, for future experiments, in a small phial with two or three parts of alcohol, it was found in a short time to have lost its venomous properties. But after mixing the venom with aqua ammonia, or spirits of turpentine, or oil of peppermint, or of cinnamon, or of cloves, or with nitric or sulphuric acid, it still seemed to act with undiminished energy. It is best preserved, however, for future use by trituration with refined sugar or sugar of milk.

A very fine, large cotton-mouth snake being captured by putting a shoe-string around him, became excessively ferocious, striking at even the crack of a small riding-whip. Finding himself a prisoner, without the hope of escape, he turned his deadly weapons on his own body, striking repeatedly his well-charged fangs deeply into his flesh. Notwithstanding this, he was put in a small basket, and carried forward. In one hour after he was found dead, and no amount of irritation could excite the least indication of life. Four hours after, while removing the skin for preservation, the blood oozed slowly from the vessels in a dissolved state. No violence was done to his snakeship except what he did to himself.

Another moccasin, shot by a pistol about two inches back of the head, and skinned immediately, gave decided evidence of vitality four hours after being flayed, by writhing the body whenever it was irritated by a scalpel.

A large rattlesnake, beheaded instantly with a hoe, would an hour after, strike anything that pinched his tail. Of several persons who were

testing their firmness of nerve by trying to hold the hand steady while the serpent struck at it, not one could be found whose hand would not recoil in spite of his resolution; and one man, a great bully, by-the-bye, was struck on the naked throat with considerable force by the headless trunk of the serpent, and staggered back, fainted and fell, from terror. Mr. Stewart, of Mississippi, tells me he once witnessed a similar scene. An old hunter shot a rattlesnake's head off, and after reloading his gun and standing some time, he stooped to pull off the rattles, and the bloody but headless trunk of the snake struck him in the temple, and he fainted and fell down with terror.

Seven venomous serpents, belonging to five different species, were made to fraternize, and dwell amicably in one den. A beautiful pair of long bodied speckled snakes, known as king-snakes, found to be fangless, and consequently without venom, were duly installed as members of the family. Some uneasiness was perceptible among the older members, but no attempt was made to destroy the intruders, though they might have been killed instantly. The next morning four of the venomous serpents were found to have been destroyed by the king snakes, and one was still within their coil, and the two remaining ones would make no effort at self-defence.

A large rattlesnake seemed stupid and indifferent to his fate. He could not be made to threaten or give warning even with his rattles. The smallest king-snake was afterward inoculated with the poison of one of the serpents he had destroyed, and died immediately after—thus evincing that they must have exercised some power besides physical force to overcome their fellow-creatures.

In short, the results of a greater number of experiments performed with the venom of a great variety of serpents, seem to lead to the following conclusions:

1. That the venom of all serpents acts as a poison in a similar manner.
2. That the venom of some varieties is far more active than that of others.
3. That a variety of the coluber, known as the cotton-mouth, is the most venomous serpent in Arkansas.
4. That the venom of serpents destroys all forms of organized life, vegetable as well as animal.
5. That alcohol, if brought in contact with the venom, is, to a certain extent, an antidote.
6. That serpents do possess the power of fascinating small animals, and that this power is identical with mesmerism.
7. That the blood of small animals, destroyed by the venom of serpents, bears a close resemblance to that of an animal destroyed by lightning or hydrocyanic acid; it loses its power of coagulation, and cannot be long kept from putrefaction.

A Good Wife.

A good wife makes the poorest and most desolate home a paradise, and moulds the most negligent and indifferent husband into a tender and thoughtful companion. The influence of woman, quiet, imperceptible, and all persuasive, is irresistible when directed by woman's instinctive tact and affection. The clamorers for women's rights rarely attain their object, while the meek and yielding can bind manhood with chains of roses more potent than chains of steel. One of our exchanges volunteers some good advice, which is not likely to pass current in our age:

The first inquiry of a woman after marriage should be, "How shall I continue the love I have inspired? How shall I preserve the heart I have won?"

1. Endeavor to make your husband's habitation alluring and delightful to him. Let it be to him a sanctuary to which his heart may always turn from the calamities of life. Make it a repose from his cares, a shelter from the world, a home not for his person only, but for his heart. He may meet with pleasure in other houses, but let him find pleasure in his own. Should he be dejected, soothe him; should he be silent, and thoughtful do not heedlessly disturb him; should he be studious, favor him with all practicable facilities; or should he be peevish, make allowance for human nature, and by your sweetness, gentleness, and good humor, urge him continually to think, though he may not say it, "This woman is indeed a comfort to me: I cannot but love her, and requite such gentleness and affection as they deserve."

2. Invariably adorn yourself with delicacy and modesty. These, to a man of refinement, are attractions the most highly captivating; while their opposites never fail to inspire disgust. Let the delicacy and modesty of the bride be always, in a great degree supported by the wife.

3. If it be possible, let your husband suppose you think him a good husband, and it will be a strong stimulus to his being so. As long as he thinks he possesses the reputation, he will be at some pains to deserve it; but when he has once lost the name, he will be apt to abandon the reality.

4. Cultivate and exhibit with the greatest care and constancy, cheerfulness and good humor. They give beauty to the finest face and impart charms where charms are not. On the contrary, a gloomy, dissatisfied manner, are ice chilling and repulsive to his feelings; he will be very apt to seek elsewhere for those smiles and that cheerfulness which he finds not in his own house.

5. In the article of dress, study your husband's tastes. The opinions of others on this subject are of very little consequence, if he approves.

6. Particularly shun what the world calls, in ridicule "certain lectures." When you shut your door at night, endeavor to shut out at the same moment all discord and contention, and look upon your chamber as a sacred retreat from the vexations of the world, a shelter sacred to peace and affection.

How indecorous, offensive and sinful it is, for a

woman to exercise authority over her husband and to say, "I will not have it so. It shall be as I like!" But I trust the number of those who adopt this unbecoming and disgraceful manner is so small as to render it unnecessary for me to enlarge on this subject.

7. Be careful never to join in a jest and laugh against your husband. Conceal his faults, and speak only of his merits. Shun every approach to extravagance. The want of economy has involved millions in misery. Be neat, tidy, orderly, methodical. Rise early, breakfast early, have a place for everything, and everything in its place.

8. Few things please a man more than seeing his wife notable and clever in the management of her household. A knowledge of cookery, as well as every other branch in housekeeping, is indispensable in a female, and a wife should always endeavor to support with applause the character of the lady and the housewife.

9. Let home be your empire—your world.—Let it be the scene of your wishes, your thoughts, your plans, your exertions. Let it be the stage on which, in the varied character of wife, of mother, and of mistress, you strive to shine. In its sober, quiet scenes let your heart cast its anchor, let your feelings and pursuits all be centered. Leave to your husband the task of distinguishing himself by his valor or his talents.—Do you seek for fame at home, and let your applause be that of your servants, your children, your husband, your God.—[Selected.

NEW ZEALAND.—One of the most remarkable features of the island of New Zealand—situated in the South Pacific, and the property of Great Britain—is the numerous warm and hot springs, and lakes, geysers, &c., which exist there in connection with the volcano of Tongariro, in the central part of the northern division of the island. Of the lakes, Lake Taupo, situated about twelve miles from Mount Tongariro, is the largest in the thermal region. It is about thirty-six miles long by twenty-five wide.

The district surrounding it is rich in thermography, and on the delta formed by the river Waikato, which empties into the lake, are numerous boiling springs; and on ascending the hills to the southward of the delta the ground is found to be of high temperature. It is formed of red or white clay, of a soft and alkaline nature, which the natives use instead of soap, and sometimes eat. Gaseous effluvia seem to have converted the rock of these hills, which is basalt, into this clay.

The natives make a peculiar use of some of the warm springs which abound in this region.—They surround them with stones, and thus form basins in which they are continually sitting.—They make a new application of the seat or hip bath by using it in the place of soap, jumping in as often as they feel cold. The practice does not seem to hurt them, they being remarkably healthy in appearance. In using the hot springs for bathing purposes the natives temper them by introducing cold water from the cold springs or rivers in proximity to them.

They are thus enabled to enjoy any temperature they may wish, varying from cold to hot.—Besides the hot springs, the natives take advantage in cooking, of the steam which arises from the springs or from crevices in the rocks, which are of themselves often hot enough for the purposes of baking.—[Diesenbach.

BOSTON MORALITY.—The Boston Post says that the Cincinnati Enquirer has some reason for saying "that it has become an established truth in Massachusetts morality that the personal failings, vices and peccadilloes of clergymen do not weigh a feather in the minds of their flock against the invaluable gifts of abolition zeal and politico clerical rhetoric."

PARENTS BE CAREFUL.—"Ma is the portrait of father torn?" asked a little cherub of three summers. "No, child. Why do you ask?" "Why, this morning he said, 'darn my picture!'"

ELECTION NOTICE.

The qualified Electors of Utah County will hold an election at the several places of holding elections in the several precincts on Monday the 3rd of August next for the following officers to wit:—

Our Delegate to Congress.
Two Councilors to the Legislative Assembly.
Three Representatives for Utah and Cedar Counties.
One Select Man for Utah County.
One Justice of the Peace for Provo precinct.
One Justice of the Peace for Summit precinct.
Provo City, July 18th, 1857.

LUCIUS N. SCOVILL, Clerk.

NOTICE.

The members of the Priests' Quorum in G. S. L. City will meet in the 14th Ward School house the 1st Sunday in every month at 4 o'clock, by order of the President of said Quorum. LEWIS WIGHT, President.

MARRIAGE.

In Ogden City, June 27, 1857, of Consumption, LOUISA wife of Wm. R. Kingsford, aged 40 years.
In North Canyon Ward, on the 30th of June, of numb palsy, ANN SINCLAIR, aged 71 years.

NEW ADVERTISEMENTS.

J. L. HEYWOOD, HAT, Cap and Muff Manufacturer, 17th Ward. WANTED in exchange—all kinds of Furs, Sheep and Lamb's wool; also all kinds of produce, County and Territorial orders.
21-11

STOLEN OR STRAYED.

A Few weeks ago from br. Alexander's farm, called Quaking Asp Grove in Parley's Park, one mile this side of Lamb's Mill, a young GREY MARE; whoever will restore her to the subscriber will be handsomely rewarded by
THOMAS D. BROWN
21-1 14th Ward.

STRAYED!

FROM the mouth of City creek Canyon on the 16th inst., a small BLACK MULE about four years old, branded with a Spanish brand on the left shoulder and thigh; a so branded B on the left thigh. Information given will be rewarded by
21-1 RICHARD BENSON, 4th Ward.

STRAYED OR STOLEN!

ONE BAY HORSE PONY, from the West side of Jordan, about four miles from the bridge. He is of small size, about 7 years old, some saddle marks. Whoever will give information or return him to me shall be liberally rewarded.
21-2 E. K. FULLER, 17th Ward.

\$10 REWARD---STOLEN.

ON the night of the 4th of July one BAY MARE, branded OO on the nigh shoulder, somewhat lame in the right hip; a claybank colored Colt went with her. Whoever will return the same to me, Salt Lake City, shall receive the above reward.
21-3 J. H. RUMELL.

A BLACK COW LOST.

STRAYED from the 19th Ward Pasture on Saturday July 18th, 1857, a black cow 3-years old, branded FG on the left horn, a place broke off the right horn. Any person that will bring said cow or give information that will lead to the recovery of her shall be liberally rewarded by
21-2 RICHARD B. MARGETTS, 19th Ward.

THE DESERET NEWS.

PRINTED ON WEDNESDAY DELIVERED ON THURSDAY.

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Milo Andrus	Big Cottonwood Ward.
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Silas Richards	Union.
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