

GRAND RAPIDS, DEC. 10, 1884.

Snake - Bite Cures.

Remedies for Serpent Poisoning.

The Things Belled On to Neutralize the Most Violent of Poisons - Cause Where Whisky and Tobacco Have Uses.

[Curiosities of Snake Life.]

"To conceive of an antidote to snake poison in the true sense of the term," Sir Joseph Fayrer explains, "one must imagine a substance so subtle as to follow, overtake and neutralize the venom in the blood; one that shall have the power of counteracting and neutralizing the deadly influence it has exerted on the vital forces. Such a substance has still to be found, and our present experience of the action of drugs does not lead to hopeful anticipation that we shall find it."

With regard to the many drugs used in various countries for the cure of snake-bite, it is curious to note that, as a rule, they are procured from the most deadly poisons. As like cures like, so poison cures poison. Pennyroyal, says Charas, was held to be the nose of a viper, which by turning and wriggling labored hard to avoid it, and in half an hour's time was killed by it. This was in July, at which season these creatures are computed to be in the greatest vigor of their poison.

Another drug which is poison to a venomous snake is tobacco, within the reach of most persons. This, among native remedies, has always been in favor, and we have heard of its efficacy ever since the weed was known to Europeans. Various species of tobacco and its allies are indigenous to most tropical countries, and probably were in use for both man and snake bite long before civilized nations took comfort in smoking. Man carries more poison in his mouth than a snake, said an old Virginian writer, alluding to nicotine. He can poison a rattlesnake more quickly than it can him. Nicholson states that it also rapidly affects a cobra, and he recommends it, should you wish to destroy the snake uninjured. "You have," he says, "but to blow into its mouth a drop or two of the oil from a dirty pipe."

Two young men chopping wood together in Virginia espied a rattlesnake. With a forked stick one of them held its head close to the ground, keeping its body constrained with his foot while his comrade took from his own moth a quid of tobacco, which he forced into that of the snake. The reptile was then released, and had not crawled a couple of yards before it was convulsed, swelling and dying within a short time.

Strychnine appears to have a similar effect to tobacco on snakes. Fayrer found cobras extremely susceptible to the influence of strychnine. An almost impalpable quantity caused a cobra to twist itself up in a rigid series of coils and die. Carbolic acid is another drug which produces powerful effects. Poured on the floor of their cages it will kill venomous snakes in a very short time. A large Bugarus died in ten minutes in this way.

Dr. Weir Mitchell approves of carbolic acid. The Lancet recommends every backwoodsman to supply himself with a little of it, which is easily portable and manageable in capillary tubes. In several of Mitchell's experiments with crotalus venom, carbolic acid applied to the wound was attended with success. But it must be done at once.

The whole secret of cures—when cures can be effected at all—lies in promptness. It is celerity on the part of the Indians which insures their success. In an instant, if his comrade be bitten, the savage is on his knees sucking the wound, grasping the limb firmly, or strapping it tightly above and below the bite, knowing quite well the importance of checking the circulation. He has his "poison pills" and tobacco in his pouch. He explodes gunpowder on the wound, and loses not instant, nor does the victim lose heart. He submits with courage and confidence, and in these lies another element of success.

Many cases are on record of persons being at death's door through fear alone, when bitten by a harmless snake, but recovering on being assured that there was no danger. And other cases are well known where bitten persons have died of fright and the depressing influence surrounding the accident when they might possibly have recovered.

And now for a few words about the most popular and perhaps most attainable of all remedies—alcohol. No wonder the backwoodsman resorts to this, which, without any chopping off of fingers or toes, or personal pyrotechnics, or other local tortures, deadens his sensibilities, renders him unconscious of suffering, and sends him into a happy oblivion of danger. It is not a refined mode of treatment, nor one that presents many opportunities of exhibiting professional skill; and it is no doubt somewhat derogatory to admit that to become dead drunk is an effective victory against snake venom.

During a sojourn in Iowa some years ago, when wild and uncultured lands formed the "streets" of the town in which I was staying—Lyons, on the Mississippi River, and as lovely a spot as artists and botanists can wish to revel in—it was by no means an infrequent occurrence to hear of rattlesnake bite.

"What was done to the man? Is he alive?" were the questions naturally asked. "He drank a quart of raw whisky, and got dead drunk."

Generally a quart had the desired effect—that is, of causing intoxication. Persons unused to intoxicants might be affected by a less quantity, but so violent is the combat between venom and whisky that a large dose must be swallowed before any effects at all are produced. I heard of a man in Nevada—George Terhune, a teamster (I give his name having reason to believe the truth of the story)—who was bitten in the hand by a rattlesnake while stooping to reach some water out of a spring. The man was alone and far away from human habitations. It was an instinctive and momentary business first to kill the snake; then rushing to his wagon he drew the bung from a keg of whisky and took a large draught of the contents. After swallowing as much as he could, he took some tobacco from his pocket, saturated that with whisky, and applied this poultice to his hand. He then proceeded with his team, drinking whisky at intervals, until he reached a dwelling, when he removed the poultice and found that the wound had turned green. Applying another of the same kind he removed his surcingle and his patient drove, reaching his destination next day as cool as a judge, having inhaled enough raw-water to be toxicated a dozen times.

There is also a case on record in which a man was bitten by a rattlesnake while stooping to reach some water out of a spring. The man was alone and far away from human habitations. It was an instinctive and momentary business first to kill the snake; then rushing to his wagon he drew the bung from a keg of whisky and took a large draught of the contents. After swallowing as much as he could, he took some tobacco from his pocket, saturated that with whisky, and applied this poultice to his hand. He then proceeded with his team, drinking whisky at intervals, until he reached a dwelling, when he removed the poultice and found that the wound had turned green. Applying another of the same kind he removed his surcingle and his patient drove, reaching his destination next day as cool as a judge, having inhaled enough raw-water to be toxicated a dozen times.

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Monksgon, Sept. 20, 1884. J. W. EDDY.

I have used Van's Magic Oil for Neuralgia, and it has proved to be satisfactory, as it has cured me entirely; also our next door neighbor was cured by it. I would not hesitate to recommend it to all who are afflicted with Neuralgia, Headache, etc., and who have tried all other remedies without success.

We have used your Magic Oil for several years, and would not like to be without it, as it is a good family medicine, viz: Burns, Bruises, Sore Throat, Colds, etc. Hence I truly recommend it to the public.

Monksgon, Mich. Mr. N. G. Vanderrhede—We have used your Magic Oil with great satisfaction. One of our children was taken sick with (so-called) diphtheria. Of course we employed a doctor, but the child grew worse every day. One morning the doctor called with four more of his profession, and consulted. If the child would be alive in the evening they were to open the child's throat and cut the phlegm out. This I did not approve of, but as there was no hope of the child's recovery, I consented. Finally our neighbor, Mrs. F. Vanderrhede, called with a bottle of your Magic Oil, and asked if we would use it—it would cost us nothing. We gave the child three or five drops internally every hour, and positioned the soles of its feet with onions, and bled its throat with your Magic Oil, and when the doctor came in the evening he wanted to know what we had given the child, as it breathed so much easier. I told him we used Van's Magic Oil. He said keep right on using it as that was better than he could do. I have thanked Mrs. Vanderrhede a thousand times for her kindness, and I sincerely thank you for your valuable medicine.

Monksgon.—I would say, I have known the effects of Van's Magic Oil, in domestic practice, always with good effects, never with bad effects. Have prescribed it in my practice; find it a very good and safe medicine.

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Grand Rapids & Indiana.

GOING NORTH.

Table with columns: Station, Arrive, Leave. Lines include Potoskey & Mackinac, Cheboygan & Mackinac, Ft. Wayne & Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids & Cadillac.

GOING SOUTH.

Table with columns: Station, Arrive, Leave. Lines include Mackinac & Cheboygan, Cheboygan & Mackinac, Grand Rapids & Cadillac.

Detroit, Grand Haven & Milwaukee.

GOING WEST.

Table with columns: Station, Arrive, Leave. Lines include Morning Express, Through Mail, Evening Express, Night Express.

GOING EAST.

Table with columns: Station, Arrive, Leave. Lines include Steamboat Express, Through Mail, Limited Express, Atlantic Express, Mixed with coach.

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NEWAYGO DIVISION.

Express... 8:10 am... 10:50 pm. Express... 8:10 am... 4:35 pm. Mail... 8:10 am... 4:35 pm.

Michigan & Ohio Railroad.

Passenger Time Table. Going West. (Central Time). Going East. M. P. St. P. M. STATIONS. A. M. P. M. P. M.

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