

CURED OF RATTLESNAKE BITE.

A Simple Remedy that is Said to Do the Business Every Time.

Alden Davis of Damascus, in Wayne county, Pa., was bitten a few evenings since by a rattlesnake in the ball of his thumb. A cord was fastened tightly around the thumb to stop the movement of the blood from the region of the wound to the other parts of the body. Young Davis was then taken as quickly as possible to the office of Dr. Kemp, at Callicoona Depot. Having seen in a newspaper a few years since a description of the remedy for rattlesnake bites as used by the Geer family at Long Eddy, N. Y., Dr. Kemp made careful investigation of the matter, and became convinced of the truth of the statement therein made, and that the remedy was indeed all that was claimed for it. He therefore advised young Davis to drive to John Geer's as quickly as possible, but first to partake freely of rye whiskey. A bottle of this liquor was obtained, and the horse's head turned to the direction of Long Eddy, distant eleven miles.

It was now late in the night, and, as the moon was down, very dark. The road was a rough one, but by careful and as rapid driving as possible the dwelling of John Geer, the famous rattlesnake catcher, was reached before daylight. By this time, in spite of the tightly drawn cord around his thumb, the poison had made its way into the hand, wrist and arm, which were badly swelled. Davis had taken but two sips of the liquor, and Geer's effect would be to increase the circulation of the blood, and thereby spread the poison more rapidly. The effects of the poison seemed not to be entirely confined to the hand and arm, but in some way was affecting the stomach. He had several severe vomiting spells, after which he spit blood freely.

Fortunately Geer knew right where to get the violet, a sovereign remedy for the bite of a rattlesnake, and, lighting a lantern, in five minutes' time had Davis eating its leaves. He then applied salt and indigo to the wound, first taking off the tightly drawn cord, which, however, had probably done good service in preventing the more rapid spread of the poison. Davis soon began to feel better. The pain, which was great when he first came, soon ceased. The stomach sickness also left him, and, lying down, he slept for an hour, when Geer awakened him to give him more of the violet and apply a fresh poultice.

At the end of 12 hours from the time he came to Mr. Geer's, Davis started to walk home, though the swelling had not entirely disappeared. Thinking he might be kept for several days, he had sent his horse home. Geer gave him a quantity of the remedy, cautioned him to walk slowly, not to go to work, but use the medicine till the swelling was entirely gone, and assured him he was safe from all evil effects of the snake bite as he could wish.

This remedy has been known and used in this place and vicinity for over eighty years. It was first obtained by Joseph Geer (John's father) from a half-breed Delaware Indian named John Johnson, who used in 1800 to occupy a hut on the Pennsylvania side of the river opposite Long Eddy, and who, for a pint of whiskey, would let a rattlesnake bite him and then cure himself with it. It is as follows:

Apply to the wound a poultice one-half cup of common salt and indigo, mixed with cold water, and renew every two hours. Eat freely of the leaves, or drink out of a tea made from them, of the blue violet (*V. sagittata*) commonly known as the "arrow-leaved" violet. If the bite be upon the leg or arm, bind the leaves in a circle around it above and just below the swelling. Moisten with cold water as often as they get dry from the fever created by the poison, and renew two or three times a day.

Wanted to Get Out.

He was an express messenger on the Santa Fe a few days ago. It was a night run, and there were two messengers in the car. Just as it began to grow dusk the train stopped at a small station and a dead body was taken aboard. Nothing in particular was thought of this, however, and as there was nothing to do and the train would not stop again for a long distance, both messengers prepared to go to sleep. One of them decided that the box containing the body would be a good place to rest on, and so he arranged himself comfortably there on and went to sleep.

How long he slept he had no idea, but suddenly, as if in a dream he heard a voice say: "Let me out!"

The messenger, startled, lay half awake for a moment, when in no uncertain tones came the words, apparently from within the head of the box on which he slept.

"D—n you, let me out." It is quite a distance from where the box lay to the other end of the car, but the messenger is positive he cleared it in two jumps. Trembling with fear, he shouted to his companion, but before he had a chance to tell his story that self-same voice exclaimed: "I want to get out of here."

Neither of the men spoke for a moment, and then the one who had first heard the voice said:

"Jim, that corpse wants to get out."

Jim thought for a moment, and then said: "Well, I reckon it wouldn't be right to keep him in there if he wants to get out."

So the two cautiously made their way to the head of the box and dobed what to do, when the same muffled voice was heard to remark:

"Po'ly wants a cracker!"

Then the mystery was explained. Some one at Denver had expressed a parrot to a friend in Kansas City. Its cage had been set away and forgotten, and the bird had naturally become hungry and thirsty. So it waited as long as it could, and then made itself heard in the manner that so horrified the express messenger.

Post Office Scarcity.

Equador, with about one million inhabitants, has only 47 post offices, but they are so widely distributed that it requires a mail carriage of 5,389 miles to reach them all—72 miles by canoe and 5,317 by horses and mules. About 500 miles of the seaboard is also covered by foreign steamship mail service. Between Quito and Guayaquil there are two mails each week by couriers—the usual time one way, travelling day and night, being six days. Other sections of the country are less favored, the receipt and departure of mails ranging from once a week to once a month, as people happen to be going.

DEATH BY ELECTRICITY.

An English Doctor Thinks it Will Not Work.

While executions still continue, there is nothing in the present and long established plan of carrying them out which needs to be changed. If the process be considered brutal, it is not more brutal than the spirit of the act itself, all attempts to refine which cannot add to its efficacy as a deterrent of crime. The process of hanging looks brutal without being actually so. Since the age of Morgagni the question now under discussion has been considered, and the opinion of the best informed physiologists, then and since then, has always been that death by strangulation or by suspension, is practically a painless mode of death. Persons who have recovered from the unconsciousness produced by strangulation have testified completely on this point, and that the old and legal method of death by suspension, according to the terms of the judicial sentence, should, at the instance of any ignorant or common officer who may carry out the sentence, have ever been changed for the long drop, or death by an excruciating and cruel blow, is incredible. Some member of the House of Commons ought to put to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, who is charged with the duty of directing that the law, be it what it may, shall be carried out, the question why the gentle, though it may seem prolonged, extinction of life by death is the national punishment for murder, this national mode of vindicating the law is also the most rational. Making the method of execution more scientific, if it be right to degrade science by so connecting her civilizing powers with such degrading and ignorant work, is simply to put a premium on crime.

Since I set up a lethal chamber for the painless extinction of the lives of lower animals I have more than once met persons, not strictly insane but in morbid states of mind, who have looked on the lethal easy death as a prospect of release from life so invitingly pleasant that if such mode of death were to be adopted as the national plan of capital murder they would not hesitate in their worst moods to kill, that they might be killed, since the severest fate that could happen would be a death brought to the painlessness of pleasure. Death by the electric shock would convey to minds of this stamp the same anticipation, but would not necessarily produce the same certain result. In some researches on the application of the electric discharge for the painless extinction of the lives of animals to be used as food, the details of which I recorded in the Medical Times and Gazette for the year 1869, this mode of death was anything but certain in its effects.

Sheep stricken apparently into instant and irrevocable death by electricity, after a few minutes showed signs of life, and if they had not been despatched in the ordinary way by the knife would have been restored to consciousness. The same fact has been observed in attempts to kill dogs by the electric shock, and I once published an instance in which a large dog, struck into perfect unconsciousness by the stroke of a powerful battery, was submitted to a surgical operation while lying, to all appearances, dead, and was as yet so little affected as to make an easy and sound recovery. It need not be inferred from such facts as these that the electric shock will not kill at one discharge—in most cases it will kill—but, exceptionally, instead of killing outright, it will simply stun, and may induce the semblance of death instead of the real death.

Gambetta's Statue.

The monument to Leon Gambetta, the Great Tribune, consists of a pyramid about 80 feet high surmounted by a female figure representing Triumphant Democracy, and wearing a Phrygian cap. In her hand Democracy holds the Declaration of the Rights of Man and she is supported by a winged lion, which advances with open mouth. In the centre of the pyramid is Gambetta, his head thrown back, his eye glancing along the vast artery from the Tuileries to the Arc de Triomphe, his hand extended in a fine oratorical gesture away toward the horizon where lurks the unseen but vigilant enemy. It is really Gambetta, just as he might have looked when he made his famous balloon voyage over the Prussian lines and away to Tours or when he ascended the tribune of the Chamber to reply to some thrust from his opponents. Over the orator is a winged figure holding a flag and representing the soul of France which is stirred to its depths by the eloquence of Gambetta. The awakening of the nation by the fervid accents of the fiery patriot is finely represented by a soldier leaning on the breech of a big gun with a broken weapon in his hand, a workman in a blouse attempting to pluck up a sword and another citizen shouldering arms and ready to march to battle. The group is called the "National Defence, or the Marseillaise of 1870." Underneath is a tablet of black marble, inscribed with the words, "To Gambetta, the Country, and the Republic." The monument is certainly striking and effective, but the mixture of Classicism and Romanticism, and the blending of bronze, iron, stone, and marble make it rather incoherent. It also looks too fragile and too modern in the shadow of the more magnificent and antique monument, the foundations of which were laid by Philip Augustus.

The Penalty of Greatness.

The German who has been arrested in London for threatening to murder Mr. Gladstone turns out to be an author. It seems that he sent the manuscript of a story to Mr. Gladstone with the request that he would read it. Some way the manuscript was mislaid, and then the German author wrote the threatening letter. One of the penalties of being a great literary man is that literary men who are not great are always trying to climb the ladder of fame over his shoulders. Mr. Gladstone is bombarded with letters and postal cards from all parts of the world, asking all sorts of questions and soliciting all sorts of opinions. The wonder is that he gets time to answer as many of them as he does. That the German author's story was mislaid is not to be wondered at. It would be well for the world if the stories of a good many more authors were to meet with a similar fate. Unlike Milton's "Paradise Lost," which, we were told, "the world would not willingly let die," the world would be very glad to see the last of many of the trashy productions thrown on the market by immature authors. But the German author who has been threatening to murder Mr. Gladstone will

probably find that to threaten a fellow citizen's life is a much more serious thing than to take the lives of at least half-a-dozen characters in a work of fiction.

Italian Oratory.

Father Gavazzi, the Italian preacher and patriot, first visited Canada and the United States about thirty-five years ago, to collect funds for the redemption of Italy. Rome, the chief city of Italy, was then occupied by French troops, ordered there by the French Emperor, Louis Napoleon. Gavazzi was an orator of the Italian school, and the crowds which flocked to hear him were surprised and thrilled. His manner was both vehement and dramatic. Words rushed forth, like some mountain torrent after a cloud-burst. Then the speaker paused, and, by a look, or by a gesture or attitude, spoke as clearly and as eloquently as by words.

He beat his breast and the resonant sound was heard throughout the hall. Using his monk's robe as a mantle, he assumed the attitude of some classic statue. Speaking of the Emperor as "Napoleon the little," he lowered himself until he seemed a dwarf, for his robe hid the angles of limbs and body.

"Did you ever see such superb pantomime?" "Every gesture was a sentence." "What a combination of actor and orator!" Such were the sentences with which listeners greeted each other, on retiring from the hall, where the orator had addressed them in idiomatic English with a slight flavour of Italian pronunciation which gave a piquancy to his utterance.

An English surgeon, while travelling in Italy a hundred years ago, saw among the lawyers of Venice several overgrown illustrations of the old Italian school of oratory. "Every advocate," he wrote, "mounts into a small pulpit a little elevated above the audience, where he opens his harangue with some gentleness, but does not long contain himself within these limits." "His voice soon cracks, and, what is very remarkable, the beginning of most sentences, while he is under any agitation and seeming enthusiasm in pleading, is at a pitch above his natural voice, so as to occasion a wonderful discord.

"Then if he means to be very emphatic, he strikes the pulpit with his hands five or six times together as quick as thought, stamping at the same time, so as to make the great room resound with this species of oratory.

"At length in the fury of his argument, he descends from the pulpit, runs about, pleading, upon the floor, returns in a violent passion back again to the pulpit thwacks it with his hands more than at first, and continues in this rage, running up and down the pulpit until he has finished his harangue.

"The audience smiles now and then at this extravagant behaviour. The advocates seem to be in continual danger of dropping their wigs from their heads, and this sometimes happens. There may be some advocates who speak with more dignity, but those I saw were all men of eminence in their profession."

A Sweet Voice.

There is no power of love so hard to get and to keep as a kind voice. A kind hand is deaf and dumb. It may be rough in flesh and blood, yet do the work of a soft heart, and do it with a soft touch. But there is no one thing that love so much needs as a sweet voice to tell what it means and feels, and it is hard to get and keep it in the right tone. One must start in youth and be on the watch night and day, at work, and at play, to get and keep a voice that shall speak at all times the thought of a kind heart. But this is the time when a sharp voice is most apt to be got. You often hear boys and girls say words at play with a quick sharp tone, as if it were the snap of a whip. When one of them gets vexed you will hear a voice that sounds as if it were made up of a snarl, a whine, and a bark. Such a voice often speaks worse than the heart feels. It shows more ill-will in the tone than in the words. It is often in mirth that one gets a voice or a tone that is sharp and sticks to him through life, and stirs up ill-will and grief, and falls like a drop of gall on the sweet joys of home. Such as these get a sharp home voice for use, and keep their best voice for those they meet elsewhere. I would say to all boys and girls: "Use your best voice at home." Watch it day by day as a pearl of great price, for it will be worth to you in days to come more than the best pearl hid in the sea. A kind voice is a lark's song to a hearth and home. It is to the heart what light is to the eye.

Inspiration by its own resultant action may amount to revelation. Love has a way of conferring wisdom; conscience, quickened and educated, reflects light upon judgment. But we should say that revelation is the increased seeing ability of mind which comes from purified and strengthened emotion, not a direct communication to the intellect.

Probably the most interesting railroad construction of recent years is the Russian road from the Caspian Sea to Samarcaud, a distance of 900 miles across great deserts, which was begun in 1883 and completed a few months ago. It was built for military uses, and for a time, at least, cannot pay commercially; but it opens up the heart of Persia to European commerce, and may develop something like modern enterprise in a country that was once a centre of opulence, power and learning. The road passes through so much desert land that water has to be carried by trains to nearly all the stations. In some sections there are no wells of water within 100 miles of each other. On account of the shifting sands hardy shrubs had to be planted along the way to protect the rails from being buried in sand and it is not yet sure that they will prove effective. One of the possible results of the construction of the road is a reclamation of the deserts, gradually, from many centres and as a result of tree planting. For the present, however, the road is interesting because it opens up at its present southern terminus a rich country to European commerce. In the event of war in India it will be of immense advantage to Russia, for it spans the section of country in which it is most difficult to move troops, because of the want of water. Express trains will put Samarcaud within five days of St. Petersburg, though, for the present, even with the aid of the railway, it takes about twelve days to make the journey.

A DESPERATE BATTLE.

Fight Between a Bald Eagle and an Immense Prairie Rattlesnake.

Dr. Allen, in the *Field*, relates his experience in the Rocky Mountains:—"One morning the stillness was suddenly broken by the shrill scream of an eagle. High up in the heavens I saw him preparing to descend, and down, down he came, with the swiftness of a shooting star, until he had nearly reached the earth, when he spread his powerful pinions and eased himself down until he had nearly reached terra firma, when with a sudden swoop he lighted upon a great prairie rattler, about five feet long, and a battle commenced such as I had never before witnessed. I rode slowly up to the combatants, as near as I could without disturbing them, and eagerly watched the progress of the fight. The bird was one of the largest bald eagles, and the snake was a monster of its kind, being three inches in diameter. The eagle, with its crest thrown backward, ran up to the snake and gave it a blow over the head with his wings that completely stunned it just as it was in the act of striking at him with all its force. Quick as thought the eagle then caught it in his talons, soared about ten feet in the air, gave it a furious shaking and let it fall to the earth, where it lay coiled in a warlike attitude, rattling and hissing in great wrath. The eagle made a second attack, in the same manner as before, but the snake watched its chance this time, and, when the eagle was close enough, thrust his head between his head and wing, with a desperate effort wound itself around the eagle's body, and it looked for a moment as though the powerful bird must die. Eaten with a violent flap of his wings, he broke the deadly embrace, caught the snake, gave it a number of jerks, and threw it down again. The blood was oozing from several places in the rattler's body, which seemed to make the eagle more excited than ever. The antagonists now remained some feet apart and seemed to be resting, while the rattler kept up a deep buzzing, perhaps to intimidate the bird. The eagle next tried another plan, wheeling around his enemy in a circle, but the serpent was acquainted with this dodge and kept full in his face. Thus foiled, the eagle began to whip the rattler with the tips of his wings, his head well thrown back, but the snake dodged the blows. The eagle then made a feint, jumped to one side and struck it a fearful blow; caught it up by the middle, and shook it until the snake was about to twine itself around his body, when he again threw it to the ground. Both showed signs of great fatigue but neither seemed inclined to give way. The eagle ran around and around his victim in every conceivable way, but so far the snake managed to hold him off until he threw back his head and made a desperate dive. The snake struck with all its force as the wing of the eagle came in contact with its head, and while trying to coil around his body was caught and carried into the air, where it was almost jerked in twain, and when it reached the ground again its entrails were hanging out, and it writhed and twisted in great pain, finally expiring. The proud bird stood looking on with the victorious air of a pugilist who has won the world-renowned battle, his head erect and his wings resting on the ground."

Burdock Leaves and Cut Worms

Having seen it stated that burdock leaves wrapped around the stems of cabbage plants when transplanted would prevent the attacks of the cut worm, I determined to try the experiment, although I had previously used stiff brown paper with almost perfect success. Thirty cabbage plants were set, and their stems wrapped with burdock leaves according to directions. As I might have known beforehand the exposed part of the leaves soon withered and dried, so that no protection whatever was afforded, and forthwith the cut worms began their work, and in one night five out of the thirty plants were destroyed. I immediately replaced them with new plants, and loosely wrapped the stems of all the plants with stiff brown paper, being fully satisfied that the burdock leaf remedy was of no value whatever to me. I have in rare instances known a cut worm to climb above the paper and eat off the leaves or stem, but scarcely one plant in fifty has been destroyed in this way.

A Trip to Polar Regions.

A trip combining pleasure and study will take about thirty scientific men of Austria far toward the North Pole this summer. They intend to take a look at the mountains and fords of Spitzbergen, to have a brief run in Greenland and Iceland, and to spend a week or so on the interesting island of Jan Mayen, near the edge of Greenland pack ice. A large Norwegian yacht will carry them over the northern seas, and if they have good luck they hope to reach 80° north latitude and look out over the Polar ice cap from the north coast of Spitzbergen. The pleasures of summer yachting in northern waters have been pictured in glowing colors by Dr. Hayes and Lord Dufferin. The thirty learned men will doubtless have an invigorating cruise, and as they represent many scientific specialties, they hope to have something of interest to say in a book which will be written after their return.

A Marvel in Steel.

There are 150,000 miles of railway in the United States; 300,000 miles of rails—in length enough to make twelve steel girdles for the earth's circumference. This enormous length of steel is wonderful—we do not really grasp its significance. But the rail itself, the little section of steel, is an engineering feat. The change of its form from the curious and clumsy iron pear head of thirty years ago to the present refined section of steel is a scientific development. It is now a beam whose every dimension and curve and angle are exactly suited to the tremendous work it has to do. The loads it carries are enormous, the blows it receives are heavy and constant, but it carries the loads and bears the blows and does its duty. The locomotive and the modern passenger and freight cars are great achievements; and so is the little rail which carries them all.

A Frenchman claims to have invented a thermometer so sensitive that its index needle will deflect two inches upon the entrance of a person into the room where it has been placed. The fabric known as Chinese grass-cloth is made from the fibre of nettles. This cloth is peculiarly glossy and transparent, and as being for machinery, has double the strength of leather.

Syrian Wives.

There are grand women in Arabia; women of ability, keen in insight, and of wonderful capabilities. The duties of the wife of a Syrian to-day, are as follows:

She brings all the water for family use from a distant well. This is accomplished by filling immense jars and bringing them upon her head. She rises early and goes to the handmill of the village carrying corn, enough of which for the day's bread she grinds by a slow, laborious process. This she carries home and cooks in an oven, which is made in the earth. It is a round hole, lined with oval and flat stones, and is heated by a fire built in it. When the bread is mixed with water and a little salt she removes the ashes and plasters pats of dough against the hot stones to cook. Could anything be more crude?

She cares for her children—usually a large family—and does all the rough work at intervals, while the husband calmly smokes his "argelle" or sits cross-legged upon his divan or horse-top, in converse with some equally hard-working member of Syrian society.

The houses are made of coarse stone, roughly hewn. The house-tops are of clay, covered with coarse gravel. In hot weather the sun bakes this mud-formed roof, and large cracks appear. The rain comes, and, as a natural consequence, the roof leaks. This is something of which the fastidious inhabitant of the Bible land does not approve. It does not add to his bodily comfort.

He remedies the difficulty—shall I tell you how? Not by any effort of his own; far from it; his wife comes, ascends to the house-top, and in the drizzling rain propels a roller of solid stone backward and forward, until she has used a lawn-mower, which rolls the sun-dried cracks together and prevents the entrance of water.

These are only a few of the Syrian housewife's duties. Her reward is not in this world, surely. She cannot speak to her husband in public; she can receive no caresses from his friends. She goes veiled and scantily clad. She has no time to make her own habiliments, for her hands must weave and spin and embroider artistically and abundantly for the husband and male children. In winter her feet are protected only by wooden sandals, and drops of blood mark the way to the Syrian well. Of course this is among the lower and middle classes of society in Syria, but those who belong to a higher class are very few.

Mrs. Livingston's Grave.

We are fifty miles from the mouth of the Zambesi, the mile-wide water shallow and brown, the low sandy banks fringed with alligators and wild birds. The great deltaic plain, yellow with sun tanned reeds, and sparsely covered with trees, stretches on every side; the sun is blistering hot; the sky, as it will be for months, a monotonous dome of blue—not a frank, bright, blue like the Canadian sky, but a veiled blue, a suspicious and malarious blue, partly due to the perpetual haze and partly to the imagination, for the Zambesi is no friend to the European, and this whole region is heavy with depressing memories. This impression, perhaps, was heightened by the fact that we were to spend that night within a few yards of the place where Mrs. Livingston died. Late in the afternoon we reached the spot—a low ruined hut a hundred yards from the river's bank with a broad verandah shading its crumbling walls. A grass-grown path straggled to the doorway, and the fresh print of a hippopotamus told how neglected the spot is now. Pushing the door open, we found ourselves in a long dark room, its mud floor broken into fragments, and the remains of native fires betraying its latest occupants. Turning to the right we entered a smaller chamber, the walls bare and stained, with two glassless windows facing the river. The evening sun, setting over the far-off Morumballa mountains, filled the room with its soft glow, and took our thoughts back to that Sunday evening twenty years ago, when in this same bedroom, at this same hour, Livingston knelt over his dying wife, and witnessed the great sunset of his life. Under a huge baobab tree—a miracle of vegetable vitality and luxuriance—stands Mrs. Livingston's grave. The picture in Livingston's book represents the place as well kept and surrounded with neatly planted trees. But now it is an utter wilderness, matted with jungle grass and trodden by the beasts of the forest; and, as I looked at the forsaken mound and contrived it with her husband's tomb in Westminster Abbey, I thought perhaps the woman's love which brought her to a spot like this, might be not less worthy of immortality.

Sabbath-Day Houses.

Every one went to church in the colonial days of New England. Families living at a distance from the meeting-house came prepared to spend the intermission between the morning and afternoon services in the "Sabbath day houses."

These houses, according to a description published in Sanford's "History of Connecticut," were small log structures, twenty-five feet long, ten broad, and one story high. A chimney in the middle divided the whole space into two rooms, for the use of the two families who united in building the house. The furniture consisted of a few chairs, a table, plates, dishes, and some utensils for warming cooked food. On a shelf were a Bible and two or three religious books.

In winter, on Sunday morning, before starting for church, the mother of the family put up food for dinner, not forgetting a jug of cider. The family rode in a large two-horse sleigh, stopped at the Sabbath house, kindled a fire, and then went into the cold meeting house, where the minister preached in an overcoat, with a muffle about his neck, and mittens on his hands. The woman carried heated stones in their muffs, and the men drew bags over their feet. No chronicler informs us how the boys and girls managed to keep warm during the service. At the conclusion of the morning service, the family hurried back to the warm room of the Sabbath house, where they took their dinner and drank cider from a pewter mug. Thanks were then returned, and the review of the sermon began. If the sermon failed to furnish sufficient matter to occupy the hour, a chapter in the Bible was read, or a few pages from a religious book. Singing and prayer sent them to the afternoon service in a devotional frame of mind, at the conclusion of which they returned to the Sabbath-day house, extinguished the fire, locked the door, and started for home.