

PLAYING WITH SNAKES.

CHILDREN HAVE GREAT FUN WITH COPPERHEADS.

An Incident Which Shows That Venomous Reptile is a Less Dangerous Light-Toyed With by Children.

"I was up in the zinc mine region of Sussex county, New Jersey, last week," and read in one of the local papers up there an account of an incident which seemed to go a good way towards confirming the truth of a startling belief that has prevailed from time out of mind among the natives of the mountains in Lancaster, York and adjacent counties of Pennsylvania, where the copperhead snake dwells in unpleasant abundance, that this venomous snake will not bite children. There are many wonderful stories told over there, especially in the famous Welsh Mountain country, about this strange lenity of the copperhead towards children. I never heard of this belief being indulged anywhere else than in that part of Pennsylvania; but this New Jersey incident rather inclines me to think that, unaccountable as it may seem, there must be more than fancy or superstition in it.

"One day a week or so ago, according to the New Jersey newspaper, Florence, the 6-year-old daughter of Geo. Wilson, of Woodburn, found much enjoyment in stamping her foot on an object she saw protruding from the foundation of the house. The sport went on until it attracted the attention of her elder sister, who, when she saw the game, was scared and ran to call her mother. The object the child had stamped proved to be a big pit. 'Such reptiles,' added the newspaper, 'although amusing are dangerous playmates for children.'

"I can't see wherein these reptiles are amusing, but in the light of this incident and other of which I have heard, I begin to have my doubts that the rare dangerous playmates for children. I recall now one instance in particular that occurred a season or two ago on the York County side of the Susquehanna river, where copperheads—or pitons, as they are called in New Jersey—are uncomfortably common. On the farm of which I am going to speak the haying hands have killed as many as ten in one day this season mowing over one field.

"The farm is the Loan farm. At the time I refer to one of Loan's children, a little girl of three, was playing in the front yard, and her mother noticed her sitting in the grass near the gate. Every now and then the child was heard to laugh gleefully, and Mrs. Loan at last

WALKED OUT TO SEE what it was that amused the child so much. When the child saw her mother coming, she shouted:

"Hurry mamma, and see the live carpet rags!"

"At the same time she held up to her mother's gaze, a snake she had grasped in her hand, which twisted and squirmed in the air. Mrs. Loan saw at once that the snake was a copperhead. Although she almost swooned with terror, she acted with rare presence of mind. It occurred to her that if she showed her alarm by crying out suddenly to her, the child would undoubtedly become frightened and the change that would naturally follow in her handling of the deadly reptile might anger the snake and cause it to sink its venomous fangs into her hand or face. With a great effort, Mrs. Loan controlled herself sufficiently to say coaxingly:

"Fetch it to mamma, dear. Don't hurt it."

"But there's two of 'em, mamma," replied the little girl. "I'll fetch 'em both."

"She reached down and picked up another copperhead that lay in the grass which Mrs. Loan had not seen, and came toddling along the path toward her mother.

WITH A WRIGGLING SNAKE in each hand. Mrs. Loan, although almost paralyzed with terror over the plight her little one was in, for one stroke of the copperhead's fang would have been her swift and sure death, retained her composure, and when the child was within a couple of yards of her spoke to her gently, and said:

"Put them on the ground, darling, and let me see them walk."

"This seemed to please the child, and she placed the copperheads in the path. They then saw Mrs. Loan for the first time, and their manner changed instantly. The copperhead, unlike the rattlesnake, is aggressive, and these two, showing all the fierceness of their nature, at once moved toward the child's mother, plainly with hostile intent. The child clapped her hands and started to catch the snakes. Her mother rushed around the snakes and snatching the child up in her arms, flew to the house, closed the door behind her, and fell fainting to the floor. The copperheads were killed later, and the little girl mourned for her deadly playthings for days.

"That is only one of scores of incidents one may hear over in that part of Pennsylvania about the immunity from danger the copperhead snake grants to children, and the New Jersey case is also one in point. Still, although it looks to me as if the startling Welsh Mountain belief had good grounds, I don't believe I would take a copperhead home as a plaything for my children, just the same."

WOULDN'T MISS THE CHANCE.

She says that he proposed to her, but that they are not engaged.

But they knew her and they laughed long and loud.

The only problem, they said, is to decide which of the two statements is false.

Sympathetic Maiden—Why, Jimmy, you poor boy! Have you been fighting Jimmy?—No—I've been fought.

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DETECTIVES OF LONDON.

PROCESS OF SELECTION FOLLOWED BY THE AUTHORITIES.

Detectives Born, Not Made. A Thorough Course of Training Necessary Before Obtaining a Truncheon—Something About the Political Department.

It is an article of faith with most people connected with the Criminal Investigation Department that detectives are born, not made, says the London Daily Telegraph. The process of selection followed by the authorities at Scotland Yard will not permit of any "duffers" finding their way into a body which has been recently described by a French magistrate as "the most effective force in Europe." In view of the epidemic of ruffianism in the streets of London, and the attention which is being given to the disorderly characters who infest the Turf, it may be interesting to take a glance at the higher branch of the service on which the British public relies for the preservation of law and order.

An examination of the books at headquarters will show that the smartest men in the detective service at the present day have been evolved from the rawest material. In most cases they have been recruited from the working-classes throughout the country, from the towns and villages of England, Scotland, and Wales. London, which is the great nursery of crime and the place of sanctuary for evil-doers from all parts of the world, supplies only the smallest proportion of the men who are responsible for maintaining the law amongst Cockneys. Some of the greatest detectives of the age have been Irishmen, but only very few are accepted by the authorities nowadays. At one time a small percentage of recruits came from the Emerald Isle, but since the time of the Fenian and dynamite outrages there has not been a strong demand for candidates from that quarter.

EARLY TRAINING.

Every detective begins his career at the lowest rung of the police ladder. When seeking employment in the London force, the young man from the country is promptly directed to Scotland Yard, where the work of winnowing the grain is begun. Physical fitness is an important qualification, and the candidate must be prepared to pass a very stiff medical examination. This may be one of the facts accounting for the large number of provincials who are accepted. After the doctor comes a test of the man's educational attainments. A writer in these columns has already pointed out that the clumsy criminal is fast becoming extinct, and, acting upon the principle of "diamond cut diamond," Scotland Yard must have men able to deal with skilled "professionals," whose weapons are the chloroform-pad, electric drills, and other resources of science unknown to the Bill Sikes of an earlier generation. It is for this reason that the standard of education is being gradually increased. Having been proved sound in mind and body, the candidates are sent to Wellington Barracks, where they are drilled every day for three weeks, or for such longer period as may be deemed necessary.

This course finished, the novice is attached to one of the police divisions of the Metropolis, and another stage of training begins. His first duty is to attend the police-courts daily, the object being to teach him the details of procedure, the manner of giving evidence, and the best way of conducting a case. The young constable is next entrusted to the care of an experienced officer, who pilots him round the various streets of his division, shows him the chief resorts of crime, and generally furnishes him with a fund of useful "tips." After a few days of this class of work he is supplied with uniform and truncheon. The days of apprenticeship are ended, and he goes forth to take a place amongst the rank and file of the Metropolitan police.

RAPID ADVANCEMENT.

There are three grades of uniformed constables, and it is the ambition of most men in these to enter the detective force, promotion to which is accompanied by higher salary and improved social position. Even to the third-class policeman the chance of proving his quality soon comes, and, in many cases, advancement to the first class is very rapid. It is from the latter section that our detectives are chiefly recruited, but no man is accepted until he has succeeded in satisfying the divisional chief that he has some natural faculty for the investigation of crime. When Sir Howard Vincent was in authority at Scotland Yard, he

tried the experiment of appointing men to the detective service who had not been trained as constables. This step proved a complete failure, and very soon after their nomination most of the new men found it desirable to resign. It may be imagined by people in the habit of reading detective novels of the Sherlock Holmes type that the arrest of criminals may be brought about by methods which have no place at the present time in our system; but the hard, practical experience of Scotland Yard does not favour a departure from the plan now pursued. The theorists have been obliged to yield to men like Melville, Littlechild, Swanson, Greenham, Hagen, Von Tornow, and Jarvis, all of whom belong to the essentially practical school. These officers held as an axiom that a fairly good "police clue" in the hands of the average detective trained in the London force was worth more than the teaching of all the psychologists in Europe. Intelligent, practical, experienced men are demanded by Scotland Yard, but hypnotists, mesmerists, and mind-readers receive no encouragement. The pay of a first-class detective constable does not average 2 pounds a week, but if success attends him he will be promoted to sergeant, when his salary, starting at 2 pounds, 2 shillings per week, may advance by yearly stages until he receives as much as 3 pounds, 1 shilling, 6 pence.

THE POLICE CLEARING HOUSE.

Scotland Yard may be described as the great "clearing house" for the United Kingdom and the Colonies as regards crime, and the most interesting feature of Scotland Yard is the Secret Service or Political Department, of which Mr. Melville, a most able conscientious officer, is the chief. While the ordinary Yard officer is dealing with such matters as the arrest of refugee criminals, extradition proceedings, or the unravelling of some murder mystery, his comrade of the Political Department is transacting affairs of still greater State importance. The safeguarding of Royalty and of Cabinet Ministers, the arrest of Anarchists and revolutionists, and the investigation of charges of treason

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fall to the lot of some forty picked men acting under Mr. Melville's directions. They are in daily communication with the police department of every foreign Government, and certain members are frequently despatched on secret missions abroad.

This special department was formed in 1883, at the time of the dynamite outrages, and remained for some years under Chief-Inspector Littlechild as a temporary establishment. Finally, the Home Office, being convinced of the enormous importance of the work which had been performed by the new service, resolved that it should be established on a permanent basis. Representatives are stationed at the chief ports not only in the United Kingdom but on the Continent. Most of the men belonging to this department are of superior education and have been selected on account of the special aptitude they have displayed in the capture of law-breakers. It enjoys the pleasant reputation of being the only police department where a liberal allowance for expenses is made. When a man accepts duty as a temporary detective he is only allowed 2 shillings, 6 pence per week in addition to his wages as a constable, but the favoured member of the "Special Service" enjoys practically a free hand. It would be obviously impossible to trace much treason-felony on so niggardly a scale as half a crown for expenses extending over seven days.

NECESSITIES FIRST.

Was that the landlord again after the rent?

Yes; and I told him that we hadn't paid for our wheels yet.

GOOD AS CAPITAL.

Binks—New man in your office, I see. Looks like a prize-fighter.

Winks—He's my silent partner. Eh? Does he foot the bills?

No. He foots the collectors.

LONG LIVED HOUSES.

There are houses still standing in Nuremberg, Bavaria, that were built in 1080.

NOT SEEKING OTHERS.

Hewitt—Come to dinner with me, Jewett—Where?

Hewitt—At my boarding house. Jewett—No, thank you. I have stomach troubles of my own.

A CLINGING DELUSION.

What is force of habit, ma? Force of habit? Well, it is the way your father keeps on thinking he is not fat, after he has had to have a special porch chair made for him!

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AN EXCEPTIONAL CASE.

Tom—Love is a disease that physicians are unable to cure.

Jack—Yes, as a rule, but a friend of mine, who had a bad case of love was completely cured by a doctor.

Tom—Is it possible?

Jack—Straight goods. You see, he was in love with a female M. D. and married her.

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HIS SURMISE.

Ya-as, I've been thinking about it, he said.

About what? they asked.

About that girl I met on the veranda last evening, he replied.

What about her? they inquired.

Why, I said, the deuced trouble with the girls was, don't you know, that when a fellow tried to kiss them they screamed, and then she said she had a bad cold, don't you know, and had lost her voice. Ya-as, I've been thinking about it, and I've pretty nearly made up my mind that the next time I get her alone I'll kiss her. Ya-as.

There are people who might be hit with a club and never find it out until the next day.

A SEVERE THUMP.

He—I was reading somewhere the other day that no woman should ever marry a genius.

She—Oh, well; don't let that worry you, even if the girls were disposed to heed such advice the bars would be down for you.

Persons suffering from Bunions or Corns should spread a little "Quickcure" on the bunion or corn, before retiring at night, cover the "Quickcure" with a piece of tissue paper, and tie a piece of linen over the paper to keep it in place until the morning, then remove linen and the "Quickcure" covered with tissue paper makes a perfect plaster; reducing all inflammation causing pain.

THE ONLY ONE OF THE KIND.

Grimshaw—I hardly know what to make of Poorchap. I never knew another fellow just like him.

Askins—What is there peculiar about him?

Grimshaw—Why, although he is in very straitened circumstances he never grubs about having squandered a fortune in his younger days!

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by local applications, as they cannot reach the diseased portion of the ear. There is only one way to cure deafness, and that is by constitutional remedies. Deafness is caused by an inflamed condition of the mucous lining of the Eustachian Tube. When this tube gets inflamed you have a rumbling sound or imperfect hearing, and when it is fully closed deafness results. If the inflammation can be taken out and this tube restored to its normal condition, hearing will be destroyed forever; vice versa, if the tube is closed by catarrh, which is nothing but an inflamed condition of the mucous surface.

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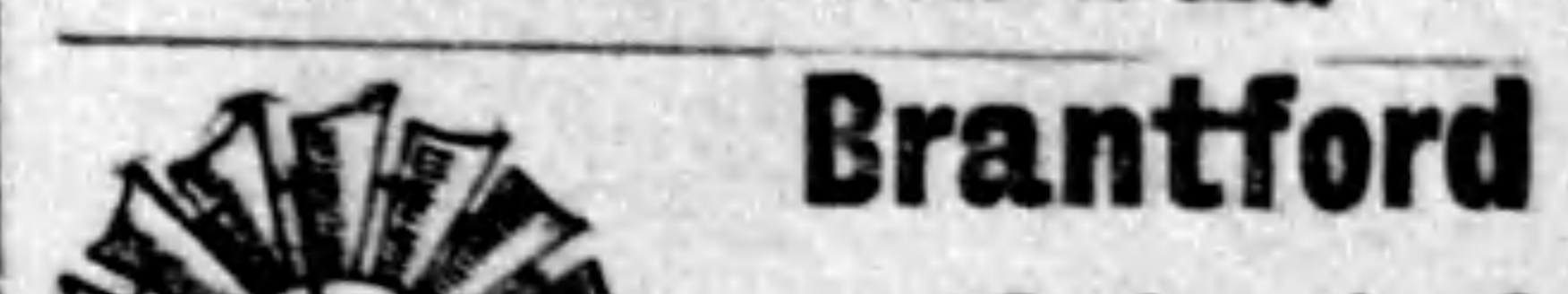
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