

CURIOUS TRAP FOR SNAKES

Naturalist Tells of Seeing a Biscuit Can Used by Natives to Capture a Cobra.

A naturalist tells us of an odd kind of snake trap that caught its victim securely. It was a biscuit can, and in the bottom of it were some macaroons.

A cobra spied the can, but a mouse was ahead of the cobra. The little thief was having a good time regaling himself on the macaroons, all unconscious that a snake was preparing to regale itself on mouse. Into the can went the head of the snake, but the head that went in was destined to come out less easily. The rough edges of the can irritated the cobra, and involuntarily it dilated its hood. That made it a prisoner. With the hood dilated the head could not be withdrawn, and the cobra remained in its tin prison until morning, when it was easily captured and killed.

Stradling, who knows the natives of India as well as he knows the snakes of that land, tells of an interesting theory held by these people. They are firmly convinced that for every human being a snake bites it loses one joint. When the number of deaths the snake has caused equals the number of its joints, the venomous head alone remains. The snake has now reached the height of its wicked desires, and at this point it develops wings and triumphantly disappears.

An exception to this rule is found on the other side of the world, in the case of the rattlesnake, for the natives of many parts of this country are said to believe that this snake gains a thimble for every man it kills. By counting these some folks pretend to an ability to calculate with precision how many persons a particular rattlesnake has bitten. But this is, of course, as great a superstition as that held by the Hindus.

A Voice for Potatoes.

Most persons in this country have pitied the men and women on the continent of Europe who are compelled to eat bread made wholly or partly of potato flour. Yet here come experts of the home economics department of Cornell telling us that potatoes and meat may be a better food combination than bread and meat.

These experts declare that there is good reason for favoring potatoes. Meat, eggs and cereals, they say, contain mineral elements which give an excess of acids, while vegetables, fruit and milk have an excess of bases that neutralize the acid. Meat produces an excess of acid, and the food that accompanies it should, therefore, give an excess of alkali. Rice, bread, macaroni and cornmeal produce acid, and so do not fill the need. But potatoes are the natural accompaniment of meat, because they produce bases. "Most persons," according to these experts, "should make it a point to eat more potatoes than they are now consuming."—Buffalo Express.

Oil Cans Save Life.

A novel idea was responsible for the saving of many lives from the cruiser Hermes after the ship was torpedoed in Dover straits. A supply of the life-saving pneumatic collars ordered by the admiralty had been expected, but the Hermes had to put to sea before these were received.

When the vessel was torpedoed no assistance was at hand. She was settling down, and a great disaster threatened, when someone thought of petrol tins, of which 400 were on board. The order was promptly given to empty the tins and screw down the stoppers, and on these tins scores of men who must otherwise have been drowned kept afloat until help arrived.

Up to Them.

Little James, aged six years, had been taught to pray each night for all his relatives and friends, and consequently the list had grown quite large. So one night when it came time for the customary prayers he refused to say them.

"Well, well, James!" said his mother. "Why won't you say them? All good little boys say their prayers."

"Yes, but I'm too tired."

"Oh, my, that's no excuse. Come now that's a good boy."

"Well," relented James, "I guess I'll have to. But, anyhow, I'm not going to pray for everybody. I'm going to cut a lot of 'em out. Some of 'em will have to save themselves."—Harper's Magazine.

Rabbits on Laysan Island.

Rabbits on Laysan island, the well-known Hawaiian bird reservation, have multiplied to such an extent since they were introduced a few years ago as to threaten the existence of the island vegetation. As this result would jeopardize bird colonies, which need shade, especially during the nesting season, an expedition which recently visited the island destroyed about 5,000 rabbits, or one-third of the total colony.

As Times Change.

"It's harder to attract attention than it used to be," remarked the town clown.

"What makes you think so?"

"I remember when I could get all kinds of a laugh simply by wearing a straw hat before the first of May."

A Serious Doubt.

"What is that noise Maude is making out there?"

"I didn't know whether she is trying her Wagnerian solo or practicing her new class yell."

TOO ROUGH FOR HIM

SOUTHERN NEGRO QUILTS THE MOVING PICTURE GAME.

Hanging and Fire in Jail Altogether Too Realistic for Darkey Who Takes Place of Alleged Picture Actor.

A negro in a southern county seat town had been condemned to die. The day of the hanging came and Rastus was taken to the scaffold in the courthouse yard. The hood was slipped over his head and the noose adjusted.

Just as the sheriff was about to spring the trap a cry of "Fire!" was heard, and smoke was seen coming from the courthouse windows. The officials and spectators, forgetting their task, rushed to help fight the blaze. Anyway, Rastus was tied and could not escape without aid.

During the fire another negro wandered into the courthouse yard and passed the scaffold. He thought he recognized a familiar form standing on it and proceeded to find out.

"Hello dar! Is dat you, Rastus?"

"Ise Rastus."

"What you all doin' on dat plat-form?"

"Ise a movin' picture actor now, Sam."

"A movin' picture actor?"

"Yes, sah; a regular movin' picture actor."

"Is movin' picture actin' hard work, Rastus?"

"It's softer dan eatin' watermelon all day long."

"Is you paid well?"

"Gets five dollars every day for workin' a hour or two."

"Rastus, you all is a friend of mine, isn't you, all?"

"I sure is, Sam."

"Den if the white folks what run dis movin' picture actor business wants another actor you tell 'em about me, Rastus."

"You can come on up here and take my job right now, Sam. Ise tired of movin' picture actin' for today. Besides, I got to spend the money Ise made already."

Sam mounted the steps and released Rastus from his bonds. Rastus in turn prepared the unsuspecting Sam for hanging. Then he skipped. A few minutes later the sheriff returned. He saw a negro standing patiently on the scaffold. Without further ado he sprung the trap.

Fortunately for Sam the rope was old and broke under the sudden strain. It rolled Sam into the dust of the courthouse yard. He wrenched his hands loose and jerked the hood from his head. Then, rolling his eyes around and rubbing his neck, he said:

"You all white folks can take back your old job. You all's too rough."

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ANNUAL REPORT

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

late graves could easily be marked and the new ones also as they are added. A new fence and a general cleaning up would add much to the appearance of the place. We recommend all graves marked so far as they are known in some substantial manner.

The following might prove of interest to those who know little about the inmates of the county asylum. Some living there are unfortunate and have seen happy days; others are degenerate and are a real trouble to those who care for them.

We stepped to the door of a building and looking in saw cord upon cord of wood sawed in regular lengths and piled high in tiers and the matron said every stick had been sawed by a blind inmate called "Blind Tommy." Of course we asked about him and they told us the following story: Thomas Sullivan was born in Ireland but came to this country early in life. He is a broom maker by trade. On June 15, 1875, at the age of twenty-six, Tom entered the county asylum and has lived there ever since. He is intelligent, works every day, knows every part of the farm, going all over it by himself.

His health is good and he is always ready for a hearty meal. He has the name of being the "very best" inmate at the county farm. We asked if anything was ever done especially for his comfort or happiness and were told that it was hard to do anything especially for him because he is so very independent, not liking to accept favors from any one. The matron, Mrs. Laughlin, says that once in a while she places some extra fine fruit or a little candy on his plate on the dining table. But aside from this he accepts nothing. He misses people who do not visit the farm as often as usual and inquires about them. He seems happy and contented, and goes about his daily duties, accepting favors from no one, for he certainly earns every penny and more than is spent for his care and keeping.

County Jail.

The county jail is a brick structure located on First street, Decatur. Ed Green is sheriff and L. D. Jacobs his deputy.

Fourteen prisoners may be kept, and at present there are nine prisoners. Six men and three women are serving jail sentences.

The jail is strong, safe and well ventilated. The prisoners exercise, usually by cutting weeds and working in the garden or on the lawn.

The building is lighted by electricity and heated by steam. City water is supplied and the building is within the city fire limits. There are two closets in the men's department which are in good condition. The whole building is a model of neatness and cleanliness. The plumbing is all right at present. A complete record is kept up to date in every respect. The sewerage is washed directly to the river which is very near, the sewer being in good condition. There is one bath tub in the men's department and it is in fine condition. The prisoners bathe at least once a week. The bedding is washed every other day and underclothes are changed every week. The county does not furnish the under clothes. The beds are just ordinary jail "bunks." The beds and bedding are very clean. The furniture consists of a table and a few chairs. There are rules for the prisoners which they are required to observe. The sexes are separated. The woman's department is located on the upper floor of the jail. There is no chance to classify the prisoners, boys and men all using the same corridors, with the insane, criminals or any who are placed behind the bars.

Some little work is done by the prisoners but no regular work is required.

Plenty of reading matter is furnished the prisoners by persons outside interested in the inmates' welfare.

No religious services are held at the jail.

No tramps are received except which the law requires the sheriff to receive. The same rules apply to receiving the city prisoners.

The prisoners are well fed and the food served is wholesome, meat is given at least once and sometimes twice a day. Vegetables and fruit are served in season.

The officers and the board of charities agree that a bat tub in the woman's department is an immediate necessity. Also a detention room at the north end of the upper hall could be made secure in which a boy or girl prisoner could be kept over night or for a short time. This should be done at once.

The board was pleased to find everything so clean and neat at the jail.

Geneva Lock-up.

The Geneva lock-up was visited by Mr. Sim Fordyce.

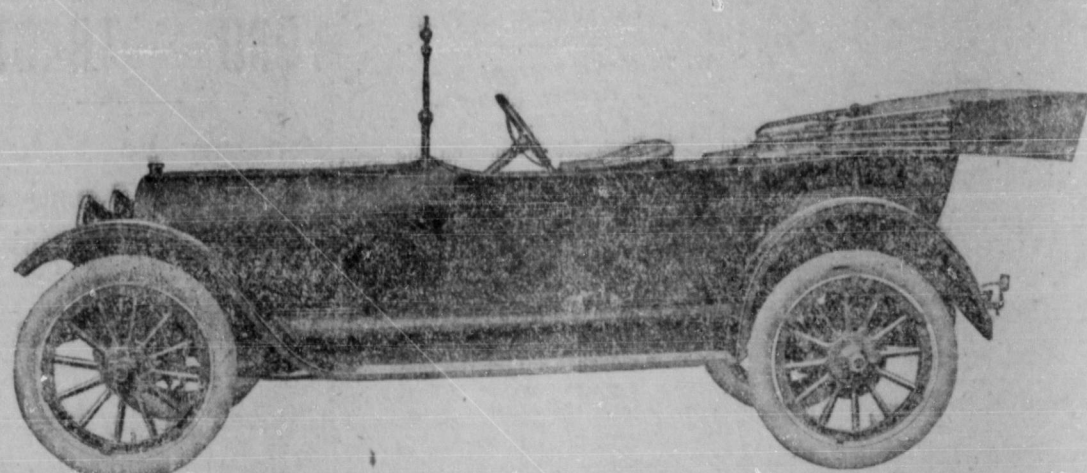
The building is constructed of brick and contains two rooms. The

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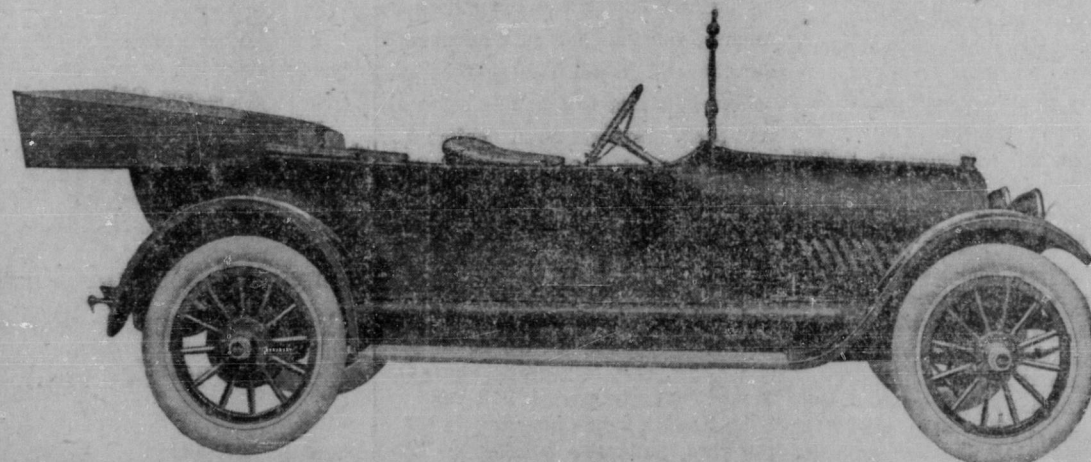
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