SOME SNAKE STURIES.

How a Blacksnake Hunts the Rattler's Foe Rescuing a Ship from a Python.

"Sit down and starpen your percil, while I overhaul my mental she'ves," remarked Mr. Thompson, curator of the zoological collection in the park, in answer to a request for some snake stories. "Before giving you some of my experiences, 1 want to enter a protest against the indiscriminate slaug ter of our common barmless snakes, such as the blacksnake, gartersnake and the like. Every farmer should protect them, for they are beneficial, instead of being harmful, as is generally supposed by a large majority of humanity. Any raturalist will tell you that the food of the blacksnate consists largely of rats, mice, &c., while that of the gartersnake is principally insects, such as grasshoppers, caterpillars, &c.

"Now for some of my experiences. In my younger days I was crossing Ashby's Gap. over the Blue Ridge Virginia, in company with an uncle of the famous Black Horse Cavalry, Ashby. We were making a portion of the ascent through quite a deep cut, when our attention was attracted by a tord, which rolled instead of hopping down the side slope. Ashby pulled up the horse and said, 'There's a black-snake after that fellow.' An instant after the snake thrust his head through the fence, and, on observing us, drew back. In the meanwhile the toad had gathered himself together, and was hopping at a lively gait up the road. Ashby remarked, 'Now I will show you something,' and sprang out o. the buggy, caught the toad, which he carried a short distance and released. Returning, he turce ! the buggy, and drove back down the road some fity steps, when we lighted and t'ed the horse. Climbing over the tence, on the opposite side of the road to that on which the snake had made his appearance we stealthily worked our way up, un'il we came in sight of the point where he was first seen. Lying down in the long grass and peering through the rails, we did not have to wait long before the snake reappeared.

"He looked about for a few seconds, and then descended the slope down which the toad had rolled, and tollowed his trail up the road. On coming to the spot where it had been picked up, he began to circle, precisely as a dog would act, having lost the scent. He gradually increased the size of his circles until he struck the spot where the toad had been put down, when he made a bee line after it. We leaped into the road and hurried after its snakeship, who as soon as he discovered that he was being followed, turned up the slope and squirmed out of sight through the fence. Ashby s id: 'I am sure you are satisfied now that the blacksnake hunts its prey by scent.' I assented, and he turned back after the buggy, while I pushed forward, picked up the frightened toad and carried it fully half a mile before re-

"Many years ago I visited the Capon Springs, Hampshire county, W. Va. While there I often amused myself squirrel hunting. The landlord owned a small terrer, FOR COUGHS, COLDS, which had been taught to hunt and tree them, and an old-fashioned Kentucky rifle. I frequently borrowed both dog and gun, and wi h their assistance managed to have fair sport. One afternoon I was making my way through the undergrowth, attracted by the barking of the dog, when just in front of me I saw a blacksnake with his head well aloft, intently looking over an old rotten log. I remained still and awaited darfed over the log, had there was a fearful rustling among the dry leaves. On advancing so there was a clear view beyond the log. I saw that he had seized a rattlesnake just back of the leid, and was killing it by constriction. Just then the dog began to bark with increased vehemence, and tearing that the squirrel would become so frightened as to commence jumping from tree to tree, I hastened away to secure my game. On my return I found the rattler dead aud the blacksnake gone. The conclusion I drew from this incident was that Constrictor base nion and Crotalus durissus were not loving neighbors."

Bicycle Books for Women.

The bicycle book is the latest, a pretty conceit which will doubtless find favor with the fair devotees of the wheel, if not those of the sterner sex. It is intended to be used as a sort of diary of one's trips and to record the speed and length of each ride. Like the address book and the calling book, which have been found really useful, this little book is bard-made. The best of papers should be used, and the cover should be of canvas, parchment or leather. A tiny painting, or pen and ink drawing of a wheel, with a suitable motto or apt quotation, would be just right for decoration.

Two symptoms of the gradual eman ipation of women being brought about by the bicycles are already observable this season. The first is the much more general abandonment of the ordinary corset. The other is the frequent acknowledgment that the use of the leggin is now a matter of discretion. Last year, even indoors in the height of summer when no sane woman would of thought of wearing a double thickness of hose, custom declared leather leggins to te indispensable. But common sense now prevails to the extent of permitting an extra covering to be dispensed with when, instead of being useful, it is plainly inconvenient.

Interesting Reading.

"What if I should cease to love you?" he asked in a moment of reckless abandon. "Then, dear, I should have your letters published as unique contributions to the literature of the century," was the soothing reply.

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The Faithful Sentry.

An Irish member of the Sixth Regiment of South Carolina Infantry was stationed on the beach at Sullivan's Island, with orders to walk between two specified points and to let no one pass without giving the countersign. He was one of those soldiers who believe in obeying orders to the letter. Two hours after Hugh bad thus been stationed, the corporal with the relief appeared in the moonlight, and was astonished to see Hugh walking to and fro up to his waist in water. The tide had come in. 'Who goes there?' demanded the

'Relief,' answered the corporal. 'Halt, relief! Advance, corporal, and give the countersign. 'But I am not coming in there to be

'Never a bit,' said Hugh. 'The littenant told me to not to leave the post.' 'Well, then,' said the corporal, starting to move away, 'you may stay there all

drowned. Come out and let me relieve

'Halt!' thundered the sentry. 'I'll put a hole in ye if you pass without the countorsign. Them's me orders from the liftenant,' and he cocked and leveled the gun.

·Confound you and the lieutenant!

answered the corporal. Everybovy will hear it if I bawl it out to you.' 'Yis, me darling, and the liftenant said it must be given in a whisper. In with ye; me finger's on the trigger.' There was nothing for the corporal to do but to wade out where the faithful sentinel stood. 'Be jabbers,' said that worthy, 'it's well you've come! The dhirty tide bas almost drowned me.'

Reasonable Skepticism.

"Stranger," he said to the traveller who had stopped at his unpretentious home for a night's lodging, "hev ye ever hearn tell ez how ef ye see a red-headed girl, ye're boun' ter see a white hoss?"

"Of course, Tha't an old idea."

"I heard it some time myself." "It has some basis of fact, too. You see, the case simply is that there are more white horses in existence than there are redhaired girls. So their appearing at the same is a more than likely coincidence.

"Well, sir," replied the householder, in a tone that defied controversy, "you kin call it a cerincidence, er what ye please, I call it a dura lie. See that gal over there ?" "Yes"

"Her hair's red, ain't it ?"

"It's-quite auburn." "It's red, that's a dead sure thing, an' I ain't ashamed of it. She's my wife. The day before I married her I had one of the purtiest white hosses ye ever laid yer eyes onter. Hoss thiet come along while the preacher was a-pernouncin' the ceremony. I've got the red-headed girl, but I ain't seen no white hoss sence. An' what's more, I don't expect ter see none."

Rearing her Young in a Trap. In the warehouse of George J. Appold

& Sons, on Water street, are several cats which have passed through a strange ad-Some time ago the old cat become the

mother of two kittens, which grew to be favorites with every one in the building. One day the kittens were n issing, and all efforts to find them failed. About a month after their disappearance

a part of the platform in the front of the building had to be removed in order to permit coal to be taken in. There, to the surprise of the porter, he saw the mother cat crouched beside a rat trap, inside of which were the two lost kittens receiving nourishment from her through the wires of the trap.

The secret was out. The mischievous kittens had crawled into the trap, which has long been out of use, and it had "caught" them. Their plight being seen by their mother. she sustained them in the manner which instinct suggested.

The kittens had grown so large in the time they had been missed that they filled the narrow precincts of their prison .-Baltimore Sun.

Odds and Ends.

"Don't you think that 'Charity' is a queer title for your new book?" 'Not at all. Charity begins at home, you know."-Philadelphia North American.

"Louise, where does the intellectual ex-

ercise come in? in p'aying whit,?" 'O, in getting other people to pay attention to the game."— Chicago Record. Mother-"No, Bobby; money doesn't

make folks happy—but I'll teil you what does." Bobby—"I know, ma; it's the stuff what you get with it,"—Judge. Mrs. Wickwire-"Why don't you ever wash your face?" Dismal Dawson-"Dont

want the sun to git a chance to spite me complexion."— Indianapolis Journal. "After all, man is a generous being."

'Yes, he is; I never saw a husband yet who wouldn't let some other man teach his wife to ride a wheel."-Chicago Record.

Higson-"Layson is the laziest man I know." Juggles-"Is that so?' Hipson-"Yes. Why, that man won't even carry life insurance."-Philadelphia North Am-

Reporter-"Here's a bit of news that is a scoop." City Editor-"What is it?" Reporter. "The shovel manufacturers have formed a trust."-Philadelphia North

To Fit the Appetite.—"What do you charge for board?" "Do you ride a bicycle?" "Yes; what difference does that make?" "It'll be \$1 more a week!"-Chicago Record.

Generally that's the Hardest of Work .-'Uncle Tom, what is executive ability?' "It's knowing how to make other people work without doing anything yourself."— Chicago Record.

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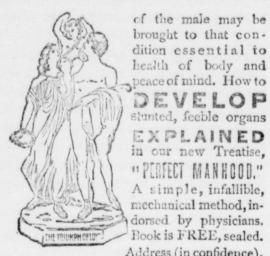
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MOVING TONS OF GULD.

How a Work of this Kind was Done Lately.

The transfer of the \$32,000,000 ingold from the vaults of the Mercantile Safe Deposit Company in the Equitable building to the new vaults of the Clearing House in New York, which was completed lately without a mishap or more incident than the ordinary moving of office fixtures.

Few persons realize what such a sum as \$32,000,000 means when it is all in gold. speaking of the treatment says the New York Sun. At a dollar a pennyweight, which is about its value, it means 1,600,000 ounces, 133,-3331/3 pounds, equal to 661/3 tons. Had the transfer been made in freight cars, the gold would have loaded six of the old fashioned ones. It would load thirteen of the big double trucks, or make more than sixty wagons loads in the country. If the gold had been transferred by men as carriers, and divided into loads of 1331/3 pounds for each man, it would have taken 1,000 men to move it, and the procession would have been long enough to reach from Cedar street to Thomas street, along Broadway, past the City Hall and three blocks beyond. Each of the 1,000 men would then have been supporting on his back a fortune of \$32,000. Still there wouldn't have been much more langer of his running away with it than there is of a man's running off with a ball and chain. The gold and the men in such a procession would be almost equal in weigh'.

All of this gold is the property of the banks which form the New York Clearing House. This is about one-half of the gold which these banks keep constantly on hand and this part of it has been deposited with the Clearing House in exchange for Clearing House certificates. These certificates are used in place of money in settling the balances which arise in the course of each day's business among the banks of the association. The certificates may be redeemed for the gold at any time, but there is little chance that the gold which has just been locked and sealed in the Clearing House vaults will be disturbed again for a generation except for an occasional count-

Before the Clearing House erected its new building in Cedar street it had no place of its own in which to keep this vast tortune of gold. It, therefore, was counted, weighed, and sealed in bags, each holding \$5,000, and placed in the vaults of the Mercantile Safe Deposit Company.

When the transfer began, the bags were taken out in the presence of Manager Sheerer of the Clearing House or of Assistant Manager William J. Gilpin and of members of the Clearing House Committee and also of the Bank Committee, in whose presence they had been originally sealed, and the seals and numbers of the bags were checked. Each lot of ten bags was locked in a strong box made of California redwood, and the box containing \$50,000, was placed in one of John Barclay's one-Broadway entrance to the Mercantile Safe | ently clothed. Deposit Company's vauits. Twenty boxes or two tons of gold made a load, and this was driven around the corner and 150 feet or so down Cedar street to the entrance to the Clearing House vault. Some of the members of the two committees of of bankers rode with each load and a single extra

policeman was on duty in the street. Two million dollars was transferred thus on April 30. On the following day \$3,-000,000 was moved, and since then \$5,-000,000 a day was moved, except on Saturday and Sunday a week ago. Yesterday

the last \$2,000,000 was moved. When the boxes of gold gotto the Clearing House, they were put upon a sidewalk elevator and lowered into the vault just as if they had been boxes of coal. Down there the members of the Clearing House and of the bank committee followed them, tor it takes some of both committees to open the big safes in which the gold was stowed away.

The new vault was described in the Sun last winter. It is the biggest and thickest steel strong box in the country, and is supposed to be the nearest to burgular proof of all in the world. It is a great steel box supported on piers, so that watchmen can see all around it, and under and over it, and its walls are made up of alternate plates of undrillable chrome steel and unbreakable soft steel to a thickness of six inches. This sate is divided into three compartmen's, and each compartment has a ten-ton outer door and inner doors nearly as heavy. These doors have seperate combinations, and no man is allowed to know them both. They are protected by triple time locks and by electrical connections both within the building and also running over to the Mercantile Sate Deposit Company's watch

Within each of these safes are seventy steel closets, and each closet has two separate locks. Each closet has separate locks. Each closet holds \$500,000 in gold, crabout one ton.

The \$32,000 000, was just about enough to fill one compartment of the big sate. As the gold was already under seal. It did not need weighing, but the two committees counted the bags, saw them put into the big closets, each committee turned its own key in the closets, and then each one locked the safe door that it was responsible for, and departed. In order that current business may be carried on, and small sums in gold taken in or paid out-say, a few millions of dollars-without calling out both committees, there are other closets between the inner and outer doors of each safe where such sums may be kept, but these can be got at only in business hours.

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