

# The Man and the Snake

By E. Mirrielees.

All round the circle of the hills the dazzling sky pressed down unobscured to the touch of the parched air-rock. Between the hills the yellow basin lay baked and breathless. Over it the tense air quivered with heat. Within, no bird fluttered, nor water purled nor green plant moved its head. Only the desert cacti, sagebrush and grease-wood and long-spined cactus, gray but never dying, lived on there in the drought, sterile and forbidding as the land which gave them birth.

Everywhere was silence upon the place, everywhere was immobility, save where the man lay and where beside him the bound snake whirred and writhed and rattled in the impotent fury of fear.

The man lay stretched on the hot earth stark naked, his face turned to the sky. A buckskin thong passed across his throat and was drawn taut between two roots of sagebrush. The noose which held his ankles was secured about a clump of grease-wood and both arms, thonged at the wrists, stretched wide as in crucifixion. Heavy bands of buckskin spanned his body so that to the prisoner there were but two possible movements. He could turn his head from side to side, facing on the one hand the snake, on the other the miniature forest of sage-brush; and he could clench and unclench his pinioned hands.

In this last freedom the final ingenuity of savage captors had found expression. With the left hand tight clinched, the snake's wild stroke felt just short of its aim. Should sleep or insensibility relax the fingers the reptile's head might overlap them.

Since early morning, through the increasing heat of the day, the man had lain there, grim and silent as the gray hills round him, save when now and then he raised his hoarse voice in defiant shouts. The snake, on the other hand, struggled and fought unceasingly against the cord which held him, striking impartially at it, at the just removed fingers or at the wooden stake to which the cord was tied, grovelling his body in the sandy earth, writhing and tugging with protruding tongue, and while translating in whirr and hiss the blind fear of his captivity.

Sometimes the man turned his head to watch; once or twice when the snake's movements flagged he slightly stirred his fingers in the sand, the ruse each time rewarded by the swift spring and fruitless stroke. But mostly he lay still, all his mind bent on endurance.

The man had been placed there to die. He knew it and the knowledge tinged his thoughts with a strange curiosity. There were three ways in which death might reach him; through the snake, through sunstroke or by the weary route of thirst and hunger. The second and quickest of these ways the light mountain air, vibrantly hot though it might be, rendered improbable. For the snake is was a part of the man's torment that at any minute he might stretch forth his hand and by the movement invite an end brief indeed, but horrible to the mind, doubly horrible to the strained imagination.

There was one other chance. An unexpected rainstorm, a heavy night dew in that barren place, would stretch the slender buckskin thong which held the rattler that unaided he might reach and strike his victim. This was the element of uncertainty in the grim problem. This it was that sent the man's eyes searching the bare horizon with a look half dread, half longing.

On one of these weary journeys of eight a tiny speck of black above the western hills attracted him—a steady pinpoint of the dazzling blue. He shut his eyes a moment in order to look again the more intently, and when he opened them, lo! the dark points were two. He watched them uncomprehendingly, as slowly and steadily high in air they moved from west to east. When at last in mid-heaven the sun's sheer strength beat down his gaze, he was the lonelier for loss of this one sign of movement.

The sense of heat had by now grown into anguish. The man's exposed body drew and quivered beneath the sun's rays as though each inch of it were endowed with a separate life. Unseen insects brushed and fluttered upon it, leaving beneath their light pressure a trail like fire on the blistered surface. The snake lay prone, exhausted almost beyond striving. The man (noting it, smiled grimly and scraped his fingers noisily in the loose earth. As the snake whirled to front the challenge, he curled his hand close with a taunt for its futile effort.

He was thus engrossed when suddenly across his face swept a sense of delicious coolness. He turned his head, close above him almost within touch of a free hand a great bird, carrion in every movement, hovered on steady outspread wings, its shadow fell across his face; its eyes, beaklike and glistening and greedy, looked straight into his own.

For an instant they stared thus, man and bird. Then with a cry the man flung himself against his bonds, struggling and straining at them for escape from this new horror. On his body, dry till now, sweat poured forth in streams. Blood gushed from his nostrils. With shrieks, with oaths, with stumbling words of prayer, he fought against the fate which held him.

Not once but many times the struggle was repeated. When at last, exhausted, his convulsed body fell back to quiet, the bird was gone. Shudderingly the man raised his eyes. Far up, half lost in blue, but ready, tireless, it hung above him.

Turning his blanched cheek to the sand, he fell into a sort of sleep. All through the waiting day he slept, through the approach of night and the swift desert change from heat to cold. The snake was sleeping, not as snakes are wont to sleep in freedom, head tucked to tail and sinuous fold lipping on fold, but with his swollen body back-thrown and stiffened against the stake which held him, caught mid-struggle by insensibility. The man turned his head to face him.

"Hey, rattler!" he called cheerily, and scraped some grains of sand toward the recumbent body.

But when he saw the start and shudder with which the creature woke, the anguish of returning consciousness, suddenly he was sorry for his act. When the snake, writhing round, struck at its cord quivering from head to tail, he would have given an hour of his own rest to have restored the sleep which he had broken.

The sun rose presently. Again the weary panorama of the day unrolled before the eyes of the two victims. The snake was quiet, weakened by his long struggle. The man, strengthened by sleep, restored by the night's cold, held himself strongly in hand.

Watching the indifference of the reptile, the man feared less. Fixing his eyes upon it, he could hold hard to sanity and to endurance, though around him perched and hovered the culture ministers of death.

But as the morning passed a new anxiety came upon him. Suppose the snake should die first. It seemed to weaken with every hour and the man trembled. He spoke to it soothingly at times and had, or believed he had, the power of quieting its paroxysms. In his fevered mind he searched haltingly for some knowledge of its needs. Would it live longer for the taking of his life? And if by stretching out his hand he could delay its end, what then of the lengthening of its pain?

Before his dimming eyes the snake loomed, now a refuge, now a menace. A dozen times he half relaxed his hand, only to draw it close again. Once, when the snake fell in its spring, seemingly dead, he thrust the fingers wide with a cry of utter deprivation. When it moved again he drew them in, instinctive love of life still upon him.

He closed his eyes after this and for a long time lay still, only rolling his head from side to side that the vultures might not light upon his body.

At last, when the sun lay low on the horizon, he ceased the movement and again looked about him. Overhead a cloud of birds, scared by the sudden quiet, hung high in air; the sagebrush all around rustled with pungent dryness and to the west the sky burned hard and bright as burnished copper.

For a long time he waited. Then with a sobbing breath, he flung round, straining his body against the cords which held him.

The snake, too, had moved. The thong that bound it was drawn taut, and painfully it had thrust its swollen head across the fingers. It lay thus, outstretched, not striking, its glazing eyes on the man's face.

And while they lay so suddenly there came to pass the impossible, the one uncounted chance. From far across the desolate sagebrush desert sounded the barking of a dog.

It came nearer and with it the creak and grinding of heavy wheels. The man strove to cry out and, failing, gnawed desperately at his baked lips and tongue. When the feeble trickle of blood which paid his efforts had moistened his dry throat, he raised his voice in shrill and terrible cries. Above him at the sound the startled birds swirled to the west. The snake, too weak to spring, had yet dragged himself to a coil, his flat head raised in air.

Between his cries the man could hear the abrupt stopping of the wagon, the confused exclamation of men's voices. Next instant the dog's moist breath whiffed on his forehead and a man's face bent to his own. There was a sudden tightening of the buckskin thongs as a knife passed beneath them, its cool blade searing like fire on the blistered flesh. Hands dragged him from his place. A man on either side, he was held erect. Through a mass of pain and weakness, he could hear the comment of his rescuers.

"Alive, all right!"  
"He'll die on our hands."  
"Carry him to the wagon!"  
Hands beneath his shoulders, they bent to the task of lifting him.

The sufferer sent out a groping hand in protest. He swallowed hard, struggling to speak. His naked foot thrust close—perilously close—to the fanged head of the snake.

"Turn him loose, too," he commanded.

## MOST INCREDIBLE MODESTY.

American Multi-Millionaire Married a Countess and Made no Fuss.

America is the wonderland of the world. She has produced among her things, many remarkable men. But up to now her history holds no record of anything so rare as the unostentatious, modest, retiring, silent multi-millionaire, John F. Betz, of Philadelphia, who married a real German Countess ten years ago because he was in love with her, and who didn't mention it till the other day, because he did not like publicity.

Through the recording of a deed of transfer, by which a large Philadelphia brewery goes to one of the sons of Mr. Betz, it became known that he was married. Upon being cornered by an inquisitive reporter he admitted that the marriage had taken place ten years ago, and that the present Mrs. Betz was a countess. The only explanation of his secrecy, according to the Philadelphia Inquirer, is that he is "habitually reticent concerning all things."

Mr. Betz met the Countess Anne Helena at a card party in Berlin. He was sixty, slightly deaf, lonely, enormously rich, "and a widowed man." She was twenty-three, beautiful and alone in the world. They married, and came to America to live, told the rest of the Betz family, and said nothing to the public. Mrs. Betz is described as a home-loving woman, who has no social inclinations that lead her beyond the home circle. After a while Miss Frances Betz, and then Johann, appeared in the home of the reticent Betzes, and in due time Frances became of school age and was sent to Temple College, but no one suspected that she was the daughter of the multi-millionaire and the countess. "We simply wish to be let alone," said Mrs. Betz sweetly, when the secret of the marriage became no longer a secret. "We are content to live quietly."

"Modesty, even when it amounts to eccentricity, is a beautiful thing to behold. The average American millionaire is a bird much more closely resembling the peacock than the dove, and the American who marries a title usually grows blatant. It is satisfying to our national pride—often and grievously wounded by the shafts of derision sped by our cousins across the sea—to know that we have one multi-millionaire who was as modest as if he had owed money, and who did not seize a megaphone to blow it when he had made a distinguished match. The only fly in our ointment is the fact that Mr. Betz is merely a German-American, and perhaps it is because the German in him predominates that he is so radically different from other grossly rich Americans.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

## "Peach" of a War Story.

Humor is not associated with the bloody days of Kentucky in revolutionary times. But a bit of fun of the grousome kind is recited by Lynn Tew Sprague, in "Outing" in an article entitled, "General Isaac Shelby, First Governor of Kentucky." The incident follows:

"A patriot soldier named Culbertson, who was acting as a scout to Shelby's command, while gathering information before the action, came suddenly upon a British dragoon who was eating a peach.

"Both were startled by the meeting and the Britisher swallowed the fruit, stone and all, and reached for his gun. A shooting match ensued. The dragoon perished by the duel and was hastily buried by the scout in a shallow hole.

"Visiting the grave next year, Culbertson found a peach-tree growing from it, and he boasted of living to enjoy fruit rooted in British soil, and fertilized by his adversary. The story we may add is Culbertson's very own.

## Smokeless Coal.

A London inventor claims to have discovered a process for producing smokeless coal, apparently by distillation of coal at a low temperature. This, after filtration, is said to deposit a very brilliant substance, for heating properties of which are far greater than those of the original coal and which is absolutely free from smoke and dirt. The inventor claims that efforts to overcome the smoke plague have hitherto been unsuccessful because they have been made in the wrong direction, and that by the extracting of the smoke producing material in coal before being burned he has been successful in producing a smokeless coal. Sir W. B. Richmond, president of the Society for the Prevention of Smoke, has bought up this invention.

## Shower Bath Apparatus.

Among recent inventions is a simple shower-bath attachment. It is an improvement over the hose and nozzle contrivance recently introduced, which is attached to the water fixture, the nozzle being arranged in one hand and the spray directed on the body with the other hand. With the attachment shown here it is not necessary to hold the nozzle in the hand. Instead the spray is directed so as to strike a person in the bath tub, and any water passing beyond the body strikes the walls of the tub. The hands are thus not encumbered and are free to use for whatever purpose desired. A Chicago man is the inventor.

It requires a pound of candles to produce as much light as 1,000 cubic feet of gas.

## A REAL ROMAN CHARIOT.

Rare and Valuable Relic of a Great and Powerful People.

Strolling through the Fifth Avenue wing in the Metropolitan Museum, in Central Park, New York, one comes upon a chariot of bronze in a great glass box. This is a grand prize in the lottery of the excavator, just such a prize as the Louvre or the British Museum would like to draw, since neither in their marvelous collections, nor at Berlin, nor in the many museums of Italy, is its equal to be found. Twenty-five, perhaps thirty, centuries has this specimen of a long forgotten fashion in war lain beneath the soil of Umbria, the wooden parts under the bronze rotting slowly away, the weight of the earth above gradually crushing in the shell, and only the protective layer of oxidation on the surface of the bronze preventing a total disintegration of car body, wheels and pole. Near it lie two curving sheets of metal, all that remains of the wooden yoke with bronze covering plates, and in a dish a shimmering mass of ivory flakes hints of a rail that graced the curving front.

In such a car, so small, yet so lavishly embellished with hammered and deftly fitted bronze reliefs, may Lars Porsena, of Clusium, have celebrated many a triumph which the narrow pride of Roman historians has suppressed. With the exception of a fragmentary bronze car at Perugia, this is the only example known of the war chariots of the mysterious people who civilized and gave kings to Rome.

## Last of Old Gunhouses.

The recent vote of the governor and council of Maine authorizing the adjutant general to sell the old gun house at East Machias brings to mind that this is the last of 59 such houses that the state once owned.

The old structure has been going to decay for some years, and not long ago the revolutionary field pieces which it sheltered were taken to Augusta and given a place on the terrace at the rear of the capitol. Since then the rain and the winds have done their work so persistently that there isn't much left of the old building.

A man, who wishes to buy it, estimates that it is worth from \$12 to \$15, and he has written to Adj. Gen. Farnham to see if there is any objection to his standing his cow in one corner of the building, provided a purchase cannot be effected.

## Chinese Salvationists.

They have a new light turned on the domestic servant question in San Francisco. It is the Salvation Army and many of the "China boys" there have become members and put their religious principles into their household work. The Salvation Army is working in many nationalities in many countries, and is doing good work among the Chinese in Chinatown, San Francisco.

## Hold-Fast Horse Blanket.

An organization of Europe devoted to the cause of humanity has recently offered quite a respectable prize to be awarded to the school teacher who accomplishes the most in the direction of instilling into the scholars in her or his care the idea of compassion for the dumb animals. How the award shall be made has not yet been decided on, but it will be exceedingly interesting to know how the various claims shall be judged.



If this were not limited to school teachers a promising candidate for these honors would in all probability be the old lady in a Western town who was severely injured by being knocked down by an animal which had been frightened by the woman's praiseworthy efforts to replace on its back the blanket which had fallen partially to the ground. It is quite a common thing to see a horse standing on a cold day with its blanket under its feet and the individual who stops to rearrange the article is a humanitarian of lesser degree than the one who invents a blanket which cannot be shed in this manner by the animal which it is designed to protect.

The blanket shown in the accompanying cut was designed for this purpose and looks as if it might accomplish its mission, as it is securely fastened at each end. The blanket is buttoned around the neck of the animal in the usual manner and by means of two strips of webbing it is secured to each of the horse's hind legs. This cannot interfere with the movements of the animal and cannot work down or be blown from his back.

## Dog Suite—London Style.

Here is a photograph of a lucky dog owned by an English peeress. Booted and clothed as shown in the picture, the animal appears in Hyde Park when his aristocratic mistress is out for a "constitutional." A maid accompanies the pair and manipulates the handkerchief whenever his dogship sneezes or sniffs.

**YOO DROPS**  
**CASTORIA**  
Vegetable Preparation for Assimilating the Food and Regulating the Stomach and Bowels of INFANTS & CHILDREN  
Promotes Digestion, Cheerfulness and Rest. Contains neither Opium, Morphine nor Mineral. NOT NARCOTIC.  
Recipe of Old Dr. SAMUEL PITCHEE  
Perfect Remedy for Constipation, Sour Stomach, Diarrhoea, Worms, Convulsions, Feverishness and LOSS OF SLEEP.  
Fac Simile Signature of  
*Chas. H. Fletcher*  
NEW YORK  
4th months old  
35 DROPS - 35 CENTS  
EXACT COPY OF WRAPPER.

# CASTORIA

For Infants and Children.  
The Kind You Have Always Bought Bears the Signature of  
*Chas. H. Fletcher*  
In Use For Over Thirty Years  
**CASTORIA**  
THE CENTAUR COMPANY, NEW YORK CITY.

**White Flour and Yellow.**  
Nothing has bothered the millers and the health faddists more than the demand among Americans for white flour. The whiter the flour the better it sells, and of late years flour that had the slightest tinge of yellow has been practically unsalable. Now, yellow flour is the natural color of flour, and in order to obtain the pure whiteness so much in demand the flour has to be submitted to a bleaching process, which the health faddists declare much impairs the nutritive qualities. This is not denied by the millers, who, however, are only interested in giving the public what it wants.  
An Englishman named Alsop has now come forward with a new process for bleaching flour, which, it is alleged, instead of impairing the nutritive qualities of the flour, increases them. This process consists of submitting the flour to the action of air which has been subjected to the action of an arc or flaming discharge of electricity. Analyses made in some of the State Agricultural Departments show that ordinary untreated flour contains fifty-one one-thousandths of its own bulk of nitrogenous matter, while treated flour contains seventy-five one-thousandths.

**Beginning of the Piano.**  
It was a harpsichord maker, Cristofori, in the employ of the Duke of Tuscany, who in 1711 made the first successful piano. As curator of Ferdinand de Medici's collection of Belgian, French and Italian instruments to look after, and this undoubtedly aided him, though the model was so crude that the inventor could never have dreamed a monument would ever be erected in his memory.  
From this feeble beginning comes a long list of names of men who helped perfect the piano. But factories alone could never have achieved without royalty to encourage and virtuosos to play. Frederick the Great ordered five pianos for his palace, where they can be seen at the present day. Marie Antoinette was a patron of the art, and Clementine in England and Mozart in Germany introduced the instrument so it became a part of life. It was in Pleyel's concert room that Chopin played, and our later firms have brought out a long list of artists, Jozseffy, Paderewski, and others.

**A Shoplifter's Shoe.**  
After knocking and dropping part of a stock of rings on the floor, a Chicago thief relied on a piece of beeswax placed on the instep of her slipper to pick up and conceal the most valued ring.

## MAGAZINE READERS

**SUNSET MAGAZINE**  
beautifully illustrated, good stories and articles about California and all the Far West \$1.50 a year

**CAMERA CRAFT**  
devoted each month to the artistic reproduction of the best work of amateur and professional photographers \$1.00 a year

**ROAD OF A THOUSAND WONDERS**  
a book of 75 pages, containing 120 colored photographs of picturesque spots in California and Oregon \$0.75

Total . . . \$3.25  
All for . . . \$1.50  
Address all orders to  
**SUNSET MAGAZINE**  
Flood Building San Francisco

**The Only Survivor**  
Of the Hayes Arctic Expedition, Mr. S. J. McCormick, now U. S. Deputy Mineral Surveyor, Bliss Station, Idaho, says: "For years I have suffered from severe pains in the hip joint and backbone, depriving me of all power. The cause was Stone in the Bladder and Gravel in the Kidneys. After using Dr. David Kennedy's Favorite Remedy of Rondout, N. Y., I was completely cured."

The optimist when he has a toothache is thankful he isn't a hippopotamus.  
MAKE A NOTE NOW to get Ely's Cream Balm if you are troubled with nasal catarrh, hay fever or cold in the head. It is purifying and soothing to the sensitive membrane that lines the air-passages. It is made to overcome the disease, not to fool the patient by a short, deceptive relief. There is no cocaine nor mercury in it. Do not be talked into taking a substitute for Ely's Cream Balm. All druggists sell it. Price 50c. Mailed by Ely Bros., 56 Warren Street, New York.

Some people tell the truth with about as much grace as they take a dose of medicine.  
Whose Say-so is Best?

With nearly all medicines put up for sale through druggists, one has to take the maker's say-so alone as to their curative value. Of course, such testimony is not that of a disinterested party and accordingly is not to be given the same credit as if written from disinterested motives. Dr. Pierce's medicines, however, form a striking exception to the rule. Their claims to the confidence of invalids does not rest solely upon their makers' say-so or praise. Their ingredients are matters of public knowledge, being printed on each separate bottle wrapper. Thus invalid sufferers are taken into Dr. Pierce's full confidence. Scores of leading medical men have written enough to fill volumes in praise of the curative value of the several ingredients entering into these well-known medicines.

Among these writers we find such medical lights as Prof. Finley Ellingwood, M. D., of Bennett Medical College, Chicago; Prof. Hale, of the same city; Prof. John M. Scudder, M. D., late of Cincinnati, Ohio; Dr. Grover Coe, of New York; Dr. Bartlow, of Jefferson Medical College, of Pa. and scores of others equally eminent.  
Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription cures the worst cases of female weakness, prolapsus, anteversion and retroversion and corrects irregularities, cures painful periods, dries up disagreeable and weakening drains, sometimes known as pelvic catarrh and a multitude of other diseases peculiar to women.

Silk Industry in Lyons.  
The ancient city of Lyons, the 2nd city in France with a population of 500,000, with silk being its important industry in the world's silk industry. More than 10,000 people—men, women and children—are employed in its factories.

**A Reliable Remedy FOR CATARRH**  
Ely's Cream Balm  
is quickly absorbed. Gives Relief at Once. It cleanses, soothes, heals and protects the diseased membrane resulting from Catarrh and drives away a Cold in the Head quickly. Restores the Senses of Taste and Smell. Full size 50 cts. at Druggists or by mail. Liquid Cream Balm for use in atomizers 75 cts.  
My Brothers, 56 Warren Street, New York.