

enables it to catch insects of different kinds. It will even eat fish, and for that purpose frequents the water as well as the black snake.

"I heard a gentleman relate a circumstance to my father once, that surprised me a good deal. He said that he was fishing one day in a river near his own house, and that being tired he had seated himself on a log or fallen tree, where his basket of fish also stood ; that a large garter-snake came up the log and took a small fish out of his basket, which it speedily swallowed. The gentleman seeing the snake so bold as not to mind his presence, took a small rock-bass by the tail and held it towards him, half in joke, when, to his great surprise, the snake glided towards him and took the fish out of his hand, sliding away with its prize to a hole beneath the log, where it began by slow degrees to swallow it, stretching its mouth and the skin of its neck to a great extent, till, after a long while, it was fairly gorged, and then slid down into its hole, leaving its neck and head only to be seen."

"I should have been so frightened, Nurse, if I had been the gentleman when the snake came to take the fish," said lady Mary.

"The gentleman was well aware of the nature of the reptile, and knew that it would not bite him. I have read of snakes of the most poisonous kinds being tamed and taught all manner of tricks. There are in India and in Egypt, people that are called snake-charmers, who will contrive to extract the fangs that contain the venom, from the cobra capella or hooded snake ; they then become quite harmless. These snakes are very fond of music, and will come out of the leather bag or basket, that their master carries them in, and dance and run up his arms, twining about his neck, and even entering his mouth, when he plays on a sort of flute. They do not tell people that the poison teeth have been extracted, so that it is thought to be the music that keeps the snake from biting. The snake has a power of charming birds and small animals by fixing its eye steadily upon them, when the little creatures become paralyzed by fear, either stand quite still, or come nearer and nearer to their cruel enemy, till they are within his reach. The cat has the same power, and can, by this art, draw birds to her, and also mice. These little