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## SNAKES ROBBED OF VENOM FOR CURE

Poison Extracted from 33 Bronx Zoo Moccasins and Copperheads to Obtain Serum—Whiskey Myth Exploded.

New York, Oct. 11.—Poison was extracted from thirty-three snakes at the Bronx Zoological Gardens this week because the demand for snake serum has been greatly stimulated, following extensive laboratory experiments which are said to prove that the whiskey treatment aggravates snake bites instead of curing them.

Ravenscroft L. Dittus, Curator of Reptiles, caused twenty-four copperheads and nine water moccasins to give up their poison, which will be developed into serum by Dr. Afranio Amaral of the Department of Snake Antitoxins in the Brazilian Institute of Science. The experiments, supposed to prove that whiskey helps to kill snake-bite victims instead of curing them, were carried on at this institution in Brazil under the direction of Dr. Amaral, who is now engaged in research work at the Harvard Medical School. These experiments were described by Dr. Gilbert Vander Smitten, a specialist in the treatment of snake bites, who assisted yesterday in the delicate work of poison collecting in the glass room of the Reptile House at the zoo.

The genial old standard remedy for snake bite has been suspected of worthlessness by physicians for many years, according to Dr. Vander Smitten, but the recent experiments in Brazil have proved that a quart of Scotch or rye actually hinders the patient's chance of recovery.

### Test Sober and Drunken Mammals.

The Brazilian experiments are conclusive, according to the specialist, in spite of the hundreds of miracles attributed to whiskey in the last few years. The activity of poisonous snakes in biting humans has increased one hundredfold, according to investigators, and hundreds have reported themselves snake-bitten in communities hitherto regarded as snakeless. Judged by the demand for prescriptions, it is asserted that Long Island has been wholly misrepresented in the natural histories which allege that it is almost free from poisonous snakes. It has all the reptiles of a tropical jungle, according to recent medical history.

"The procedure in the Brazilian experiments," said Dr. Vander Smitten, "was to take a series of mammals and dose them with whiskey. Then poisonous snakes were caused to bite them. A similar series of mammals was kept sober and they, too, were bitten by snakes. The intoxicated animals all died five or six hours before the sober animals."

"The fact of the matter seems to be that whiskey or any other alcoholic liquor, instead of counteracting the poison, merely acts to speed up the circulation, to spread the poison more quickly throughout the body and to

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speed the chemical changes which it causes. "If you want to kill a snake-bite patient, give him whiskey. The best treatment for snake bites today seems to be to remove as much poison as possible mechanically, to wash the wound and then to treat the patient with serum. My own experience indicates that nothing else should be done. We have often injected potassiumate of potash about the wound, but this, it is likely, does more harm than good. The drug kills tissue and seems to have no beneficial influence."

### Collecting the Poison.

The snakes were collected into two kegs for the poison extract yesterday. They were lifted out by large wire hooks and placed on a table, where an instrument was placed just behind the head to render it impossible for them to strike. Each of the thirty-three snakes wriggled and struggled, but none succeeded in threatening the nimble operators, who are used to handling quick-thinking reptiles. Allowing the first snake an inch or two of room in which to strike, Mr. Dittus placed a glass funnel covered with parchment before the reptile. It struck instantly, the quarter-inch fangs penetrating the parchment. Each of the snake's natural hypodermic needles ejected poison. The snake specialist then caught the subject back of the jaws and squeezed the poison glands, forcing another drop from the fangs. The poison was allowed to run from the small funnel into a glass receptacle. One after another the thirty-three snakes were thus treated, and a total of sixty drops of poison collected, the venom of the moccasins being kept separate from that of the copperheads. There is no specific serum at present against moccasin and copperhead bites, victims of these snakes are treated with rattlesnake and other snake serums which have a beneficial effect, but are not so efficient as the specific serum is expected to be.

### Obtain Serum From Horses.

On his return to Brazil Dr. Amaral will use the two types of venoms in developing antitoxins from horses. For this purpose magnificent percherons are used. A dose of one-twentieth of a drop is first injected. A big healthy animal hardly notices this. A week or so later a larger dose is given. This is repeated for months until the horse is finally unaffected by a dose which would be promptly fatal to an untreated animal. After the horse has developed immunity to this extent, it is able to furnish serum in large quantities. A quart or more of blood is extracted. From this the clear serum is drawn off. This is strongly charged with substances, developed by the poison treatment, which have the power to neutralize the venom. The horse may be bled again and again for serum, but after a certain period the immunity wears off, and a new producer of serum has to be developed. The same horse is not used over and over for this purpose. The serum from a horse which has undergone a second course of poisoning undergoes complications of some unknown kind and is of less value in treating patients.

Quick Treatment an Essential.

"The snake serum, if injected a few hours after the bite, is an infallible remedy," Curator Dittus said yesterday. "The one drawback to it is that it must be handy. The patient must be treated within six hours or so, or else the work of the poison is so far advanced that it cannot be counteracted. It should be distributed through all

localities where snake bites are frequent. Hundreds of lives have been saved by it. It has not only been speeded to the rescue of victims by long-distance telephone and automobile, but by radio and aeroplane. I have just returned from a trip to Southern California, where there are several poisonous varieties of snakes, and I learned that in several cases airplanes have been sent out from San Diego and other points to ranches where snake-bite cases have occurred. The call for the remedy has usually come by long-distance telephones, but in some cases it has been relayed by radio.

"The serum will be developed in laboratories in Brazil, because the serum laboratories in this country are all working to capacity in producing remedies for diseases which are more common in this country than snake-bite. Because of the number and variety of snakes in Brazil and the great annual death rate from them, the development of the serum treatment has advanced much further there than elsewhere."

Dr. Vander Smitten said that the Brazilian medical men had developed a polyvalent snake serum, which means a combination of snake serums. Very often the patient does not know what kind of a reptile bit him and specific antitoxin cannot be used. The polyvalent serum, however, contains a fraction of specific serum against the

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venom, and the action of the specific is aided by the varieties of serum in combination with it. The snake poisons closely resemble each other, and any type of serum has more or less effect in killing any kind of snake poison.

The sixty drops of venom obtained yesterday, after working several months in the veins of percherons, will produce several hundred doses of serum. These will be distributed in the local-

ties where moccasin and copperhead bites are most frequently reported.

Sir Joseph W. Isherwood is the inventor of the Isherwood system of ship construction, upon whose patent 12,000,000 tons of vessels have already been constructed.

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### MEMORIAL TABLET.

The quarterly meeting of the St. John Power Boat Club was held last night in the club rooms with Commodore J. H. Barton presiding and a large attendance of members. An interesting feature of the meeting was the presentation to the club of a handsome bronze tablet bearing the names of the members and their sons, who enlisted and served overseas during the late war. The tablet contains a list of forty names and was the gift of Rear Commodore Ronald A. McAvity. Heartly thanks were extended to the donor in a unanimous standing vote and all present joined in singing "For he's a jolly good fellow" and then gave three ringing cheers for the Rear Commodore.

### Y. M. C. A. CLASSES.

The Y. M. C. A. gymnasium classes are now in full swing and the schedule for the season has been completed. All of the classes are well attended and the members are getting to work in good style. The average attendance in the various classes is as follows: "Comers," 40; Junior A, 72; Junior B, 50; High School, 30; Junior business boys, 30, and young men's class, 30. The senior leaders' corps held its first meeting last night and there was a good attendance. The wrestling

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# ANNUAL AUTUMN FUR SALE

Opening Thursday Morning, October 12th and Continuing Until Saturday, October 21st.

In former years we have held our Annual Autumn Fur Sale in November, but this year we have decided to hold it in October. There are several reasons for this. First, we have been able to purchase very advantageously from several of the large fur houses; then, the season this year is slightly in advance of other years; and finally, we have decided to give the people of St. John and vicinity such bargains in fur garments and separate pieces that the name F. S. Thomas and Fur Values will be associated throughout the province with one another.

Nothing will be withheld during this Fur Sale. Everything in Furs in the entire store will be subjected to startling reductions. You can see both "price tags"—the former price and the Sale price. And the F. S. Thomas label means a positive guarantee as to quality and workmanship.

### Hudson Seal Coats

The quality of the pelts in these Hudson Seal Coats is unsurpassed. Made in full smart body lines in varying lengths. Exquisitely trimmed with Alaska Sable, Beaver, Squirrel and Fitch. The large Shawl collar and modish wide cuff make this garment one of our smartest and most popular coats. The new silk girdle may be had in place of the belt if desired.

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| Alaska Sable Trimmed—2 Only— | \$625.00; Now \$510.00 |
|                              | \$500.00; Now \$435.00 |
|                              | \$475.00; Now \$395.00 |
| Opossum Trimmed—2 Only—      | \$290.00               |
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| Grey Squirrel Trimmed—       | \$475.00; Now \$415.00 |
| Fitch Trimmed—               | \$500.00; Now \$435.00 |

### Persian Lamb Coats

The dernier cri in coats is Persian Lamb. A few are self-trimmed but the majority are trimmed with Alaska Sable. Deep shawl collar and cuffs of Alaska Sable and handsomely lined with rich brocade silk.

|                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Alaska Sable Trimmed— | \$500.00; Now \$425.00 |
|                       | \$475.00; Now \$385.00 |
|                       | \$450.00; Now \$365.00 |
| Self Trimmed—         | \$390.00; Now \$315.00 |
|                       | \$375.00; Now \$310.00 |

### Scotch Moleskin Coats

The illustration here gives you an idea of the beauty and exquisite style of 2—only—Scotch Moleskin Coats. These coats are 40" long, have large cape collar and bell sleeves with beautiful 8-skin border. The lining is of luxurious soft figured silk. Former price was \$500.00. Annual Fur Sale Price \$435.00

### Hudson Seal Coatee

New York has set the sign of approval on the Coatee. We have 1—only—made from very superior skins. The former price was \$250.00.

Annual Fur Sale Price, \$165.00

### Mink Marmot Coats

We have 8—only—Mink Marmot Coats, 40" and 42" long, trimmed with convertible collar of beautifully marked Raccoon skins and deep cuffs of same. The lining is of fancy poplin.

Annual Fur Sale Price, \$76.50

### Pony Coats

It is doubtful if a finer medium priced coat can be found than one of Russian Pony. Made of genuine Black Russian Pony Skins. These soft pelts are long wearing and fashioned in the smartest advanced modes. Trimmed with 14 in. Opossum collar and deep cuffs. Civet may be had if desired.

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### RACCOON COATS

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A marvelous showing of Animal Scarves of Black Lynx, Wolf in Taupe and Cinnamon, Alaska Shawl Collars, Neckpieces of Mink, Ermine and other favored Furs; all at prices for our Annual Fur Sale of from 25% to 50% discount.

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