An Adventure With Two Cobras.

To show how to fight a cobra, that most deadly of snakes, Raymond L. Ditmars, snake expert of the Zoological Gardens, told of a death-grip fight he had with two of them in an animal collector's shop. Two of these enormous creatures had been received by the dealer in a long crate that had been crushed by other cages piling on it.

"The accident occurred in an upper floor of the man's store," said Mr. Ditmar, "and before he could do anything the two cobras were after him, poised to strike, like two green candlesticks, six feet high.

"He uttered a yell and literally tumbled down stairs, banging the door behind him. Then he trembled and fussed, at a loss what to do until it occurred to him to telephone to me for help.

"I went down to the place with a stick and a bag accompanied by a keeper, and found the upper floor barricaded and everybody about the place with nerves on the jump. One thing was in our favor, the windows were screened with fine meshed wire, so the cobras couldn't get out that way, and we knew they were somewhere in the loft.

"The keeper and I went up with our sticks and bags. Each stick was provided with a noose that we hoped to get around the reptiles' necks and thus save them alive. The animal dealer accompanied us to the door but couldn't be persuaded to go any further, so the man and I went in and closed the door behind us.

"Next minute I heard the key turn in the lock. 'What are you doing?' I yelled. 'Unlock that door. It may be we'll have to run for it.' 'All right,' said the dealer, 'I'll unlock it,' and I thought he did so, but I hadn't any time to find out, for instantly the serpents were reared up in the striking pose. They almost touched the roof, and what they wanted to strike was me!

Not Willing to be Caught.

"I told the keeper to reach the noose, which was made of heavy copper wire, over the swaying head of one and pull it down, while I did the same to its mate. But the snakes didn't permit us to do that little trick easily. They darted forward and back, disappeared until we didn't know where to look for them and as we were looking in one place appeared again in a dark corner. It was a fight to the death, or seemed so, and we were sweating freely from our rapid exercise—more like a fantastic dance than anything I can liken it to. The cobras went forward and back and so did we, and each partner kept his eyes fastened relentlessly on the enemy.

"On they came at last in what was meant to be a last dash, and back we went as far as the space would permit, whirling the sticks before those perfectly poised deadly heads. Candlesticks, did I call 'em? They looked to me by this time like death heads. The two came on together, and that made it more danerous.

"I think one thing only saved us that day. The floor was covered with loose boards and, as I afterwards

found, they were slippery. As the cobras sailed across to get us, they faltered, feared to lose their pose—the deadly striking pose, and drew back.

"That was our time to rush in and get the nooses over their heads. I succeeded, but the keeper failed. The cobra disappeared and the keeper got to his feet with a grunt, for he had fallen headlong. On came his cobra again, for these reptiles will never give up in a fight, and this time he got the noose over it.

"'Get on him and hold him down!' I yelled while trying to perform this feat to the wriggling mass in front of me. At length I did get my feet planted on the cobra's neck and I reached out for the bag; it wasn't difficult to wriggle it into the bag, and after I had tied it with a rope, I could go to the other fellow's assistance.

Both Serpents Safe.

"We had both serpents safe, when there came a frightened voice from the other side of the door demanding to know if we were still alive.

"'Yes, we are, but no thanks to you,' I answered the dealer, 'and now, you poor coward, you can unlock the door. We've got both the cobras bagged. How much do you want for them?'

"The dealer, still trembling, peeped through a crack in the door and, said he: 'Seeing that you've helped me out I'll sell them to you for $50 apiece. That's dirt cheap for a pair of lively cobras.'

"'I'll give you $25 and not a cent more,' said I.

"'Impossible to let 'em be sacrificed,' said the dealer. 'That wouldn't be a fair price for two old faded out cobras, and these are young, lively and in the best of health, as you can see for yourself.'

"I took out my knife and says I:

"'Twenty-five dollars it is or I slit the bags!'

"Oh, yes, I took the cobras away at my figure. The keeper and I were a little played out with the exercise, and hungry and thirsty as well. So before starting back to the Zoo we went into a little cafe to refresh ourselves. We had the two cobras in a basket that we placed under the table near our feet. Along came a friend of mine, who sat down near us and ordered a hearty lunch. As he was eating it a hollow hiss sounded from the basket.

"'What kind of a monkey have you got in there?' asked my friend, peering under the table at the basket.

"'No monkey,' I replied; 'just a couple of cobras recently arrived from India.'

"He turned pale and getting up, reached for his hat, saying: 'somehow I seem to have lost my appetite.'"

Variety the Spice of Life.

In tropical climates while men lose their "go," initiative and efficiency. Too many of them actually degenerate, morally and physically. The strange thing is that the great heat, not so much as to the unchanging climate, with its utter lack of stimulating atmospheric conditions. It is in variable climates like our own that the world's best work has been done. And by looking at a globe you will see that most of the big centres of human activitly lie in the same parallel of latitude. The explanation seems to be that unchanging extreme heat or cold robs both mind and body of keenness and vitality, whereas frequent changes of temperature supply man with those electric tonics which make for health and efficiency.

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An Absent-Minded Genius.

In the history of absentminded and forgetful men(that remains to be written) Beethoven must certainly have a prominent place.

It is related of him that about the time he was engaged in the "Pastoral" symphony, he went into a restaurant and ordered dinner. As there was some delay in serving the meal, his mind reverted to his composing; and when the waiter came and offered dinner, he waved him away, saying, "Thank you, I have dined." Laying down the price of the meal he took his departure.

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Adventures of a Stick.

Ten years ago a casual caller at a house in Barnet, Herts, Eng., went away leaving his walking stick behind. His address was not known at the house, and as the stick was not claimed the occupier kept it. Recently he went to the north of Scotland for a holiday and took the stick with him. When returning, he placed it with his umbrella in a hold-all, which was lost on the journey. It has just turned up minus the stick, but tucked inside the cover was an unsigned note reading: "My favorite walking stick was recognized after 10 years' separation and is now in possession of its lawful and happy owner."

When making lemonade, place lemons on the grate in the oven for a few moments before squeezing. This will make them more juicy.

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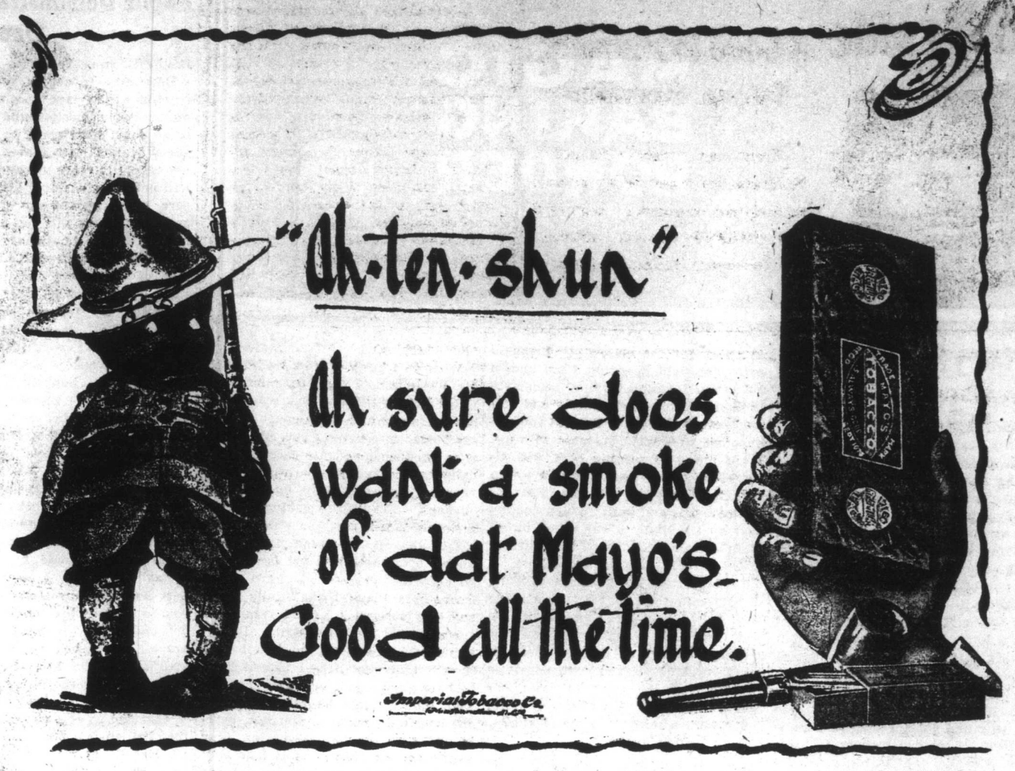

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Household Notes.

Paraffin taken from jams can be kept in an old coffee pot and heated whenever it is wanted.

The wood parts of a sewing machine will look like new if polished with sewing machine oil.

Equal parts of good soap and scouring powder will do wonders to tarnish bathroom fixtures.

Cover cabbage for the first five minutes of boiling; then remove cover and boil twenty-five minutes.

To get a knot out of a thin gold chain easily, hold the knot with one pin and pick out with another.

Cook the cores and peelings of the apples when making apple dumplings; drain the water from them and use it for baking the dumplings.

To save gas when curding sour milk for cheese, set it over the self-lighting device on the gas stove.

Gravies will have a rich "nutty" flavor if a little finely ground cornmeal is mixed in with the flour.

A safety razor blade is excellent for ripping seams, as it cuts the thread without injuring the cloth.

When the kiddies' shoes are new, sew the buttons on with twist and they will not be always coming off.

To clean the gas stove use a steel-bristled brush, which may be found in an automobile supply shop.

Keep a pair of scissors in the kitchen for shredding greens, and cutting up vegetables or left-over meat.

Large pockets of black or white oilcloth hung on closet doors make convenient receptacles for dustcloths, overshoes, etc.

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