

### A Lecture on Rattlesnakes.

Two miles out on our road back we found Stradbug sitting like a statue, gazing at something in the road just ahead of him. "Come here, General Bradley," he called. "I want to introduce you to one of the inhabitants of this delightful country," at the same time pointing to a monster rattlesnake coiled in the trail. "I have been plaguing him," continued Strad, "and he is a game fellow. See," he added holding out his saber toward the reptile. Quickly the snake raised his chest, and sprang his full length, falling within two feet of old Strad's horse.

"Look out there, or he'll bite you," cried General Bradley. "Not a bit of it," replied Strad; "the fact is, general, I have been studying this specimen of the natural productions of this country for more than an hour, and I have found out, first, that he will not bite unless coiled; second, that he can only jump the length of himself when coiled." He then made the snake coil up again and strike two or three times. "He ain't much of a traveller either," said old Strad, whipping the reptile when stretched out and making it run as fast as it could. "He coils tail first," continued the experimenter, making him coil, "and like an honest fellow, gives fair warning before he strikes, which is more than some of our own kind do, general; besides, I don't believe he'd strike in the dark at all. You will readily observe," continued old Strad, growing facetious, "the difference between the nature of the snake and the dog; a dog shakes his tail to show you he is pleased, the snake shakes his tail to show you he is mad. I look at that eye, sir, I have looked a mutiner in the eye and disarmed him; but I would not like to look at that fellow steadily in the face for five seconds." The snake was coiled, his body resting on his tail, and his head raised to the height of a foot, and he winked proudly curved. His eyes shone like two little diamonds, and his yellow skin glistened in the sun. The spots on his back seemed ever changing from dark brown to a bright red color. "Come," said Strad, "I'll bet there's not a man in the crowd, an' shoot him in the head." (It is said to be almost impossible to shoot the head of a rattlesnake. The hunters declare that their sensitiveness is so great that they can feel the wind of the coming bullet and dodge it. Be this as it may, I have seen men who could hit a bull's eye or drive a nail at one hundred yards, that could not shoot a snake in the head.) Several revolvers were levelled and discharged at him, but the snake remained unharmed. A soldier then dismounted, and taking his carbine, at the fourth shot nearly severed the body of the reptile. "Foul!" cried out Strad, "you hit him in the body; but take off the rattles, the game is yours." The man did as he was bid, and there were eleven rattles and a button.—*Letter to Philadelphia Press.*

### Dust in Cities.

Prof. Tyndall states that almost the whole of the dust in rooms is of organic origin, and prominent among these organic bodies is horse manure. The removal of this offensive contamination from the air of infected localities has been the subject of careful experiment and investigation in England by the London Board of Health. Not only have the droppings been removed from the streets but the surfaces of the pavements have also been purified by jets of water thrown by steam power, whereby all the crevices between the stones forming the pavements have been cleansed. In some districts the practice has been adopted of covering all surfaces that are soaked with foul organic materials with a layer of fresh earth. This has been attended with the most satisfactory results. The Val de Travers asphalt pavement is however regarded by Sir Joseph Whitworth, the great English authority on all questions connected with street economy, as offering the most promising relief from such organic dust, since its introduction will tend to hasten the employment of hot-air engines with India-rubber tires for all the purposes of street traffic, and the source or cause of the contamination will of necessity disappear.

### Swindling the Farmer.

Every spring brings forth a host of advertisements to catch the eye of the farmer.—They are very skilfully worded and set forth enormous yields. Such an advertisement or circular I received the other day from some western man (name forgotten,) who claimed to have a very prolific field-corn; three stalks would average eleven sound ears. An acre would yield two hundred and fifty bushels of good corn, but he does not say two hundred and fifty bushels of shelled corn. Sandford advertised his little dusky white corn in the same way. A number of farmers in this neighborhood purchased it, and it proved to be a miserable failure; yet Sandford found purchasers at seven dollars per bushel. The Norway oats was another swindle, for which farmers paid an extravagant price. It was nothing more than the black Poland or Feather oats. And now we are to have a Late Rose potato, for which we are asked to pay a large price, and it may prove to be nothing more than the Garnett Chili, which is very similar to the Early Rose in shape and color. Farmers should be careful to purchase only from honest seedsmen, and give swindlers and speculators a wide berth.—*German town Telegraph.*

To DESTROY BUGS.—The best method of destroying bugs is to wash the woodwork infected by these vermin with a solution of carbolic acid in water, the strength of five parts of acid to one hundred of water. The insects are at once killed by the solution which also acts as a disinfectant.—*Ex.*

NATIONAL HEALTH.—Everything depends upon it. It is by continuous and persevering labor alone, handwork and headwork, that England holds its position against other countries more favored by Nature, but without a high standard of vitality—and that, as you know, implies more than a mere lengthening out of life—labor such as we require cannot be kept up. Again where you have to deal with men in masses, the connection between vice and disease is very close. With a low average of popular health you will have a low average of national morality, and probably also of national intellect. Drunkenness and vice of other kinds will flourish in such a soil, and you cannot get healthy brains to grow on unhealthy bodies. Cleanliness and self-respect go together, and it is no paradox to affirm that you tend to purify men's thoughts and feelings when you purify the air they breathe. It used to be thought that the vast unnecessary destruction of human life which takes place in all populous countries was, if a misfortune, yet a misfortune not without its compensations; because it was argued, if that destruction ceased, all the inconvenience of surplus population would follow. But that is a danger which we have not now to apprehend. There is no fear, in the present state of the labor market, of our being overdone with hands for whom no employment could be found; nor do I think we shall be so again, at least for a long time to come. The English laboring classes are getting over their dislike to emigration; and the attraction of new countries will tend to grow stronger rather than weaker. In Ireland, from that cause, population is already stationary or nearly so, and it is impossible to feel sure that the same condition of things may not prevail here also before many years are over.—*Lord Derby at Liverpool.*

BUSH-FIRES IN ALGERIA.—From time immemorial it has been the custom of the Arab herdsmen to burn all underwood from beneath the trees, to produce the tender shoots of which cattle are so fond. To give some notion of the enormous spread of these conflagrations, I have but to quote from the newspaper reports of 1865. In 1863, 110,000 acres were burnt in the province of Constantine alone; whilst in 1865 the damage done amounted to 253,755 acres. In the arrondissement of Guelma 35,600 acres were destroyed, The forest of Teleschoon was burnt straight down to the sea. (*Moniteur d'Algerie*).—*Hon. Lt. Wugfield (Under the Palms).*

An Indiana farmer, after trying to trap, poison and shoot the rats that overrun his premises, bought two goats and gave them the range of yards and stables. Within a week every rat emigrated and staid away until the goats were sold, nearly two years afterward, when they all came back with all their friends. A second edition of goats was procured, and since then not a rat has been seen on the premises.