

THE SNAKE CHARMERS.

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[For the CHILDREN'S RECORD.]

Our picture represents a not uncommon sight in India—the snake charmers, or men who travel about exhibiting tricks with snakes.

Among the many uncanny reptiles of India the snake is not the least significant. Strange to say the commonest snakes are the most poisonous. The bite of the cobra,

The Karite is a small snake that often infests the house, climbing the curtains, and hiding behind sofa cushions; and often narrow escapes are made from being bitten by it. The daboya, though not perhaps so common is even more dangerous. But the cobra is the most dreaded, as well as the most revered of India's snakes, and many thousands of Hindus meet their death annually from its bite.

These snakes have very developed poison bags on either side of the head,



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daboya, and karite, is very deadly, and these are the snakes generally found around about our houses, out houses, and gardens.

In my own experience, and I have travelled thousands of miles through the districts of India, I have met with very few snakes in my camp life; but I have found them to be much more commonly encountered in and about human dwelling places.

which, when distended, as they always are under excitement, present the appearance of a hood. It is this hood, sometimes marked also in the shape of a V, which gives the cobra such a noble appearance in the eyes of the Hindu. His reverence goes the length of believing it to be a god, and giving it worship. Especially in Nag-pauchmi, or snake festival season, these people will place milk beside the snakes' holes as an offering.