

## SERPENTS FOR TOYS.

EXTRAORDINARY MAN WHO IS SNAKE-PROOF.

Silas Sugg Toys With All the Most Venomous Serpents, Lets Them Bite Him, and Doesn't Fear Them Because He Is Impervious to Their Poison.



His name is Silas Sugg, and he looks it. He is neither pretty nor has he great wisdom, but he can cut loose an off-hand sermon that will take the bark off, and he can handle venomous snakes as no other man

on earth can do it.

He doesn't care what sort of a snake it is—copperhead, cottonmouth, moccasin, sand rattler or side winder—he will pick him up as if poisonous snakes were as mythical as unicorns.

He is a homely old farmer who knows the trade of silversmith and has got religion.

His immunity from death by snake bite, he says, is the miracle-token of the genuineness of his mission from the Almighty.

When Silas Sugg plunges his bare arm into a writhing, wriggling, hissing mass of rattlesnakes, copperheads, cottonmouths, moccasins and puffing adders and draws them out again with a copperhead hanging by his fangs to his thumb, a cottonmouth with his fangs so deeply fixed in Sugg's wrist where the veins are largest and bluest that the blood comes, and the broken-off poison teeth of a rattler still in his flesh, the ordinary man or woman begins to believe in miracles and Silas Sugg.

Of course all the smart people will tell you that the poison glands have been removed from Silas Sugg's reptiles and that they are harmless therefore as garter snakes. For doubters of this sort Silas performs some experiments. He disengages whatever snake happens to be biting him at the time and lets it bite a cat or dog or fowl.



THE WIZARD OF THE SNAKES.

The snakes that do Sugg no harm invariably kill the animals they strike. The other afternoon, in the midst of an exhortation to the ungodly to come in and be saved, Silas Sugg snatched a rooster from a nest by his fence and held it up before one of his copperheads. It took just seventeen minutes for the poor cock to die.

Silas Sugg is forty-eight years old. He has had no education and neither of his parents could either read or write. He was a failure as a farmer and has made his living for sixteen years as a silversmith. The religious phase of his character developed about five years ago, when he evolved a sort of theology from the Bible, in which Christianity and snakes seem to bear about equal parts. According to him Christ's mission on earth, besides being to save the lost and restore peace among the sons of Adam, was to repeal that law which ordained enmity between mankind and the snake, whose persuasions brought about the fall.

Sugg is very careful about his serpents. They can bite him as much as they will, but he handles them as carefully as though they were glass and he was afraid of breaking them. In the autumn he turns them loose among the reeds of Illinois, and he says they always come back in the spring.

In his deal box he carries a rattlesnake, which appears to be a fine-four-foot specimen of *Crotalus confuentis*; three or four copperheads of various sizes, which are readily recognizable as *Ancistrodon contortrix*; a five-foot cottonmouth, otherwise known as the highland moccasin and to ophiologists as *Ancistrodon atrofasciatus*, and equally dreaded under either name; several water moccasins, *Ancistrodon piscivorus*, the bits of every one of which is ordinarily considered fatal. Ophiologists say that the puffing adder, or ill-tempered, bad-mannered *Heterodon platyrhynchus*, is harmless. Sugg has one in his box. He says that cats and chickens die when bitten by the puffing adder, but the puffing adder doesn't hurt him.

All of these snakes are allowed to strike Sugg at every performance he gives. They are performances, though

he permits no admission fee and refuses to travel with any circus, side show or dime museum. He really seems to be just a big, awkward, stupid man with a good rough eloquence and a sincere belief in his mission to preach. Of course, he neither drinks nor smokes and has all the minor virtues that make up the backwoods church member.

### AGREEABLY DISAPPOINTED.

He Thought She Was Begging but She Merely Wanted the Mustard.

One of the richest men living, whose immense wealth makes him a target for poor people, has recently been in Paris and the way in which he repelled one of the applicants for his generosity is related like this, says the *Pittsburg Dispatch*: On the opposite side of the hotel table sat a woman who had once been rich.

"Monsieur, you Englishmen are so chivalrous—so ready to assist those in distress."

"Yes," said the man of wealth, hesitating. He had heard that before and thought he knew what was coming next.

"Would you, with your usual generosity, do me a favor and a great kindness?"

"Yes, madam—that is, it depends somewhat—"

"Think well, monsieur, before you promise, for it is a great kindness."

It was the same old plea that he had heard many times before from people who wanted a loan.

"I am afraid, madam, that I shall have to—but what it is you wish?"

"Only that you would be kind enough, monsieur, to pass me the mustard. You have everything on your side of the table."

### Laws of Iron's Magnetism.

The laws showing the relation of the magnetizing forces of iron to the resultant magnetism have been fixed from experiments just completed by Prof. Reginald A. Fessenden of the Western University and A. E. Kennedy, until lately associated with Thomas A. Edison.

According to the *Pittsburg Dispatch* these two electricians have been trying for a year past to solve this law of iron's magnetism. The discovery will,

### HORSE TRADERS' TRICK.

Kansas City Dealer Learns Something New in St. Louis.

"I have been trading in the big horse markets, like the one here in St. Louis, a good many years, and it was only a few days ago that I found out that the country horse trader can give the city-chap cards and spades and then beat him at his own game," said Frank Pomeroy, of Kansas City at the Lindell. "Your innocent farmer is not half so innocent as he looks or pretends. This conclusion was forced on me while I was attending a sale of horses on County Court day at one of the best-known county seat towns in Mississippi. I had gone there for the purpose of buying a number of horses of certain quality for a customer in St. Louis. I wanted good-looking, gentle stock between the ages of three and six years, broken to both saddle and harness.

"Twenty or more animals that met the requirements of age and looks were trotted out before me, but none of them did I buy because invariably when I expressed my satisfaction with one something happened to make me displeased with him. In each case I was assured by the owner when the animal was first brought out for inspection that he was gentle and easily managed, but when I applied the test I found that just the contrary was true. When the horses that pleased my fancy were started out for a canter in order that I might see their gait and style they would begin to rear and pitch madly and try to throw their riders. I thought, of course, that the honest farmer had tried to deceive me and congratulated myself on having caught him at his trick. The owners appeared to be as badly surprised by the unexpected antics of the animals as I was, but I, of course, thought this was only a part of their little game. Several of them protested earnestly to me that they could not understand why their offerings were behaving so badly, as at home they were so docile and tractable that a child could ride or drive them anywhere.

"I came back to St. Louis from that sale empty-handed. Not until yesterday did I learn the trick that had been practiced on me to beat me out of my purchases. I met at the sales stables across the river one of the country horse traders I had met at the county seat sale. He laughed when he saw me and coolly told of how he had put up a job on me when I was in his town. He explained that the horses I first selected and then refused to buy were in reality as gentle as their owners had represented them to be but that he and his partner had discovered a chemical liquid which when poured on any part of a horse's anatomy covered with hair in a few seconds after its application soaks into the hide through the hair pores and causes such intense pain as would make the gentlest horse pitch and rear like a wild pony when first saddled. These rascals found out that there was a demand for the horses I had selected and concluded to beat me out of them so they could buy them at a lower figure than I had offered. They sneaked around when the owners were not looking and dropped this liquid on each of my selections just in time for the fluid to take effect on the animal at a critical time. I threw up my hands when this explanation was made and took off my hat to the man who made it."—St. Louis Republic.

### Curious Dinner at Jericho.

An American traveling in Jerusalem describes in the *Hartford Courant* an interesting dinner he ate recently at a hotel in Jericho:

"We sat on the porch of the hotel at Jericho," he wrote, "after a dinner at which we were served with butter from Norway, cheese from Switzerland, marmalade from London, wine from Jerusalem diluted with water from the well of Elisha, raisins from Ramoth Gilead, oranges from Jericho (in no respect inferior to those from Jaffa or the Indian River, Fla.), and almonds from the east of the Jordan, smoking Turkish tobacco, which, like the Turkish empire, is inferior to its reputation, and a cup of coffee from—the corner grocery of Jericho."

### The Highest Bridge.

The highest bridge of any kind in the world is said to be the Leo river viaduct on the Antofagasta railway, in Bolivia, South America. The place where this highest railway structure has been erected is over the Mo's rapids in the upper Andes, and is between the two sides of a canon which is situated 10,000 feet from the level of the Pacific. From the surface of the stream to the level of the rails this celebrated bridge is exactly 636½ feet in height, the length of the principal span is 99 feet, and the distance between the abutments is 802 feet. The gauge of the road is 2 feet 6 inches and the trains cross the bridge at a speed of 30 miles an hour.

### Unintentional Pitt.

From the *Weekly Telegraph*: At an evening party recently the hostess had bustled out of the room to arrange some details of supper, or something. During her absence a young man sang a sentimental ballad—to the intense agony of the company. The hostess returned just after he had finished. As he had to leave early he approached to make his farewell. "Good-night," said the hostess, with the usual excess of amiability. "Good-night. I'm so sorry you can't sing." The young man crimsoned and fled.

Pennsylvania produces hardware manufactures to the value of \$238,000,000 yearly, which is equivalent to \$74 per inhabitant, the average in Great Britain being 19 and in Germany \$10.

## A ROARING FURNACE.

THE INTERIOR OF THE EARTH A REAL HELL.

How Earthquakes Are Manufactured in the Molten Bowels—In Fact It Is Remarkable That Quakes Are So Few in Number as They Are.



UAKING, it seems, is the natural and constant condition of the earth. This is the conclusion of modern science.

We have just been warned in the state of New York that we are subject to earthquakes. Even in quiet, steady-going England, they have lately felt shocks. What is the original cause of an earthquake? It is possible that there are several causes, but seismologists are generally agreed that there is one very common one. Deep down in the earth's crust something smashes. There is a jarring and the resulting shock is sufficient to send rattling to the ground the strongest of man's works on the surface of the earth. This sudden breakage is then the commonest cause of earthquakes. The smashing is due to the unequal contraction of the earth. This planet is losing its heat, and in the process it contracts. If the contraction were equal all would be well, but it cannot be, for the earth's crust is made of materials of varying consistency. One part offers more resistance than another, but at last it gives way under the overwhelming accumulation of the contracting force. Then there is a break, called a fissure, in some vast stratum of rock. One side of the fissure as it sinks down grinds against the other, which is sinking slowly or not at all. The jarring caused in this way is something difficult for the human mind to conceive. If a man could hear the sound without any intervening

elongation of valleys beneath the bed of the ocean, and even the submergence of works of human construction.

The western shores of South America have risen more rapidly than any other region of large extent on the world, and this is also more earthquake shaken than any other. At Valparaiso, during the last 220 years the rise has been nineteen feet. For the seventeen years prior to 1817, the rise was eleven feet. Similar remarks apply to Japan. It is probable that some earthquakes are the result of internal explosions. Water in vast quantities falls down through a fissure of the earth until it reaches a superheated rock. Then it is turned into gas with a suddenness that makes an explosion. Volcanic eruptions are presumably the result of these explosions. It has been observed that when a volcano is active the surrounding country is generally free from earthquakes. An earthquake, as we feel it, is a series of waves of vibrations traveling through the ground. The force is transmitted from one molecule to another, while the particles themselves hardly move from their original positions, just as a blow struck on one end of a stick will drive away a ball resting at the other end, although the stick itself remains in one place.

A slight shock striking a house in the rear will shake the cornice from the front. The vibrations run upward diagonally from the ground at the rear to the front. The source from which an earthquake originates is called the "origin," "focal cavity" or "centrum." The point or area on the surface of the ground above the origin is called the "epicentrum." The awful earthquake which destroyed Lisbon in 1755 had its epicentrum in the sea bed fifty miles from the coast. The waves which rolled down upon the doomed city rose to a height of sixty feet. Off the coast of Ireland, 500 miles away, they were five feet. Even in the West Indies they were felt. In Japan, in 1854, an earthquake wave which caused great loss of life was thirty feet high. The same shock produced a wave eight inches high at San Francisco. In 1868 Peru was visited by a very destructive suc-

cession of waves, one of which was sixty feet high. They were felt at the Sandwich Islands, 5,500 miles away, within twelve hours, and in Japan, 10,000 miles away, on the next day. They were also felt in Australia the next day. Their rate of speed was 370 miles an hour. South American coast towns have been repeatedly devastated by these waves. The first movement usually observed is a drawing back of the waters, and this is so well known to precede the rush of large waves that many of the inhabitants have used it as a timely warning to escape toward the hills and save themselves from the terrible reaction which so quickly follows. Professor Rudolf Falb, of Vienna, has original and startling theories on the subject of earthquakes. He believes the inner portion of the earth to be fluid. In the crust above this fluid reservoir are cracks and channels into which by the attraction of the moon and sun the fluid is drawn. On entering these cracks cooling takes place, and there are tremendous explosions of terrible reaction which so quickly force the denudation of ages. There is one striking illustration near Avalanche Lake, in the Adirondacks. The surface of our earth is forever moving up and down like the waves of the ocean. This is one of the external accompaniments of the internal smashing and grinding that takes place. Where elevation or subsidence is greatest there are earthquakes commonest. As a proof that elevation has taken place, scientists point to raised beaches, sea-worn caves, raised coral reefs and the remains of many sea organisms, all of which are found on coasts high above the level of the highest tides. Proof that subsidence has taken place is furnished by submerged forests, the pro-

flood in B. C. 4000. In other words, he has furnished a scientific explanation of the biblical deluge. He predicts another great flood for A. D. 6400.

### THE CARE OF BOOKS.

Children Should Be Taught Early to Love These Precious Possessions.

When we were children we were taught that it was next door to a crime to destroy books. Of course, books are not as expensive or as hard to get now as they were a quarter of a century ago, but all the same they are too valuable to waste or throw away, declares the *New York Ledger*.

Children should be taught how best to take care of books and ought never to be permitted to throw or bang them about or tear them in pieces. They should be encouraged to accumulate volumes, and to do this must have a place in which to keep them. Good, plain book shelves cost but little, and every child should have a set.

In one well ordered household there are five youngsters, between the ages of 5 and 15 years. Each child has a bookcase, one of the ordinary, plain sort that cost \$4 or \$5. There are curtains made from the skirts of worn-out dresses or of paper muslin, for the family has but little of this world's goods to use, and every dollar, even every cent, has to be counted. But there is in this household a spirit of consideration that will not allow interference with private property, and each member is expected to take care of his or her own possessions, to be responsible for them and to exercise absolute control and ownership over them. Especially is it the case with books and tops. These are borrowed and loaned only with the owner's consent. New books are carefully covered and marked with the owner's name, not only on the cover, but also across the first page of the story or reading matter. Names on the flyleaf may be obliterated or torn off, but when placed across the beginning of the subject matter they are apt to remain and are easily identified.

### Moving Extraordinary.

Years ago the business of shoring up



IMAGINARY DRAWING SHOWING THE INTERIOR OF THE EARTH.

miles of earth it would strike him dead. Billions of tons of matter are involved in such a cataclysm. The falling wall of a fissure may grind against its opposing wall for several thousand feet. In such a case no buildings within hundreds of miles of its surface center can remain standing. Sometimes it must be inferred several of these internal smashings of the earth take place within a limited area and within a short time of one another. Then whole continents are shaken. The smash frequently occurs at a "fault" in a stratum of rock. This is a place where the stratum is weak or there is an actual gap. The contracting force grinds the two edges of the rock together, or else a mighty weight from above crushes down through the weak place. Geologists find traces of these vast distortions of the earth exposed on the surface by the denudation of ages. There is one striking illustration near Avalanche Lake, in the Adirondacks. The surface of our earth is forever moving up and down like the waves of the ocean. This is one of the external accompaniments of the internal smashing and grinding that takes place. Where elevation or subsidence is greatest there are earthquakes commonest. As a proof that elevation has taken place, scientists point to raised beaches, sea-worn caves, raised coral reefs and the remains of many sea organisms, all of which are found on coasts high above the level of the highest tides. Proof that subsidence has taken place is furnished by submerged forests, the pro-

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and moving ordinary sized buildings was considered somewhat risky, and was one which only experts were willing to undertake. Recently it became desirable to move a chimney and the idea was suggested that it might be moved intact. Of course it involved some special preparation, but the task was successfully accomplished. The chimney was 85 feet high, weighed a hundred tons, was seven feet square at the base, and had outer and inner walls eight inches thick. Its destination led over rough ground, with grades up and down, but the job was completed without accident or damage. There was neither crack nor flaw in the masonry when the chimney was set down on its new foundation. This is the tallest and heaviest chimney that has ever been moved. Another chimney 52 feet high was safely transferred and these two are, it is believed, the only ones ever taken from one place to another.

### Not So Quiet.

"Ah," said the city man, "often have I wished I could have led as peaceful and quiet a life as you." "Peaceful and quiet?" retorted the farmer. "I gosh! I've raised a double set of stepchildren—eight boys."—*Indianapolis Journal*.

### In a Country Lane.

"Where are you going, my pretty maid?" "For a basket to put that chestnut in," she said.