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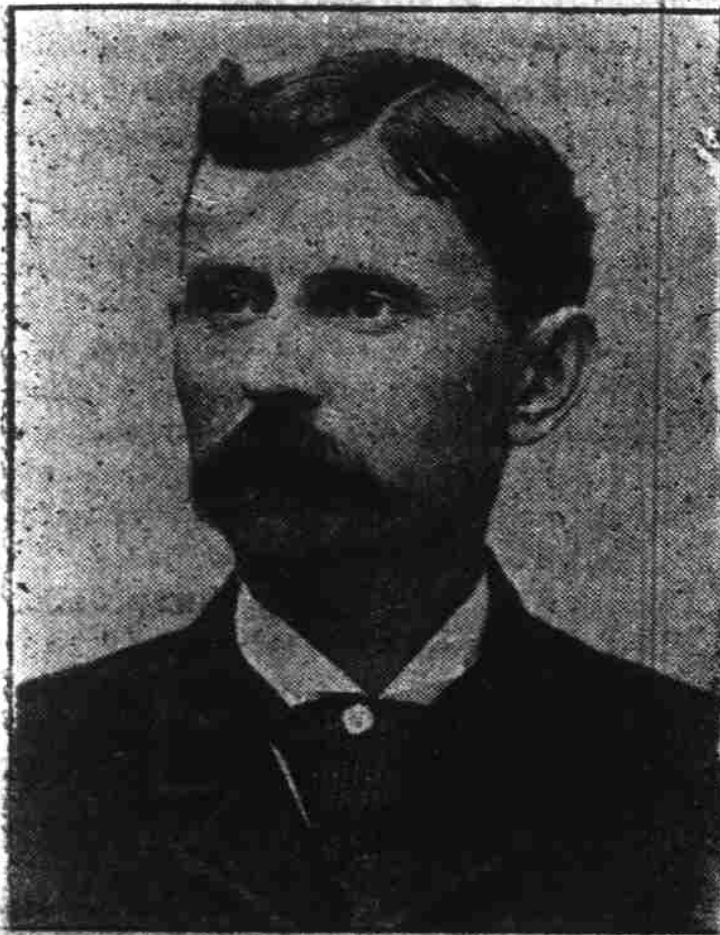
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No. 1

## Mr. Charles W. Spruill

While I was busily engaged in official duty at Raleigh my law partner wired me of the death of this excellent gentleman. It was a startling and saddening telegram. For more than thirty years Mr. Spruill and I have been intimate friends. He came to Bertie county upon his marriage to Miss Annie Tadlock December 17, 1874. He has lived with us since then. He was born near Plymouth, February 13, 1852. His father was Frederick Spruill and his mother was Mary E. Cox. Thirty odd years ago Mr. Spruill moved to the Indian Woods section of Bertie county and there he conducted a fine country store and cultivated a magnifi-



cent farm. He was as useful a citizen as Bertie county ever had in it. He adopted the best methods in his farming operations. He stocked his farm with the highest grade animals. His reputation as a progressive farmer was state-wide. He was President of the North Carolina Farmers Association. He was for many years a justice of the peace, fair and just. In 1898 he was elected chairman of the Board of Commissioners of Bertie county. He voluntarily retired a few years ago. Every one felt that the best interest of the county would be served by him and there was universal regret when he quit the Board.

He was a prominent member of the State Good Road Convention and largely to his wisdom and progressive words we owe our present improved roads. Mr. and Mrs. Spruill kept open house; where genuine hospitality was dispensed. They raised a large family of children.

In politics Mr. Spruill was very active; attending the State and District Conventions where he was listened to with confidence by his fellow delegates. It will be very difficult to supply the place of this good citizen in the political, business and social life of Bertie county.

He was buried at his home on Sunday last. I was kept at the bedside of a very sick relative, else I should have paid my tribute to his memory with the hundreds of others who attended his burial. Rev. B. S. Barnes conducted the ceremony, assisted by Rev. T. T. Speight.

It is very difficult to write of the death of those who have been your friends and clients without seeming extravagance. I speak the simple truth when I say that in every relation of life Charles W. Spruill was an hon-

## Ament The Gossip

We clip without comment the following from Col. Fairbrother's "Everything":

"Gossip has wrecked more homes, made more drunkards, ruined the chances of more young people, caused the shedding of more tears than any other known vice of mankind. Women used to be called the gossipers and it was once the practice of an enlightened society to duck them. As they went under the cold water they realized somewhat of their meanness and it is said sometime they reformed. They are tiresome and tedious. They glory in the downfall of a young man or woman or any lapse on the part of a business man, especially if the person has heretofore borne a spotless reputation. Their excuse was that they had no other way to pass away the time, but now with her club duties, her church work, her social calls and her home and family, the ordinary woman has enough to keep her out of mischief, so that it is no longer a legitimate excuse. In fact women have advanced in this respect almost more than in any one direction during the past decade.

If we have scorn and harsh words for a woman gossip where shall we look for language strong enough to condemn the most despicable of all human wretches—the male gossip. Bank failures have been charged to him; panics are his work and men who are bravely and triumphantly living down a dark past are broken and are worse than murdered by his miserable glee in making public some fact or suspicion he has "heard". Francis J. Henly was shot out in San Francisco during the progress of the graft prosecution, because he could not keep in his own miserable carcass something he had heard about a prospective juror. The man was living a useful life with a wife who trusted him and it was a far greater disgrace to the attorney that broke down that man's structure of life and scumpled his hopes, than the truth could ever be, no matter what his past record was. When he shot Henly he did only what any man under his circumstances would have wanted to do, and after the excitement of it all died away, a good many thought and said Henly got his, pity it was not fatal. The man had no courage to make another effort and the poor fellow killed himself the same day, thus proving what a tragedy it is when men must be the one to spread the "news".

## First Community Building

One of the first community buildings in this country was opened by the Board of Trade at Washington County, Pa., on October 24, 1914. The purpose of the building is to furnish a general meeting place for town and country people and to bring them in closer touch.

In the general meeting room on the first floor are telephone facilities, magazine and writing tables, sets of all available Farmers' Bulletins, The Experiment Station Bulletins of the State, and blanks upon which application may be made for those desired by individuals. Another large room on the first floor is suitable for luncheons, illustrated lectures, and local shows, demonstrations, meetings, etc.

On the second floor are two large rest rooms for women: Those in charge of the enterprise hope to be able to employ a woman attendant and provide her with facilities for caring for small children of visiting shoppers. The building also contains offices for the board and agricultural bureau.

Back of the building is a hitching ground, with ample space for 50 teams, with a brick walk to the building. Country people can hitch their teams, leave their wraps, arrange appointments by telephone, etc., and then go about their duties in town.

—The Federal News Leader.

orable man. I prized his friendship in life. I shall cherish his memory in death. I send his weeping wife and cheerless children, the love of a friend.

FRANCIS D. WINSTON.

## Snakes Friends of Humanity

No branch of natural history is so surrounded with weird and falacious narrative, deplorable ignorance and superstition as that dealing with the serpents, the result being inherent fear and a relentless crusade of club and heel against a group of creatures of great economic value, and, with few exceptions, absolutely harmless, says an article in the Philadelphia Record.

One hundred and eleven distinct species of snakes occur in the United States, which only 17 are dangerous to man. Thirteen of the latter are rattlesnakes, genus *Crotalus*, with an unmistakable mark of identification, the tail ending in a rattle. The four remaining dangerous species comprise the copperhead and water moccasin, genus *Ancistrodon*, and two small brilliantly colored coral snakes, genus *Elaps*. The range of the water moccasin and coral snakes does not extend farther north than the Carolinas, leaving locally only the banded or timber rattler (*Crotalus horridus*) and the copperhead (*Ancistrodon contortrix*) to be considered in the light of dangerous reptiles.

The economic value to the farmer of most of our snakes is of great importance, and an examination of the stomach contents of a few wantonly killed specimens would soon convince an intelligent person of the force of this plea for the protection of our snake friends. The presence of large numbers of snakes in fields of growing crops or about barns containing grain at once indicates an abundance of destroying rodents, upon which the snakes feed voraciously, putting to shame the feeble efforts of the family cat.

At a conservative estimate, an adult reptile will kill four rats a week for forty weeks in the year, or 160 rats. If these rats were allowed to live and propagate their kind the result at the lowest calculation would be as follows: If 80 of the 160 rats survived and bred they would raise three litters of six young each, totalling 1,440. Granting that one-half of these young reach maturity and raise one litter of six their first year, it would mean an increase of 4,320, making a grand total of over 5,000 injurious rodents accounted for by one snake in a single year.

The poisonous rattler and copperhead are never found close to the habitation of man, and their appearance easily distinguishes them from their harmless allies.

The shape of the reptile's head is no sure indication of its character, as is the common belief. The pit vipers, *Crotalus* snakes (so named on account of the presence of an orifice between the eye and nostril, embrace all the rattlesnakes, together with the copperhead and water moccasin. They all have heads distinct from the body, but deadly coral snakes have all the outward appearance of being harmless.

The hog-nosed snake, *Heterodon platyrhinus*, is a good example of this mimicry of the venomous snake, and has little chance for existence when it crosses man's path. Of ugly and sinister appearance, when cornered they flatten the head and hiss in a threatening manner, but soon feign death, rolling over on their backs and remaining so until the danger has passed. They cannot be induced to bite by any amount of tormenting. This is greatly feared and is called by many formidable names, such as spreading adder, death adder, blow adder, sand viper, according to locality.

The most interesting of our local serpents is the King, or chain snake, *Ophibolus gentulus*. This beautiful reptile is a powerful constrictor and cannibalistic, feeding on all manner of snakes as well as rodents. They are immune to the venom of the rattler or copperhead and will kill and devour all of these snakes they encounter. Their attitude toward man is quite the reverse, as they are readily handled and make by far the most interesting specimens for study purposes, thriving well in captivity, and apparently developing a real affection for their keepers. They attain a length of six feet.

The garter snake, genus *Eutaenia*, are our most numerous variety, embracing eleven well-defined species,

including the beautifully-marked ribbon snake. This group defies extinction even in the most populated regions, being plentiful in city parks. They are viviporous, bringing forth as many as sixty living young each year. They feed entirely on cold blooded prey, tadpoles and frogs being their main diet. The variation in color is frequent in the same species, but they are easily recognized by the general scheme of markings. Thriving for years in captivity, they make most interesting study specimens. The common variety, *Eutaenia sirtalis* are numerous in Fairmount Park.

Their nearest relatives, the water snakes, genus *Tropidonotus*, so gleefully stoned by the country boy, are very numerous, and are found in large numbers shunning themselves along the banks of creeks and ponds. They are nearly always dark brown in color, with transverse markings. They feed on frogs and fish and show wonderful dexterity in capturing their quarry. The large brown water snake, *Tropidonotus toxipilotus*, grows to great size, and is much confused with the poisonous moccasin, *Ancistrodon piscivorus*, owing partly to the fact that it is found basking on the same logs with the deadly "cottonmouth".

The colubers or rat snakes are all powerful constructors, and of the greatest economic value, feeding entirely on warm-blooded animals. They are large and handsome snakes, the pilot or mountain black snake, *Coluber obsoletus* being a typical example. This variety is supposed to go as an advance guard of the dreaded rattlesnake and lead it to safety, which is as ridiculous and fallacious as the oft-repeated tale of snakes milking cows or swallowing their young in time of danger. They are often found in the same retreats as the rattlers, which no doubt gave birth to this myth.

The common black snake or racer, *Zamenis constrictor*, is not a constricting species, but holds its prey to the ground with the body, while the engulfing process is accomplished. To see these black meteors dart away over rough ground with express speed is a startling sight, and one must be quick indeed to capture them. Cornered they fight viciously, but the needle-like teeth are incapable of inflicting anything but the most superficial wounds. These snakes, as well as all the colubers, are oviparous, the young being hatched from eggs.

To strip the snake subject of its erroneous ideas, and to lay aside foolish and unwarranted prejudice, requires but little investigation, and once this is done a fascinating and interesting field of study is unfolded before the student of nature and keen observer.

Remember that snakes are never slimy, and that even the poisonous never bite except in self-defense. Bites by rattlesnakes or copperheads, even where these reptiles are numerous, are a great rarity, and in the Northern or middle States, if properly treated, of no great danger, the large, dangerous snakes being confined to the far Southern region of the United States.

Raymond L. Ditmars, curator of reptiles of the New York Zoological Society, to whose most comprehensive work I refer all interested in the subject, recently told the writer that there are quantities of rattlesnakes on his own place which he does not allow killed, considering their rodent-destroying value greater than their danger.

A rattler's age cannot be told by the number of buttons on its rattle, as they get an additional segment with each shedding of the skin, occurring from three to five times annually, and the rattle is continually subject to loss of all or part. They also shed the functional fangs at short intervals, new fangs taking their place. It, therefore, does not render the animal innocuous to remove the fangs, as unless the bone is injured, the snake is soon as dangerous as before.

There are many so-called antidotes for snake venom, but none of them has any merit.

If any accident occurs with either a rattlesnake or copperhead, immediate and heroic treatment must be resorted to to prevent serious consequences. A ligature should at once be made above the punctures to prevent the venom from entering the circulation, and the wound deeply incised with a sharp instrument to promote a free flow of blood. It should be

## Wage Earners and Tuberculosis

### Death Rate from Tuberculosis Increases With Dust

Where there is less dust there is less tuberculosis. This disease is responsible for almost exactly one quarter of the deaths among wage earners in this country between the ages of fifteen and thirty five. It is also responsible for almost exactly one out of every three deaths that come between the ages of twenty and forty years to both male and female wage earners.

The death rate from tuberculosis among agriculturists may be put at 106 per hundred thousand. In comparison with this the death rate from tuberculosis among those engaged in cotton manufacture is 202; brass work, 279; copper work, 294; glass making, 295; earthenware, 333; cutlery, 332; file making, 402. Other statistics might be given showing the same thing, namely, that tuberculosis is intimately associated with certain occupations, especially those giving rise to dust, metallic, mineral or organic.

The prevention of tuberculosis, so far as it is an occupation disease, is chiefly a question of removing dust and of providing adequate light and ventilation. It is exceedingly important that the dust of industries be carefully removed from the shop and factory, since it is true not only that the dust particles and fumes lower the resistance to disease, but also because tuberculosis is transmitted from person to person almost entirely by means of dust and germ laden air. Virulent tubercular germs are coughed up and spit out, which are in turn breathed in by people having lungs sore and irritated by dusty air. Therefore it is exceedingly important that wherever people congregate, as in places of occupation, every precaution must be taken to prevent the accumulation and scattering of dust. If at the same time an abundance of clean, pure air and a high degree of sunlight can flow about the workers there should follow among wage earners a positive and marked reduction in the deaths from tuberculosis.

### Education in North Carolina

This is one of the happiest weeks of the whole year for many thousands of Tar Heel boys and girls. They have finished up their school work and commencement exercises are being held almost everywhere. They are great institutions and their programs never seemed more attractive. It is noticeable how ambitious and yet how much more practical they are becoming. If there ever was a time when North Carolina was in better educational condition than the present year finds it, no record of it has ever been made. These hosts of boys and girls who have been so well equipped and are being sent out into their life work are priceless assets. They are the glory of the State.

There are some essentials to the success of a cooperative venture, and people are beginning to recognize them. There must be sufficient cash capital, a territory that will maintain the business, good management, "cash" must be adhered to (absolutely no credit); cutting prices must not be resorted to, for a "war" of prices is destructive to all. The saving must be in rebates at the end of a year or half-year. There must be care not to exceed the buying power of the capital and get the business into a tight place, and a "cooperative spirit" must be the community. Not every locality can maintain a cooperative store, and good managers are rather scarce. — Docking, Kansas State Grange.

then washed with a powerful solution of permanganate of potash, which will neutralize all the poison with which it comes in contact.