

No. IV.—NOTE ON THE DIGESTION OF EGGS BY
COBRAS AND DABOIAS.

With reference to Mr. C. P. George's Note printed on page 174 of this volume, and in accordance with a suggestion made by Mr. Phipson at the last meeting of our Society, I have made the following experiments with the live snakes at my disposal at the Government Laboratory, Parel, with a view of ascertaining how long snakes take to digest a hen's egg if swallowed with the shell intact.

Our first attempt was a failure, in so far as the egg broke in the cobra's gullet while being pushed down.

No trace of the egg or its shell could be found next day on palpating the snake's body. The animal passed a motion 16 days afterwards, in which a few pieces of egg shell were observed.

The second cobra was successfully fed with an entire egg, by using long forceps to open the gape, and by oiling the shell freely. When examined on the following day, a bulging was noticed about $\frac{2}{3}$ down the body, which proved to be the egg. On feeling this lump a distinct crackling was felt, pointing to the commencing disintegration of the egg. Twenty-four hours later all trace of the egg had disappeared.

A third cobra was similarly fed with a like result.

It thus appears that the cobra requires 48 hours to digest a whole fowl's egg.

In the case of the Russell's viper it was found impossible to introduce even a bazaar egg, so we had to content ourselves with pigeon's eggs.

The result was the same as in the case of the cobra, *viz.*, the egg could be felt after 24 hours as a softish lump which crepitated distinctly under the fingers, and it had disappeared entirely in 48 hours.

W. B. BANNERMAN, M.D., LT.-COL., I.M.S.

PLAGUE RESEARCH LABORATORY, PAREL.

BOMBAY, November, 1904.

No. V.—DO WILD ANIMALS EVER DIE OF INTESTINAL
OBSTRUCTION.

In the course of numerous *post-mortem* examinations on animals from the Victoria Gardens, Bombay, two cases of death from obstruction caused by the presence of foreign bodies have come under the notice of the officers of this laboratory. It strikes one as incongruous that such miscellaneous feeders as the bear and Cassowary should thus die, yet the following proves that, in captivity at least, such is the fact.

CASE I.—In September 1903, a common Indian Black Bear died of some intestinal trouble in the Victoria Gardens, Bombay.

It was sent here for examination, and the cause of death was found to be peritonitis due to perforation of the small intestine caused by the impaction of a mango stone.



Bannerman, W. B. 1905. "Note on the Digestion of Eggs by Cobras and Daboias." *The journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 16, 363–363.

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