

„SNEKI-KOTI”

INENTING TEGEN DEN BEET VAN VERGIFTIGE SLANGEN

DOOR

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Bij de bespreking in het Februari-nummer van Dr. Morton C. Kahn's artikel „*Notes on the Saramaccaner Bush Negroes of Dutch Guiana*” („*American Anthropologist*”, Juli—September 1929), zeide ik te zullen terugkomen op de mededeelingen van den schrijver over de „sneki-koti”. Wat hij daaromtrent schrijft geeft zeer juist terug wat men hierover in Suriname zooal hoort. Ik laat daarom het geheele relaas hier volgen:

.....,I was not able to get into very intimate contact with these [the witch doctors] and did not learn much about it, [their system of medicine] with the exception of their famous snake bite cure or snake cotti, which is so highly thought of that it is difficult to find a person even in the Dutch towns who will not speak favorably of it.

The snake cutti, besides having power to cure snake bites, is supposed also to render the person who has taken it immune even to the attack of a snake. When a person treated comes near a poisonous reptile it is supposed to remain motionless, or slink away long before he sees it, or the snake actually drops dead! This medicine is supposed to be so strong that if a person who has taken it enters the house of a pregnant woman a miscarriage will be caused. Or if he comes into the room where there is a newly born infant, the child will immediately go into convulsions. They recognize that there are various kinds of snake cutti. The substance is prepared as follows: when a poisonous snake is killed, the tail and head are cut off and the tail is put in the mouth of the snake. This is then roasted over a slow fire and the whole is reduced to a black powder, which is finely ground ¹⁾. It may be administered in two ways, internally or by a small incision in the arm and rubbing some of the black powder into the wound. This substance is also used in treating cases of a snake bite. I wa

¹⁾ Naar men algemeen zegt worden de bladeren van zekere planten mede verkoold tot poeder.