

some big vegetables in London. I remember seeing three men sleeping on one beat!"

Gardener: "Three men?"

Harry: "Yes, policemen!"

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THEN HE WOKE UP.

"Smithkins," said that young man's employer, "you may take a month off."

"Oh, sir," replied the clerk, "it is so good of you to suggest it! I have felt the need of a holiday for some time, but have hesitated to ask for it, knowing how busy we are. But it will do me good, and I thank you for your consideration."

"Smithkins," said the employer, "are you crazy?"

"Why, no, sir. Didn't you say I might take a month off?"

"Certainly that is what I said. This is the first of the month, while last month's calendar remains over your desk. Take last month off, and keep it up-to-date. That's what I meant."

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TOO RISKY.

The stranded motorist looked up and down the road. His car had played him false, but a simple spanner would put things right, and, like a fool he had left all his tools in the garage.

But at last along came the hoped-for friend in need.

"Hi! Will you stop a moment and lend me your spanner?" cried the stranded one.

The occupant of the approaching car slowed down and called out:—

"What?"

"Will you stop a moment and lend me your spanner?" repeated the stranded man.

"Oh, no! Oh, no!" replied the other, speeding up again. "That's how I got mine!"

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SMILE RAISERS.

Jackson: "I never know what to do when I call on a sick friend." Johnson: "Well, it's always as well to remember not to look surprised because he is still alive."

Doctor: "Did you take the pills I sent you on Monday, George?"

George: "Aye, I did; but they little boxes be that 'ard to swallow, sir. Couldn't 'ec do 'em up in somethin' different?"

"Papa, will you buy me a drum?" asked a little lad of his father.

"But, my boy, I'm afraid you'll disturb me with it."

"Oh, no, I won't," said the little fellow; "I'll only play it when you're asleep."

Manager: "We must put a great deal of realism into this forest scene. Can you get someone to growl so as to resemble a bear?"

Assistant: "I think so. There are six or seven chorus men who have not received their wages for three weeks. I'll call them."

The politician burst into the lawyer's office, and in an excited manner asked: "What would you do if a paper should call you a thief and a liar?"

"Well," said the lawyer scrutinisingly, "if I were you I'd toss up a penny to see whether I'd reform or pay no attention to the statement."

A political rally was being held in a large hall. The speaker was a man who had a rather weak voice and similar political policies.

A man in the gallery cupped his hands behind his ears in a vain effort to hear; then shouted: "Oi cawn't 'ear! Oi cawn't 'ear!"

Another man, sitting in front of the platform, rose to his feet and shouted back: "Ya cawn't 'ear? Well, thank 'Eaven, and sit down!"

PILES

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SCIENCE SIFTINGS

By "VOLT"

Nature's Sunshade.

The first thing with which your friends greet you when you return from the seaside is a remark about the healthy tan of your complexion.

The dark color that appears on your face after a little while by the sea is simply Nature's sunshade. The skin is very delicate, as you may find to your cost if you lie about on the sands on a hot day after bathing. Those who have spent most of their time indoors during the year go away for their holidays with skins that are unprotected because they are nearly white. If the skin remained this color it would be scorched by the rays of the sun.

The brown shade that appears as soon as the skin is exposed to the strong light acts as a kind of filter, straining out the harmful rays which, if unchecked, would work havoc.

Sometimes the brown appears mainly in little patches; these are the freckles which the seaside girl dreads to see appearing on her nose. She does not realise that Nature is merely doing her best to prevent that nose from being scorched and blistered by the sun.

Hotels on Wheels.

The largest and most powerful railway engine ever used in the British Isles has just been introduced by the Great Northern Railway Company.

The new locomotive was built to the design of Mr. Gresley, the company's engineer. It has a total heating surface of 3,455 square feet, or nearly 1,000 square feet more than that of the company's next biggest engine.

The engine and tender together weigh one hundred and fifty tons; the combined vehicles can carry eight tons of coal, five thousand gallons of water, and can haul a load of six hundred tons at fifty-five miles an hour.

This mammoth locomotive will be used to draw the "Flying Scotsman," the express that has left London for Scotland at ten o'clock every morning for more than sixty years.

The same company have also built for their Scottish service some new sleeping-cars which are the last word in travelling luxury. They have a patent device for preventing rocking. In addition, there are specially constructed beds, hot and cold water, semi-indirect lights which can be dimmed for use as night-lights, and switches controlling the lights, fans, heating ventilator, and bell, which can all be operated by the passenger from his bed.

Invading Hosts of Insects.

Though the locusts found near London recently caused some alarm (says *Tit-Bits*), they are by no means the first seen in this country, and French scientists, who predicted not long ago that one of the plagues of Egypt would be added to our other post-war troubles, are not likely to be able to say, "We told you so."

In semi-tropical countries, and even in parts of the Continent, the appearance of a couple of locusts may be of much graver import, since they may prove to be the advance guard of an army of countless millions.

A pair of the pests were found at Port St. Louis, near Marseilles, in 1817. Three years later the whole district was invaded by the voracious insects, and the inhabitants of more than twenty communes abandoned their farms, which had been stripped bare. Trees, vegetables, grass—all had gone. Usually, however, locusts come like thieves in the night, and it would be thus that they would descend upon us if they paid us a visit at all.

A long, dark cloud is seen low on the horizon. Nearer and nearer it comes, and louder and louder grows an ominous sound—a sound which the Wise Man of the Bible compared to that of "chariots of many horses running into battle." Soon the cloud is overhead, and a moment later the air is alive with buzzing, whirring insects, which dash into people's faces, fill their houses, perish by myriads in water troughs, and settle on everything.

Birds by the thousand dart among them, for they have been followed from afar by flocks of bee-eaters and locust-eaters, which in turn have been pursued by hawks, kites, and falcons. But their natural enemies do not appear to diminish their numbers.

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