

## THE POISON CUP.

"What a lot o' cases o' people bein' poisoned through eatin' tinned food there's been lately, Mrs. 'Opkins. Makes you nervous, don't it?"

"Aye," said Mrs. Hopkins, shaking her head. "I wouldn't touch the stuff. My poor 'usband always said it was drinkin' tea out of a tin cup when 'e was in the Army what give 'im delirium triminus!"



## THE STUMBLING BLOCK.

A man who had obtained work in a railway yard was told off to mark some trucks.

"Here's a bit of chalk," said the foreman. "Mark each of em eleven."

Some time afterwards the foreman came round again. There was a large "1" on the first truck. Nothing else had been done. The man stood gazing up at the sky.

"What does this mean?" asked the foreman. "Only one truck done—and I said eleven, not one."

"I know," said the man, "but I couldn't think which side of the '1' the other '1' goes."



## SMILE RAISERS.

"But surely," urged Jones, "seeing is believing?"

"Not necessarily," replied Brown. "For instance, I see you every day."



"Do you remember Mrs. Smith?"

"No, I can't say I do."

"Oh, you must remember her! She was the plainest girl in the village. But I forgot; that was after you left."



"Sambo, I don't understand how you can do all your work so quickly and so well."

"I will tell you how it is. I stick de match of enthusiasm to de fuse of energy and jes naturally explodes."



During a lesson on the Deluge a teacher explained that when the Flood came all living creatures except those in the Ark were drowned.

"And what happened to the fish, miss?" she was asked.



Teacher: "Children, can any of you tell me what is the most dangerous part of a motor car?"

Tommy: "Yes, Miss. It's the driver."



"Your baby seems very fond of you, Tom, old chap," remarked his friend one day.

"Fond of me! I should just think he is," replied Tom. "Why, would you believe it, he sleeps all day while I'm not at home, and stays awake all night just to enjoy my society."

Tell us when and where you propose to remove your furniture and competent men with roomy vans will shift it with no inconvenience.—The New Zealand Express Co.

## Science Siftings

(By Volt)

## Forests of Floating Seaweed.

The greatest seagoing expedition ever organised is about to start from New York to explore the Sargasso Sea. Discovered by Columbus, this remarkable sea is covered by a huge gathering of seaweeds, a floating mass of vegetable growth extending for nearly 260,000 square miles, around which the North Atlantic slowly revolves. Numerous air bladders, like small berries, keep the plants afloat.

Seaweeds thrive chiefly in the 100 fathom limit—within 600ft of the surface—but small and almost invisible forms are found everywhere in the ocean. Round British coasts a primitive variety is seen in the bright green and hair-like "crow-silks"; but no essential difference exists between the small weeds and the immense growths found in Pacific waters.

Thicker than the trunk of a large tree, the gigantic stems of seaweed near Tierra del Fuego attain the astonishing length of 400ft. Huge fronds resemble the spreading leaves of tropical palms. There are extensive sub-ocean forests of kelp, and floating islands of weeds swarming with live animals often measuring 8ft from base to tip.

Seaweeds multiply chiefly by means of spores, but near land the waves render unique assistance. In rough weather, numerous small pieces of weed are stripped from their moorings by the sea and are carried away until they become entangled and held fast. Then, if not dislodged and other circumstances are favorable, the pieces of weed settle down and become fresh plants.

## X-Ray Negatives: Advantages to Surgery.

A cable message from New York to the daily papers, under date April 15 says:—An X-ray negative of a person's hand, which was sent by wire from New York to Chicago, has been examined by prominent medical men, who assert that this successful experiment demonstrates that the time is near when X-ray diagnosis of an injury or ailment by specialists can be made at a great distance from the patient. The picture was received in Chicago seven minutes after it had been sent from New York. Specialists state that the negative is as clear and distinct as the average plate, and could readily be used for the purpose of diagnosis. Leading physicians in New York and Chicago declare that the process will prove most valuable in helping to eliminate the time element which is frequently of the utmost importance in the diagnosis of a case.

## The Beginning of Gas-Light.

Those who have reached middle-age can remember the time when gas-light was provided merely by gas-jets, each consuming six cubic feet of gas an hour and providing no more light than three common candles.

Forty years ago electric light began to supplant gas, and most people made up their minds that gas lighting was doomed. Experiments were made with the object of improving coal gas—that is, giving it greater

power of illumination—but these proved futile.

Then Baron Auer von Walsbach came to the rescue. He discovered that cotton fabric, if soaked in a nitrate solution composed of ninety-nine parts of thorium and one of cerium, and then placed over a hot flame to burn out all impurities, would glow with a white incandescence, giving out a pure white light of astonishing power.

By making a cone of this fabric he produced the incandescent gas mantle, which, if placed over a gas-jet, cut the consumption of gas by half, and at the same time gave ten times more light. This invention saved the gas-lighting industry, and is to-day being used extensively upon oil as well as gas lights.

Thorium, the principal material in the composition of the gas mantle, is a rare earth found in very few places. Almost the whole of the world's supply comes from Brazil.

## THE MOST OBSTINATE

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