

"I say," he said, "do you know that the mare you sold me is stone-blind?"

"It know it," answered her former owner, airily.

"Well, you didn't say anything to me about it," replied the other, his face flushing angrily.

"Oh," was the response, "the man who sold her to me didn't tell me about it, and I thought perhaps he didn't want it known."

#### AFRAID TO MOVE.

Robinson was fascinated by the demeanor of the man sitting opposite him. Never a movement did he make; he sat there motionless, while the train roared along the metals, his elbows pressed tightly to his sides, his hands stretched out in front of him.

"Poor fellow! He must be paralysed," thought Robinson. And, on the strength of this, being a sympathetic fellow, he was only too glad, as the train neared their destination, to concede to the stranger's request that he should take his hat from the rack and place it on his head.

A minute later the collector came for tickets. Again Robinson's services were requisitioned, this time to remove the stranger's ticket from his pocket. Robinson did so; but restrain his curiosity longer he could not.

"How did you become paralysed?" he asked, in his most gentle voice.

"Paralysed?" gasped the stranger. "I'm not paralysed. My wife's sent me up to town to fetch a piece of glass, and"—motioning to his hands—"this is the width."

#### WILLIE'S WORLDLY WISDOM.

When little Willie's mother opened the door to the vicar her face beamed with joy and welcome, in spite of the fact that it was washing day.

"This is a real pleasure, sir," she began. "I've been wanting to thank you for the good you've done our Willie by your evening classes. Home's as different again since he attended the plumbing and gasfitting class!"

"This is indeed gratifying—very!" said the vicar. "Now, what improvement have you noticed in little Willie of late?"

"Well, he's arranged our penny-in-the-slot gas-meter so that we get our gas for nothing. You see, he's moved it from the scullery to outside the front door, sir."

"But you still have to put your pennies in the slot, my good woman!"

"Ah, but you see, sir, before he put the meter in the road, our Willie wrote 'Chocolate' over the slot!"

#### SMILE RAISERS.

Lady: "What caused you to become a tramp?"

Ragged Robert: "The family physician, mum. He advised me to take long walks after meals, and I've been walking after them ever since."

Mr. Smith, out walking with his small son Bobby, met Mr. Brown, a fellow-architect. They strolled along together. To keep their minds in working trim, the two men patronisingly picked out the good and bad qualities of the new buildings they passed.

Presently Bobby spied a spotted dog.

"Look, father," he said, scornfully. "look at that dog. I don't like it. There's too much work on it!"

Jones: "By Jove, Hobson, you do look smart! That coat must have cost you a tenner."

Hobson: "Not at all. Only five bob down, and five bob every time the tailor sees me first."

Joe: "What's the difference between Capital and Labor?"

Moe: "It's this way. You lend me £100. That's the capital."

Joe: "Yes."

Moe: "You try to get it back. That's labor."

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## SCIENCE SIFTINGS

(By "VOLTA.")

#### Rare Tropical Woods.

The woodlands of temperate climes yield of course the bulk of the world's lumber, but comparatively few treasures; but those of the tropics are filled with rare cabinet woods, spice woods, dye woods, and many with medicinal virtues. Their name is legion. Some are of vital importance, too, in the industries, such as the rubber and gutta-percha trees. The forest resources of the Philippines are only slightly explored, but they are known to contain vast stores of wood products representing incalculable wealth. They were practically untouched during the Spanish regime, and fortunately for the future of the islands, they have been wisely administered since the American occupation.

#### Origin of the Gas Jet.

A woman's thimble is said to have been the means of suggesting the first gas burner. William Murdock, the inventor, first burned the gas simply as a flame from the end of a pipe. One day in an emergency he wished to stop the illumination. Hurriedly looking around for something, Murdock seized his wife's thimble and thrust it over the light, which was immediately extinguished. There was a strong odor of gas, however, and the experimenter applied a light to the thimble, discovering that it was full of holes, through which tiny jets of flame appeared. The importance of the result was that the illumination from those two or three tiny jets was much brighter than had been given by the great flare from the end of the pipe. Acting on the principle which this chance discovery revealed, he constructed what was known as the Cockspur burner.

#### Why Men Become Bald.

Each time a man lifts his hat his head experiences a sudden change of temperature, and it is this constant heating and cooling of his head, according to a recent medical writer, which causes the hair to drop out in the long run. It is very seldom that soldiers go bald early, for they do not raise their hats, but salute. Women, too, never go bald so soon as men; that is because their hats are retained on their heads when they are out of doors, and are only taken off when indoors. Another reason why men go bald is said to be because they so often wear their hair clipped close.

#### Swimming Powers of Animals.

Have you ever noticed a gull dropping on to the sea—how it spreads its wings high so that the feathers shall not be wetted? If a gull's wing-feathers get wet it cannot rise until they dry. Throw a mouse into the water. It can swim a little, but as soon as its fur is soaked down it goes, and drowns. So, too, in the case of a rabbit. As soon as its fur is wet, it is done for. A mole can swim like anything, but a monkey is very helpless in the water. Almost all land birds drown very rapidly, if unlucky enough to fall into the water. They strike out with their legs, move round and round in a circle, but cannot get off the water. Lions and tigers are very good swimmers, and do not share the common cats' hatred for the water. But of all the cat tribe the South American jaguar is the finest performer in the water. It seems often to plunge in for mere joy of a swim. A rabbit, as we have said, drowns as soon as its fur is soaked through, yet curiously enough its near relative, the hare, swims quite well, and will often cross a river when hunted. Bears are good swimmers, even those that usually live far from large sheets of water, and the common rat is no mean performer. One of the best of animal swimmers is the horse. Horses have been known to swim a river nearly a mile wide simply to get back to their old stables. Deer, too, can all swim well. There are cases of caribou having swum across lakes 10 miles wide when escaping from forest fires.

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