



Bites and Stings

BITES and stings are the really inevitable vacation handicaps. Poison ivy and nettles, thorns and thistles we can avoid, if we see them in time. They are rooted; we have to go to them to get into trouble. But the many-legged, many-winged bearers of bites and stings can and do pursue us, defy smudges and ointments, wriggle through chinks in our screen armor.

We get bitten, as a rule, because some creeping or flying thing wants a meal at our expense: mosquitoes, deerflies, ticks, sandfleas and their all too numerous ilk are simply hungry. We get stung, usually, because we have injured or angered or unintentionally menaced: bees, hornets, scorpions merely strike in self-defense. But no matter what the cause, the afflicted ones (and that includes pretty much all of us) want a cure.

For bites, the general rule may be laid down: soothe, don't scratch. Scratching a bite seldom brings any real relief, and may set up infection. A wet cloth, soaked in a mildly alkaline solution like ammonia or baking soda, will do more to relieve mosquito-bite itch than any amount of rubbing.

When you get stung, the first thing to do is to get the sting out of the wound—for bees usually leave their bayonets sheathed in their victims' flesh. It is better to lift the sting out with the tip of a penknife than to pull it out with fingers or tweezers. The latter method will squeeze more poison into the wound, from the still-adhering poison sacs.

Treatment after stinging will depend on what stung you. If it was a bee, the poison is acid, and should be counteracted with an alkaline solution, as in the case of a mosquito-bite. If the stinger was a wasp or hornet, the poison is alkaline,

and acid treatment is called for. Vinegar or lemon juice are ready remedies.

The more serious kinds of biters, like snakes and the now notorious black widow spider, should not be permitted to spoil your vacation through fear. The chances are very decidedly against your meeting up with them. Most snakes, including the dreaded rattlers, will keep out of your way if they can. And spiders are equally fugitive.

If bitten by a snake, get the poison out of the wound as well as you are able, by sucking (making sure your mouth

has no raw spots or cold sores in it), and by inducing bleeding by cutting the adjacent tissues. Do not, under any circumstances, drink whisky. Lie as still as possible, and have your friends rush a doctor to you.

In the unlikely event of a black widow bite, lie still and call a doctor. You may feel sure that you are going to die, but you probably won't. Black widow bites make their victims rather severely sick, but are not nearly so deadly as they are reputed to be.

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GEOGRAPHY

Russian Scientist Celebrates A Jubilee of Exploration

A JUBILEE—50 years of exploration for science—is attained this spring by 72-year-old Prof. Peter Kozlov, whose adventures in the heart of Asia have gained him world fame.

Prof. Kozlov's flat in Leningrad is a small museum of his journeys to Central Asia. His expeditions have overlooked no phase of interest in that little-known part of the world. They have studied its birds, animals and people, its rocks and lakes, its dead cities and tombs. The vast bulk of the collections repose in museums, where the specimens offer material for years of scientific study.

Born the son of a peasant, Peter Kozlov was a full-fledged scientist and already launched on his explorer's career when just past twenty. His first journey, accompanying a more experienced explorer, took him straight to Mongolia and Tibet, where he was destined to spend years of his life.

By 1893, he was speaking with authority on Central Asia, sharply criticizing erroneous theories regarding the vagrant lake Non-nor, on which he wrote an interesting book. He was now leading his own expeditions.

Discovery of the dead city of Kharokho, during his journey across quicksands in the Gobi Desert, is one of the highlights of Kozlov's career. Scores of European and Russian travelers had sought this buried city. Kozlov drew plans of its tremendous fortress walls, towers, and half-ruined stone monuments. He found in the ruins books in seven languages, amazingly fresh pictures, statues and domestic articles.

From the Gobi Desert, he brought

back plants of considerable interest to regions troubled with drought.

He unearthed evidence that Greek art and culture spread as far east as Mongolia. And he showed that the Greeks were not dealing entirely in myths when they talked of a land of Hyperboreans, dwellers behind the north winds. For the wave of trade and travel that relayed Greek ideas to the heart of Asia over 2000 years ago, doubtless brought back rumors of the civilization there beyond the north winds. In an ancient burying ground of this civilization in the mountain passes of northern Mongolia, Kozlov's expedition found tapestries, jade, carved figurines and other beautiful things.

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ZOOLOGY

Squirrels Chew Up Metal Tree Tags; Ignore Nails

SQUIRRELS in a Midwestern forest seem to be "getting hard." They are chewing up the metal identification tags which foresters nail on young trees—nobody knows why.

The tags are made of aluminum, fastened to the trees with copper nails. The marauders, which have been identified as gray squirrels by their tooth marks, chew up only the tags and let the nails alone.

This puzzling bit of squirrel behavior was reported by John G. Kuenzel of the Central States forest experiment station, U. S. Forest Service. (*Journal of Forestry*, May).

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