

In Lighter Vein.

(Each month we give a prize of a book for the best original joke or story. Who will be the prize-winners next month?)

The Prize Joke.

The prize offered for the best story for this department goes this month to Dick Acton, Cumberland, B. C., for the following story. Evidently it is told in the young boy's own words. One of the aims of this monthly competition is to develop in boys and girls power to tell stories well. Very few can do this, although the art is one to be desired. It is needless to say that humor and coarseness are not the same thing. The merit lies in the telling quite as much as in the story. The instalment this month is not as good as it should be. Who will win the prize next month?

Second Hand Children.

A little girl asked her father what it meant when you said a person had adopted a certain child. Her father told her that it meant that the person had bought the child second hand. Her brother said why his parents didn't buy him in the Old Country was because they didn't want to have to pay duty on him. I know the little girl and boy, and the father too.

Dead Turkeys.

A story is told of a Winnipeg commission merchant who is an extremely "close buyer." When he receives a consignment, he never fails to claim an allowance for something alleged to have spoiled on the way. This habit is well known to the trade and has led to many complaints from shippers, but the merchant had always managed to come out on top. During Thanksgiving week, as the story goes, he received several barrels of fat, dressed turkeys from a poultryman in the Northwest. Herebefore he had dealt exclusively in live fowls, and probably the correspondence clerk got things mixed. At any rate, the shipper was astonished to receive a letter by return mail, running as follows: "Dear Sir: We regret to advise you that four of the turkeys in your consignment of November reached here dead. Please make deduction for same and correct amount. Yours truly." The poultryman communed with himself and replied thus: "Dear Sir: I am sorry to say I find it impossible to make concession requested. I have established a rule requiring all customers who desire live dressed turkeys to notify us in advance, so we can send them in heated cars. Turkeys without feathers and insides are liable to catch cold if shipped in the ordinary manner. The mortality among dressed turkeys was very large this year. Yours mournfully."

The Night Was Wet.

A Brandon young man went one evening to visit his fiancée, and getting interested in conversation, stayed rather long.

When he prepared to depart he found to his discomfort that it was raining heavily. After much persuasion she prevailed upon him to stay the night.

All at once he was missed, and his friends wonderingly awaited his return. An hour later he reappeared, breathless. He had been home for his nightshirt!

A Homoeopathic Cure.

A physician and his friend were standing on the street corner of a Virginia town where they were spending a few days, says Short Stories. Their attention was amusingly arrested by the sight of an old darky belaboring the flanks of a mule in a vain persuasion to make him

move on. At last the doctor was appealed to.

"Say, boss, I'll give yo' five dollars ef yo'll make dis hyer mule go."

With a sly wink, the physician opened his case and took out his hypodermic syringe, filled the needle with an acid, and sent it into the hind quarters of the mule. The effect was magical. With a wild plunge the mule went tearing down the street, with the darky after him, the bystanders roaring with laughter. A short time afterward the darky, dust-covered and panting, approached again.

"Say, boss, how much was de wuff of dat stuff yo' done squit in dat mule?"

"Oh," said the doctor, "about ten cents."

Down went the darky's hands in his jean pockets. He fished out two dimes.

"Hyah, boss, am twenty cents. I wish yo'd squit twice as much of dat stuff into me, 'case I'se bound to catch dat mule."

An Interested Listener.

At a dinner party not long ago a certain young gentleman (an enthusiastic golfer) started in with the shellfish to enumerate to his partner the details of a match that he had been playing that day.

It was not until the pudding was brought on that he suddenly thought himself that he had been doing all the talking. Indeed, the young lady had not said a single word during the entire progress of the meal. It was possible that she was not interested in the subject; incredible, but still possible.

"I am afraid that I have been boring you with this talk of shop," he said in half apology.

"Oh, no, not at all," was the polite response. "Only, what is golf?"

With Moral Effect.

Frederic Remington recently met a young Englishman who is travelling in this country and is not averse to acquiring information. The subject of bucking broncos came up, and the Englishman said:

"I've read that in riding those wild horses of yours the main thing is to keep cool. Has a good moral effect on the beasts, I've been told. Is it true that your riders sometimes roll a cigarette and light and smoke it while riding a vicious buck?"

"Oh, that's an ordinary occurrence," replied Mr. Remington easily. "But when I was in the West if a cowboy wished to subdue a particularly dangerous animal he would mount him with a razor, brush, hand-mirror and so forth, and, while the creature reared and kicked, the man would proceed calmly to shave. That's when you get your fine moral effect."

Queen Victoria and the Silver Basket.

The Honorable Beverly Tucker, Minister to the Court of St. James, was better liked by Queen Victoria and upon more intimate terms with her than any other American. Mr. Tucker's reputation was well known as one who never remembered to pay a bill if he could forget it. To provide a proper receptacle for a gift of American apples which he wished to present to Her Majesty and still be consistent with his principles, he persuaded the leading jeweler of London to lend him a beautiful silver basket, on the strength of the advertisement it would be to him. The basket did not come back from the Queen, and the jeweler began to prod Mr. Tucker

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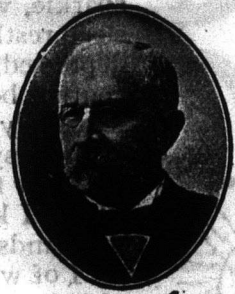
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