

A CASE OF CONSCIENCE.

Why an Editor Could Not Be Judge in a Literary Contest.

The editor of a magazine was invited to act as a judge in a prize story contest. "Is it to be an anonymous contest?" the editor asked. "Yes, indeed." "And I suppose all the stories will be typewritten?" "Certainly. We have particularly stipulated that." "I'm very sorry," was the reply, "but I can't possibly."

"But—but you will be asked to read only the best of the stories submitted," reminded the publisher. "A staff of competent readers will sift the wheat from the chaff, and"—

"I'm very sorry, but I'll have to refuse, and I can't tell you how it grieves me to say this, for I appreciate the great compliment you are paying me, and I would appreciate equally the remuneration you offer. But the fact is this—my conscience would smite me if I undertook the work. You see, I have had about twenty years' experience in editorial work, and during that time I suppose the manuscripts of every popular and unpopular author of the day have come to my desk for attention. I have been in such long correspondence with many of these authors that I know their handwritings well, and even a glance at my morning's mail will tell me who my correspondents are. And—do not smile—I know their typewriters equally well. I know the various makes they own, and those who prefer elite type to the ordinary size, and those who use italics and inverted quotation marks. I can even recognize an author's peculiar method of making a caret and his own manner of punctuation. But all this is nothing to my ability to spot at once an author's style. Attempts have often been made to deceive me, but only on rare occasions have they succeeded. But you must not think this so astonishing after all. I have been tied down to my one line of work for a long time now, and the number of really successful writers is not so great after all. It would be quite remarkable if I had not learned something about their characteristics after all these years. Almost all of them would doubtless submit stories in your contest, and perhaps the majority of their manuscripts would be passed up to me by your readers. If, recognizing any particular writer's work, I pretended to give an opinion based on supposed complete ignorance of that writer's identity, I should not be doing the fair thing. For that reason I must decline to act. You understand me, I hope." "Yes," said the publisher, "I do. But whom shall I ask in your place?" "Some one who is not cursed with quite so much conscience," replied the editor.—Bookman.

Alligator as Food.

There is reason to believe that the flesh of a young boiled alligator is barely distinguishable from veal, says an English traveler. It is probably cleaner and more tender than much of the meat of the animals that are usually consumed as food on the continent or in the east end of London. I have never desired to taste the flesh of alligators, cooked or uncooked. But in India I have seen the Sontals and other casteless natives greedily devour the flesh of an alligator without waiting to cook it. The flesh was very pale in color and probably was much superior to the flesh of snakes and rats and such like vermin which form the ordinary food of the predatory Sontal when hunting in his native woods.

A Little Ambiguous.

A group of interested citizens was observed standing in front of a billboard in one of Chicago's suburbs reading a large poster that had just been put up. Some of them were greatly amused, while others were highly indignant.

A nearer inspection showed that the purpose of the poster was to advertise a "genuine colored minstrel's entertainment" that was to be given at one of the local amusement halls. The particular portion that had roused the emotions of the crowd was printed in great, flaring letters:

"It will be enough to make a mule laugh! Bring your wives and children!"

Lost Dignity.

Irish viceroys are stripped of their sovereign attributes as soon as they reach English waters, which gives point to the following story told of one viceroy and a lady with whom he was acquainted. They both found themselves on board the Holyhead packet. During the voyage from Ireland the lady treated the viceroy with ceremonious respect. So soon, however, as the packet entered Holyhead harbor she said to him, "Now, Bobby, you're no longer viceroy, so take my bag and make yourself useful."—London Truth.

Chinese Stewards on Pacific Liners.

We sailed from San Francisco, bound for Honolulu, on a ship whose stewards and sailors are Chinamen. Even if all does not go well with the boat's motion in days of storm, one cannot fail to be entertained by these spry sons of the orient.

The costume worn by the stewards is quite remarkable. For ordinary, everyday wear they don white garments that resemble American pajamas in their style of cut and fit. For dinner each evening and on Sundays the white suits are exchanged for light blue garments of the same description—rather an odd liver to our prosaic minds! Of course, every Chinaman preserves a habitual, solemn silence. If, owing to an interesting conversation, the passenger fails to notice the dish with which the table steward is trying to serve him the patient Chinaman stands immovable, with outstretched hand and sphinxlike countenance, until attention is drawn to him, after which, his duty done, he slips in silence on his way. Plodding, silently, the sailors attended to their duties with mournful faces that strongly appealed to me. They ate with chop sticks, sitting on their heels the while, and were, in fact, eminently satisfactory specimens in every way.—Travel Magazine.

A Hopeless Case.

A Scottish paper tells a story of an old Scottish woman who was "unco' drouthble," without the money to buy "a drappie." "Lassie," she said to her little granddaughter, "gang round to Donald McCallum and bring me a gill. Tell him I'll pay him 't the morning."

Back came the child with a refusal. Donald declined to part with his whisky without the cash. Eager and irritated, the old woman cast about for some means of "raising the wind," and her eye fell upon the family Bible. "Here, lassie," she said, "gie him this and tell him to keep it until I bring him the siller." Off went the little girl, but she soon returned, still carrying the Bible. Donald was obdurate. "He says he maun hae the baubees' sret, granny."

In anger the disappointed grandmother threw up her hands and exclaimed: "Loch, did onybody ever hear the like o' that! The man will neither tak my word nor the word o' God for a gill o' whusky!"

A Canine Shirk.

Rex, a thoroughbred spitz, must perform the painful duty of escorting a certain neighbor home when she has been calling at our house. However, it is not without a show of reluctance that he does it. Recently our friend missed her escort, and no amount of whistling proved equal to recalling him. This occurred several times and it was always in about the same place that Rex disappeared. One night our friend determined to discover Rex's little game. After whistling and calling she made a pretense of going on. She stopped in a deep shadow. Around the corner of the nearest house appeared a slinking figure. Stealthily quitting the shadows Rex crept out and peered long and anxiously up the street, whither, as he well knew, he should have continued to conduct the lady. After this he turned shamelessly around and lit out for home.—Chicago Tribune.

Baby's Share of Blame.

She had been fitted for two gowns, the total cost of which was nearly \$600.

"Now," she said to the saleswoman, "I want you to do me a favor."

"Certainly," was the prompt response.

The customer colored deeply. "I want you to make out the bill partly for gowns for me and partly for baby dresses and a baby's cloak."

The saleswoman was used to the whims of fashionable women, but this was something she was a little slow in comprehending. The customer explained.

"You see," she said, "my husband is very fond of our baby, and if he sees that the bill is partly for dresses for her—well, he won't mind so much."—Exchange.

Takes His Own Medicine.

In Baluchistan when the physician gives a dose he is expected to partake of a similar one himself as a guarantee of his good faith. Should the patient die under his hands the relatives, though they rarely exercise it, have the right of putting him to death unless a special agreement has been made freeing him from all responsibility as to consequences, while if they should decide upon immolating him he is fully expected to yield to his fate like a man.

Man's Ruling Wish.

There is one wish ruling over mankind, and it is a wish which is never in a single instance granted—each man wishes to be his own master. It is a boy's beatific vision, and it remains the grownup man's ruling passion to the last. But the fact is life is a service. The only question is, Whom shall we serve?—W. F. Faber.

Still in the Dark.

"Does your maid object to being called a servant?" "I don't know. We've only had her two weeks and she hasn't really permitted us to get on speaking terms with her as yet."—Chicago Record-Herald.

The Return.

Magistrate—What! do you mean to say your husband struck you, and he that physical wreck? Mrs. Maloney—Yes, yer honor, but he's only been a physical wreck since he struck me.—Independent.

Discontent is the want of self reliance; it is the infirmity of will.—Emerson.



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Free Medical Advice.

A well known London physician at a dinner party one evening was much worried by one who was seeking gratuitous advice. "Do you know, doctor," said his questioner, "I know a man who suffers so terribly with indigestion that at times he can do nothing but howl with pain. What would you do in that case?"

"Well, I suppose," responded the medical man, "I should howl with pain too."—Westminster Gazette.

Flabbergasted Pa.

"Ah, pater, I am no end glad to be home from college."

"What's that?"

"I am jolly well pleased, y'know."

"Hank, clean out the old stall! There's a new critter on the place."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

A Thorough Sport.

The Deacon—Young man, don't you know that there's a rainy day coming? Spendthrift—Meby there is, but I've got \$5 that says the weather man won't call the turn. Come, now, if you've got any nerve, show your money.

A Good Imitation.

The other day an amateur artist was producing some rapid sketches to amuse his children. He drew a sketch of a hen so naturally that when it was afterward thrown in the waste paper basket it laid there.

A Little Different.

"I suppose," she said with fine sarcasm, "you were sitting up with a friend?" "No, m'dear," replied he truthfully, "I was settin' 'em up with a friend."—Houston Post.

Hard to Fit.

She—He has a most extraordinary figure, hasn't he? He—That's so. I believe an umbrella is about the only thing he can buy ready made.—Ally Sloper.

The Tobacconist's Effigy.

One of the most peculiar things in the whole history of signs is the fact that while all other shopkeepers were patronizing the embryo painters the tobacconist always called upon the woodcarver on the continent as well as in England. As long ago as Elizabeth's reign the wooden image of the black boy was the favorite sign of the tobacco dealers. Later the customary sign was the highlander or a figure of Sir Walter Raleigh. In Holland, for some strange reason, the tobacconist adopted the dairymaid as their sign, with the motto, "Consolation for sucklings." The Indian, naturally enough, has always been the predominant sign in this country, although once in awhile a reversion to type crops out with the ancient black boy.

Paris Has No Wash Day.

Paris sends all her washing out in the country—that is, the bonton Parisian. The city laundries that do up the linen of the foreigners from England, Asia and America wash by machine and dry by steam heat under the pavement or near the sewer arteries. It is against the law to hang out wash. If a tenant put a pocket handkerchief or a towel in the window to dry the concierge would have a fit, and if he couldn't persuade her to remove the nuisance the gendarme would. Large and small concerns send delivery wagons about for work, which is expressed to the country and returned in a week or ten days. The work is exquisite and prices are reasonable, but the strain on the garments is treble the wear.

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