



THE WELCOME GUEST

RECOMPENSE.

BY R. E. MUNKITDICE.

It was about a week before Christmas when Colonel Smith was wandering homeward upon the main thoroughfare of the city of his adoption. The colonel was as full of the spirit of the merry season as was the very air itself. He thought of the presents he was about to make and of those which he expected to receive as he cast his eyes about him and saw the shop windows full of the latest novelties in toys.

When he was lost in such a pleasant Christmas reverie as he had not since he was a small boy, he happened to pass along in front of a great marble hotel. At the time he was passing a painter was engaged in the act of retouching some of the inside blinds at an open window. It is not likely that it will ever be known just how it happened, but the painter, while probably preoccupied with dreams of the approaching holiday, toppled the pot of paint off the window sill, from which point it whirled through the chilly air and deposited about three-quarters of its contents upon the colonel.

The latter was as red with rage as he was with pain when he flew into and through the main entrance of that hotel and presented himself at the office. "Sir!" exclaimed the colonel in a towering rage. "Was kind of treatment do you call this, sir?"

"Pretty rough," replied the clerk, not knowing exactly what to say, because he was ignorant of the accident that had just happened. "I am glad," roared the colonel, with beautiful irony, "that you are at least kind enough to assume an attitude of sympathy, but I am here, sir, to demand satisfaction for damages. As I was passing, sir, one of your painters, sir, upset a pot of red paint upon me, sir!"

Here the colonel paused for breath, and the clerk, learning the cause of his trouble, became very profuse in his apologies. "I am sorry it happened, sir, very sorry. But you should not be so unreasonable as to blame the establishment for what was the fault of a painter employed by it."

"You should employ only painters who understand their business, sir!" roared the colonel in a fine frenzy. "And I will teach you that paint cannot be poured upon me with impunity, sir!"

also a very dignified and proud spirit person. And when she saw the colonel enter the house belated with red paint and heard that he had been glibed at by boys as he passed along the street she was completely undone and has since been confined to her bed. Her feelings have got to be paid for too. The colonel is really more distressed over his aunt's feelings than anything else connected with this unfortunate affair, and he proposes to fight it out on the basis of their feelings and wounded pride.

"I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll settle the thing for \$30.75, and not a cent more. If this doesn't meet your views of a fair compromise, you must seek your remedy in the law, and then you will find what your client's feelings are worth."

"It is," replied the hotel's attorney. On Christmas morning, when the bells were ringing merrily in the frosty air, Colonel Smith appeared in a new suit of clothes to celebrate the occasion, for he had accepted the hotel's terms of \$30.75—\$30 for his ruined clothing and \$3.75 for his feelings and those of his dear old aunt.

The gift which harmonizes with its festive surroundings and just fits in a vacant spot is the one which is most valued. The same rule applies to articles of dress. To the young brunette, whose evening gowns are generally pink or crimson, the pale blue fan, although lovely in itself, would not be as serviceable as a plainer one which she could use with her existing wardrobe.

The friends in mourning and the invalid appreciate the thoughtfulness which adapts the gift to their saddened lives. The book, with its comforting message; the potted palm to brighten the darkened room, the soft knitted shawl or slippers—in fact, anything that evidences consideration for their feelings, and does not jar by incongruity, is priceless.

It is astonishing to note how much is frittered away on perishable trifles when the Christmas gift, of all others, should be something enduring. The elaborate card and beribboned booklet are practically useless, aside from the remembrance which prompts their giving. Almost every one has a collection of satin hand painted valentines, lovely to look at, but the care of which is the despair of both mistress and maid. But some say: "Other things are beyond my means. I cannot afford to give substantial presents."

THE HIGHEST AWARD.

Royal Baking Powder Has All the Honors—In Strength and Value—Is Best—As Proven by the World's Competition. The Royal Baking Powder has the enviable record of having received the highest award for articles of its class—greatest strength, purest ingredients, most perfectly combined—wherever it has been tested in competition with others. In the exhibitions of former years, at the Centennial, at Paris, Vienna and at the various State and industrial fairs, where it has been tested by judges who have invariably awarded the Royal Baking Powder the highest honors.

At the recent World's Fair the examinations for the baking powder awards were made by the experts of the chemical division of the Agricultural Department at Washington. The official report of the tests of the baking powders which were made by this department for the specific purpose of ascertaining which was the best, and which has been made public, shows the superiority of the Royal Baking Powder over all other baking powders exhibited at the fair the next highest in strength thus tested contained only 133 cubic inches of leavening gas. The other powders gave an average of 111. The Royal, therefore, was found to be 20 per cent in strength than the next highest competitor, and 48 per cent above the average of all the other tests. Its superiority in other respects, however, in the quality of the food it produces, in its wholesomeness, could not be measured by figures.

It is these high qualities, known and appreciated by the women of the world for so many years, that have caused the sales of the Royal Baking Powder, as shown by statistics, to exceed the sales of all other baking powders combined.

A Clever Dwarf. A magnificent feast had been prepared at Burlington in honor of the king and queen, and it was arranged that the little dwarf, Jeffrey, should step from a huge venison pastry into her majesty's service. This mode of appearing was not new even then. A pie with a dwarf inside was thought a "dainty dish to set before a king," and a gift of this kind was often a road to the sovereign's favor.

On the day of the dinner Jeffrey found himself imprisoned in a large dish, surrounded by a high wall of standing crust. Of course a way had been found to give him air, but he afterward said he felt buried alive. To add to his discomfort Buckingham slyly ordered the pie to be warmed, saying, "It is better eaten warm than cold."

Young Jeffrey remained quiet and said never a word as the dish was carried to the kitchen; but he was far from happy and thought of Nebuchadnezzar and the fiery furnace until he grew "warm with apprehension." The cook, however, understood the joke and the dwarf pie was placed in safety on the royal table. At last came the fateful time—the crowning moment of Jeffrey's life.

The pie was opened, the trumpet sounded and forth sprang the dwarf. He was clad in a full suit of armor, and equipped about the table shaking his little sword at some of the guests; and, remembering the scorching the duke had threatened for him, he gave a vicious little tweak at his grace's noble nose. Buckingham drew back in time to save his handsome face and threatened to cudgel the young knave with a chicken bone; but the king laughed and said Buckingham was served quite right.

By this time Jeffrey was nearly deafened with applause and half drowned in the perfumes the ladies sprinkled upon him, so he hastened to end the scene by prostrating himself before the queen's plate and entreating to be taken into her service.—St. Nicholas.

What General Lane Did for Texas. One episode in the career of the late General Walter P. Lane will forever enshrine his memory in the hearts of the Texas people. During the Mexican war, while in the major's command of the Texas Rangers, under General Wool, he was sent with a small body of men in the direction of San Luis Potosi to discover the movements of the Mexican army. There were two roads to San Luis Potosi, one by Matichula, a large town, the other by the great hacienda of Salado, where the scattered Texas war prisoners drew black beans in 1846 and were shot. The two roads were divided by a range of mountains. Lane took the left hand, and actually penetrated to and entered the city of Matichula with its 20,000 people and a garrison of several hundred men. He ordered and obtained dinner at a messon, a sort of wagon yard inn, announced that a large American army was near and feasted his men to their full.

Signs of Spring.

Sound of gusty spring rain. When we wake at daylight hours, see tipped branches on the pane. Boating music to the show. Crows that caw from steaming woods. Robins piping in the glades. Duds that from their winter heads. Two and a half like pretty maids. Grateful odors of damp earth. Birds that from their winter heads. Shouting, leaping in her mirth. Down the bare banks of the hills. Here and there a crow's head. Thrusting up to dare the cold. While its sisters, warm in bed, Stir their coverlets of mold. Spring is coming, spring is now: She is whistling in the air. Soon the blithe nymph will be here. Shaking blossoms from her hair. —James Buchanan in Harper's Bazar.

Signs of Spring in a City. The present forward weather seems to be a great season for the small boy. He gets more solid enjoyment out of the warm days and the dry sidewalks than the street cleaning department of the board of public works. Every small boy who is anybody down on the heights has a pair of roller skates and a good strong pair of lungs. These boys play hockey on the asphalt pavement of that exclusive quarter, catch rides on the backs of grocery wagons and keep up a constant and eternal yelling. Why they yell does not appear. It is perhaps because a small boy cannot do much of anything without yelling. These boys go scurrying around corners on their skates in imminent danger of cracking their own skulls and to the great terror of passers by. They dodge under the heads of spirited coach horses and altogether make a fresh and healthy nuisance of themselves.

Those poorer boys who are not wealthy enough to afford each a pair of roller skates, split up a pair between two and go about pushing the wheeled foot in front of them, evidently having as much fun as the rest. The whipping top is also now much in vogue, and the tops and the rollers make life a burden to the nursesmaid with their perambulators and babies and the policeman on the corner.—Brooklyn Eagle.

An American Absentee Landlord. One of the principal arguments advanced in favor of deer forests is that those who are able to indulge in that luxury spend much money in the Highlands. But how if sportsmen insist on maintaining forest grounds and never visit them? Mr. Winans, whose sporting territory extends from the Beaulieu Firth to the Atlantic—from sea to sea, in fact—has not shot over the land once during the past four years, and as the deer have in consequence multiplied enormously, the crofters of the district have resolved to ask the millionaire to allow them a day's shooting.

The application is doubtless made more with the view of bringing the crofters' grievances before the public than anything else, for it is sure to be ignored. But the continued absence of Mr. Winans raises a wider and more important question: Can the setting aside of a great stretch of country as deer forests which are never shot over be justified on any ground whatever?

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