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Americans as a Nation Laughers and Talkers?

The American laugh is most impressive. Laughing is a very important emotional expression and one learns a lot about character through careful observation of the way people laugh, Carl G. Jung, writes in the Forum.

There are some folk who suffer from a crippled laughter. It is just painful to see them laugh, and the sound of that shrill, evil, compressed rattle almost makes you sick. America as a nation can laugh. This means a lot; it means that there is still childlikeness, a soundness of emotion, an immediate rapport with fellow beings.

This laughter goes hand in hand with a remarkable vivacity and great ense of expression. Americans are great talkers. Gossip even extends into monstrously big newspapers, so that the talking goes on even when you are reading.

The style of "good" American writing is a talking style. When it is not too flat, it is just as refreshing and exhilarating to us Europeans as your laughter. But often, alas, it is just chattering—the noise of the big ant heap.

Cynicism Confuted by Man's Belief and Hopes

It seems the fashion now to find a cynical motive at the root of every good deed, to reduce all nobler emotions and impulses to some unsavory form of sex complex. I have even heard those who are proud of their "sophistication" explain mother love as a form of sex gratification! These things are the fashion now. But there are no fashions in human beings. Beneath the changing mannerisms and garments on the different generations, men and women are what they always have been. They want the same things. They believe in the same things.

They believe that virtue is always rewarded and evil is always punished. Hokum? Yes, but they are wiser than the critics. They believe these things because these things are true. Goodness may not be rewarded by money, evil may not be punished by hanging. But there are rewards and punishments that cannot be seen by the naked eye.—Cecil B. De Mille in Motion Picture Classic.

Faith in a Few Things Best

Channing said truly, "No one is so tempted to believe too little as the person who began by believing too much." Or, rather, too many things, trying to see in detail the fashion of things to be, making an Atlas of Eternity. In reaction against what it deems the over-belief of other days, our generation has fallen into an underbelief, far below what is its right. If our fathers asked how good is the most that we can mean by the word "God," their sons ask how real is the least we can mean by it. What we need is not faith in more things, but more faith in a few profound things which make us men, whence men in all ages have derived inward sustaining hope. For we are moved most deeply not by many things we try to believe, but by the few things we cannot persuade ourselves to disbelieve.—The Churchman.

The Bachelor's Pie

Dr. Harvey W. Wiley, the food expert, ended a eulogy of rhubarb with an anecdote.

"There was a bachelor mason in my native Kent," he said, "who used to cook his own food, and one day he came to work with a pie over two feet long fastened to the top of his lunch basket.

"'What have you got there, Joe?' the boss asked him.

"'A pie. What do you think?' said Joe.

"'But look at the length of it,' said the boss.

"'Well,' Joe growled, 'the rhubarb was that long.'"

Fleeting Youth

George Edwards—old London Gaiety "guv'nor"—was a great believer in youth and good looks in his actresses, and he gave particular care to the selection of the "six little wives" in "San Toy," and, after the piece had run for some months, he was found at the back of the dress circle inspecting the stage critically through his opera glasses.

"Look at those girls," he groaned.

"What is the matter?" asked his fidus Achates.

"Can't you see how old they're getting?"—Kansas City Star.

Citrus

One evening Mr. Brown was seated in the living room reading the paper when his little son John, age five, approached him, and asked:

"Papa, what is a lemon?"

"Why, a lemon is a citrus fruit. It's something that causes a bitter taste in your mouth," his father replied.

"Well, papa, if mother gives me that bad medicine tonight, will she be a lemon," Johnny inquired.

Effectively Stirred Up His Sleepy Listeners

A noted writer was talking about the success of a trashy and sensational novel.

"This novel," he said, "reminds me of a preacher. He was preaching away, proclaiming eternal truths, one somnolent summer morning, and in the heat his congregation drowsed.

"Suddenly he paused. He glared down at all those nodding heads. Then he resumed in a loud voice:

"'I was walking down Green lane last Thursday and in Farmer Cornelius Husk's barnyard I saw a strange sight. Yes, I saw a large sow suckling a litter of ten little pigs, and the sow and each little pig had a long horn growing out of the forehead between the ears.'

"The preacher paused again. He glared down at his congregation again. They were all wide awake now. They all gazed up at him with wide-eyed interest.

"'Aha!' he said bitterly. 'A while ago, when I was telling you eternal truths, you went to sleep; but now, when I tell you a pack of silly lies, look how wideawake and interested you are!'"

Divided Guilt Between Speaker and Listener

William W. Sewell, ranch manager in the West for the late President Roosevelt, and his guide on many a hunting trip in Maine, was the source of an interesting anecdote in New England in 1901.

The President, standing on the portico roof of the old Bangor house, in Bangor, Maine, called out: "Has anyone seen old Bill Sewell of Island Falls? If he's in the crowd, bring him up."

And Bill was brought up, while notables from all parts of New England were thrust aside.

"Bill, I'm glad to see you," greeted Teddy. "But I never expected a smart fellow like you would be wasting time listening to political speeches."

"And I never figured a smart feller like you would waste time makin' 'em," grinned Bill as the two shook hands.

Suresnes in History

Suresnes cemetery, a historic spot, has been the grave of soldiers since prehistoric times. It is situated on the gentle sloping hill of Mont Valerien, named after the Roman emperor whose forces there won a bloody victory. In the Middle ages Mont Valerien was frequently the scene of fierce battles between the Frankish tribes. Napoleon started to build a fortress there because of its strategic position. In the Franco-Prussian war Mont Valerien was the last French stronghold to surrender to the German armies besieging Paris, and was also the scene of an artillery duel between the troops of the national government and the bloody Paris communards.

Romance of the Sponge

If we only realize it, there is really a good deal of adventure represented in the articles of usefulness and luxury and necessity about us.

Sponges, for instance. We see them hanging in our bathrooms and that's all we see. But they must be brought from the bottom of the sea. Sponges do not grow everywhere, and those from some sections of the ocean's bed are superior to others. The best sponges usually come from the deepest water, and the so-called silk sponges from the Mediterranean are from deep water. For the deep-water sponge it is necessary for divers to search, though those from shallower water can be gathered by means of long poles.

White House Restored

When the British attempted to destroy the White House, in 1814, the fire gutted the interior of the building and badly damaged the exterior walls. All preparatory work and repairs to masonry were done in 1815 and early in 1816. Contracts were let for the cutting and delivery of timbers from nearby Virginia and Maryland, and the erection of the roof was commenced in October, 1816, and completed in December of the same year. By September, 1817, the work had progressed sufficiently to permit President Monroe to spend a few days in the building, and in December of that year he took up his residence there.

Home of Watercress

Motoring between Henley and Nettlebed recently, says a writer in the London Evening News, I came for the first time upon "Watercress Village." It must be unique in England. Its name Ewelme, pronounced Yewelm. A stream as clear as crystal runs down the middle of the village street, and watercress grows in profusion in it. Rustic bridges cross the stream and lead up to the cottage gardens. Further broad expanses of watercress beds lie beyond the cottages, and the occupants make a living from watercress.

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