



Well, we tried!

The difficulty with describing a book like A. P. Herbert's *LAUGHING ANNE* is that it is so quotable that you can't somehow get on with the description. But we must try . . . so . . . "LAUGHING ANNE" is the most delightful collection of light verse that . . . well, here's a sample—

The broken reed continued:

"I never swore a swear,
I never kissed a woman's hand
Till I was twenty-four.
They took me to a night club then—
Ah, how was a lad to know?
And all the rips of Wimbledon
Was dancing in a row;

"Nine—ten—eleven—thirty

*And still the music played.
O Heavens, the mushroom sandwiches,
the lights, the lemonade!
Don't tell my mother, etc.*

The *New York Times*, the *Saturday Review of Literature*, all the better journals have praised this book. The *Weekly Westminster* said that *LAUGHING ANNE* held at least seven lyrics that would make a fortune for some musical comedy. But they all quoted at length, too. F. P. A. was the only one who really found the way to describe the book. He did it like this the other morning in the *N. Y. World*:

*How gleeful and gay are the verses of A. P. Herbert, a poet of Punch!
They're jolly, jejune, and they sing to a tune
That you think of at dinner or lunch.
"Laughing Anne" they are hight; they
are merry and bright;
They are simple and silly and sage
And I'm not either glad or dejected to add
They are published by Doubleday, Page
And Co.
Yo ho!
They are published by Doubleday, Page.*

LAUGHING ANNE

By A. P. Herbert

Illustrated by George Morrow

At all bookstores, \$2.00



The Phoenix Nest

LATELY we were asked by a newspaper to be one of many contributing to a symposium as to which twelve writers of all the world and of all time we considered The Twelve Immortals. . . . The symposium followed *Rudyard Kipling's* casual remark, in his speech acknowledging the medal given him by the Royal Society of Literature in England, that "quite a dozen writers have achieved immortality in the past 2,500 years." . . .

The symposium appeared in a morning paper of the following day. Our own list was obviously stereotype, and we could have gone on naming fifty more writers of the world that we thought worthy of immortality. To name twelve is to give but a poor idea of the many notable achievements in the literature of the world. As to immortality . . .

For instance, few read *John Donne* today, yet the Dean of St. Paul's seems to us just as immortal as the Dean of St. Patrick's whom we included in our list. *Michael Drayton's* poems, lyric and heroic, appear to us to confer immortality upon him among the great of the seventeenth century. Among English writers alone we could name literally dozens worthy of the bays. For twenty-five centuries is a longish time. . . .

Kipling was not to be taken so literally. A more fruitful speculation, it seems to us, might have sprung from an earlier remark of his in the same speech. He spoke of the "unlettered ancestors" of the earliest writers as those who bequeathed them "the entire stock of primeval plots and situations—those fifty ultimate comedies and tragedies to which the gods mercifully limit human action and suffering. This changeless aggregate of material, workers in fiction through the ages have run into fresh moulds, adorned and adapted to suit the facts and fancies of their own generation." . . .

A good examination question for those majoring in English in the colleges would therefore seem to be, "Name the fifty ultimate comedies and tragedies which have through the ages formed a changeless aggregate of material for workers in fiction." . . .

Frankly, we ourselves don't know what they are. Does anyone wish to speculate? Why fifty? And what are they? . . .

Stephen Leacock is still funny. His latest, "Winnowed Wisdom," has made our morning enjoyable and has successfully prevented us from working, which, in itself, is a blessing. After our recent trip we read his "All Aboard for Europe" with special appreciation. His "Outlines of Everything," "The Next War," and "French Politics for Beginners" are high spots in the book. But we aren't sure whether the preface about the Average Man isn't the highest spot. . . .

We think we have already asked diffidently what in — *Walt Whitman* is doing in the English Men of Letters New Series? He wasn't an English Man of Letters. We learn from the inside of the jacket of *John Bailey's* "Walt Whitman," that "Mr. Bailey is refreshingly temperate in his discussion of the poet's work." Just what this means we shall have to find out. We might be able to tell you, if we hadn't been reading Leacock. . . .

It is with sorrow that we have turned up some very pink slips entitled "Red Star Line. Wine Card," and have noted thereon four bottles of Rudesheimer, one of Sauterne, one of Chablis, and a final Mumm. But where will the poignancy of these memories end! Enough, enough. . . .

Though, at last, the Great Western Railway is vindicated! We have also turned up an excess-fare coupon from Paddington to Princes Risborough, proving that we paid our fare at the last minute, in a mad scramble, when booked for the latter town. Had not a friend met us at that station, to whom we explained that we had lost our receipt, and who vouched for us with the authorities, we might not be home yet. And here the darn thing is, after all. . . .

It's so warm today. We guess that is why we can't get down to work. Rather would we tilt back and be reading *Chesterton's* "The Incredulity of Father Brown" (Dodd, Mead), or *Agatha Christie's* "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" (ditto). We remember *Agatha Christie's* "The Murder on the Links" as quite a good yarn, and of course the Father Brown series goes on for ever, in which Mr. Chesterton is always ingenious and entertaining, if frequently preposterous. . . .

Edna St. Vincent Millay's sister, *Kathleen Millay*, has written a novel concerning a New Hampshire girl in Greenwich Village. It is called "Wayfarer" and will be pub-

lished in the fall by the new firm of William Morrow and Company. . . .

Now that Hearst has bought *McClure's* we have heard rumors of his adding *The Century* and even the *Atlantic Monthly* to his string of magazines. We wonder whether such rumors can be substantiated. . . .

In *Edwin Valentine Mitchell's* latest issue of *Book Notes*, *Peter Singleton Gates* leads off with an absorbing paper concerning the late *Roger Casement*, his suppressed diaries and his trial. When we started abroad, *Liberty* was beginning to publish revelations in this connection. . . .

Out of it all not nearly so much revelation as was looked for emerges; but the bitter irony and tragedy of the whole affair is manifest. Casement played the man and took to the full the consequences of his course of action. The lines with which Mr. Gates ends his article, however, seem to us rather shocking, particularly as he seems to speak with authority. He has seen the diaries, we have not, but he concludes with the remarks, "There is one other truth, revealed in his own diaries over a period of years. Casement was a hopeless moral degenerate." . . .

The man is dead, a man who stepped out of life bravely, and resolutely closed his lips upon involving any of his countrymen in his fate; a man who loved his country, Ireland, and died for her. He followed his own lights, but he lived for far more than his own personal safety. Merely for these reasons it seems to us to be hitting below the belt to end an account of him with a charge that the reader is utterly unable to substantiate, inasmuch as the evidence is quite inaccessible. . . .

It gave us a queer start, for Mr. Gates was apparently writing with understanding. Even if true, what has that fact to do with the issue for which Casement died? Casement's claim on our memory is quite other in every respect. . . .

Samuel Roth's Two Worlds Monthly is just out on the news-stands, and contains, as promised, the first instalment of *Joyce's* "Ulysses." Now it can be more widely read. Also, reprinted from one of *Ralph Hodgson's* earliest slim volumes of poetry, is a group of five short poems, less familiar than his later work. The number opens with an excellent short story by *D. H. Lawrence*. . . .

Sean O'Casey, it is reported from London, via *The Evening Standard*, asseverates that he wishes to be buried "in what polite society calls evening dress." He has refused to wear conventional evening clothes since being a "lion" in London. "The most formidable of Mayfair butlers," states O'Casey, "would be insufficient to induce me to incarcerate my body in the ridiculous thing called evening dress. I think a dinner jacket and a hard shirt are among the funniest things in the world." . . .

O'Casey says he has dined with *Lady Lavery*, *Augustus John* and *G. B. S.* when none of them wore evening dress. He thinks *G. B. S.* wore a kilt. But he has—O'Casey has—decided to wear evening dress in his coffin. As a shroud he thinks the costume wouldn't be so bad. . . .

We regret to differ with Mr. O'Casey. Most of the younger men have seemed to us more distinguished when we saw them in dinner jackets than otherwise. Some of them look like fools, of course—but then some men look like fools in any costume. As long as no one tries to insert us into a dress-shirt in weather as hot as this we shall have no general objection to evening dress. In fact, it's rather restful to "dress up" in winter, after a long grubbing day at the office. . . .

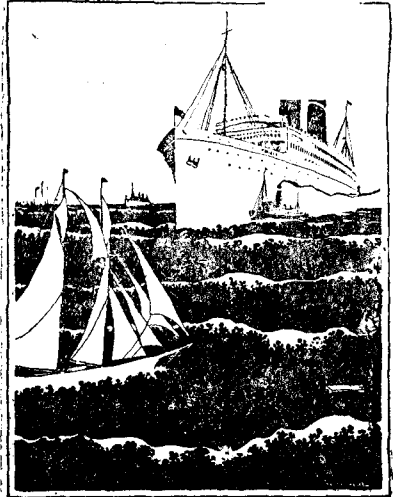
So long as knee-breeches don't come in, we're fairly safe. For our calves leave much to be desired. . . .

Bong swarr, as they say in Paris.

THE PHOENICIAN.

The Nonesuch Press announces the early publication of *George Moore's* new romance, "Ulrick and Soracha," in an edition limited to 1,250 copies. Each copy is numbered, is signed by the author, and has a copperplate design by *Stephen Gooden*. . . .

The Cambridge University Press has nearly ready "A Bibliography of Sir Adolphus William Ward, 1837-1924," who, though he desired that no formal biography of himself should be written after his death, left instructions that a bibliography of his writings should be printed, in hope that it might be of service to students.



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