

Trade Winds

James F. Fick

Not long ago I was sought out by a fellow named George Q. Lewis, who serves as executive director of—I swear this is what it says on his letterhead—the National Association for the Advancement of the Art of Joke Telling and the Preservation and Encouragement of the Amateur Story Teller (“Laughter Is Our Business—Happiness Is Our Most Important Product”). Mr. Lewis, an amiable chap, said he wondered whether he might help in any way with this column, and I told him that indeed he could—by clearing up a question that had long been in my mind: What are the funniest jokes of all time?

Mr. Lewis, true to his word, has supplied me with what he certifies as three of the funniest jokes in human history, and I would be remiss in my duties if I failed to pass them along to you. Here they are, all of them one-liners:

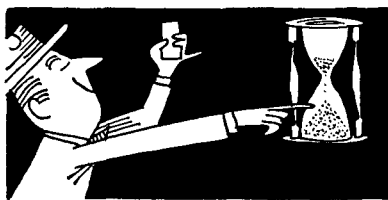
1) I went to see my doctor about my loss of memory and he made me pay in advance.

2) I have just found out what the chief cause of divorce is—marriage.

3) She lost her job in the 5&10 because she couldn't remember the prices.

I gather that a good deal depends on the delivery.

Two contemporary phrases to go quietly berserk by: “At a point in time” and “in my judgment.” If we had a nickel for

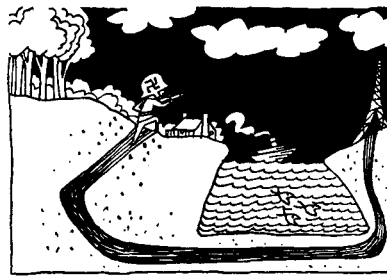


every time those are used to suggest mental profundity these days, we could all retire. (I bore it all gracefully until I heard a man say, “We ought to get together for a drink at some point in time.”)

To what lengths will the Viking Press not go to publicize a book? Last month a large colony of rats was discovered living in the center strip of an exclusive block of Manhattan's Park Avenue. How they got there no one seemed to know, and for several days the papers published long speculations on the mystery. It did not escape the attention of this department, however, that Viking Press, which is in that very block, will soon publish a book by Stephen Gilbert under the suspiciously appropriate title *Rat-*

man's Notebooks. And at lunch the other day, a highly placed figure in the Viking organization referred cryptically to “Viking's fiendish and tireless publicity efforts.”

Do you think of Winston Churchill as a man who was fearless in war? He was not, it seems. During World War II, according to Major General Sir Kenneth Strong's new book, *Intelligence at the Top* (Doubleday, \$6.95), Churchill was



haunted by the thought that the Germans might manage to tunnel under the English Channel and “pop up in the middle of Kent.”

Whatever happened to jogging? A year or so ago you could hardly set foot outdoors in my neighborhood without running the risk of getting knocked down by a jogger. And at one large sporting goods store in Manhattan, they couldn't keep enough jogging shoes in stock. Now there are jogging shoes aplenty on the shelves, and it's been weeks since I saw a jogger. Joggers, where have you gone?

And whatever happened to Mensa, that organization for people with huge IQs? A couple of years ago I was continually seeing news stories about the group, and in fact I once spoke with several enthusiastic members, but I haven't heard a thing about it in months. I do recall, however, that members needed to be very bright in order to qualify—in the top 2 per cent of the population, as I remember it—and I am wondering if they finally learned so much about the rest of us that they decided to get away from it all and go underground.

Tip of the Week: Remember all those tedious hours you spent studying history in school? Well, *now* they finally let us in on the fact that there's an easier way. It's by the use of extra-sensory perception, and Hans Holzer tells all about it in his new book, *Window to the Past:*

Exploring History Through ESP (Doubleday, \$5.95). The way it works, the book reveals, is that people leave “electromagnetic imprints” on objects, and even after they die the objects they touched remain “psychometrized.” So all you have to do is find a properly psychic person to interpret the magnetic fields for you. I wish I could tell you more, but when I started to read the book it began giving off these funny waves. . . .

Now that the God-is-dead controversy seems to have run its course, a lot of people have been waiting to see what would turn up next. The answer may lie in a short book (153 pages) by an articulate Presbyterian clergyman named David Poling, who argues that the church is dead or at least dying, and properly so. Mr. Poling's book, *The Last Years of the Church*, is as outspoken as anything I have seen on the subject, and a good many clergymen are likely to be more than a little upset by it. But Poling is a convincing advocate for his case. “These are the last years of the church,” he writes, “when you can live in New York City for four years and never have a visitor or caller or luncheon guest or commuter mention or quote or praise or criticize a preacher! When pastors or congregations or religious societies are mentioned only on the church page—in paid advertisements—you know that something has set in, and it is not the ascendancy of the church we have always known.”

It's a book that will certainly give more than one churchgoer something to think about.

I am told that the Japanese, those versatile industrial innovators, have done it again, this time by producing the world's cheapest hearing aid. Priced at only 19 cents, it consists of an authentic-looking earpiece with a cord that disappears into one's shirt front. Although not a thing is attached to the end of the cord, the device is said to work beautifully. It seems that anyone seeing a hearing aid on a person invariably talks louder, and in many cases that's enough to do the trick.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S
KINGSLEY DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 1819)

H. (enry) A. SCHROEDER:
A MATTER OF CHOICE

Curiosity alone leads to limited education. The School of Hard Knocks is narrow and there are many myriads of dropouts. Your formal education, your schooling, supplies the facilities for satisfying your curiosity with new ideas to be curious about.



**Everyone is troubled with the world we live in.
And that includes Equitable.**

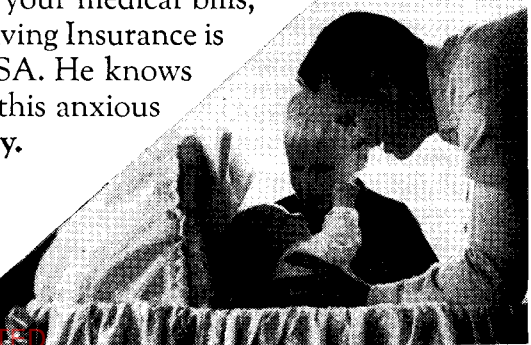
People in flight from farms. Poverty in the cities. There's a big job to do—to save communities, rebuild lives. Equitable is doing its best to help. Last year, we invested millions of dollars in urgently needed projects: financing housing, hospitals, nursing homes, small businesses. And we urge you to help—to do what you can to make things better in your own community.

Of course, our main concern is helping families find financial security. Protection that safeguards your children's education, helps pay your medical bills, provides for you when you retire. That's what Equitable Living Insurance is all about. Talk to an Equitable agent anywhere in the USA. He knows how to design a plan that meets your personal needs. In this anxious world, that's how **Equitable provides a corner of security.**

 **THE EQUITABLE**

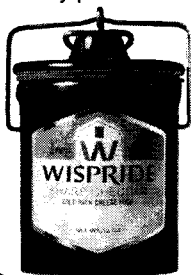
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THE BARTENDER'S GUIDE TO PARTY CHEESES...

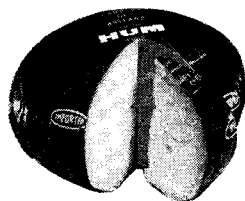
WISPRIDE® Sharp Cheddar Cheese spread lights up any manhattan with golden goodness. Toasted, served on crackers, or sharpening up the hors d'oeuvres, it refreshes any palate.



SWISS KNIGHT® A nut-like flavor makes this fine imported Gruyère a warming companion for a chilled martini. In wedges or slices, a great Knight for a party.



HUM® Holland's finest Gouda and Edam to be sliced or scooped as a tangy complement for any drink.



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SR's Check List of the Week's New Books

Crime Suspense

- COLD WATERS. By P. M. Hubbard. Atheneum. \$4.95.
THE DEVIL FINDS WORK. By Michael Delving. Scribners. \$4.50.
THE ETRUSCAN BULL. By Frank Gruber. Dutton. \$4.50.
SLAY TIME. By Paul Muller. Roy. \$3.95.
SUNDY FELL DESIGNS. By Osmington Mills. Roy. \$3.95.
THREE DAYS TO LIVE. By Robert Charles. Roy. \$3.95.

Current Affairs

- THE ARAB-ISRAELI IMPASSE. Edited by Majdia D. Khadduri. Luce/McKay. \$4.95.
VOICE OF ISRAEL. By Abba Eban. Horizon. \$6.95. (Revised edition.)

Fiction

- THE BIG WIND. By Beatrice Coogan. Doubleday. \$7.95.
THE CHINESE GAME. By Charles Larson. Lippincott. \$4.95.
THE CRAZY LADIES. By Joyce Elbert. NAL/World. \$6.95.
THE FACE IN THE FROST. By John Belairs. Macmillan. \$4.95.
FERDINAND. By Louis Zukofsky. Grossman. Hardbound, \$4. Paperback, \$1.50.
HEADS. By Edward Stewart. Macmillan. \$4.95.
A HIDDEN LIFE. By Autran Dourado. Knopf. \$4.50.
IF ISRAEL LOST THE WAR. By Richard Z. Chesnoff, Edward Klein, and Robert Littell. Coward-McCann. \$5.95.
THE LOWEST TREES HAVE TOPS. By Martha Gellhorn. Dodd, Mead. \$4.95.
THE NIGHT OF THE COMET. By Daniel Telfer. Doubleday. \$5.95.
NOTHING BLACK BUT A CADILLAC. By Raymond Spence. Putnam. \$5.
ON THE WINGS OF THE STORM. By Richard Newhafer. Morrow. \$6.95.
ORFEO IN PARADISE. By Luigi Santucci. Knopf. \$4.95.
STORM IN CHANDIGARH. By Nayantara Sahgal. Norton. \$4.95.
SHORT STORIES OF THE NINETIES. Edited by Derek Stanford. Roy. \$6.95.

History

- THE CASE THAT WILL NOT DIE: Commonwealth vs. Sacco and Vanzetti. By Herbert B. Ehrmann. Little, Brown. \$12.50.
NAGASAKI: The Forgotten Bomb. By Frank W. Chinnock. NAL/World. \$6.95.

Linguistics

- LINGUISTICS TODAY. Edited by Archibald A. Hill. Basic Books. \$6.95.
THE POWER OF WORDS IN YOUR LIFE. By Elizabeth R. Hogan. Funk & Wagnalls. \$4.95.

Miscellany

- THE AVENGERS. By Michael Bar-Zohar. Hawthorn. \$5.95.

HOW WOMEN CAN MAKE MONEY IN THE STOCK MARKET. By Colleen Moore. Doubleday. \$4.95.

INVENTORY. By Michel Butor. Simon & Schuster. \$7.95.

THE PETER PRINCIPLE. Why Things Always Go Wrong. By Laurence F. Peter and Raymond Hull. Morrow. \$4.95.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON: Essays and Journals. Edited by Lewis Mumford. Doubleday. \$6.95.

SONGS OF THE PRAIRIE: Mentioned in the Little House Series of Books by Laura Ingalls Wilder. Compiled by Margaret Irwin. De Smet News/Sherwood. \$3.85.

THORNTON WILDER. By Helmut Papajewski. Ungar. \$5.

V. SACKVILLE-WEST'S GARDEN BOOK. Edited by Philippa Nicolson. Atheneum. \$5.95.

WHY ISN'T A NICE GIRL LIKE YOU MARRIED?: Or, How to Get the Most Out of Life While You're Single. By Rebecca E. Greer. Macmillan. \$4.95.

Personal History

THALBERG: Life and Legend. By Bob Thomas. Doubleday. \$7.95.

THURSDAY'S CHILD HAS FAR TO GO. By Kathleen Lukens and Carol Panter. Prentice-Hall. \$5.95.

WHY ME?: An Autobiography. By William Gargan. Doubleday. \$5.95.

THE WOMEN IN SHAKESPEARE'S LIFE. By Ivor Brown. Coward-McCann. \$5.95.

Poetry

LATEST WILL. By Lenore Marshall. Norton. \$6.

LOVE POEMS. By Anne Sexton. Houghton Mifflin. Hardbound, \$4. Paperback, \$1.95.

MODERN POETRY IN TRANSLATION: The Greek Poets. Collected by Paul Merchant. Grossman. Hardbound, \$3. Paperback, \$1.25.

Political Science

CBW: Chemical and Biological Warfare. Edited by Steven Rose. Beacon. \$7.50.

DISARMAMENT AND SOVIET POLICY, 1964-1968. By Thomas B. Larson. Prentice-Hall. \$6.95.

INTELLIGENCE AT THE TOP. By Maj./Gen. Sir Kenneth Strong. Doubleday. \$6.95.

Religion

DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE: Some Historical Prolegomena. By Jaroslav Pelikan. Yale. \$6.

ST. AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS: The Odyssey of Soul. By Robert J. O'Connell. Harvard. \$6.50.

Science Fiction

THE AGE OF THE PUSSYFOOT. By Frederik Pohl. Trident. \$4.95.

REFLECTIONS IN A MIRROR AND THE TICKING IS IN YOUR HEAD. By Leonard Daventry. Doubleday. \$5.95.

—Compiled by NAID SOFIAN.