

HOW PEOPLE LAUGH.

WHAT would our homes be, asks a writer, but for the hearty and ringing laughter of our little ones? These as much as anything enable us to forget the cares and the burdens of business, and make us feel young again. Now, what is so natural to children and to young ladies is equally natural to us all, and let us, if we would consider our health and happiness, secure as opportunity occurs a deep, vigorous, and merry laugh. But though laughter is so beautiful and useful, though it is at once a good minister, and a ministry for good, a minister to whom we should give a call, and attend his ministry regularly, and love to seek much of his society, yet we have forms of laughter which are at once hateful and unnatural.

There is no amusement, no glee, no mirth, no joy in the laugh of the hysterical. It is a body without a soul, a casket without the jewel, the guinea stamp without the gold; it is the carcase without the life, hence it pains, wounds, grieves, and distresses the onlookers. It springs not from health, as it ought, but from weakness; not from gladness, but from a wounded spirit; and a laugh which otherwise would have been meaningful and beautiful is meaningless and unsightly.

Some men have a Mephistophelian laugh—a devil's laugh—the laugh of the fiend. Their grin—cold, chilly, awful—is offensive; their smile is insulting, sickening and blighting, and their laugh is altogether from the pit. Their utterances are all misanthropic, irritating, and wounding.

The cynic is cynical in all his puns, repartees, jokes, and anecdotes. He is ever spiteful, vindictive, and cruel, and let him disguise it as he may by assuming a humane veneer, it all comes off in time, and the real man himself is seen and he is seen to be a hateful creature. A young cynical husband was out with his wife one day, and pointing to a monkey cutting capers on the top of a barrel organ, he brutally said, 'That's a relation of yours, Mary.' 'I know it is,' replied the wife, promptly, 'but it is by marriage.' He richly deserved that answer.

Some laughter is not unlike the chirping of a bird. With this difference: the chirping of the bird is natural and becoming, whereas the chirpy laughter is not either natural or comely. It is thin, soulless, and foolish. It has neither soul nor substance, sincerity nor significance, beauty nor blessing. We often wonder whether the poor creatures have any idea of the sounds they emit. They cannot have, or no such words as 'he-he-he,' 'a-ha-ha,' and 'o-ho-ho,' would ever escape their lips. Sir Morell Mackenzie declared that no man hears accurately the sound of his own voice, and hence he does not know it when he hears it from

the phonograph. Laughter, though wonderfully varied, like music, like the human face, like the voice itself, has a substantial unity which is sadly outraged by those who chirrup. We must be natural in our laughter, and if we are to be so we must not be artificial, but really natural in ourselves. Our laughter will never be better than we are. It will be a reflection of our own souls, and it reveals whether there be depth in us or whether the sounds we make are but the outcome of habit. If your laughter is not natural and becoming, make it so. A bridegroom solemnly told the bride's youngest brother, 'I take Mary away to-day, and will have her all to myself.' 'All right,' said the youngest, 'if you can stand it I can.' But neither speaker nor hearer ought to be able to stand chirpy laughter.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

He loved me so—he loved me so! Could I
Do aught but love him when he loved me so?
And thus it never struck me to deny
Love's fire on my heart's altar, all aglow,
Burned brightly, too, and would for evermo'.

I loved him so—I loved him so! Could I,
Lacking experience's wisdom, know
A love like that could ever fade and die?
Love I deemed firm, and pure as unscanned snow
In some deep mountain cleft, for evermo'.

He loved me so—I loved him so—could we,
Ay, either dream of such love ending so?
But yet—or mine for him, or his for me—
The fire upon love's altar ceased to glow,
And we walk different ways for evermo'.

I loved him so—he loved me so—yet fear,
Ah me! not merely fear, I surely know,
Tho' two be sweetest sweet and dearest dear,
Not ours alone, but much love even so
Has ended, and will end for evermo'.

HOW 'WEE STILL' WHISKY IS MADE.

THE process of making whisky by the 'wee still' is a very simple one, and requires no great chemical knowledge. An old hand at the business, with whom we once foregathered, described to us the primitive method with as much fervour as a scientist could describe an important experiment in his laboratory. 'You see,' he said, as he tapped his snuff mull, 'the way to make the good speerit is not an easy way at all, but I will make it plain to you, so you can practise it without deeficulty. First the barley is put into bags and in a running water to soak it. Then it is put in a room underground covered over with wood and divots. You could walk over the place without knowing what was there, it was just like what the Word says of treasure hid in a field. Ay, many a time I thought on that, people moving all about it and over it and never knowing it was there! Then it was taken to the kiln. This was a business of great deeficulty, for the smoke would let people know what was going on, you see. But, howsoever, it had to be done. The malt was placed on cross sticks covered with straw, and it was dried by a fire of peats in a hole below.

'It's the peat that gave it the fine taste. Ach! not like what they call a "blend." Them and their blends! But, as the minister says—to proceed. When the malt was dry it was bruised or ground in a mill, and after that it was carried on the back of a horse or man to the botly, and he would be a clever fellow that would find it there. Then they put the ground malt in casks with water to what you call ferment, and a boy or lassie was left to stir it with a stick of willow or the birch. Then they placed the stuff which was in the casks in the still. The still was made of copper, just so large as could be carried on the back of one man. If there was no money to buy a copper, we used to get one of tin, though it is not so good. The crooked pipe or worm that was screwed into the still must have water always running over it to keep it cool, and so the botly was always beside a stream. The whisky came pouring out of the worm into a tub below. Ay, it was a grand spout! The same thing was done a second time, with not so much heat, and a small piece of soap was put in to make the whisky clear. Then the work was done, and what we had then to do was to drink it and to sell it. Where will you get the like of it to-day? Truth to tell, however, 'Wee still' whisky can only be drunk by the makers. The taste is poisonous and the strength outrageous. A small 'tot' will give anyone but a Highland 'crofter' a swelled head for a month.

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