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On Taking A Joke

LAUGHTER is God's medicine for the mind. Humour is a ready antidote for depression of spirits. Joy, that deep-seated spring of heart-felt happiness bubbles forth in jest and joke. The jovial fellow is pure and open of heart, and has besides an overwhelming interest in mankind. He laughs at people; he laughs with people; he laughs at himself. He sees the ludicrous in the daily round, and the joke in the poisoned arrow of back-biting and malignity. He meets the direst calamity with a jest. There is no use being angry with him. He doesn't know what anger means. There is no time for anger. there is no time for spitefulness. All of which does not lessen his capacity for affairs—of business, of state, of war—nor his appreciation of the seriousness of world problems. The most miserable person on earth is the one who cannot appreciate a joke—the joke on himself as well as on the other fellow. We are afraid some people are so introspective, so selfish, so sensitive to criticism, so self-centred that a joke grates upon them like the tiger's tongue upon the human hand, and with the same ferocious result. It's not that way among the boys at the front. They have too much else to think about to exalt their petty prejudices. They pick out the humour from the dreadful round of daily duty and exploit it for all it's worth. The books and pictures born in the trenches are the jolliest of all. Our little paper has pages, each week, filled with good-natured jesting. There has never been, from the first, a single witticism with a sting. There never will be. Any cartoon of character in language or drawing, surely ought to be surveyed in a spirit of laughter. To laugh at ourselves is the hardest task of life, and to appreciate the joke levelled at our own head is the supreme test.

O. C. J. W.