

Laughter as a Disinfectant.

By RUTH CAMERON.



"It was the sort of situation we can laugh at and see the fun of six months after, if not at the time."—From Peg Woffington.

Once upon a time when I was visiting, something went severely wrong with my hostess's waterpipes in the middle of the night. We telephoned frantically for aid, found we could not get it for three or four hours, tried once more to stop up the leak, realized that was impossible, and settled down to bail. Having been on a long trip the day before, we were very tired. It was a cold night and the heavy pails of water had to be carried up a flight of stairs. So altogether, it was a most annoying situation. And I think we should all have been very cross if it had not been for my hostess's sister. She is a person with a keen sense of humour, and she laughed so heartily at the funny sight we all made in our hastily concocted costumes, marching solemnly up and down stairs with our pails, or kneeling beside the offending pipe, plying the dipper, that she soon had the rest of us laughing and joking and looking on the whole thing as rather a lark.

It is a great gift to be able to see the humour of a trying situation even in the midst of it.

The average man, as Charles Reade

says, can laugh at such things six months afterward, but to be able to see the funny side of annoyances at the time they occur is a rare and precious talent. The man or woman who has is better to find than a five-pound note, as Stephenson puts it.

A laugh is such a disarming thing. It pierces poses, takes the sting out of annoyances and rous irritability—all in the twinkling of an eye.

He who has learned to love and laugh has learned to live.

I once knew a man who had more than the average human being's share of annoying peculiarities. His first wife was a woman with a nervous temperament and very little sense of humour, and she fretted and protested and nagged and fumed herself to death against these peculiarities.

As soon as the second wife was installed she also ran up against the annoying traits, but instead of fretting, she laughed. Not, you understand, a superior or irritating laugh. That, of course, would have infuriated her husband and made him the more obstinate in his ways. But just a friendly, disarming laugh, a laugh with him at his own peculiarities. She couldn't really cure him because he was a bit too old, but, by removing the irritant of fretful protest and substituting the disinfectant of laughter, she certainly has done wonders.

Learn to laugh at annoyances and you will have taken just about half the gloom and unhappiness out of life.

Ruth Cameron

The New Blessedness of Mesopotamia.

HOW BRITISH ENGINEERS ARE HARNESSING A NEW THE ARRESTING OF A CRADLE OF THE RACE—SIR WILLIAM WILCOCK'S SCHEME FOR RE-IRRIGATING THE EUPHRATES VALLEY.

"It is a curious fact that the two districts which may be called the cradles of the civilised human race—the valleys of the Euphrates and the Nile—were and are dependent on artificial irrigation for the support of any considerable population," says the Glasgow Herald.

"The success of the British in adding to the prosperity of Egypt by conserving the waters of the Nile is known to everyone, but the similar work which has been quietly going on in the Euphrates valley for the past three years is as yet almost unknown to the world.

The First Section Completed.

"During this period the first section of the Mesopotamian irrigation works has been completed, a rapid result largely due to the assistance of the Turkish Government. When we have thought of the Turk in connection with progress it has generally been in the commiserating terms which Sir David Baird's mother used of the Indian to whom the fiery Scot, Hyder Ali's captive, had been bound—'God help the poor fellow that's chained to our Davie.' But if the Turkish Government has in this matter contradicted all historic precedent we are justified in claiming a great part of the credit for Sir William Wilcock's—the British expert so well known in connection with the Nile—who has advised the Turkish Ministry of Public Works since 1909, and is the true author and begetter of a scheme which is destined to give literal significance to the 'blessedness' of Mesopotamia.

Turkish Tardy Reparation.

"Sir William had much to do with the irrigation works that have so notably augmented the agricultural

resources of Egypt, and he has had everything to do with the conception of the Mesopotamian undertaking, while the execution has been in the equally safe hands of Sir John Jackson (Limited). While British skill and ability have been the backbone of the enterprise, it is bare justice to acknowledge that the Turks, notwithstanding the financial drain of a war waged for their European possessions, have steadily supplied the contractors with the funds they required to construct the barrages on the Euphrates which have now reached completion. If the world cares to call this tardy reparation for the ruin inflicted by the Mongol (Turkish) invaders in the thirteenth century on one of the most fruitful countries on the earth's surface, it is none the less a striking fact that promising Asiatic developments should coincide with the expulsion of this hitherto unprogressive race from the portion of Europe it misgoverned and despoiled.

To Rescue 3,500,000 Acres.

"It must be remarked, however, that the least speculative of nations could scarcely resist the attractions of Sir William Wilcock's plans, if they were to be judged merely by commercial tests as a remunerative investment. With the ancient history of Mesopotamia and the modern experience of Egypt as guides no element of risk could possibly attach to the irrigation scheme. In the work which he published a year ago Sir William stated that the estimated cost of the complete scheme would be for the irrigation works £113,350,000, and for the agricultural works £213,350,000. By means of these it was calculated about 3,500,000 acres would be reclaimed. The times available would amount to £7445,000 for maintenance, there would be left a considerable balance to meet the charges on capital, while at fourteen years' purchase—not an extreme figure—the land reclaimed would be worth upwards of £2100,000,000.

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A Land Flowing With Milk and Honey.

"The work so far done has been confined to the construction of the Hindie barrages on the Euphrates, through which about half a million acres will be brought under regular irrigation, and make the means of restoring to humanity a section at least of that region which, in biblical language, merited the description of 'a land flowing with milk and honey.' Given anything like decent government, there can be no doubt as to the certainty of the results.

"Professor Gregory has recently explained the evidence for a belief that there has been no great change in the climatic conditions of this part of Asia in historic times. If in our day, as for many centuries past, the country between the rivers, has been almost a synonym for desert wastes, the blame does not lie at the door of Nature. In early times men made a garden of the fertile plains by utilising the waters of the great rivers by which they are bounded, and protecting their fields and vineyards from the devastating floods which now during three months of the year rendered the Euphrates and Tigris the terror of a scattered population. The soil has not lost its fertility; it has only been deprived under the blighting rule of the Ottoman Turk of the irrigating streams which in the days of Nineveh were skilfully supplied.

As in Old Days

"On the ramifying system of canals a wonderful civilization was sustained, and it is not incredible that a new Moslem civilization may be erected on the old foundations—for, after all, modern engineers are not proposing to do more than was accomplished in the dark backward and abyss of time—if the race which has been heavily chastised for its political shortcomings will give a recreated Mesopotamia a chance to thrive.

"The world is vitally interested in the success of this great undertaking. As the population grows every civilized land is becoming more and more indebted to the less developed countries not only for the raw material of manufactures but for the bread which their own soil can no longer produce in sufficient quantity. In Great Britain we are regrettably dependent on the overseas agricultural wealth for which our manufactures are exchanged, and are therefore specially interested in the opening up of what would be at once a new market and a valuable source of supply.

Mesopotamia's Future.

"We recognize, however, that the future of Mesopotamia cannot be confidently predicted. It is easily within the powers of modern engineers to furnish the means of prosperity, but we cannot so unhesitatingly assert that it will be the function of the Ottoman Government to supply the administrative conditions of prosperity. We can only hope that the Turks, profiting by their losses in the West, will turn to the East with a fixed determination to deal justly with the peasantry and so restore to the world one of its lost granaries."

What Has Been Done.

What has been done to restore prosperity to Mesopotamia, once the granary of the world, by means of irrigation is thus described by the Constantinople correspondent of the Daily Mail:

"The opening of the Euphrates barrage (dam) took place last Friday. This barrage, which is at Hindie (about forty-seven miles north of Bagdad) is the first completed part of the extensive irrigation works undertaken by the Young Turk Government for the improvement of Mesopotamia. Their construction was entrusted in February, 1911, to Sir John Jackson, Ltd. In spite of local difficulties and the Balkan wars, the work has been successfully pushed forward.

"The barrage consists of masonry piers with thirty-six openings fitted

with sluices to hold the water to the desired level. There is also a navigation lock for barge traffic. Below the main barrage is a subsidiary one constructed with a lock of the same size. The water level can be raised 16½ feet, enabling an extensive area of rich land to be irrigated.

"Up stream the ancient Hilla channel leading to Hilla and Babylon has been cleared for a distance of fifty miles. This allows the utilization of the water of this area also."

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Fashions and Fads.

Jet continues to be much liked. The plain net gimpes continues good.

The black velvet costume is always correct.

It is a great season for colored handkerchiefs.

Chinese ideas are prevalent even in shoe buckles.

Brocaded moire silk handbags are in good style.

Satin or silk cut bias should be chosen for girdles.

Straight round belts for coats are coming back again.

There is no diminution in the favor shown to tassels.

Jacquard crepe, white, is seen in new frocks for the south.

All the fancy materials seem just now to be in great request.

The new lingerie dresses are often entirely of shadow lace.

The Japanese girdle bow is losing nothing of its present favor.

The best veil to show small designs on hairline and craquele meshes.

Full godet basques are noted on coats, producing a flaring effect.

There seems to be no end to the use of black-and-white net frills.

Gloves are used chiefly in pale tints—white, pearl, gray or beige.

Supple moire and lace is one of the new evening dress combinations.

There seems to be no end to the variety of rhinestone hair ornaments.

Some of the prettiest new underclothes have casings of net and net frills.

The very fashionable woman has her boot tops of the same color as her costume.

Pendants are to be used to weight the corners of collars or the ends of neckties.

Crepe embroideries will be more seen than ever as the spring approaches.

Printed leather is expected to appear in the shape of waistcoats and half belts.

Now there are little draperies in backs of dresses that distinctly suggest bustles.

It is said that among gowns worn by royalties abroad the slit is notably absent.

Indigestion, Gas Or Sick, Sour Stomach

Take "Pape's Diapepsin" and in five minutes you'll wonder what became of misery in stomach.

"Wonder what upset your stomach— which portion of the food did the damage—do you? Well, don't bother. If your stomach is in revolt; if sour, gassy and upset, and what you just ate has fermented into stubborn lumps; head dizzy and aches; belch gases and acids and eructate undigested food; breath foul, tongue coated—just take a little Pape's Diapepsin and in five minutes you wonder what became of the indigestion and distress.

Millions of men and women today know that it is needless to have a bad stomach. A little Diapepsin occasionally keeps this delicate organ regulated and they eat their favorite foods without fear.

If your stomach doesn't take care of your liberal limit without rebellion; if your food is a damage instead of a help, remember the quickest, surest, most harmless relief is Pape's Diapepsin which costs only fifty cents for a large case at drug stores. It's truly wonderful—it digests food and sets things straight, so gently and easily that it is really astonishing. Please, for your sake, don't go on and on with a weak, disordered stomach; it's so unnecessary.

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