

—“Marianne,” Paris.
Take a seat

ONE piece of wisdom which the French have absorbed, and which they practise, is a maxim by Chamfort: *The most completely lost of all days is that on which one has not laughed.*

There are few days on which a Frenchman does not laugh at least once.

Rabelaisian

The tradition of French laughter is a long one—quite as long as France's military history, which is

the longest in the world. Everybody has heard of Rabelais, monk and physician, whose Gargantua and Pantagruel have kept the world laughing, and made it think, for the best part of four hundred years.

Then there was Molière, whose “Doctor in Spite of Himself” will be broadcast from 2YA on Sunday. This Parisian, born in January, 1622, wrote many plays which, when they are produced at the *Comédie Française*, still delight the French. There is much that is entrancing in such plays as *Tartuffe*, *L'Avare*, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, and *Les Femmes Savantes*—much pungent satire,

sparkling conversation, and genuine fun. It is in *Les Femmes Savantes* that the famous pun is made:

Berlise: Veux-tu toute la vie offenser la grammaire?

Martine: Qui parle d'offenser grand'mère ni grand-père?

The pun is almost identical in English: Are you doing to offend grammar all your life? Who said anything about offending grandma, or grandpa?

The Frenchman of to-day, if he has only a working knowledge of English, is puzzled by many of the jokes in *Punch*. And the Englishman looking through *Le Rire*, or *La Vie Parisienne*, for example, finds that there is much that is not amusing to him. The Frenchman finds the Englishman's sense of humour rather stodgy; the Englishman may find the French a trifle too physiological.

Les Blagues

Here are some of *les blagues* (the jokes) at which France is laughing to-day:

“I,” said Hitler, “shall put my cards on the table.”

“Good,” said Goering. “I hope they're food cards.”

—Choc (Paris).

* * *

Will the Baltic become the Red Sea?

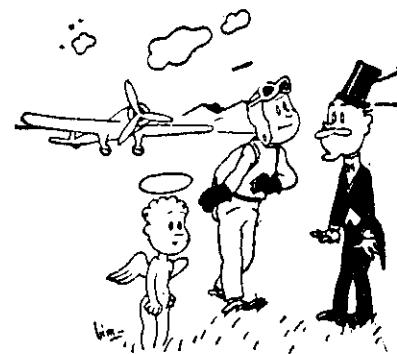
—L'Intransigeant (Paris).

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Recently a large parcel was dropped by a French reconnaissance plane on the Siegfried Line. Inside were a number of children's water-wings and the touching message, “Now you can come over and fight.”—French broadcast.

* * *

Three German soldiers are seated silently in a cafe, each behind his mug of beer. After a while the first one



—“Marianne,” Paris.
I brought him down as proof of my altitude flight

rests his head on his hand and sighs; the second follows, sighing more deeply; the third says with impatience, “Oh, for heaven's sake don't start talking politics.”—Gringoire.

Hitler has taken the day off to visit a mental hospital. The inmates are lined up in groups to meet him. As he arrives before the first group they all lift their arms and cry “Heil Hitler.” All except one, who doesn't move. Hitler turns to him angrily, demanding to know why he doesn't give the official salute. “But I'm not mad,” protests this individual, “I'm the warder.”—Gringoire.



—“Candide,” Paris.
He is an agent of the Gestapo pretending to be working for the British Intelligence Service in betraying the Russian OGPU for the benefit of the French Sureté

BANISH

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