FACETIA
AMERICANA
FACETIA AMERICANA

FIRESIDE CONVERSATION
A FRENCH CRISIS
LITTLE WILLIE
THE OLD BACKHOUSE

Articles by
MARK TWAIN
EUGENE FIELD
JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

PRIVATELY PRINTED FOR SUBSCRIBERS ONLY
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE
Fireside Conversation

—Mark Twain.
ESTERNITE toke Her Majestie, ye Queen, a fantasies such as she is sometimes stricken withal, and had to her closet certain that doe write plays, bokes, and such like, these being My Lord Bacon, His Worship Sir Walter Raleigh, Mr. Ben Johnson, and ye childe Francis Beaumont, which being but sixteen, hath yet turned his hand to ye doing of ye Latin masters into our English tongue with grete discretion and much applause. Also came with ye famous Shaxpur. A right strange mixing truly of mighty blood with mean, ye more in especial since ye Queen's Grace was present, as likewise these following, to-wit:

Ye Duchess of Bilgewater, twenty-six years of age; Ye Countess of Granby, thirty-six; her daughter, Ye Lady Helen, fifteen; as also these two maidens of honor, to-wit: Ye Lady Margery Boothby, sixty-five, and Ye Lady Alice Dilbury, turned seventy, she being two years Ye Queen's Grace's elder.

I being her Majestie's cub-bearer, had no choice but to remain and behold rank forgot, and ye high holde converse with ye low as upon equal terms, a grete scandal an ye world did heare about it.

In ye heat of ye talk it befel that one did break wind, yielding an exceeding mighty and distressful stink, whereat all did laugh full sore, and then:
YE QUEEN:

Verily in mine eighit and sixty yeres have I not heard ye fellow of this fart. Meseemeth, by ye grete sound and clamour of it, it was male; yet ye belly it did lurk behind should now fall lean and flat against ye spine of him that hath been delivered of so stately and so vast a bulk; whereas ye guts of them that doe quiffsplitters bear, stand comely stiff and rounde. Prithee let ye author confess ye offspring. Will my Lady Alice testify?

LAD ALICE:

God, Your Grace, if I had room for such a thundergust within mine ancient bowels, ’tis not in reason I could discharge ye same and live to thank God that He did chose handmaid so humble whereby to show His power. Nay, ’tis not I that have brought forth this rich and o’ermastering fog, this fragrant gloom; so, pray seek ye further.

YE QUEEN:

Mayhap ye Lady Margery hath done ye company this favour?

LADY MARGERY:

So please your Madam, my limbs are feeble with ye weighte and drouth of five and sixty winters, and it behooveth that I be tender unto them. In ye goode providence of God, if I had containied this wonder, forsoothe the wolde I have given ye whole evening of my sinking life to ye
dribbling of it forth, with trembling and uneasy soul, not launching it sudden in its matchless might, taking mine own life with violence, rending my weak frame like rotten rags. It was not I, Your Majestie.

YE QUEEN:

O God's name, who has favoured us? Hath it come to pass that a fart shall fart itself? Not such an one as this, I trow. Young Master Beaumont—but no; 't would have wafted him to heaven like down of goose's body. 'Twas not ye little Lady Helen—nay, ne'er blush child; thou'lt tickle thy tender maidenhedde with many a mousy-squeak before thou learnest to blow a hurricane like this. Was't you, my learned and ingenious Jonson?

BEN JOHNSON:

So fell a blast has ne'er mine ears saluted, nor yet a stench so all-pervading and immortal. 't was not a novice did it, good Your Majestie, but one of veteran experience, else had he failed of confidence. In sooth it was not I.

YE QUEEN:

MY Lord Bacon?

LORD BACON:

Not from my lean entrails hath this prodigy burst forth, so please Your Grace. Naught doth so befit the grete as grete performance; and happily shall you finde that 'tis not from mediocrity this miracle hath issued.
(Though the subject be but a fart, will this tedious sink of learning ponderously philosophize. Meantime did ye foul and deadly stink pervade to that degree, that never smelt I ye like before, yet dared I not leave ye presence, albeit I was like to suffocate.)

YE QUEEN:

What sayeth Ye Worshipful Master Shaks spur?

SHAKSPUR:

In ye grete hand of God I stand, and so proclaim mine innocence. Tho ye sinless hosts of heaven had foretold ye coming of this most desolatnig breath, proclaiming it a work of uninspired man, its quaking thunders, its firmament-clogging rottenness, his own achievements in due course of nature, yet had I not believed it; but had said ye pit itself hath furnished ye stink, and heaven's artillery hath broke ye globe in admiration of it.

(Then there was stillness for a space, and each did turn toward ye Worshipful Sir Walter Raleigh, that browned, embattled, bloody swashbuckler, who rising up did smile and simpering say:)

SIR WALTER:

Most Gracious Majestie, 'twas I that did it, but indeed it was so poor and frail a note, compared with such as I am wont to furnish, that in sooth I was ashamed to call ye weakling mine in so august a presence. It was nothing—less
than nothing—I did it but to clear my nether throat; but had I come prepared, then had I delivered something worthy. Bear with me, please Your Grace, till I can make amends.

(Then delivered he himself of such a godless and rock-shivering blast that all were fain to stop their ears, and following it did come so dense and foul a stink, that that which went before, did seem a poor and trifling thing beside it. Then saith he, feigning that he blushed and was confused: “I perceive that I am weak today, and cannot do justice unto my powers;” and sat him down as though to say: “there, it is not much; yet he that hath an arse to spare, let him follow it if he think he can.” By God if I were Ye Queen, I would e’en tip this swaggering braggart out of ye court, and let him air his grandeurs and break his intolerable wind before ye deaf and such as suffocation pleaseth).

Then fell ye talk about ye manners and customs of many people and Master Shaxspur spake of ye boke of ye Sieur Michael de Montaine, wherein was mentioned of ye custom of ye widows of Perigord to wear upon ye head-dress, in sign of widowhood, a jewel in ye similitude of a man’s member wilted and limber, whereat ye Queen did laugh and say, widows in England doe wear pricks, too, but betwixt ye thighs, and not wilted neither, till coition hath done that office for them. Master Shaxspur did likewise observe how ye Sieur de Montaine hath spoken of a certain Emperor of such mighty
prowess that he did take ten maiden-heddes in ye compass of a single night, while his Empress did entertain two and twenty lusty knights between her sheetes, yet was not satisfied; whereat ye merrie Countess Granby saith a ram is ye Emperor's superior, since he will tup above a hundred ewes twixt sun and sun, and after, if he can have none more to shag will masturbate until he hath enriched whole acres with his seed.

Then spake ye damn windmill, Sir Walter, of a people in ye uttermost parts of America, that copulate not until they be five and thirty years of age, ye women being eight and twenty, and do it then but once in seven years.

YE QUEEN:

How doth that like my little Lady Helen? Shall we send thee thither and preserve thy belly?

LADY HELEN:

Please Your Highness' Grace, mine old nurse hath told me there are more ways of serving God than by locking ye thighs together; yet am I willing to serve Him that way, too, since Your Highness' Grace hath set ye example.

YE QUEEN:

God's woundes, a good answer, childe.
LADY ALICE:

Mayhap 'twill weaken when ye hair doth sprout below ye navel.

LADY HELEN:

Nay, it sprouted two years since; I scarce can more than cover it with my hand now.

YE QUEEN:

Hear ye not that, my little Beaumont? Have you not a little birdie about you that stirs at hearing of so sweet a nest?

BEAUMONT:

'Tis not insensible most illustrious madam, but mousing owls and bats of low degree may not aspire to bliss so 'whelming and ecstatic as is found in ye downy nest of birdies of paradise.

YE QUEEN:

By the gullet of God! 'Tis a neat-turned compliment. With such a tongue as thine, lad, thou'lt spread ye ivory thighs of many a willing maid in thy good time, an thy codpiece be as handy as thy speeche.

Then spake ye Queen of how she met old Rabelais when she was turned of fifteen, and he did tell of a man his father knew that had a double pair of bollocks, whereon a controversy followed as concerning ye most just way to spell ye word, ye contention running high betwixt ye
learned Bacon and ye ingenious Jonson, until at last ye Lady Margery, wearying of it all, saith:

“Gentles, what mattereth how ye shall spell ye word? I warrant you when you use your bollocks you shall not think of it; and my Lady Granby, be you content, let the spelling be; you shall enjoy the beating of them on your buttocks just the same, I trow. Before I had gained my fourteenth year, I had learnt that those who would a cunt explore stopt not to consider ye spelling o’t.”

In sooth, when a shift’s turned up, delay is mete for naught but dalliance. Boccaccio hath a story of a priest that did beguile a maid into his cell, then knelt him in a corner to pray for grace to be rightly thankful for this tender maidenhedde ye Lord hath sent him; but ye Abbott, spying through ye keyhole, did see a tuft of brownish hair with white flesh about; wherefore when ye priest’s prayer was done, his chance was gone, forasmuch as ye little maid had but one cunt, and that was already occupied to her satisfaction.

Then conversed they of religion, and ye migh-tie work ye old dead Luther did doe and Master Shaxpur did read a part of his King Henry IV ye whiche, it seemeth unto me, is not of the value of an arseful of ashes, yet they praised it bravely, one and all. Ye same did read a portion of his Venue and Adonis, to their prodigious admiration, whereas I, being sleepy and fatigued
withal, did deem it but paltry stuff and was the more discomfited in that ye bloody buccaneer had got his wind again and did turn his mind to farting with such a villain's zeal that presently I was like to choke once more. God damn this windy ruffian and all his bloody breed. I wolde that hell might get him.

They talked about ye wonderful defense which old Sir Nicholas Throgmorton did make for himself before ye judges in ye time of Mary; which was unlucky matter to broach, since it fetched out ye Queen with: "a pity that he, having so much wit, had yet not enough to save his doter's maidenhedde for her marriage-bed." And ye Queen did give ye damned Sir Walter a looke that made him wince for she hath not forgot he was her own lover in ye old day. There was silence to uncomfortableness now. 'Twas not a good turn for talk to take, since if Ye Queen must find offense in a little harmless debauching, when pricks were stiff and cunts not loathe to take ye stiffness out of them, who of this company was sinless? Behold was not ye wife of Master Shaxpur four months gone with child when she stood up before ye altar? Was not Her Grace of Bilgewater rogered by four Lords before she had a husband? Was not ye little Lady Helen born on her mother's wedding day? And beholde, were not Ye Lady Alice and Ye Lady Margery, mouthing religion there, whores from the cradle?

In time came they to discourse of Cervantes and of the new painter, Rubens, that is beginning to be heard of. Fine words and dainty-wrought phrases from the ladies now, one or
two of them being in other days, pupils of that poor ass Lille himself. And I marked how that Johnson and Shaxpur did fidget to discharge some venom of sarcasm, yet dared they not in ye presence of ye Queen’s Grace, she being ye very flower of ye Euphuists herself. But, behold there be those that having a specialty, and admiring it in themselves, be jealous when a neighbor doth essaye it, nor can they abide it in them long. Wherefore it was observable that Ye Queen waxed uncontent; and in time a labored grandiose speecche out of ye mouth of Lady Alice, who manifestly did mightily pride herself thereon, did quite exhause Ye Queen’s endurance, who listened till ye gaudy speecche was done, then lifted up her brows, and with vast irony, mincing saith:

“O shitte!”

Whereat they all did laugh, but not ye Lady Alice, ye foolish old bitche.

Now was Sir Walter minded of a tale he once did hear ye ingenious Margarette of Navarre relate, about a maid, which being like to suffer rape by an old Archbishopp, did smartly contrive a device to save her maidenhedde, and said to him: “first, My Lord, I prithee, take out thy Holy tool and piss before me,” which doing, lo! his member felle and would not rise again.
A French Crisis

—Eugene Field.
INCE Butler sang of dildoes, and Villon loved to treat
Of certain cross-grained margots whom he'd rogered on the street;
Since Rabelais and Rochester and Chaucer chose to sing
Of that which gave them subtle joy—that is to say, "the thing,"
Why should not I, an humble bard, be pardoned if I write
Of a certain strange occurrence which has lately come to light?
One evening in December, on the Boulevard de Prix,
While the sombre bells of Notre Dame announced the hour of six,
A dapper wight named Edward, met tripping on her way
A madame with a character and gown quite decollet;
A babbling, buxom, blooming, billowy-bubbied dame,
Camille Maria Jesus Hector Limousin, by name.
Tho' fair she was of countenance, she was as lewd a bitch
As ever wallowed in a bed or mouzled in a ditch;
And maugre wealth of family, she was as foul a minx
As ever fondled scabby cods or nursed gangrenous dinks.
She tumbled one American, and with his drooling yard
The august house of "Grevy" fell, and fell almighty hard.
She toyed with Simon's senile tape, and burned Clemenceau's tail;
With howling Rochefort had she drunk of Mother Watkin's ale.
With Perier, and with Carnot, she had wrestled for a fall;
She had drained old Goulet till he lay, no good, against the wall.
She did not swive for sustenance, she rather lived to swive,
And at the two-backed beast she beat the veriest whore alive.
No prurient dame of high degree, nor wench of tarnished fame,
Could be compared with Limousin at this close-buttock game.
The Greeks had sixteen postures, and the Hindoos sixty-four,
And Cleopatra's aggregate was seventy-five or more.
What were a hundred postures to this fantastic quaen?
She had at least a thousand, and each of them tres bien.
On top, the pumping method, or lying on the side,
Or spread upon her billowy bum, a la the blushing bride,
Or standing up, or sitting down, or resting on all four,*
Whereby the visitor could take his choice of either door;

*This was the favorite posture of the Russian sian Empress whore.

(The above line, probably not in the original, is added in one copy of the poem.)
Or dressed or naked, every way her geinus could invent
To catch the silvery substance that tickleth when 'tis spent.
She'd nig-nog, duffle, snuggle, concomitate and quag;
She'd dance the "Shaking of the Sheets," fa-doodle, wap and shag;
She'd "Come the Caster," niggle, jerk, and "Hear the Nightingale;"
She'd nest-hide, dance "St. Lager's Round," and do it with her tail;
She'd break her leg above the knee, pound, click and tread as well,
And with a Holy Father, put the Devil into hell.
She'd wrestle, bang, cohabit, futuore, fornicate and frig;
Go goosing or grousing, and if needs be cooning go,
Rasp, roger, didle, bugger, screw, canoodle, kife and mow.
There was no form of harlotry, nor any size of tarse,
That had not run the gauntlet 'twixt her nostrils and her arse.
What shall I term that slimy pit-like orifice of sin,
That let her liquefactions out, and other factions in?
A·tuppence, twitchet, coney, commodity or nock,
Pundendum, titmouse, dummelherd, quaint merkin, naf or jock?
Call it whatever you please, there's nothing in a name,
And though it had been dubbed a rose, it would have smelt the same.
And he? He was as fine a buck as ever topped a ewe,
Or with his facile penis clave a virgin's clam in two.
The flush of lusty manhood lent its beauty to his face,
And the outlines of his study frame were full of virile grace.
But what seemed fairer far than these, to Limousin's fair eyes,
Was the ne plus ultra yelper that swung between his thighs.
To this illustrious pego and its adjacent flop,
Let other kingoes, lobes, and yards, in adoration drop;
These other virgas, placket-rackets, pintles, stunts and jocks,
And all the brood of praipismic candidates for pox;
Fie, on the mewing mentulae, for what, oh, what were these
Beside that phallic glory that hung below his knees?
Your pillycocks are competent for tickling mouses' ears,
And tools hight lobes are brute enough to bring forth bridal tears,
But the yelper that's ambitious to enact heroic roles
Must be of such proportions as to stretch the roomiest holes;
With dornicks so proficient that when they cease to spout,
The lady cannot pee the dose but has to cough it out.
This tool of his was one foot long, and had three corners to it;
Its bevelled velvet head stood up, when in the mood to do it,
And as it stood, and breathed and purred, and murmured sort o' sadly,
What woman, if she felt at all, but hankered for it madly?
And then those cods, when dainty hands in amorous dalliance squeezed 'em,
They'd throw a stream which ladies say, beyond all telling pleased 'em.
This monumental penis had frigged through all creation,
The jibby, bouser, beagle, bawd of every nation;
The courtesan, the concubine, the siren and the harlot.
The widow in her grassy weeds, the splatter-dash in scarlet;
The madam in her drawing room, with social homage honored,
The washee-washee almond eye, whose quim is cat-a-cornered.
From Colorado in the west, to Mannheim in the east,
(And that's a goodly distance—six thousand miles at least),
This prick had mown a swath of twats of every size and age,
So numerous I could not write their number on this page.
Where'er he went he left behind a gory, gummy trail
Of lacerated, satiated, ripped-up female tail.
'Twas to the bearer of this tool that Limousin applied,
For the pleasant little service that he'd never yet denied,
And when she asked him, "Voulez?" he was fly enough to see
He would have to meet a crisis, so he bravely answered "Oui!"
A crisis is a crisis, but a French one, we've heard tell,
Out-crises all crises, and that is simply hell.
He modestly unfolded his Brobdingnagian prick,
And hit that foreign madam's thing just one gosh-awful lick;
She gave a gruesome tremor, and shrieked aloud, "Mon Dieu!"
Her eye-balls rolled up in her head, her lips turned black and blue;
But there he lay and sozzled 'till he pumped her full, and then
He went and hired a doctor to sew her up again.
Little Willie
—Eugene Field.
HEN Willie was a little boy,
Not more than five or six,
Right constantly he did annoy
His mother with his tricks.
Yet not a picayune cared I
For what he did or said,
Unless, as happened frequently,
The rascal wet the bed.

Closely he cuddled up to me
And put his hand in mine,
Till all at once I seemed to be
Afloat in seas of brine.
Sabean odors clogged the air,
And filled my soul with dread,
Yet I could only grin and bear
When Willie wet the bed.

'Tis many times that rascal has
Soaked all the bed-clothes through,
Whereat I'd feebly light the gas
And wonder what to do.
Yet there he lay, so peaceful-like;
God bless his curly head!
I quite forgave the little tyke
For wetting of the bed.

Ah, me! those happy days have flown,
My boy's a father too,
And little Willies of his own
Do what he used to do.
And I, ah! all that's left for me
Are dreams of pleasure fled;
My life's not what it used to be
When Willie wet the bed.
The Old Backhouse

—James Whitcomb Riley.
When memory keeps me company and moves to smiles or tears,
A weather-beaten object looms through the mist of years;
Behind the house and barn it stood, a half a mile or more,
And hurrying feet a path had made, straight to the swinging door.
Its architecture was a type of simple classic art,
But in the tragedy of life it played a leading part;
And oft the passing traveler drove slow, and heaved a sigh
To see the modest hired girl slip out with glances shy.
We had our posy garden that the women loved so well;
I loved it too, but better still, I loved the stronger smell
That filled the evening breezes so full of homely cheer,
And told the night-o'ertaken tramp that human life was near.
On lazy August afternoons, it made a little bower,
Delightful, where my grandfather sat and whiled away an hour.
For there the summer morning its very cares entwined,
And berry bushes reddened in the steaming soil behind.
All day fat spiders spun their webs to catch the buzzing flies,
That flitted to and from the house, where Ma was baking pies.
And once a swarm of hornets bold had built a palace there,  
And stung my unsuspecting aunt—I must not tell you where;  
Then father took a flaming pole—that was a happy day—  
He nearly burned the building up, but the hornets left to stay.  
When summer bloom began to fade and winter to carouse,  
We banked the little building with a heap of hemlock boughs.  
But when the crust was on the snow and the sullen skies were gray,  
In sooth the building was no place where one could wish to stay.  
We did our duties promptly, there no purpose swayed the mind;  
We tarried not, nor lingered long on what we left behind.  
The torture of that icy seat could make a Spartan sob, 
For needs must scrape the goose-flesh with a lacerating cob 
That from a frost-encrusted nail was suspended by a string— 
My father was a frugal man and wasted not a thing.  
When grandpa had to "go out back" and make the morning call,  
We'd bundle up the dear old man with a muffler and a shawl.  
I know the hole on which he sat—'twas padded all around, 
And once I dared to sit there—'twas all too wide, I found;
My loins were all too little and I jack-knifed there to stay;
They had to come and get me out, or I'd a passed away.
Then father said ambition was a thing the boys should shun,
And I must use the children's hole 'till childhood days were done.
But still I marvel at the craft that cut those holes so true;
The baby hole, and the slender hole that fitted Sister Sue.
That dear old country landmark; I've trampled around a bit,
And in the lap of luxury my lot has been to sit;
But ere I die I'll eat the fruit of trees I robbed of yore,
Then seek the shanty where my name is carved upon the door.
I ween the old familiar smell will soothe my faded soul;
I'm now a man but none the less I'll try the children's hole.