

W. L. Sumner
"As my reading has broadened with my experience my conviction has deepened that the progress of the world is dependent upon a widening appreciation of good literature." — Calvin Coolidge.

Mrs. Ida Benfey Judd

American Story-Teller

410 Central Park West

New York City

July 19th.

Dear Miss Tarbell:

Your postcard is here. I wish I could make plain how grateful we are that you will allow us to use some lines from your Lincoln article. Of course, I will send them to you before sending to the publisher, of the booklet.

You are right, Of course, humor cannot be taught. The Chair will be for the Advancement of Humor. We are copying Bacon's title of a book - "For the Advancement of Learning."

In the booklet which we are now getting ready, we shall try to make plain that as one studies poetry, literature, music, so one may study humor. One does not hope to be a poet, or a great writer, or a composer, - so one does not expect to be a humorist. But the study in these fields brings appreciation, understanding - it should change one's life.

Did you happen to notice a series of articles running in the Herald-Tribune this winter, the Sunday Magazine section, called - "Who's Who in Humor?" There was no more humor in these articles than there

is in many combinations of noises called music,
or in jingles called poetry. Many realize this
truth concerning poetry and music, but it is not
plain yet concerning humor and comedy.

Leacock, who you know is Professor of Economics
at McGill University, and is called a Humorist, had
a long article in "The Monitor" on "Why do we Laugh?"
Leacock makes these statements;

"Scholars tell us that Aristophanes was probably
the wittiest man that ever lived: so witty that
it takes half a page of notes to explain a single
one of his jokes."

Scholars also say that the humor of Shakespeare
is deeper than any other: so deep, the you often
see no bottom to it."

I am sending to Leacock two lectures of George
Meredith's on "Comedy." He delivered them at Oxford.
This little book of Meredith's will be the guide-book
for study when the Chair for the Advancement of Humor
opens its course. As Viola Roseboro' once said:
"Meredith's book is complete, nothing more to be said
about comedy for a hundred years."

Of Leacock reads
Meredith's little book
he will surely get some
light on the subject
of Humor.

With love and
gratitude - Lda B. Fidd