

## *Foreword*

The feverish search for information as evidenced by the Outline of This and the Outline of That, by the Story of everything from Philosophy to Chiropody, grows apace. People seem to be in a questioning mood, assuaging their thirst for boundless knowledge at the wells of synthetic waters. Learned and semi-learned purveyors of information are enriching—if not the reader—themselves, their families, their booksellers, and their publishers with volume after volume of closely packed and loosely gathered stores of knowledge. *Informatio redivivus.*

It is with the keenest pleasure, therefore, that the editors of this particular book present an “Outline of Misinformation,” a “Story of Errors,” a “Symposium of Mistakes”—call it what you will.

Here are no compilers of fat books on civilization, no tourists into the fallow fields of philosophy, no tracers of the outline of knowledge, only poor innocent harassed blunderers trying to find the right answers to the most uncivilized of mental tortures: the examination.

Out of the mouths of babes comes the material of this book—babes, at least, compared to their forbears among the Story-Tellers. Teachers of history, of literature, of French and German and Latin, of grammar and rhetoric, of the Holy Book and of the spelling book, have racked their memories and remembered such gems of succinct misinformation as “The Acropolis was the she-wolf that nursed Romeo and Juliet” or “Virgil is the mother of Christ.” Names have been omitted lest the authors of these treasures, many of whom are now undoubtedly millionaires and statesmen, motion picture actors and mechanical engineers, congressmen and customers’ men—perhaps even presidents—should be embarrassed in their lofty positions by evidences of their youthful indiscretions. But in some cases the startled discoverers have allowed us to cite their

authority. To these, as well as to those who chose to remain anonymous, our grateful thanks are given.

To the doubting Thomases who read this book and believe it to be wholly or partly manufactured by professional humorists we have only the profoundest contempt, nay, antipathy. They are the same Toms who believed that Daisy Ashford was Barrie or Kipling or Hardy or someone or other of less tender years. Previous to that they were the Tommies who in school went around disillusioning their fellow-pupils with modernist propaganda concerning Santa Claus and the labor-saving stork. Before that they were undoubtedly suckled at the breasts of Pharisees. We will have none of them.

In closing, or rather in opening to the pages that follow, let us tell a parable which might prompt you to temper a too harsh judgment on the mental sins of these young. A youngster arrived home from school with a garish "E" on his examination card. His mother demanded to see the questions which he had flunked so ignominiously. She read the examination paper carefully and turned on her child

with a withering look, dismissing him with the comment: "You must be an absolute *marron*."

"Let him who is without sin"—laugh too contemptuously at what follows. Let him also send in all authentic "boners" known to him for our use in future volumes.