

T-BONE SLIM DISCUSSES

THE LAUGHING DOG

(Written after Mark Twain's
"Leaping Frog")

The Von Platen Lumber Company, an elite outfit, at Porir, Mich., Camp C had, in addition to "the aggressive 'Gulliver,' obstacle-overcoming, overbearing and overpowering" the sheik of Hill Creek and restive Lothario of Nett River—as was saying, in addition to all these things, the Von Platen had a Spitz-bitch gifted with a hilarious turn of mind.

No one seemed to know what the dog was laughing at and many theories were advanced as the cause of her mirth, sometimes hysterical but always mysterious—discarded as fast as proposed.

One of the popular theories was that "the dog had caught a case of grins, contagious-like from one of the super-intellectual gyppos that had a habit of talking to himself, in a fatherly way, nights, (when he had time) laughing over his own brilliancy and applauding his mental gyrations with wreaths of smiles, ebbing and flowing—fading and flourishing—ravishing.

Another opinion that prevailed, but finally perished, was that the dog was highly gratified at the way "Gulliver" ran the works and the amount of logs that were taken out between two nights—and for a while the dog was under suspicion of being a "Company man." Said suspicion, too, may have been the cause of the sad demise of the "slut" and mother of five pups—peace to her ashes—rumor had it that the poor dog had caught a chill as a result of her vigilancy in keeping track of the restive gyppos and nighthawks taking observations over the heavenly beauties after hours wondering how much raisinjack the big dipper would hold.

Many were the reasons given—almost every man had a version of his own and it was hard to know whom to believe. Superstitious forty-niners were firmly convinced that the dog was possessed of one Beelzebub, if not His Majesty himself, and there was those that insisted that a doglegation be sent down to Appleton, Wisconsin to fetch up an official shagger of Mephistophelian squatters—a monk, expert in expelling and exorcising Luciferian intruders and microbes of the Satanical-commonwealth.

And the beauty of that theory was that it could not be disargued—no question could be raised as to its plausibility since there was absolutely no possibility of a frame-up between the dog and the monk. If Beelzebub was in the dog, it was genuine. (Hearst papers please copy.)

Where was I? Oh yes—anyhow, the dog just laughed and laughed. One morning, I think it was the night before she died, she stepped out on the porch to see the boys off as they were getting on the car to be taken out to work and, sure enough, here again the dog just stretched out in convulsions of joy, skinned her teeth way back to both her ears in a most knowing smile . . .

"I wonder what makes the dog do that?" inquires a new-comer, deeply interested.

"Way, don't you know?" counters an old-timer, in surprise.

"No. I can't figure it out."

"It's very simple—that dog is laughing at you guys getting on that flat car half past five in the morning."

I. B. S.