

# *My Best Laugh*

By GRACIE FIELDS

**T**HE son of Mr. and Mrs. Smith went abroad to a far distant land. At the request of his parents he wrote long letters every week giving them all the news. Unfortunately Mr. and Mrs. Smith were very illiterate, and on several occasions they found it almost impossible to decipher their son's letters.

For some time this distressed them greatly, especially when later letters revealed that earlier ones had been misunderstood.

At last, they determined to take all future correspondence across to their very learned neighbours. This seemed to work quite well for a while, but somehow they intensely disliked hearing their son's more intimate phrases read out in the cold, unemotional voice of a comparative stranger, so they thought of some other medium.

Inspiration came to Mr. Smith one night. He would go to evening classes and improve his knowledge of the English language. Once conceived, the idea pleased him mightily. He saw the local authorities and everything was satisfactorily arranged.

Some three weeks after he had started his lessons he was returning from school one night, when he suddenly came upon a small leather case. It was full of coins.

Very excited, he hurried home to his wife.

"We must give it up to the police and claim a reward," he said. But Mrs. Smith disagreed. "Now just you put that up in the loft and keep quiet about it," she said.

Eventually, she had to hide it herself, still entirely against Mr. Smith's wishes. None of her specious reasoning could move him, and he stubbornly insisted that it should have been handed to the authorities.

Some days later, a policeman came down their street making door to door enquiries about the missing bag. When he reached number 45, Mrs. Smith opened the door to him.

"No, never seen or 'eard of it," she said, in reply to his enquiries. At that precise moment Mr. Smith poked his head over her shoulder and she exploded—"He's not all there; Potty . . . see?"