

Folks Say

Hans Christian Andersen

Folks often say one thing and mean another. Folks say so much that means so little. Folks say -- Folks say -- Yes, there is a lot of slander, but also a lot of innocent talk. Both seriousness and humor hide under that saying.

Folks say that the age of miracles is past, but that is not true. The age of miracles is still with us, in our souls; it is there that revelations come to man. Although the world may seem arid and desolate, God's fountain of mercy spouts forth within it. Life flourishes, and through inspired music, through poetry and science, God will unfold miracles for us until the Judgment Day.

Folks say that our feelings and thoughts arise from the motions and vibrations of our nerves - now inspiration, now happiness, now pain. Each one of us is but an instrument. Yes, indeed, but who touches the strings and makes them vibrate and tremble? God's invisible spirit.

Folks say funny things, and often with four cents' worth of malice. Folks say that once there was a lady who dreamed that all her teeth had fallen out, and that she remarked, "Now I'll lose one of my friends." But they said it must have been a false friend, for all the lady's teeth were false!

Folks say that when Sarah married the Philistine king Abimelech, she said to her husband, "We will call our son Isaac," for that meant in their language: "Folks will laugh." Old Sarah knew human nature. She knew folks' opinions - and they haven't changed since Sarah's time.

Folks say - and this is supposed to be quite true - that the other day one of the severe art critics stood by the seashore watching the waves.

"This is superb," he said, "superb and right!" And our Lord took off His hat and answered, "Thank you, Herr Professor!"

Folks say - yes, folks say - But let that be enough, at least for today.