

Laugh the Beloved Country

J P van Niekerk

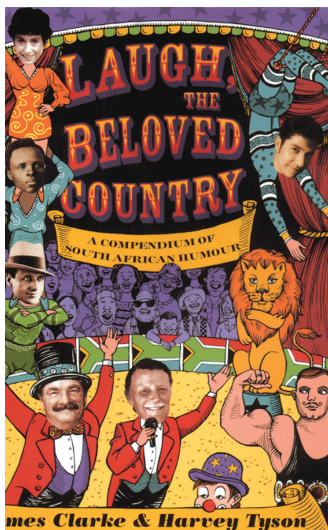
Laugh the Beloved Country, compiled by James Clarke and Harvey Tyson. Cape Town: Double Story, 2003. Pp. 318. Price R179.00 ISBN 1-919930-32-9.

Since laughter is the best medicine, practitioners are advised to prescribe this anthology liberally. Uniquely, it may also be prescribed by non-registered persons. A draft package insert is proposed herewith:

Composition: A compendium of the best South African humour in the printed media in the last 200 years. Contains the best-known brands in alphabetical order from Apartheid to Zapiro; from magazine or newspaper columns, to extracts from newspaper reports and books, articles, poems, and cartoons, with commentaries on each. Several dozen contributors include Herman Charles Bosman, Chris Ellis (a medical colleague), Gus Ferguson (pharmacist), Madam and Eve, Nat Nakasa and Pieter-Dirk Uys; there is also work by the compilers, James Clarke and Harvey Tyson.

Pharmacological classification: Concentrated humour; including satire, irony, farce, wit and gentle humour.

Pharmacological action: Stimulation of the humour centre of the brain results in the outpouring of endorphins, adrenaline, etc. and general stimulation of the nervous system. Outward evidence of these effects ranges from mild to severe. At one end of the spectrum is mild contraction of the levator labii superioris muscles; while at the other extreme are paroxysms of guffawing, with diaphragmatic



spasm, perhaps accompanied by uncontrollable lachrimation.

Indications: For people who wish to have a better understanding of our foibles and to improve their immune systems by stimulation of the appropriate internal regulatory systems.

Contraindications: Not advised for those who wish to retain entrenched prejudices.

Pharmacokinetic properties:

Absorption: Subject to considerable individual variation, though usually fully absorbed.

Distribution: All systems affected, though mainly nervous, endocrine and muscular.

Biotransformation: Fully transformed into beneficial endocrine and neuronal components.

Excretion: Components are likely to remain in the body for prolonged periods.

Dosage and directions for use: Tolerance is considerable and no known over-dosage has been reported. Individual preferences apply, but dosages are usually taken in moderate amounts.

Side-effects and special precautions; Drug interactions; Known symptoms of over-dosage and particulars of its treatment; Drug

interactions: Nil.

Storage: Preferably should not be stored on the shelf — for wide circulation. No temperature limitations.

Summary: The product raises the spirits, alleviates depression and stimulates the immune system. Liberal use recommended.