



Whether Common or Not

By WILL M. MAUPIN.

A WORD WITH MY FRIENDS

Eight years ago I issued a volume containing a number of my sketches and verses under the title of "Whether Common or Not." The edition was exhausted inside of a year. I am now figuring on issuing a new volume of verses, the same to be a collection of what seems to me to be the best I have written for The Commoner. Its title, if issued, will be, "Kiddies Six," because my bunch of six children have furnished most of whatever inspiration there has been in the verses. The frontispiece will be a picture of them all, from the Big Boy, who has "flew the nest" to the Littlest Girl, who hasn't had the new worn off of her yet. The book will consist of upwards of 200 pages, printed on the best of paper, bound in cloth with gold trimmings, and each copy autographed by the writer.

The publication of this volume depends on whether enough of my friends signify a desire to own copies. If enough so signify to warrant me in undertaking the expense, the book will appear as soon as the work can be done. I do not want the dollar now. I only ask that those who think they would like to own one of the books to drop me a postal card to that effect. I'll record the names and notify them when the book is ready. Then the dollars may come in as fast as they please. I have adopted this method for the very simple reason that to publish a book costs money, and I am no John Andrew Carnyfeiler. If you want a copy, send me a card to that effect. And lest you forget it, DO IT NOW! Sincerely yours, WILL M. MAUPIN.

Dreaming

Tired of the cities, their sham and their show;
 Weary of white lights, their glitter and glow;
 Yearning and longing to pack up and go
 Back to the ranges unbounded.
 Back to where honor is more than a name;
 Back where life's cards are dealt square in the game;
 Back to where duty undone is a shame,
 And life with joy is surrounded.

Weary of watching mad struggles for gold;
 Sick of child faces by labor worn old;
 Sick of men's souls that are calloused and cold—
 I long for the rivers and ranges.
 Sick seeing womanhood traded and bartered;
 Sick seeing mother and child by greed parted;
 I'm going back where the best in life started,
 Back to where honor ne'er changes.

Far from the streets with their noises and clamor;
 Far from the shams with their tinsel and glamour;
 Far from the din of the wheel and the hammer,
 Out in the silence unbroken.
 Out 'neath the blue sky in freedom to revel;
 Scouring the mountainside, riding the level—
 Where men are built square and not on the bevel,
 Where friendships are known though unspoken.

Sick of the sights of the city's streets crowded;
 Sick seeing truth in the grave's garments shrouded;

Sick seeing sin that parades with a proud head,
 Wearing by hypocrites scheming.
 Longing to ride where the scene ever changes;
 Yearning for skyline o'er long mountain ranges;
 Back to where both the true and the strange is—
 This is the dream I am dreaming.

Law and Discipline

The last session of the Nebraska legislature enacted a law making it a misdemeanor for a boy under eighteen years of age to smoke or chew tobacco.

The law was enacted at the behest of a lot of men and women who are greatly interested in the welfare of our youth, but for the life of us we are unable to grasp the benefits of any such law. When it comes to pass that any father or mother is unable to handle an eighteen-year-old boy, this department is going to advocate the enactment of a law providing for the education of the aforesaid fathers and mothers. Discussing this law with a neighbor the other day, he removed his pipe from between his teeth and remarked that he thought it a good one, for it might have the effect of retraining his fifteen-year-old boy from contracting the habit.

That made me laugh.

If the admonitions of father and mother will not restrain a boy from contracting the tobacco habit, you may safely wager anything from a doughnut to a box of crackers that law will not. Being only a very few years from boyhood the Architect of this department inclines to the belief that the first effort of the law will be to encourage boys to learn the habit, more for the purpose of showing that the law can not get them than to secure pleasure from the tobacco. That's boy nature. The Architect is just old-fashioned enough to fear that a lot of fathers and mothers are trying to shirk their parental duties off on the state.

Had we been consulted in the framing of the above mentioned law we would have suggested that instead of fining the boy he be taken home and the father instructed to give the young fellow a jacketing, imposing a fine upon the father who failed to carry out the mandate properly.

Two Funerals

A few months ago there was buried in an eastern city a man whose trade was war. He achieved fame on the battlefield, and during a long life he trained men in the art of preparedness for killing their fellows. When he was buried the funeral procession was miles long, flags hung at half-mast all over the country, solemn salutes from parks of artillery and volleys of musketry resounded across the continent.

Last week there was buried in Lincoln a man whose whole life had been spent in serving others. He never laid up a dollar, for the simple reason that he thought more of helping others less fortunate than himself than he did of accumulating money. When he saw his fellow workers in trouble he never failed to go to their assistance. No appeal to him for help, either financial or moral, ever fell upon deaf ears. Time and again he could have made big money by suppressing his convictions or by merely refusing to assist others. But never a dishonest dol-

lar crossed his palms. When his mortal remains were carried to their last resting place only one carriage followed the hearse, and less than a score of the thousands of workingmen he had made sacrifices for were grouped about his grave.

'Twas ever thus. Will it always be?
 Measured by the world's standard Tom Kelsey's life was a failure. Measured by the standard with which final accounts are reckoned, his life was a success, for it was a life unselfishly devoted to the service of others. Some of these days, let us hope, the world will pay its homage to the men whose lives are spent in building—whose lives are spent in trying to lift up, in trying to lighten the load of unfortunates, in trying to let a little sunshine into the dark places of earth. When that time comes, homage will be paid to such men as Tom Kelsey and not to the men whose trade is bloodshed and destruction.

Two Views

The pessimist—
 A lot of toil, a lot of care,
 A lot of woe to vex us;
 A lot of trials and of tears,
 And worries to perplex us.
 Long years of struggle and of strife—
 All that makes up the sum of life.

The optimist—
 A lot of joy midst all our work,
 The love of friends and neighbors;
 The smile of loved ones 'round the hearth,
 Sweet rest from weary labors.
 For me the sun, the birds, the trees;
 For me the music ringing,
 When childish laughter greets my ears,
 And children's hands are clinging.
 Sweet welcome home when cometh night—
 I'll live today, for life's all right.

Worried

"That Mrs. Skipperly who has just moved in across the street met me on the street a while ago and introduced herself."
 "What kind of woman does she appear to be?"
 "All right, I guess, but I've been bothered ever since I met her."
 "What about?"
 "While I was talking with her I smelled gasoline, and I've been wondering ever since whether she had an automobile or had been cleaning her gloves."

Things We Hear Every Day

"The doctor said mine was the worst case he ever handled."
 "It weighed just four pounds and seven ounces three hours after I landed it."
 "This watch of mine hasn't lost ten seconds in eight months."
 "It is almost impossible for me to get a shoe to fit because of the peculiar shape of my feet."
 "I told you so."
 "I am taking so many papers now that I don't find time to read half of them."

A Beautiful Sentiment

The other day the Architect received a card from a friend in Philadelphia, so full of beautiful sentiment that it will always be treasured. "Bachelors' children are always young, and so are the children of the childless," said the writer. Then the writer told of a friend who had just lost his little one and said: "I told him he was far better off than I, because he had the memory of a little one to cherish, while I had none."
 There is a whole volume in that little remark, and the longer one studies it the sweeter it gets. Next to having little ones playing around

your knees is having the sweet memories of little ones who have played about your knees.
 The man who loves little children is always young of heart, and the man who is young of heart is always a welcome neighbor and friend.

Anarchy!

"Kill it, Jack!"
 "Put him on the hummer, old boy!"
 "Knock him out, old man!"
 "Tie the can to him, old man, and send him to the dog house!"
 "Biff him, old sport!"
 "Knock his block off!"
 "Slam him! SLAM HIM!"
 No, good friends, not anarchy; not even an incipient riot. Merely a scene you may witness on nearly any vacant block every afternoon now. It is a sure incident of every session at the great national pastime. Without it the game would lose half its charm. And if we couldn't have the opportunity to exhaust our pent-up feelings by anathemizing an umpire now and then we'd surely explode. Many a man has been able to relieve himself of a grouch due to be delivered at home by merely going to a ball game and unloading it on the umpire.
 Nobody loves an umpire.

Release

Let congress now adjourn
 And save expense;
 Let members home return
 And end suspense.
 Comes now the one who'll solve
 And problems of state,
 And methods new evolve—
 The graduate.

Brain Leaks

The worst lies are not couched in words.
 What we pray for and what we need are often vastly different things. There are two good features about picnics—the anticipation and the recollection.
 What has become of the dear old ladies who used to tie their spectacles on with a string?
 One of the most enjoyable sights in the world is that of a small boy landing his first fish.
 Instead of worrying over things you fear may happen, try rejoicing over things you hope will happen.
 A great many mothers have worried over fingerprints on the window-pane that they would give worlds to see once more.
 One of the blessings of not having everything you want is the opportunity it affords you for having something to wish for and hope for.
 About the time a city man weeds over a 7x9 garden a couple of times he loses his ambition to be the owner and cultivator of an 80-acre farm.
 "Wisdom is good with an inheritance," remarked Solomon. This reminds us of the patriot who is always shouting for the old flag—and an appropriation.

"Kiddies Six"

Our dear young friend, Will M. Maupin is now making arrangements to issue a new volume of poems, and will be titled "Kiddies Six." It will be a completion of his best verses, which from time to time has appeared in Bryan's Commoner. With Gene Fields' and Whitcomb Riley's volumes, it seems to use the addition of "Kiddies Six" to the library would make one's collection complete, and the lover of the sentiment beautiful should by all means have this volume constantly on the library table, and thus be able at any time to "drive dull care away." Just drop Will a postal card, and tell him to reserve one for you as soon as published. The dollar you can send later.—Oregon (Mo.) Sentinel.