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Whether Common or Not
By WILL M. MAUPIN.



Louis and Ruth

I've got a brand-new daughter now, And proud I am of her; Although it rather seems, somehow, As if she really were A sign that I am growing old, That many years have sped; That oft the bells dead years have tolled— The "Biggest Boy" has wed.

It seems that only yesterday I wound his wounded toe With yarn in the old-fashioned way— 'Twas really years ago! It seems but just a day or two Since off to school he ran; But "Biggest Boy" now looms to view As a new married man.

Gee whiz! How Tempus fugit by— I've got a daughter-in-law! It seems so short a time since I Was playing "Boston taw;" So brief a time since, free and glad, I'd gaily romp and run— And now to think that I'm the Dad Of a big married son!

Well, I admit my shadow turns And points the eastward way; That memory's incense sweetly burns To many a yesterday. But, praise the Lord, although the gray In my hair has a start, I can with truth stand up and say I'm keeping young of heart.

So, daughter, you've a welcome here Like blooming flowers of May; To us you'll be both near and dear Forever and a day. But I'll admit it seems quite queer, When all is done and said, That I've a brand-new daughter here 'Cause "Biggest Boy" is wed.

Swallowing Land

When I was a lad, living only a few miles from the Missouri river, I used to watch that stream during the spring floods to see it eating away the land on either side. I have seen whole farms disappear in an hour. One night a party of us boys were camping out near the old river. We went to sleep on the east bank of the stream and woke up on the west bank. During the night the river had cut across a low place east of us and changed its channel. In doing so it had swallowed up hundreds of acres of land, deposited two or three feet of sand on hundreds of other acres, and made citizens of Missouri over into citizens of Kansas.

As I started out to say, I used to think the old Missouri could swallow land at a greater rate than any other institution. But now comes my good friend Senator W. R. Patrick of Sarpy county, Nebraska, with a story of a land swallower that has the Missouri river backed off the boards and yelling for help.

An acre of land contains 43,560 square feet. At \$43.56 an acre that is just 1 mill per square foot. Then my friend Patrick proceeds to figure that every time a man pays 15 cents for a drink of booze, and that is the standard price, he is swallowing a 150-foot strawberry patch. If you invite four friends to drink with you the five swallow a 750-foot garden patch. An ordinary spree will swallow a good-sized pasture. If you are a "moderate drinker," and consume only three drinks a day you

swallow 3,150 square feet of land per day, or 164,250 square feet of land per year. That means that you have swallowed in a year a bit over thirty-seven acres of good land in the last ten years. Now stop and figure out how many acres of land old King Booze is swallowing every year in this country of ours, and you'll realize that as a land swallower the Missouri river is in the amateur class.

I'm reminded of the story of the man who went to a doctor and said: "Doctor, look at my throat." The doctor did so and said: "I see a very badly inflamed condition, sir."

"I should think you would!" said the man. "I've sent 360 acres of good land, fifty head of cattle, four spans of horses, a good house and barn and a lot of outbuildings down that throat in the last three years."

A Family Affair

Married, at home of the bride's mother, on Saturday, June 10, 1911, Mr. Louis Blaine Maupin and Miss Ruth Rosa. Immediately after the ceremony the bridal couple took the train for Baggs, Wyo., where the groom has already prepared the home nest and where they will reside in future.

Just twenty-three years ago next November he, who is now the "biggest boy," made his appearance in a little cottage in Fairfield, Neb. It doesn't seem that long to the Architect—that is, not until he takes a surreptitious peep into the glass and sees a lot of gray hairs and a network of wrinkles. The Architect has had about as many experiences as the average man, but this is the first time he stood around and saw one of his own children "jump the broomstick." It's a peculiar sensation, isn't it, you gray-haired boys and girls who have children and grandchildren of your own? Now, if the "biggest boy" has captured as big a prize as his Dad captured when he trapped the Little Woman—and I believe he has—he is going to discover mighty quick that he hasn't been living up to date—just merely existing. How I could write into word the feelings that swept across my heart when I saw the Biggest Boy stand up and vow to love and cherish the charming girl who had given into his keeping her future life. A flood of memories swept over me. I saw in my mind's eye a little cottage away back there in '88; I recalled the joy that swept over me when I heard the first wailing cry; I saw him develop from infancy into sturdy boyhood, and from sturdy boyhood into stalwart youth. I recalled the fishing trips we have had together, the many days when we roamed the woods more like school-boys chums than father and son. I recalled one anxious night when two of us watched over his bed, fearing every minute that the angel of death would touch him, and I remember how those two watchers knelt down while the Little Woman voiced the thanks of both of us that he had been spared. I tell you, a father can think of a wonderful lot of things during the few minutes that it takes a pastor to marry the Biggest Boy to the girl of his choice.

Well, the Biggest Boy has a whole lot more to start married life on than his Dad had. Dad didn't have enough money to flag a bread wagon, and he happened just at that time to be out of a job. But this situa-

tion didn't feaze him nor the Little Woman. Not a bit of it! Wasn't the world an oyster ready for their opening? Sure! And if that oyster hasn't yet opened to the limit, at least it has opened up enough to keep things going at a fairly satisfactory rate. And while there are some hours and some days of those vanished years we wouldn't like to live over again, we wouldn't sell for much gold the memory of a single one of them. It hasn't been all sunshine by any means. Some of the days were woefully cloudy. A couple of little mounds in God's acre testify to that. But we have the sweet memory of the two little ones who were with us for a while.

Well, well! Here we are, maundering away about something that interests no one but ourselves. But when a man's Biggest Boy gets married, and he happens to be the first of the flock to do it, that man is quite likely to want to tell all about it.

Something Similar

"On the square now, old man; did you ever buy a gold brick?" "No I never did. But I'll tell you what I did do once. I voted the democratic ticket in order to get wool on the free list."

Brain Leaks

Money will purchase truckling, but never loyalty.

Those of us who do not need a balance-wheel need an accelerator.

You can never make a suffering man believe that any woman feels as cool as she always looks this kind of weather.

Talk about the "good old days!" Just remember, Mr. Office Man, that your grandfather couldn't work under the inspiration of an electric fan.

If you are built right something comes along to cheer you up just about the time you have made up your mind that the world is going to the demnition bowwows.

We always have a suspicion that the man who wears a full beard has a weak chin to conceal. This, however, may be due to the fact that our own whiskers are a bit thin on the chin.

TO MY MANY FRIENDS

I say "To my many friends," for the reason that I have on hand ample evidence that they are many. I recently announced that I would get out an edition of my verses if enough friends signified a desire to own copies to warrant me in undertaking the expense. The response has been so hearty and so kindly that the edition is already assured. I am now getting the copy ready. I am going to take time to get this book out in proper shape. When it is ready for delivery I will notify you. In the meantime, if you have not already ordered "Kiddies Six," send in your order. I am not going to take chances on having so many unsold copies left on hand that I will lose money by the publication thereof. It takes too much hustling to feed and clothe a big bunch of growing kiddies like mine to take any long chances. Order the book now and send me the dollar when I notify you the book is ready for delivery. Sincerely and thankfully yours,

WILL M. MAUPIN.