



Whether Common or Not

By WILL M. MAUPIN.

The New Year

"Ring out the old,
Ring in the new;
Ring out the false,
Ring in the true."

Ring, ye bells, for the Glad New Year

Whose dawn appears o'er eastern slopes.

Ring out each dismal doubt and fear,
Ring in the dawn of rosy hope!

Ring out till o'er the whole world swells

The music of your joy, O, bells!

Ring in the bonds of brotherhood,
Ring out the power of greed and might.

Ring in the work of common good,
Ring out the wrong, ring in the right.

Ring out till brother brother tells
Your glorious message, O, ye bells!

Ring in the truth that makes men free,

Ring out the false that binds in chains.

Ring in the good that is to be,
Ring out the greed for wrongful gains.

Ring out until the hills and dells
Send back the echoes, O, ye bells!

Ring in the Fatherhood of God,
Ring out the wiles that mar the day.

Ring till the paths that men have trod

Become again the better way.

Ring out till o'er the whole world swells

The music of your joy, O, bells!

Speaking of Resolutions

Of course you are going to make a lot of good resolutions next Monday, regardless of the fact that in all the years gone by you made the same old resolutions and then fell down. Far be it from me to discourage anyone who is trying to break away from the bad habit, but I have my doubts about the man who waits until January 1 to quit. Oh, yes, I've supplied a considerable lot of paving material for that other place, and I suppose I'll furnish a lot more, but of this you may be sure—I am not going to make any good resolutions next Monday. I'll either make them the day before, or the day after.

But next Monday I'm going to renew some resolutions I made years ago, and ask for strength to carry them out a little better in future than I have been able to do in the past. One of the best things Kin Hubbard of Indiana ever got off was his remark, credited to "Ike Martin," to this effect: "If you don't know anything good t' say of a man, think up somethin'." I've been trying for years to say only good things of men and women, and on New Year's day I'm going to renew that resolution made a long time ago. I am going to ask for help to carry out old resolutions—that I will do all I can to make smiles grow, to make children happier, to be a neighbor and not a near-dweller, and to so strive that somebody, sometime, will say, "Well, he made us all feel better, anyhow."

Say, friends, if that last is said of me after I have gone over, I'll be mighty proud.

No, sir, I'm not going to "swear off" on the old pipe. I have my

reasons. First, I don't want to. Second, why should I? I get too much comfort out of it, and I have too much affection for the Little Woman. Several years ago she had a heart-to-heart talk with me about my smoking, and as a result I laid the pipe away and resolved that I'd quit. In less than a week the Little Woman hunted up the pipe and tobacco pouch, and drawing nigh unto me she remarked:

"For goodness sake, Will, fill up and take a good smoke. You'll drive me and the children crazy!"

She informed me after I had stoked up that for a week I'd been crosser than a bear with a sore head. Once in a while I get a bit impatient around the house and threaten to quit smoking. That makes 'em all get good.

But, my young friend, if you have never learned to smoke, don't. And if you have only been smoking a few years, quit. I never saw a middle aged man who smoked who did not regret that he had formed the habit. Nor have I ever seen a middle aged man who did not smoke who regretted that he had not acquired the habit in his younger days.

And, good father of the growing boys, if you are addicted to tobacco, for goodness' sake don't make a monkey of yourself by telling your boy he must not learn the habit. A little bit of example beats a wagon load of precept.

Many years ago—say about thirty-five, when I was a lusty boy, it was one of my Saturday duties to saw and split enough wood to last over Sunday. We had a fine woodshed in which I might work. One particular Saturday I was hurrying to get the wood sawed so I could go fishing. I thought father had gone down town, so I took a big chew of tobacco and sawed and chawed for dear life. But just as I spat out a huge mouthful of the juice father appeared in the doorway and looked at me over the rims of his spectacles. He didn't say a word, but turned and went away. I saw him headed towards town, and the way I made that saw fly was a caution. I thought that perhaps the blow might be softened a bit if I had a big pile split up when father got back.

A couple of hours later father appeared in the woodshed, seated himself on the woodpile and asked:

"Son, how long have you been chewing tobacco?"

I stammered a bit and then remarked that I hadn't chewed long.

"Where do you get your tobacco?" he asked.

I told him I bought it out of my weekly allowance of 50 cents, or with money earned running errands.

"You never steal it, do you?" he asked.

I resented that idea.

"Ever beg any?"

I replied that I got an occasional chew from a chum.

"Well, my son, I would rather you wouldn't chew tobacco, but if you have formed the habit and want to continue, I certainly don't want you begging tobacco, and I know I am unable to allow you enough spending money to supply you if you are going to indulge in such habits. But I have bought you a piece of tobacco, and when that is gone I'll get you some more. I'll keep you in chewing tobacco if you are bound to chew.

With this father reached into his

pocket and pulled out a plug of tobacco about eighteen inches long and two inches thick and handed it to me. Then he turned and went out into the yard and then into the house.

I had reached for that plug almost mechanically. I turned it over and over, thinking mighty fast and hard. Then I climbed up and laid that plug of tobacco on a rafter, and so far as I know it is there to this day. I never saw it again, nor did I tell anyone where it was. And the chew of tobacco I had that morning was the last I took for many a long year.

I opine that my father knew as much about boy nature as any man that ever lived. He knew that it wouldn't do any good to forbid me to chew. He knew it would be a waste of time to whip me for it. So he just shamed me out of it—that's the word, shamed me out of it.

But this is no time for maundering about the past. This is a time to think about the future. So here's a Happy New Year to everybody—and especially to my friends, known and unknown, far and near. And every reader of The Commoner is my friend, I know. May all that is good and true be yours to have and to keep, not only through the coming new year, but through all the years that are yet to be.

ANOTHER POLITICAL FUNERAL FOR MR. BRYAN

It is now some fifteen years since publicists and press of a certain persuasion began holding political funerals for William Jennings Bryan on frequent occasions. Meanwhile Mr. Bryan has flourished as the green bay tree and been able to command the nomination of a great political party for president whenever he wanted it. General expectation is that 1912 will be his fallow season, but that his word will be potent enough to prevent the nomination of any man he will not approve.

The Underwood-Bryan controversy has afforded another opportunity for those platitudinous panegyrists of the Uriah Heap school to unburden themselves of another set of funeral orations. Let us urge ardent mourners not unduly to hasten in buying tickets to the Bryan obsequies. Mr. Bryan is represented as "repudiated by his party's leadership." Bosh! Mr. Bryan made a mistake, which is one of his specialties. He made a huge one in 1896—and got more votes then, and twice afterward, than any candidate for president had ever polled before 1896!

The strength of Mr. Bryan does not depend on the attitude of the democratic representation in congress. It never did, and never will. It is with the plain people, not the party managers. It is not based on any assumption of Mr. Bryan's infallibility, but on a firm conviction of his honesty.

Mr. Bryan made a mistake that was made by plenty of other people. He observed Mr. Underwood's political geography, and he noted the delay about bringing forward a steel schedule. Ergo, he assumed a casual relation that did not exist. Mr. Underwood's explanation, backed by the members of the ways and means committee, is complete and satisfying. It is merely regrettable that this explanation was not given to the public sooner.

But as to any serious, permanent impairment of Mr. Bryan's hold on public confidence as a result of his fulminations on the steel schedule, it is nonsense. Mr. Bryan does not play the sort of game for points that smaller politicians play. He doesn't maneuver to "get something on" his antagonist and credit himself with a number of points proportioned to the bigness of the something or the

skill of the maneuver. He plays for the masses of his party, and his hold on them is what enables him to influence those leaders who are always so ready to claim the platform with funeral elegiacs. Mr. Bryan has proved time and again that he is stronger with any other democratic organization in the nation than with the caucus of democratic representatives in congress. He will prove it again.—Washington (D. C.) Times.

THE REFERENDUM AND RECALL

To the Editor of the Philadelphia North American: The principle which underlies what is known as "the recall," the writer believes will persist and grow stronger as it goes. The belief that appears prevalent among certain people that they were born to rule is only a fragmentary persistence of the ages of tribal existence, when the chief could, in a way at least, do as he pleased. Kings and emperors and other species of despots have followed as time went on and took their places and assumed their powers, always not by the foolish superstition of what is called divine right, but always in keeping with what was the subject's ability to rule himself. If the American people conclude that it would be wise to recall their judges it would be the most encouraging thing that has happened in this union since the adoption of the constitution. It will not only be an indication that the efficient portion of the electorate is recognizing and assuming its responsibilities, but also a gratifying forecast of the coming day of the people's rule.

President Taft and others appear terribly afraid of the mob. There is not the least danger of the mob when the initiative and referendum and the recall is under discussion. The real dangerous mob in this country is composed of those who sell their votes, either for dollar bills or special legislation, and it is ruling, or, rather, misruling, now. It is laughable to hear men exalted to power by purchased votes expressing solicitude for free institutions, and it would be even more laughable if it were not a tragedy to listen to the expression of fear about the recall of judges who have been elevated to positions which should be sacred, by men who were given their power by purchased votes.

JOHN S. HAMILTON.

FRANCIS M. DANAHER

Francis M. Danaher, a well known and highly respected Albanian, died at his home, 139 Lark street, after a long illness. Mr. Danaher was born in Charleston, S. C., seventy-seven years ago and had resided in Albany for the past sixty years. He married Mary E. Hillenbrant, who died twenty-five years ago. Mr. Danaher was an expert machinist and engineer until he retired from active work several years ago. He was a student and devoted much of his time to books.

Mr. Danaher is survived by three sons, Judge Franklin M. Danaher, of Albany; John E. and Edward A. Dalahaner and a daughter, Miss Ella N. Danaher, of New York.—Albany (N. Y.) Knickerbocker Press.

LOYAL

Marks—"So your Italian barber refused to shave you? Why was that?"

Parks—"I told him I'd just had a Turkish bath."—Boston Transcript.

HE WAS MISTAKEN

"I asked your husband last evening if he had his life to live over again if he would marry you, and he said he certainly would."

"He certainly wouldn't."—Houston Post.