



# Whether Common or Not

By WILL M. MAUPIN.

## Everyday Heroes

Let those who would sing of the glory  
Of carnage and pillage and hate;  
Of battlefields corpse-strewn and gory,  
Of war honors blood bought and great.  
But if I may sing, let my singing  
Be such that the public is stirred  
To honor the man, working best as he can,  
As one of the common herd.

Let those who would sing loud the praises  
Of forum and pulpit and pen;  
Of men who attract the crowd's gazes,  
And play on the passions of men.  
But if I may sing, then I'm voicing  
My praise of him who, all the while,  
Is plugging away, just the best that he may,  
As one of the rank and file.

Let those who would frame verse and canto  
In honor of genius for gain;  
I freely confess I don't want to,  
Though fortune and fame might attain.  
But if I may write, let my verses  
Concern that man faithful and strong,  
Who, grimy of face, is just filling his place  
As one of the common throng.

Let those who would frame song and story  
Of empires so often blood-bought;  
Of heroes who've won fame and glory  
Because of the woes they have wrought.  
But if I may, then I am framing  
My stories and songs of the man  
Who never does shirk, howe'er humble his work,  
But does just the best that he can.

## A Boyhood Experience

Fossil, Oregon.—To the Architect: Your page in The Commoner is very interesting to me, and in looking backward, as we old boys are inclined to do so, I am reminded of one of my own boyhood experiences. I have a twin brother, John, and we were raised on the banks of the Jordan, a small creek in Indiana. One day in our rambles we saw a fishhawk go into a hole that had been tunneled into the bank of the creek. Being of an inquisitive turn of mind we proceeded to investigate what we felt sure was a fishhawk's nest. The bank being about ten feet high and perpendicular, we found it difficult to get to it. John proposed that he stand in the water at the bottom of the bank and I should let myself down from the top and stand on his shoulders. After placing ourselves in this position we were not long in finding out what a young fishhawk looked like. I forced my arm into the hole to my shoulder and felt something soft. Thinking I had hold of the old bird I yelled to John to look out as I was fetching her. But when I pulled her out, instead of an old fishhawk I had grasped in my hand a blacksnake about six feet long. John and I landed in a promiscuous heap in about two feet of water, and the snake hurried away. So did we. As we walked along the homeward path, single file and with chattering teeth, John said: "Well, Bill; you fetched her out, all right." It has been forty years since that

incident occurred, but I often think of it, and never without the cold chills creeping over me. To this day I haven't been able to decide which was the worst frightened, me, John, or the snake.

WILLIAM J. VANHORN.

Say, Brer VanHorn; that reminds me of the old catch conundrum: "What's the difference between an orange and a box of axle grease?" Of course the one asked usually replies: "I don't know." Then you say: "Well I'd hate to send you to the store to buy oranges for me." - Not referring to allusions at all, at all; but isn't there more difference than that between the feel of a fishhawk and the feel of a blacksnake?

## One of Many Evenings

"Papa, will you help me with my rithmetic?"  
"Yes; for a little bit."  
It was the 13-year old girl that asked, and when Dad replied in the affirmative he piled up trouble for himself.

"What's the first problem?"  
"What is the interest on \$1,667 at 6 per cent from April 16, 1906, to January 13, 1907?"

Easiest thing in the world. Hasn't Dad paid enough interest to know how to figure that out? Sure, Michael!

"Now, my dear; you first find how much time has elapsed between the date first mentioned and the date last mentioned. To do that you put the lesser year and its accompanying dates under the greater year and its accompanying dates, after which you proceed to subtract. As sixteen days can not be subtracted from thirteen days it is necessary to borrow thirty days from another month, making a total of forty-three days, from which, after taking thirteen days we have twenty-seven days remaining. April is the fourth month and January the first month, but as four can not be subtracted from one, we must borrow twelve months from a year, adding to the one month, making a total of thirteen months, and four months from thirteen months leave nine months. Having borrowed a year we now find that we must take it into account, therefore we pay it back by adding it to 1907 and then subtracting the total, or 1907, from 1907, which leaves nary a year."

Having proceeded thus far Dad wipes the perspiration from his forehead, sharpens his pencil and looks hopelessly at the Little Woman.

The interest on \$1,667 at 6 per cent for one year is \$100.02. But we do not have a year's interest to pay; only nine months and twenty-seven days. It beats all why they don't make the months come out even instead of making us figure in a lot of fool extra days. Now nine months' is best found by dividing \$100.02 by twelve and multiplying by nine, which being done gives us \$8.33 1/2 as one month's interest—

"Dear, I wish you'd shut off the furnace. It's getting beastly hot in here—"

"—and \$75.01 1/2 as the interest for nine months. Now we must find the interest for twenty-seven days and we do that by—"

"Mamma, if you don't make the baby be still I can't work this problem and explain it in such simple language that Rena can readily understand it."

"—as I was saying, we do that by dividing the interest for one month

by thirty to get the interest for one day, then multiplying by twenty-seven to get the interest for the fractional month. So doing we find that one day's interest amounts to 27 cents and 68-100 of a cent, plus. Naturally and of course, if that is one's day's interest, twenty-seven days' interest would be twenty-seven times that, or \$7.47 1/2, plus. Now we add the interest for twenty-seven days to the interest for nine months, securing and attaining a total of \$82.49 plus. You see, my dear, how very simple it all is. I hope I have made it clear."

"Well, it isn't very clear, papa; besides, you haven't got the right answer."

By this time the floor is littered with paper covered with figures. Dad's face is red and damp, and mamma is hurriedly preparing the rest of the kiddies for bed, fearful lest Dad make some remarks.

## What o' the Night?

The days are getting longer now, which means, of course, that the evenings are getting shorter. Funny how things work out that way, isn't it? But it has been a long, hard winter, with many of us grayhaired little boys cooped up in the house and often hard put for something to while away the time. The Architect isn't going to tell how he whiled away the winter evenings, 'cause he ain't going to brag about how much he worked. People wouldn't believe it, anyhow, so what's the use. But he would like to know how his comrades of the gray hairs and the easy chairs and the reminiscent moods, passed their winter evenings. Write and tell him; making your stories as brief as the evenings were long—that is, don't make 'em as long as the evenings, but as short as the days. Tell your stories in your own way, for the Architect is paid an enormous salary (this is supposed to be an humorous department) for getting the letters and the commas and the periods and the quotation marks all in their right places. Come on with the stories, boys. And when the Architect says "boys" he wouldn't be understood as ignoring the girls. He would embrace them all.

## Kiddies Six, Not the Six Kiddies

A friend from far away writes: "Not having any kiddies of my own I want your 'Kiddies Six.'" That's all right. She can have the "Kiddies Six," but nary a one of the six kiddies. Bless 'em; I've got a lot invested in 'em, and I'm investing more every day, but they're the biggest dividend payers any man ever had.

Another faraway friend sends me a picture of his six kiddies, all of whom are perched on the back of a mighty sedate and gentle looking old horse. The accompanying letter says the horse is only 27 years old. But those six happy youngsters perched upon that horse's back make a mighty fine picture. Although I wouldn't trade my six for my friend's six, yet I confess that if I just had to trade I wouldn't ask any boot.

Sure!

"Jobson is always immersed in his business."

"I should say so. It beats all what interest he takes in it."

"What does he do, anyway?"

"He loans money on salary assignments, household furniture and live stock."

Limerick

There was a young fellow in Dallas  
Who longed to reside in a palace.  
But the lazy young lout  
Just idled about  
And nev' had more'n one gallus.

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