



Whether Common or Not

By WILL A. MAUPIN.

New Year's Day

New Year's day is "swear off" day,
And O, that some would do it.
'Twould be so fine, O brother mine,
And we would never rue it.
If Standard Oil would give up spoil
And Steel would drop its grafting,
We'd shout with glee from sea to sea
And burst our buttons laughing.

If Baer would swear to treat us fair
And not with greed pursue us;
If trusts in wheat and sugar sweet
Would both no longer do us;
If all would say that from this day
'Twould be their chief endeavor
To treat us white, we'd all delight
And give them praise forever.

If trust in shoes would now refuse
To squeeze us on the prices;
If trust in meat should now repeat
"We'll ask but decent prices."
If these would swear to treat us square
Through Nineteen-five, and after,
We'll all rejoice in loudest voice
Until we shook each rafter.

If trusts today would each one say,
"We'll gouge you folk no longer.
For be it known our love has grown
Each passing day much stronger,"
I here repeat if these words greet
Our ears this New Year weather,
We'd all arise in great surprise,
And then drop dead together.

Too Expensive

"Hello, Billson! Is it true that you
are going to get married?"
"Not much! I can't afford it."
"But you draw a good salary."
"Yes. But women spend so much
these days I couldn't stand the pace.
It costs too much to clothe them in
the latest fashion."

With which remark Billson lighted
a 10-cent cigar, paid for two rounds of
drinks and proceeded to lose seven
straight games of billiards.

Hard Luck

"Our postal service is becoming ab-
solutely vile."

"Why, I thought it was all right."
"Well, it isn't. I swore off smoking
New Year's day, and the next day I
received a fine meershaum pipe from a
friend down east. He had sent it by
mail and it went astray and was gone
more than a week."

A Great Scheme

Just before Christmas Waggs was
dead broke and as blue as an indigo
bag. When a fellow is broke, out of
a job and a long ways from home it
is not at all strange that he should
feel blue. And Waggs was awfully
blue because he was broke, jobless
and an awfully long distance from
home.

He planned by the hour how to make
a stake, only to discard each plan al-
most as soon as it suggested itself to
his mind. Just when he was about to
give up in despair a brilliant thought
struck him. He proceeded to put it
into execution, and now Waggs is roll-
ing in riches and a thousand people
have been made happier.

The plan was simple enough, and
the wonder is that it had never been
worked before.

As soon as his plan was fully evolved
Waggs rushed to a printing office and
had several thousand neat circulars
printed. Taking a city directory he
sought the names of several hundred
friends and acquaintances, and each

one received a circular. It was headed
"A Christmas Exchange," and the
body of the circular explained the
scheme. Briefly it stated that people
often received duplicate Christmas
presents, and that while a man often
received a half dozen things he didn't
want he did not receive some one thing
that he really needed. The idea was
to have an exchange of the duplicates,
strict secrecy being assured. All that
needed to be done was for a man to
tell what he had that he didn't want
and name something he wanted that
he didn't have. Waggs was to make
the exchange, exacting a small com-
mission from each party to the ex-
change.

For a week after Christmas he
worked twenty-four hours a day, and
even then had to employ a number of
assistants. Denby, who wore a full
beard, traded off a handsome shaving
set sent by a distant friend, for a dress
suit shield sent to Billby, who wouldn't
wear a clawhammer coat under any
circumstances. Mrs. Flutterly swapped
a duplicate bridge whist outfit for a
jardineire received by Mrs. Willowby,
who had so many already that she
had to keep some in the cellar. Smith-
son, who abhorred tobacco, swapped a
smoking set for a set of Thackery re-
ceived by Thompson, who detested
anything in the reading line outside of
the daily newspapers and the maga-
zines.

Men who had received copious quan-
tities of pretty little embroidered do-
dads that they didn't know how to
use, traded them off for card sets,
smoking sets and fountain pens re-
ceived by dainty boys who wanted to
litter up their dressing rooms with
pink ribboned things. And every time
a trade was made Waggs drew down a
liberal commission for his trouble.

Waggs made enough out of the
scheme to keep him in comfort until
another Christmas. His scheme is not
patented, and as it confers a blessing
on puzzled humanity there is seem-
ingly no reason why it should not be
worked in every city and town in the
country.

Bostonesque

"Did Santa Claus bring you every-
thing you wanted, Johnnie?"

"I assure you, madame," replied John
Beaconsfield Hill, etat 8, of Back Bay,
Boston, "that I expressed no wish as
to what the mythical personage, Santa
Claus, should deposit in my hosiery, be-
cause of the fact that I am quite well
aware without any equivocation that
Santa Claus exists only in the imagi-
nations of the mentally deformed, and
the idea of suspending any article of
my wearing apparel for the purpose of
having it used as a receptacle for tok-
ens of affection is repugnant to one
who is deeply interested in the study
of disease germs and microbes, to say
nothing of —"

But the inquirer had fainted away.

Unanimous

"Everything is getting higher these
days," complained Snubbly.

"That's right," replied Jaggsly. "I
found the bottom of my coal house
awfully close to the top this morning."

Wish they Would

Among those whom we wish would
swear off on New Year's day are:

The fellow who thinks it funny to
tie huge placards to the trunks of a
newly married couple.

The fellow who says rude things un-

der the impression that he is blunt and
plain spoken.

The woman who spreads her skirts
out over enough street car space to
keep three tired men standing for
thirty-seven blocks.

The youth who thinks you wonder
how he can inhale so much cigarette
smoke all at once.

The clerk, who, after he gets your
money and hands out your package,
says "thank you" in a tired tone of
voice.

The merchants who litter up your
front porch with cheap dodgers in
these days of good newspapers.

The men who think that being a
"good fellow" consists in depriving
his family of comforts in order to
keep up a show of liberality down
town.

The man who thinks that checking a
horse's head up until its nose sticks
straight out in front adds to the ap-
pearance of the animal.

The young lady who has to be coaxed
for an hour to play and then keeps it
up indefinitely after she gets started.

The maker of the railroad time cards
who thinks that it is his duty to make
his tables as difficult of interpretation
as possible.

Brain Leaks

Trying and failing is better than
never trying.

Things that come easy are usually
the hardest to keep.

Money builds the house, but it is love
that makes the home.

It is better to resolve and fail than
never to resolve at all.

You get closer to God by drawing
nearer to your neighbor.

There is a vast difference between
"swearing off" and remaining off.

If good resolutions were bread and
butter there would be an end to hun-
ger.

The man with the least money can
usually see the best places to make an
investment.

There is one good thing about build-
ing air castles—it keeps the builder
looking up instead of down.

Somehow or other the sermonette
smothered in a concert never appealed
to us on a Sunday morning.

Some people spend so much time
telling how good they are that they
have no time to show how good they
are.

Some people who hasten to "lay their
burdens on the Lord" are awfully
slow in giving Him credit for their
joys.

It is hard to make the average
housewife believe that there is any
greater business calamity than a cake
falling.

A man begins to get some idea of
how his wife works when he under-
takes to dress the children in the
morning.

Was there ever play so enjoyable as
the hard work done while preparing
the presents for the little ones on
Christmas morning?

We hope to live long enough to see
the day when the amateur elocution-
ists will no longer recite "How Ruby
played." It's a worse chestnut than
"Curfew shall not ring tonight."

Backing Silver with Gold

Mr. Roosevelt recommends a pro-
vision of law making the silver dollar
redeemable in gold, yet Mr. Roose-
velt is seeking to avoid the mistakes

of the Cleveland administration.

If congress shall carry out the sug-
gestion, and it is highly propable that
it will, the basis for the operation of
a new endless chain will have been es-
tablished.

Assume that a Belmont syndicate,
such as operated during the Cleveland
administration, decided to drain the
treasury of gold and force bond issues
to keep up the treasury reserve of
gold. The syndicate would control the
gold. The syndicate would control the
silver dollars—a comparatively easy
accomplishment, since the average
man prefers the paper dollar to the
silver dollar—and present these mil-
lions of silver dollars for redemption
in gold. There are, in round num-
bers, about 60,000,000 silver dollars in
circulation. The minimum of the gold
reserve is 100 million dollars. By se-
curing possession of one-fifth of the
total of silver dollars, the syndicate
could deplete the reserve, force a bond
issue, and with a willing president put
the infamous endless chain in opera-
tion.

And when the endless chain was well
in operation and the public alarmed at
the depletion of the gold reserve, there
would naturally spring up a demand
to head off the operation of the chain
by stopping the coinage of the silver
dollar. The plan of the bond syndi-
cate manipulators and the money
barons to get complete control of the
money is well known and any person
with fair understanding of the issue
of money monopoly is prepared to an-
ticipate every move on the checker-
board of financial legislation.

The president furthermore suggests
the retirement of the greenbacks and
an indefinite means of imparting elas-
ticity to our currency. What he has
in mind is the Shaw scheme of an as-
set currency to make municipal, state
and possibly railroad—and who knows
but that some day industrial, bonds as
a basis of issue.

The president does not understand
the money question or he would not
become a party to the scheme of the
rich clique which loves the dollar more
than country. Mr. Roosevelt never has
supplied any evidence of his capac-
ity to direct or suggest wise financial
legislation.—Dubuque Telegraph.

Football Brains

A Chicago dispatch to the Kansas
City Journal says: "Football play-
ers, according to Jere Delaney, trainer
of the Northwestern eleven, are sub-
ject to an ailment similar to soften-
ing of the brain, which leads not only
to the making of peculiar statements,
but causes strange actions which some-
times are amusing.

The exact cause of the trouble,
Trainer Delaney said, he is unable
to fathom. He declared, however,
that it results more from the long con-
tinued physical and nervous strain to
which the men are subjected during the
three months of rigid training which
they are forced to undergo than from
the blows, kicks and bumps they re-
ceive on their skulls during games.

"It is known," said Delaney, "that
every player of the game fights his
games over again in his dreams, but
only by the men who are in close
touch with the players it is recog-
nized that they are given to constant
dreaming, during which they make
strange motions, as if struggling with
an imaginary opponent."

According to Delaney, the athletes
are given to almost childish methods
of play when at rest. An instance re-
lated by the trainer was of a man who
during more than hour pored over a
map of the United States, drawing
lines with his index finger and imag-
ining he was traveling over the coun-
try which his finger crossed.