



## Whether Common or Not

By WILL M. MANPHE.

### Vain Surmising

Mamma's knitting little stockin's just as cute as they can be,  
An' I wonder who will get them, 'cause they're much too small for me.  
Just th' littlest, tweekiest stockin's, almost like my dollies wear,  
But they ain't made for my dollies, 'cause they both have got a pair.  
An' some dresses—long an' ruffled, an' th' sweetest, softest lace—  
An' a lot of other fixin's mamma sews with smilin' face.  
My, I just can't help but wonder when such pretty things I see  
Who will get them when they're finished, 'cause they're all too small for me.

Yesterday, when I was playin' with my dollies on th' floor  
Mamma stood an' watched a minute as she leaned against the door;  
Then she smiled at me and asked me if I wouldn't rather dress  
A cute little baby brother, an' of course I answered, yes.  
"Will you get me one?" I asked her; but she smiled an' walked away  
To sew more on little dresses purt' nigh all the livelong day.  
An' I couldn't help but wonder for whose child they all could be,  
For I know I couldn't wear 'em 'cause they're all too small for me.

Just last night I asked my papa if a brother cost too much,  
An' he laughed an' said to mamma, "Don't her questions beat the Dutch?"  
Then my mamma smiled and kissed me an' said, "Well, perhaps some day we will get one from the doctor as he drives along this way."  
So all day here by the window I have watched for Doctor Strong,  
An' I wish that he would hurry, 'cause I hate to wait so long.  
If he hasn't got a baby he must get one, for, you see,  
All the dresses mamma's making are a lot too small for me.

### Just Thoughts

Every now and then the busiest of us see something that makes us lay aside our tasks and sends our minds gallivanting off into the past in search of things almost forgotten. Just the other night the elder son came through the room with his dress suit on:

"What's going to happen tonight?" queried the little woman who has been watching him for a long series of years.

"Going to the theatre with a little party," he replied.

Of course a pair of proud and fond eyes watched him as he carefully adjusted the hat so as not to disarrange a hair, and shrugged his shoulders so the heavy overcoat would not spoil the set of the clawhammer beneath, but, just the same, after he hurried out one mind refused longer to remain at its task and insisted on taking an excursion into the realms of yesteryear.

There were no operas then. About the best in the entertainment line was when the Jennie Holman troupe rented the vacant store room and improvised a stage by using a lot of boards borrowed from the local lumber yard and fitting it up with a few curtains that could, by stretching the imagination, be made to do service for woodland, garden, parlor and prison scenes. Or, when the Jennie Holman troupe didn't show, the next best thing was the W. C. T. U. entertainment. And then there was the church oyster

These made up the public entertainments in those days, but of course there were other things to amuse. Well, we guess yes. Taffy pulls, and surprise parties and—O, my—skating parties!

Honest, now, wouldn't you rather be able to reach down an old pair of strap skates and hike off to get "her" and go skating over on the Tarkio than to encase yourself in a linen armor and a dress suit and sit in a stuffy chair three or four hours listening to some high priced artist doing gymnastic stunts with her voice?

Of course you would!

You may not be ready to make public admission of the fact but deep down in your heart you know you would.

Say, the day you got your first pair of skates—"rockers" they were—you wouldn't have traded places with any old king, would you? My, but they beat any skates in the whole world. There were enough straps on them to make a harness, and a screw in the heel to keep 'em from slipping. Didn't it beat anything how that hole in your heel was always plugged with a gravelstone when you sat down on the cold ground to put on those skates? And if it happened to be a particularly aggravating bit of gravel your fingers were always so numb you couldn't hold your knife.

And say! Remember when those new-fangled skates came out—the kind that had only one strap and that one over the toe, with a plate for your bootheel and a little knob on the skate that locked it to your foot? You were sure, in those days, that the man who invented the heelplate was the greatest genius the sun ever shone upon. And you were mighty near right, too. And a little afterwards there came the all-clamp skates, but that was just about the time you had to quit skating and spend most of your time hustling for the little old per week.

My, my; but those were great days. Beat the opera and the rout and the pink tea and the reception all out of sight. Along about 7:30 in the evening, when the moon seemed frozen stiff in the clear sky, the crowd came past the house on its way to the skating place, and they yelled for you to come on. Then you grabbed those old "rockers" and hurried out, and away you went, helter-skelter, to the creek, or the river or the pond, as the case might be. Within ten minutes after you got there you had a big bonfire of driftwood—if it was to be found, and surreptitiously procured rails if nothing else fell to hand—and then you had to kneel down in the snow to fasten "her" skates on.

By the way—do you remember one queer thing about those old skating days? The girls had to be taught over again every winter. Funny, wasn't it? The last skating party of the winter before they could skate just as nice! But the very next winter you had to begin and teach 'em all over again. But you rather liked to teach 'em, eh?

In and out, here and there, away you went, your steel runners gripping the ice, your hands gripping her hands, and the frost gripping both of your noses, and the frosty air was filled with your happy laughter. Then the home going. Skates were removed, wraps adjusted, and the long walk through the moonlit night!

Ah, talk about your dress suits and evening dress and operas and all that sort of thing. Huh, the young folks

of today don't know what real, genuine, healthy fun is, do they?

Don't you wish your material body could follow your mind back into that happy past, so you could once more strap on those old "rockers" and skate until the heelstraps wore great blisters on that anklebone? Why, you'd pass up a whole winter of operas for just one night on the old skates back in those days of long ago.

### Good Night—Sleep Tight

The old clock strikes the hour of eight,  
And worn with childish play  
My little ones kneel gently down  
At mamma's knee to pray.  
Then off to bed each sleepyhead  
To dream till morning light;  
But ere the fairies' wings are spread  
They whisper low:  
"Good night—  
Sleep tight!"

All day the house rings with their play,  
And nought they know of care.  
The childish griefs that come their way  
Are trifles light as air.  
A sob, a kiss, and all is well,  
And grief has taken flight;  
The faries weave their magic spell  
And then we hear:  
"Good night—  
Sleep tight!"

"Good night—sleep tight!" God guard your rest.  
Then wake to greet the day.  
"Good night—sleep tight!" By angels blest  
As night hours drift away.  
When at the close of day they kneel  
In little robes of white,  
The sweetest thrills of love I feel  
To hear them say:  
"Good night—  
Sleep tight!"

### Grave Error

The sympathetic visitor paused before Cell No. 3377 and looked upon the occupant.

"May I inquire what brought you here?" queried the visitor.

"I engaged in the banking business," said No. 3377, "and made the grave mistake of departing from the regular methods.

"O, you violated the law by loaning yourself too much money to carry on your outside business?"

"Not much, sir. If I'd done that I would have been a financier. I entered the bank with a jimmy and the night-watchman gave the alarm."

### Senator Graball

"Do you think, senator, that the giving of railroad passes has an undue influence on our lawmakers?"

"Well, I am inclined to think that the giving of passes exerts no particular influence," said the senator, speaking cautiously, "but the failure to do so often has a very important effect on the roads."

### Cautious

"Marry me," cried the millionaire, "and I will treat you like a queen!"

"That is not enough," replied the cautious damsel. "I must be assured that you will treat me like a chorus girl."

### Woe

The fate of empires and of kings  
No longer doth concern us.  
The coal spell such an anguish brings  
We can not think of such small things—  
We've got to feed the furnace.

### Brain Leaks

Length of years is not life.  
A right start is half the task.  
Worries wear out more men than work.

It is not necessary to be grouchy in order to be grave.

When a man asks you for advice you are always safe in inquiring what kind he wants, and then giving it to him.

The man who searches his own

heart is not apt to find flaws in the hearts of others.

People who borrow trouble are always in debt.

People who listen have no right to complain of gossips.

There is a vast difference between liberality and prodigality.

A well worn suit paid for is better than a fine suit worried about.

Many prayers that are started upward find lodgement in the basement.

A balance in the bank today is better than a good time one day last year.

It is a good thing for a lot of husbands that their wives do not go on strike for wages.

A great many men have achieved reputations for wisdom by making two or three good guesses.

The emptier a man's head the louder he can boast of how much liquor his stomach will hold.

One of the sweetest things in life is having so lived it you can look back on most of it with pleasure.

Only the man who has no boys of his own is capable of giving expert advice on how to raise sons.

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