

Whether Common or Not.

A Memory.

Sitting in the gathering shadows as the daylight slowly dies,
And the stars begin to glisten through the windows of the skies;
While the memories come trooping from the dim and distant past
And like witches' incantations o'er my mind their spell is cast—
In the gray light of the gloaming
Through youth's days in fancy roaming,
And the scenes, like phantom pictures, through my mind go dashing fast.
In the old home 'neath the maples with their waving boughs o'erhead,
When the leaves at King Frost's summons turned from green to gold and red,
There we gathered ev'ry evening 'neath the rooftree quaint and low
And knelt down in family prayer in the firelight's ruddy glow.
Mother sitting in the corner in her old accustomed place,
Gently rocking, always knitting, with a smile upon her face;
Children gathered in a circle poring over schoolday themes,
While the backlog, stirred to anger, shot abroad its golden beams—
As the winter winds were sighing
For the hours swiftly flying
Like the shadows ever dancing on before the chasing gleams.
Singing, talking, playing, laughing—swiftly time before us sped
Till the old clock on the mantle gave the warning-note for bed.
Then, when father read the scriptures as the flames danced to and fro
We knelt down in family prayer in firelight's ruddy glow.
Trooping up the winding stairway, down the dark and chilly hall—
Soon the backlog burned to ashes and the darkness covered all.
And we dreamed about the future—dreams of winning gold and fame;
Dreamed of winning wreaths of laurel in the world's Olympic game—
Youthful fancies deeming pleasure
All that filled life's brimming measure—
Till we heard at early dawning father calling each by name.

Ah, the years are long and lonely, and the group that sat beside
That old fireplace has been scattered since the sweet-faced mother died.
Would that we, again united, hand in hand could once more go
Back and kneel in family prayer in the firelight's ruddy glow.

It Was Coming.

The Mean Man was feeling unusually mean on this particular morning. It was nearing the cheerful Christmas time and the sight of happy children, the glitter of the handsome Christmas goods and the general air of good will, all made him feel out of sorts the worst way. As he wended his way to his office he felt that he must make somebody miserable or he could not be happy.

Turning a corner suddenly he col-

lided with a little girl. She was crying, and the tears ran down her little cheeks while her frame shook with her sobs.

"What's the matter with you?" growled the Mean Man.

"Please, sir; I was just crying because mamma told me Santa Claus would not visit us this year, and the pretty things in the windows look so nice, and I want some of them so bad, an—"

"O, quit your snivelling," growled

the Mean Man. "Of course Santa Claus won't visit you. There is no Santa Claus."

As he spoke the Mean Man felt a joy arising in his heart, for here was a glorious opportunity to make some one miserable.

"That Santa Claus story is all a lie. It's time you knew it. I think it a shame that people will lie to children about that sort of thing. Now quit your snivelling. You are too big to believe that Santa Claus fab!e any longer. I tell you there ain't no Santa Claus and I'm—"

"What's that you're telling that little girl?" queried a young man who was attracted by the sight of a child in distress.

"He was just telling me that there ain't no Santa Claus, and I did so want Santa—"

"You been telling this little girl that?" demanded the young man.

"Of course I did. I think it a disgrace to let children believe that foolish—"

Biff! Bang!

It was the Mean Man getting what was coming to him. And he got plenty.

Thirty minutes later a little girl emerged from a toy shop with her arms full of bundles and a young man came out just behind her, whistling softly and rubbing a bruised knuckle.

Honesty.

"A penny for your thoughts, Mr. Lightly," said Miss Pert.

"Aw, my deah Miss Pert, they ah' not wo'th a penny, dontcher know."

"How refreshingly honest you ar, Mr. Lightly."

Perhaps.

Mf. Gruffly (tasting the Thanksgiving turkey)—"I can't eat anything. The turkey don't taste right and the cranberry sauce is not fit to eat. I wish I had a Thanksgiving dinner such as mother used to get up. She was all right, mother was. She could suit me."

Mrs. Gruffly—"Perhaps you did not feel then as you do now."

Mr. Gruffly—"Why not?"

Mrs. Gruffly—"Well, when you used to enjoy your mother's cooking you'r

stomach was not burned to a blister with bad whisky and you were not as nervous as a cat because your flesh was not soaked full of nicotine, and you were not up two-thirds of the night before chasing around a billiard table at the club and having just one more with the boys. Perhaps that had something to do with it."

Mrs. Gruffly might have added more, but Mr. Gruffly pushed back from the table and grabbed his hat. His exit was marked by an unusually loud slam of the hall door.

Brain Leaks.

Did any one ever know a "village cut up" that fulfilled the expectation of his friends by becoming a great comedian?

The village gossips always feel that they have been imposed upon when the village belle marries a young man in her own town.

Why is it that a piece of dress goods displayed in the show window always looks better than the same kind of goods on the counter?

If men would spend as much time trying to do good as they do trying to find excuses for being bad, this would be a much better world.

It is a pity that no one knows the name of the man who first called them "church socials." He deserves a place on the roll of humorists.

Nothing is more painful than the sight of an ancient maiden trying to act girlish, unless it is the sight of a young man trying to act smart.

Living in a city has its drawbacks. You never see the old man who used to come around every few days to ask if he could get a job sawing your wood.

We sometimes feel that preachers could do better if their congregations would applaud occasionally. That sort of thing helps an actor; why not a preacher?

The country boy makes lots of sport for his city cousin when in town, but it isn't a marker to the sport the city cousin makes for his rural cousin when on his first visit to the country.

A league pitcher has just been signed to work four months for a salary of \$5,500. A college professor is in luck if he can get \$1,800 for working twelve months, every day in the month and eighteen hours a day. Yet some people wonder why young men do not yearn for the higher education.

—Will M. Maupin.

"The Commoner, Condensed."

The Commoner
Condensed.

Arrangements have been made with the Abbey Press, of New York, for the publication of a book of from three hundred to three hundred and fifty pages, which will be, as its title indicates, a condensed copy of The Commoner for the first year of its existence. The volume will reproduce the editorials which discuss questions of a permanent nature, together with selected paragraphs. A few chapters will be devoted to Mr. Maupin's page, to the Home Department and to the Weekly Press Forum. The last chapter will contain the choicest poems which have appeared in the paper during the year.

The editor has a two-fold object in

issuing this abridgement of the year's work. He desires, first, to furnish in convenient form for preservation, the more important editorials so that subscribers who have not kept complete files may have a permanent record of the paper from the beginning, and, second, he also desires to give to new subscribers an opportunity to secure the principal part of the preceding numbers of the paper. The publisher's retail price of the volume will be \$1.25 for cloth, 50 cents for paper binding, but the following offer is made to subscribers:

The Commoner for one year and "The Commoner, condensed," cloth binding, \$1.50.

The Commoner for one year and "The Commoner, condensed," paper cover, \$1.25.

The book is sent postage prepaid. This offer is open to old subscribers who renew for one year or to new subscribers. Those who have already renewed can secure the book by sending 50 cents for the cloth binding or 25 cents for the paper cover.

The first year of The Commoner ends about the middle of January, and "The Commoner, condensed," will be issued as soon after that date as the work can be done. Orders should be sent direct to The Commoner; they will be filled as soon as the book is issued from the press.

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