



Whether Common or Not

By WILL M. MAUPIN.

A Picture.

"Twas in a little packet that long years
had been forgot,
A bunch of old-time letters laid
away
Tied with a bit of ribbon in a neat
true lovers' knot—
I found it while my children were
at play.
A relic old and faded, but more prec-
ious, far, than gold,
Or Indian monarch's boasted wealth
of pearl,
And my tears fell fast upon it—'twas a
portrait worn and old—
A picture of my mother when a
girl.

"Twas such a dainty maiden who
looked out with smiling face,
A maiden in a queer, old-fashioned
gown.
Her hands so primly folded with a
 quaint and stately grace,
Her laughing eyes demurely glanc-
ing down.
'Twas such a stately maiden of an age
long dead and gone,
Whose face peeped out from frame
of hair acurl;
And as I sat there dreaming fast my
teardrops fell upon
The picture of my mother when a
girl.

"Twas but the briefest moment e'er
I was a boy again,
And youthful days came trooping
back to me.
I saw the old home standing just as
in the old days when
I lisped my boyish prayers at
mother's knee.
I felt her kisses clinging unto mine in
sweet caress—
Ah, naught the happy past can e'er
unfurl
Like this dim, faded likeness of a
maid in somber dress—
The picture of my mother when a
girl.

In place of chiefest honor hangs this
portrait old and worn,
A sacred shrine where love its hom-
age pays.
And not a painter living could my
humble home adorn
With a picture that could longer
hold my gaze.
The home is incense-laden and the
mornings brighter dawn
Since looking out from frame of hair
acurl
A face so sweet and saintly meets me
when I gaze upon
The picture of my mother when a
girl.

He Knew.

"My new rural drama is bound to be
a success," declared the manager. "I
want to give you the first dates."
"Thank you. What—"
"You ought to see the trained cows
I've got. I've learned 'em to nibble
the imitation grass on the back scene,
and it's just as natural as life."
"But who—"
"You ought to hear the pigs in the
second act grunt. It'll kill the au-
dience dead. Why, them pigs will be
fed real corn and they'll squeal when
the hired hand comes in until you'd
feel like you was back on the old farm
again."

"That's very good, but what is the
name of—"
"I've patented a mowing machine
scene, too. Beats the boss race in the
'County Fair' all hollow. Big roll of
grass-covered canvas and a panoramic

back set. Machine cuts and rakes the
grass while the panorama works.
Looks just like a real machine cutting
real grass. It's bound to make a hit."
"Yes, I know, but who have you en-
gaged to—"
"And the village choir. 'Course no
rural drama is any good without a vil-
lage choir. Well, I've got it. Choir
sings and then has a fuss right on the
stage. Naturest thing you ever saw.
And the chickens—say them chickens
I trained are 'it.' Hens come out of
the barn cacklin' like all possessed.
Couldn't be realer if they was right
at home."

"That's good; but have you engaged
good people to—"
"And the mortgage scene—say,
that's a wonder. We file a real mort-
gage right in view of the audience.
Bound to make a hit."
"But—"

"And we've got horses that take the
cake. Say, them horses play leadin'
roles, I want to tell you."
"Look here, I—"

"The plowin' scene is the best thing
ever. We use real dirt on the stage
and the hired hand plows a furrow
that would take first prize in a plow-
in' match. We'll carry our own dirt
an' make a feature of it."
"Hold on there, I want to know—"
"And we—"

But the owner of the opera house
insisted on getting in a word.

"I know your horses and cows and
pigs and chickens and farm machin-
ery will be all right. But what I
want to know is, have you engaged
any good people—any actors and
actresses with reputations—to play this
new piece of yours."

"Good people!" ejaculated the man-
ager of the new play. "Good people!
Ain't I been tellin' you all the time
that this is a rural drama? What'n
the name of common business sense
do we want to hire good people in a
rural drama for?"

Accustomed to It.

The rain was falling in torrents,
sidewalks were floating and the streets
were rushing rivers. But amidst it all
a man stood upon the corner and made
no effort to seek shelter.

"Hi, there!" shouted the grocer.
"Better get in out of the storm."
"What storm?" queried the drenched
individual.

"The rain storm. First thing you
know the whole corner will wash
away and drown you," shrieked the
grocer.

"What, afraid of this little drizzle?"
queried the soaked individual.

"Call this a drizzle!" shrieked the
grocer. "This is a regular flood."

"Merely a drizzle, I tell you."
"Who'n thunder are you, anyhow?"
queried the grocer.

"Who am I? My name is Beatem
and I've been bearing the market on
Wall street for the last three months.
Talk about floods—why this rain is
only a little drizzle compared with the
outpouring of water we've had on Wall
street during—"

Just then the pavement floated out
and the spectator went sailing down
the street, a beatific smile playing
upon his features.

Old Adam.

The pompous man, feeling it neces-
sary to say something to the report-
ers who crowded around him, thrust
his thumbs into his armpits and re-
marked:

"I have met with great success, gen-

tleman, but I do not take the credit
to myself. All that I am I owe to my
wife."

When the remark was featured in
the newspapers an obscure man who
knew all about it quietly observed:

"He is not the first man to throw
the blame on his wife. I recall an-
other incident wherein a fellow named
Adam figured prominently."

Frightened.

"I am unable to tell just what is
the matter, doctor; but I feel that
something awful is threatening me."

"Where is your trouble located?"
"That's just what I want to know,
doctor. I fear it is some affection of
the brain."

"Head ache?"
"No."
"Bright spots floating before your
eyes when you close them?"

"No."
"Unable to sleep?"
"Sleep like a top, doctor."
"Well, tell me what it is you fear."

"It's just this, doctor. Here lately
I've actually been interested in some
of the 'midsummer fiction' printed by
the leading magazines, and I'm afraid
it's a sign that my brain is out of
order."

His First Duty.

The newly elected president of the
great corporation hurried home,
dashed into his library and seized a
pen.

"Don't let anybody disturb me!" he
said to his wife.

For several hours nothing broke the
silence save the scratching of the
presidential pen across the paper.
Sheet after sheet was filled with writ-
ing and laid aside. The perspiration
rolled from the presidential brow and
ink was spattered all over his shirt
front. Finally he laid aside the pen,
leaned back and heaved a great sigh
of relief.

"There! Finished at last," he ex-
claimed.

"What on earth have you been do-
ing, dear?" asked his wife.

"I have been performing my first
work since being elected president of
the Consolidated and Amalgamated
United States Pig Iron Company," said
he.

"What is it?"
"I have been preparing for the press
the rules I have followed and by which
I have worked my way from obscurity
to my present high position. I have
noticed that this is about the first
thing the newspapers have about the
men who are selected to manage big
institutions."

Brain Leaks.

Ill-luck is usually founded on laziness.

The wise father tries to know his
own son.

The man without a dollar is always
sure he would do great good with a
million.

The man who cannot gnaw green
corn off of the cob is more to be pitied
than blamed.

When a man takes no interest in
politics it is a pretty good sign that
he has no principle in it.

Sometimes it requires a wonderful
amount of bravery to admit that you
are afraid to do certain things.

We have great respect for the man
who cheerfully admits that he drives
one of the slowest horses in town.

You cannot judge the piety of the
parents by the size of the family Bible
on the center-table in the front room.

Every time we see a man beating a
horse we are quite sure that Ingersoll
was mistaken. There's only one place

where such a man could be adequate-
ly punished.

A host of men have gone to the bad
trying to be good fellows.

The average woman can extract a
world of satisfaction out of an op-
portunity of saying "I told you so."

Ever since David smote Goliath peo-
ple have had a habit of standing off at
a safe distance and throwing rocks at
sin.

Somehow or other we rather pity
the baby that is painfully neat and
clean. It is a sign that it is not hav-
ing a good time.

When a wife gets a letter from her
husband she is not satisfied unless it
conveys the information that he is
awfully lonesome.

TOBACCO TRUST CONSIDERATIONS

The negotiations now going on as
to whether the tobacco trust is to give
the tobacco growers of Kentucky a
chance to live or whether it will per-
sist in the attempt to depress prices
and break down the auction markets
are suggestive of many considerations.
For one thing the trust managers
ought to consider how likely it is to
suffer provided they go too far, both
in the matter of liquidation and in the
unwillingness of planters to continue
growing their great staple. The trust
problem, in fact, is brought home to
the whole state and particularly to
Louisville, whose leaf tobacco trade in
its various ramifications forms her
largest commercial interest.

The ease with which the cotton
market was made to respond to spec-
ulative manipulation this year is a
hint that the tobacco trust might take
to heart. Tobacco of the Burley vari-
ety is a natural monopoly of Ken-
tucky, just as cotton is a monopoly of
the south, for while tobacco is grown
elsewhere it lacks the flavor and the
other qualities that make the Ken-
tucky product an article of universal
consumption. Tobacco grown in this
state is shipped to every corner of the
world, civilized or uncivilized. The
raked negro basking in the woods of
Africa is willing to exchange gold
dust, ivory or slaves for the "black
fat" that comes from western and
southern Kentucky, while the oldest
civilization of Europe ranks tobacco
in some form among the essential re-
quirements of life.

An article whose production is lim-
ited by natural causes and whose use
is so constantly growing that the
working up of the raw material con-
stitutes one of the most profitable of
all manufacturing enterprises, ought
to bring a good price, as cotton is do-
ing now, and must continue doing
whether the corner is a failure or not.
Instead of that, tobacco has been sell-
ing lower and lower since the Conti-
nental and American have obtained
such a grip upon the markets. The
demand has been increased, but by the
destruction of competition values
have sought a lower level every year
since the trade in it has been prac-
tically monopolized.

Present conditions in the leaf trade
would have resulted in a roaring mar-
ket for the great staple were not the
planters compelled to sell their crops
on so restricted a market. The origi-
nal American Tobacco company,
which began with a comparatively
small capitalization on January 21,
1890, has now become expanded into
a set of monster corporations which
are seeking the monopoly of every
branch of the trade, and which has
power to depress the leaf market at
will. These corporations are worth
enumerating.

First, is the American Tobacco com-