



# Whether Common or Not

By Will M. Maupin.

### The Man Ahead.

We have heard in song and story that gave honor, fame and glory,  
In the choicest flow of language to the doughty "man behind;"  
But it strikes me while here sitting that 'twould be meet and befitting  
Now to sing awhile the praises of a man of different kind.  
Though the "man behind" is needed, still 'twill have to be conceded  
That there is one quite his equal, though of him you've seldom read,  
So a toast I will address him, "Here's to him, and may God bless him,  
To the willing, honest toiler, to the steady 'man ahead.'"

Out at break of day he hustles and with all life's problem's tussels,  
Full of hope and cheer while toiling with his implements of trade;  
Watching not the clock's hand creeping, but his mind on his work keeping,  
And delighting in the product that his brain and hands have made,  
Home at eve when work is ended and the day in night has blended,  
With his wife and children gathers 'round the evening table spread—  
Sober, honest and hard working, never any duty shirking,  
He's the man we all should honor; he's the steady "man ahead."

When his neighbor's woes are doubled and the way of life seems troubled  
Then he takes upon his shoulders part of his poor neighbor's load;  
And with cheery gift of labor helps that sorely stricken neighbor  
O'er the places rough and weary in life's ever-winding road.  
Walking forth with faith undying, he is ever up and trying  
With his might to make things easy for his weaker brother's tread,  
And with help that's ever ready he puts out his hand to steady  
Those who need this greatest hero, this plain, helpful "man ahead."

When the final trump is sounded thro' the universe unbounded,  
Then the "men behind the gun," or men behind the pen or plow,  
All their garlands proudly wearing and with great self-conscious bearing,  
Will come forth with every prospect of more glory, I'll allow.  
But they'll all be fiddling second when the final score is reckoned  
And the judgment of the Father is made on the quick and dead;  
For the man of earnest labor who cared for his needy neighbor  
Will, when hosts of saved are marching, be indeed the "man ahead."

### So Different Now.

"Papa," exclaimed the boy who had just entered the high school, "I can't get this problem."  
"Stuff and nonsense," exclaimed the father, recalling the fact that when he was fifteen years old he could cipher through the first 175 pages of Rays Third Part Arithmetic without a wobble. "The idea of a boy of your age getting stumped in figures."  
"But this is so difficult, papa," said the boy.  
Now papa rather prided himself on having been an unusually bright pupil in his youthful days, so he proceeded to exhibit the skill in numbers he had acquired.  
"Well, son, if you've tried it and have failed, just give it to me and I'll solve it for you."  
As papa spoke he hauled out his pencil and grabbed a sheet of paper.  
"If the greatest common divisor of

a number is equal to the square root of another number multiplied by 3, and that product is the dimensions of a right angle triangle bisected by a line drawn transversely through the area, what is the area of the bisected fraction?" read the boy.

"What-what-what's that?" stammered papa.  
The boy repeated it.  
"The idea that you confess your inability to work such a common problem!" exclaimed papa. "I'm ashamed of you."  
"But, papa, I—"  
"Nonsense! Just work at it until you get it. Go right at it. When I was a boy I could answer such easy ones off-hand."

"But, papa—"  
"That's enough, sir. Go to work." And papa buried his face again in the evening paper. A couple of hours later the boy heard papa telling mamma that there was altogether too many fads in our public schools these days.

### The Kindergartener.

The littlest girl was heartbroken when the biggest little girl started to kindergarten and left her sad and lonely at home.  
"Never mind," said the biggest little girl, "I'll tell you all about it."  
In a day or two mamma discovered the littlest girl backed up in a corner and the biggest little girl teaching her a song she had learned at the kindergarten. And this is the way it sounded:  
Mike tunny-tissof thee  
Sweet and duff liberty  
Uf thee ice ing.  
Lan where mife ather stied  
Lan duff the pilgums spride  
From ef er moun and side  
Let free dumring.  
But the tune was perfect and mamma felt very proud of the biggest little girl.

### Satisfied.

The young heathen listened with gladness to the instructions of the young man who had crossed the trackless ocean to teach him the ways of civilization.  
Then he waded in.  
When he emerged from the scrimmage and wiped the blood and dust from his eyes he saw the ball hurtling through the air.  
Slowly removing his nose guard, padded trousers, leg fenders and heavy shoes the heathen remarked:  
"If this is civilization I believe I will cling to the more humane and less bloody traditions of my head-hunting fathers."  
Of course, being only a heathen, he was unable to comprehend the beauties of our national fall sport.

### What Flight Have Been.

In vain the serpent endeavored to beguile Eve into plucking and eating the apple.  
"See, it is a beautiful red and tempting to the sight," urged the wily serpent.  
"Yes, it looks all right," replied Eve.  
"Then eat," said the serpent.  
"Pardon me," said Eve, "but you can't ring in any Ben Davis apples on me."  
Alas, that this particular apple should have been discovered too late.

### Good Advertiser.

"Gentlemen," exclaimed the candidate, "I firmly believe that the office should seek the man, and—"  
"Well, your sign is big enough to

attract attention," shrieked a sordid member of the opposition who sat in the rear of the hall.

### The Accommodating Druggist.

Faggs (the poet)—"Can you give me two halves for this dollar?"  
Saggs (the druggist)—"No, but I have something just as good. I'll—"  
Faggs—"There, that illustrates the force of habit. Of course you have nothing just—"  
Saggs—"Course I have. I can give you four quarters."

### The Popular Hero.

Who is that the people cheer  
And meet with glad acclaim?  
Has he some famous battle won  
To magnify his name.  
You bet your life that's what he's done,  
The gallant, dauntless soul;  
Gained ninety yards in one end run  
And touched the winning goal.

### The Right Term.

Putson Calls—"This period of liquidation in Wall street is sadly deranging business."  
Upson Downes—"Liquidation?" My dear sir, it is liquifaction that is doing the damage."

### Papa Goose Rhyme.

Old King Coal was a jolly old soul,  
Right jolly without compare,  
But he shriveled up and looked for a hole  
When he met with a king named Baer.

### A Bad Scaire.

There was a young man in Eau Claire  
Who westward went gunning for baire,  
When a baire hove in sight  
The man took to flight,  
And his legs fairly flew through the aire.

### Sad Discovery.

"How did your book sell?"  
"Well, you see, I thought all my friends would buy it, but—"  
"But what?"  
"If they did I'm practically friendless."

### Ambiguous.

"Do you consider Wraggsley a man of any poetic ability?"  
"Well, Wraggsley wrote the words of a popular song."

### October.

The season's here when we may note  
The youth at close of day  
Soak tennis clothes to get the coat  
He put in hock last May.

### Brain Leaks.

It takes at least two to gossip—one to talk and one to listen.  
The trouble with some people is that they mistal: liberty for license.  
A great many men who belong to church do not belong to anything else.  
You may pray for what you want, but God will give only what you need.  
Speaking of world benefactors, what's the matter with the individual who invented pumpkin pie?  
The fat man deserves plenty of sympathy. No matter how badly he feels his wife will think he is shamming.  
Man usually is willing to pay more to be amused than instructed because he thinks that he already knows it all.  
The husband who is always seeking to be a "good fellow" usually succeeds only in giving his wife a bad time.

The man who is too good to to the polls is usually the man who kicks longest and loudest about the way things are being run.

## To Those Not Well Dr. Shoop's Restorative On 30 Days' Trial

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Mild cases, not chronic, are often cured with one or two bottles. At druggists.

### Mr. Roosevelt's Forgettery.

The littleness with which Miles was kicked out of the army is paralleled by the petty and partisan jealousy and hatred that suppresses even the name of McClellan in the great battle of the civil war with which he was part and parcel, and won immortal fame by his splendid generalship and heroism and which hastened Lincoln from the White house to congratulate and honor "Little Mac" on the bloody battlefield.—Pittsburg Post.

## A Book Worth Reading

The author of the department of The Commoner known as "Whether Common or Not" has arranged for publication in book form a number of verses and sketches that have appeared in that department during the last thirty months, together with some that have appeared in other publications.

### Whether Common or Not

Will be a book of not less than 250 pages, printed from clear type on an excellent quality of paper, and handsomely and strongly bound in cloth. The price has been put down to the low sum of one dollar—gold, silver, greenbacks, national bank notes or gold or silver certificates—no asset currency received. The book will be ready for delivery about December 1, 1903, and will make a handsome present for husband, wife, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, cousin, sweetheart or mother-in-law. If you want a copy, please write the author to that effect. You need not send the dollar until he notifies you that the book is ready. He uses this method in order that he may gather an idea of how many copies he can sell. If he orders a big lot and fails to sell them he will be financially stuck. A gratifying number of orders have already been received. Read what some of the subscribers say concerning "Whether Common or Not?"

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