



Whether Common or Not

By Will M. Maupin.

Think It Over

A little bit of laughter helps to brighten up the day,
A cheery word will make the load seem lighter.
A welcome smile of greeting helps to smooth the rugged way,
A friendly hand will make the world look brighter.
It's worry over trouble that has never happened yet
That makes a fellow old and stooped of shoulder;
And wrinkles surely follow all the worry and the fret,
To make a fellow feel and look much older.
A little snatch of singing helps to shorten up the road,
A whistled tune will keep the heart from grieving.
A "howdy-do" soul spoken helps to bear the weary load,
A cheery "hello" helps beyond believing.
To grrouch is but to double all the trials of the day,
To grumble is to lose life's choicest flavor.
It's love that keeps you happy all along the weary way,
And brings to you the old world's richest favor.
The time you spend in sighing never brings you in a cent;
It's waste of time to sit around and grumble.
It's up to you to hustle with a will, and good intent—
The world will quick forgive you if you stumble.
But this world hates a quitter, and it loves the man who tries;
It loves the man who meets misfortune smiling;
It loves the man who's looking with a smile within his eyes,
And with a cheery word the hours beguiling.

The "Sopsyvine" Tree

Mrs. Elizabeth F. Ridgeley of Mulberry, Kan., asks me a question I can not answer. A long time ago, in some reminiscent mood, I mentioned in this department the "sopsyvine" apple tree that grew in the old home orchard. Mrs. Ridgeley wants to know about it. She says:

"A year or more ago in speaking of your boyhood fishing experiences you referred to an early morning start and said you always slipped down past the old 'sopsyvine' apple tree to get two or three apples. Long ago we lived at Mt. Tabor, Ia., and an old apple grower named Morrison sold us 'sops of wine' apples that were the top-o'-the-world for quality, and the memory of those apples is a cherished pleasure in our home. You are the only person I have ever heard of who even knew of such an apple, and your boyish contraction may not really be the same. But do you know of that variety of apple now, and would it be possible for me to get a young tree, 'sops of wine,' or even a cutting for a graft?"

I wish I could tell Mrs. Ridgeley where to get a tree or a cutting, but I can not. I've been asked that same question before, but I couldn't answer then or now. Some have tried to convince me that the winesap is the same thing as the "sopsyvine" of my boyhood, but I know better—there never was a winesap grown that was in it for a minute with the juicy, richly flavored "sopsyvine" apples that grew in the old orchard. Others have tried to con-

vince me that the richness of that particular apple existed only in my imagination, exaggerated by the vanished years—but I know better than that, too.

If there is anybody who can tell Mrs. Ridgeley where to get a "sops of wine" apple tree they will be doing her a favor—and the Architect, also. I'd like to plant a couple in the yard back of the little cottage where the Little Woman could take care of it until the time came when I might yank its luscious fruit and eat my fill. She's a great hand at caring for trees and flowers and all that sort of thing, including cabbages and beets and turnips, and me.

A Vivid Memory

The Architect is going to make bold to quote liberally from a letter just received from a far-away friend who lives at Weldon, Ills., and that is very close to the old home town in the Sucker state. The writer relates an incident in the boyhood of the Architect that is as vivid in memory as if it happened only yesterday. After a few kindly words concerning the little verses and sketches in this department, Mrs. Andrew Allen writes:

"I believe I heard your father preach on baptism at a basket meeting held in the orchard at the Thomas Bondurant farm in the summer of 1870. I was twelve years old at that time and was just beginning to grasp sacred things, so was very much impressed with the manner in which Elder Maupin related the narrative of our Lord's baptism. Just about the moment that the parson was ready to prove that the baptism of the sinless Christ was and is the only example for sinful man, a great commotion arose just back of the improvised pulpit. A plank had been laid with either end upon an open barrel to form a table to hold a pitcher of water and a glass for the preacher's use, the day being very warm. Jackie Stultz and the preacher's boy had climbed upon the board to get a better view of the crowd, and just at the moment when the good elder was most earnestly declaring that 'down into the water,' and 'up out of the water,' was the way and the only way, Jackie thought of something he wanted to see elsewhere and jumped off his end of the board. Down went the preacher's boy into the barrel with a wild whoop of dismay. The good elder turned around, lifted a badly scared boy out of the barrel and went right on preaching as if nothing had happened. I have often wondered as I read your reminiscences if you were that boy, and if you remember the occurrence."

And I admit now, more than forty years later, that I was that boy, and I do remember the circumstances. And I can remember Uncle Tom Bondurant, upon whose farm that basket meeting was held; and his good sister, Miss Mollie, who was his housekeeper through all his long years of bachelorhood. Uncle Tom was always too busy making money and using it wisely to get married. Besides, his charming old mother was always his sweetheart. I will always insist that there never was but one woman who could make as good jelly tarts as Grandma Bondurant.

Yes, I can almost feel the bruises of that fall into the barrel. And I can still see father lifting me out and going right ahead with the sermon as if lifting boys out of barrels was

a regular part of the ceremonies.

But why does my welcome correspondent ask me to "forgive the rambling letters of an old woman. She is only four or five years older than I am, and I would have you know that I am a young man."

For Which We Are Thankful

We've a lot to be thankful for, and among other things is the fact that the Little Woman has never wasted any time following the directions laid down in the Female's Household Companion for "making father a beautiful library table for Christmas out of two soap boxes and the top taken from an empty sugar barrel," or "making a handsome parlor suite out of nail kegs, three gallons of prepared varnish and the velvet collars taken from old coats." More than that, she has never violently assaulted our weekly pay check by undertaking to follow any of the "weekly menus" set forth in the aforesaid publication.

We've got this Christmas business down to an exact science—all but getting the coin. We have thus far managed to persuade the kiddies that what they need is what they most want for Christmas, and that's what they get, including the usual supply of candy and nuts and a few little toys and books. Then I buy the little woman what I really can afford for myself, and she buys for me what she can really afford for herself. That is to say, I buy what I most want, and she buys what she most wants. What I buy I give to her, and what she buys she gives to me. Then after the noise of Christmas morning has died down a bit we wander off into another room and swap presents. It's a bully scheme, and I recommend it to you. It has but one drawback—but that is a drawback we all experience—we seldom have enough money to get all the things we really think we and the kiddies need. But, thank the good Lord, we always manage to have enough to eat and to wear, and a bit to divide with those who come in to see us. And keeping Christmas isn't a matter of giving and receiving. Far from it. Christmas is of the heart.

A Pleasing Christmas Gift

Do you want to do a Christmas favor to a lot of people—a favor that will not cost you an extra penny? If you do, just do your Christmas buying early. That will mean a lot to the men and women behind the counters of the stores and shops, and to the boys and men on the delivery wagons. The Christmas season doesn't mean much to them under present conditions save weariness and worry and aches and pains. You can cure a lot of that by being early with your shopping, thus preventing the senseless and barbarous "Christmas rush," and by being just as courteous and considerate to the clerk behind the counter as you insist upon their being to you.

Let us all join in giving the clerks behind the counters a Christmas gift in the shape of courtesy and consideration.

Bill Says

By keepin' your teeth shut tight together you always manage to keep from sayin' th' wrong thing. But that won't keep you from thinkin'.

"RESTRAINT" BEFORE A JURY

To the Editor of the New York World: The president in his Detroit address called on Mr. Bryan to "tell the public what particular contract or restraint of reasonable trade he would condemn which would not be condemned within the definition of the court" (referring to the supreme court decision in the Standard Oil and Tobacco trusts.) Perhaps in an

equity proceeding for an injunction in which the decision rests entirely with the court and there is no jury trial, it might be difficult to take "such particular contract or restraint of trade" out of the scope of those decisions, but in a criminal prosecution involving imprisonment of the manipulators charged with restraining trade, the definition given by the supreme court in those cases—that the restraint prohibited by statute, does not apply to a reasonable restraint of trade but only to an unreasonable restraint—would, I fear, in most cases prevent a conviction.

Such a criminal prosecution must be had before a jury, which would be called upon to determine whether the restraint complained of was unreasonable within those decisions. On such a trial for the purpose of showing that the restraint was beneficial to the public, and therefore not unreasonable, the defendant would perhaps be permitted to show that the product has been cheapened in price by the combination charged with unreasonably restraining the trade, and the court would have to charge the jury that they could not find defendant guilty if upon the evidence they found the restraint was not unreasonable.

How many convictions do you think can be secured if the question whether the restraint is reasonable or unreasonable is left to the jury? And the trouble will be that no case, either civil or criminal, would be a precedent for or would control other cases. Each case, whether the restraint was reasonable or unreasonable, would have to be threshed out wholly regardless of the decisions in previous cases.—A. J. D., New York, Sept. 22.

America's Most Famous Songs

How often have you wished for a book containing the old, old songs; for after all, the songs nearest to our hearts are the ones we knew as children—and the ones our children are singing today.

We have just examined a music folio entitled *America's Most Famous Songs*; these comprise the best known songs, including patriotic, home, love, southern and folk songs. Songs like the following:

Alice, Where Art Thou?
Battle Cry of Freedom,
Ben Bolt,
Dixie Land,
Gipsy's Warning,
Heart Bowed Down,
Kathleen Mavourneen,
Last Rose of Summer,
Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep,
When You and I Were Young, Maggie,

and 50 other universal songs of America with music and piano accompaniment, in large clear print and on good paper.

We have been so favorably impressed with this splendid collection of songs, and feel so certain that nine out of every ten readers of *The American Homestead* will be anxious to own the book that we have made arrangements with the publisher in New York to reserve a liberal supply for our readers.

Each subscriber to *The American Homestead* who sends us twenty-five cents to pay for a year's subscription to the paper, and ten cents to pay for wrapping and postage on the book of songs will receive a copy with our compliments.

This offer will hold good as long as the present edition of the books lasts, and requests for the book will be filled in the order that they reach this office. We caution everyone to be prompt in sending for the book. If your subscription is already paid in advance, the 25 cents remitted will still further advance your expiration date for one year.

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