



Whether Common or Not

By Will M. Maupin.

A Prayer

Lord, teach me how to walk thy ways
Through all my days, come joy or grief;
Help me to frame songs in Thy praise
And give new strength to my belief.
I ask not gifts of tongues that I may yet be heard above earth's strife;
But let me aid some passerby,
And smoother make his path of life.

Lord, teach me how to live each day
So that when I behold the sun Far down where slopes the western way,

I can look back on duty done.
I ask not power to sway the throng
With fiery zeal and stirring voice;
But let me with some humble song
Make just one fellow man rejoice.

Lord, teach me how to work Thy will

In humble lot where I am cast;
Give strength each duty to fulfill,
And hold me faithful to the last.
I ask not place of pomp or power,
But well content with humble part

If I can for one passing hour
Make light some brother's heavy heart.

Lord, for the tasks so near at hand
That need be done, let me enroll;
The lesser things that total grand
When all men seek Thy promised goal.

I ask not strength for wondrous task
That, having done, men would acclaim;

But give me grace, dear Lord, I ask,
To help some brother in Thy name. Amen!

From the "Grayhaired Boys"

A couple of weeks ago the Architect said he would like to know how some of the "grayhaired boys" spent their winter evenings. He remarked that he would like to hear from them, because their contributions would enable him to devote a little more time to bobbing for bullheads—and the bullhead season is almost here. That the "grayhaired boys" are readers of this department is evidenced by the responses that are coming in. The Architect already sees several future days when instead of grinding out copy he can take these communications from the pigeonhole, drop in a few commas, semi-colons and quotations marks, send them over to the printer—and then hie away to the resort of the elusive bullhead.

Here is how one of the "boys" has been putting in the long winter evenings. It is a mighty interesting letter, and some of these days the Architect hopes to "just drop in" upon the man who wrote it and go through some of those old scrapbooks:

Humboldt, Kan., Feb. 20.—To the Architect: So you want to know how your "comrades of the gray hairs and easy chairs" have been passing their winter evenings. Well, as my children have all gone I have spent my evenings at home with "that old sweetheart of mine," and being a lover of poetry, I have committed many to memory—among them this one:

"I am not old; I can not be old,
Though three score years and ten
Have wasted away like a tale that is told

The lives of other men.
I am not old though my friends and foes

Alike have gone to their graves,
And left me alone with my joys and woes
Like a wreck in the midst of waves."

I have also committed to memory Riley's poem, "An old sweetheart of mine," to which I have added a few lines of my own:

"She has been my wife for forty years,

And in coming down the line
I have thanked my God ten thousand times

For that old sweetheart of mine."

For years and years I have been cutting out pieces from newspapers and magazines and pasting them in scrap books, and as I have a goodly supply on hand I have spent a part of my time during the evenings in pasting. For year I have been writing down in another book "great truths in short sentences," or "wise sayings of other men," and this has served to pass away an hour. In my book I read such crisp sentences as these:

"Secret sins do not have secret consequences."

"God has yoked to Guilt her pale tormenter, Misery."

"You will find something each day you live to pity, and to perhaps forgive."

"Make yourself useful to the world and the world will give you bread."

"I have lived to thank God that all my prayers were not answered."

"From all life's grapes I press sweet wine."

"It is hard to tell who makes the most trouble, the friend with the best intentions or the enemy with the worst."

"Fast living makes fast links in the devil's chain."

I have written thousands of these truths down in my book, and often during the long winter evenings I read them over; and although she has "silver threads among the gold," if you were to look into our room most any evening you would see me at some time holding the hand of "that old sweetheart of mine."

"And again I feel the pressure of her slender little hand

As we used to talk together of the future we had planned."

Little Johnnie

Little Johnnie remained quiet an unusually long time while mamma was entertaining her visitor, but finally he had to speak.

"Where does your husband keep his airship, Mrs. Goldrocks?"

"Be still, Johnnie," warned his mother.

"But I want to know," insisted Johnnie.

"Why, Johnnie; Mr. Goldrocks hasn't any airship. What made you think he had?"

"O, 'cause I heard papa say yesterday that Mr. Goldrocks was a mighty high flier."

Information and Queries

Mrs. F. M. S. of Alliance, Neb., sends some interesting information about the old "sopsyvine" apple mentioned in this department at various times. She says it is the "Saxon," and advises me to get a few young ones and plant them, intimating that the Little Woman would cultivate them and bring them to maturity. I know how she would

—she'd do it by sitting on the back porch, sunbonneted, and bossing me while I officiated as nursemaid to those infant apple trees. I know, 'cause I have some young apple trees already growing in the back yard. Mrs. S. also submits a couple of questions, one of which I must decline to discuss, as politics is barred from this department. As to the difference in altitude between Alliance and Denver I am unable to give any information. However, I think investigation would disclose that there is very little difference between the two, Denver being the greater.

Easy Enough

Irene Jones of Greenwood, Neb., who is thirteen years old and in the eighth grade, kindly writes and tells me how to work that problem in arithmetic. She says it may serve to save some of Dad's sweat and be plainer to the kiddie. You bet it will, my little friend! But if you are going to come to Dad's rescue every time one of his kiddies springs something on him, you're in for a mighty strenuous time. I thank you heartily for your solution, and so does the Biggest Girl. Greenwood is only a little distance from Lincoln, Irene. Suppose you come over some day next summer and you and I and the Biggest Girl and her sisters will hike around to all the interesting places in Lincoln—the state prison, insane asylum, orthopedic hospital, university museum, state farm, railroad shops, and such like places. Dad and the kiddies know where they sell the whoppin'est big ice cream sodas a fellow ever stuck his face into.

Kiddies Six

That's the little book of verses the Architect of this department published last November. There are just 225 copies of this volume left to sell. When they are gone the edition will be exhausted. If you want one of them you'll have to hurry. The price is one dollar, postage prepaid. The book contains 200 pages and is bound in cloth. The Architect has included in this volume the verses that he has written for The Commoner during the past ten years—or some of them—picking out those he likes best and which seem to have been most popular. I want to sell the balance of this edition, turn the money over to the Little Woman, and forget the book business for a while. Come on with your orders—and the dollars.

Not Fitted

The great dramatic manager gasped.

"You can not smoke cigarettes?"

"I can not," replied the applicant for a role.

"And you never utter an oath?"

"I never swear, sir."

"And you don't even know how to hiss through your teeth?"

"I do not."

"And yet you ask me to cast you for the role of villain in my great drama! I believe you are a mere hireling of one of my jealous rivals, sent here to ruin my production if you can. Get out!"

Prepared

We are now prepared to see water running up hill in an open ditch—
And pigs flying through the air—
And fish walking on land—
For, behold, is not Teddy steadfastly refusing to be interviewed?

Brain Leaks

A lot of fellows who think they are iconoclasts are merely hammer-wielders.

The widow's mite was not enough to found a library, but the gift will be remembered long after some present day libraries have crumbled into dust.

WORDS OF GRANT, WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON ON THE THIRD TERM

Theodore Roosevelt's announcement of his candidacy for a third term recalls the contest in 1880 when General Grant, after four years absence from the White house, was an unsuccessful candidate for the nomination for a third term.

In reply to a resolution adopted by the Pennsylvania state convention in May, 1875, President Grant, who then serving his second term, wrote to General Harry White, who presided over the convention and in his letter he said:

"Now, for the third term, I do not want it, any more than I did the first."

General Washington, in his farewell address, which is looked upon as the foundation stone of the anti-third-term rule, said:

"I beg you at the same time to do me the justice to be assured that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation which binds a dutiful citizen to his country and that in withdrawing the tender of service, which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interests, no deficiency of respect for your past kindness, but am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both."

"Every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe that while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene patriotism does not forbid it."

Before the beginning of his second term in the White house President Jefferson on January 6, 1804, said:

"General Washington set the example of voluntary retirement after eight years. I shall follow it, and a few more precedents will oppose the obstacle of habit to anyone, after a while, who shall endeavor to extend his term."—St. Louis Republic.

THE INITIATIVE DECISION

Chief Justice White in the opinion holding the initiative and referendum valid (not only in Oregon, but in Missouri and in all the states and in the United States, wherever the people have provided it or may provide it) makes a distinction between popular or legislative acts "addressed to the framework and political character of the government" and acts which are "justiciable" in their nature.

According to the distinction, it is a political act to provide the initiative or to provide a state commission government instead of a governor and legislature, etc. It is justiciable to regulate commerce, to impose a tax, etc. Of cases within the first division the judiciary must keep hands off, even though the constitution has been violated. Only congress could determine that such an act was unconstitutional and could take such steps as it might deem necessary to correct the political wrong. And if congress did nothing, nothing would be done. But of the second sort of cases, those affecting the rights of individuals, or groups—like rights of property, liberty, etc.—the judiciary is the interpreter of the constitution.

The income tax law was justiciable. The Hepburn rate law and the state two-cent fare laws are justiciable.

The chief justice expresses surprise that the distinction was not obvious. But there are many who set the line of division between political and justiciable functions at a different