

Prayers for Suicides.
On All Souls' Day every good Catholic goes to some cemetery to lay flowers on the graves of loved ones. Owing to the number of suicides by drowning in the Danube there are many dead to whom this rite cannot be paid, and in honor of these a touching ceremony has been held in Budapest. Several thousand persons walked in solemn procession to the bank of the Danube by the Franz Josef bridge, and a wreath made of leather was sunk in the water, while the attendants uncovered their heads and said prayers. On one side of the wreath the words were embossed "For the salvation of those who died in the Danube," and on the other side "Do not take this out, but leave it in the water." A layman then gave an address, in which he extolled the virtues of many of those who had been driven to suicide, and then blessed the church for refusing to be denied to their bodies.

Dogfish.
A fisherman from Montauk Point was telling his friends of catching a huge dogfish that had a most abnormal skull. The angler operated on his ugly and worthless catch, and found in the skull all that was left of a once strong rubber band. Evidently when that big dogfish was little some angler who had rigged up for cod or other bottom fish had caught the dog around its gills and turned it loose, expecting the tortured thing to die. That recalled the story of how some fishermen not so gentle and humane as the ruling angler treat the poor but pestiferous dogfishes when they are caught. Generally there is an empty beer bottle handy, and this is tightly corked and tied to the tail of the fish, which is thrown back into the sea. It goes to the bottom, of course, but the steady pull of that air-filled bottle finally proves too much for its strength, and it comes wiggling up, tail first, only to go down again and repeat the performance until the wretched thing dies. Frequently, when there is no beer bottle to be had, a piece of wood will do just as well, or just as ill.

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The Little Marcy
By M. J. Phillips

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"The little Marcy!"
John Burden smiled as he said it to himself. Geraldine Marcy succumbing to the craze and buying Christmas presents! He had supposed her almost as immune to such frailties as himself; but there was no question that she had succumbed. Abrahams' great store had engulfed Burden, drawn him in and tossed him about among the bewildering aisles with thousands of others like a chip in a whirlpool. He had come in search of his particular brand of drawing pencil. Presently he found himself drifting past the handkerchief counter, where the current of eager women shoppers fairly boiled.
There he had seen the familiar little tailored figure, and his heart gave a throb of recognition. He had passed close to her—had almost brushed her shoulder as he struggled to free himself from the entanglement of women. She had just completed her purchase. It was a heart-shaped box of handkerchiefs, the cover decorated with sprigs of holly. The clerk was handing her a card for the address—a Christmas card which would inevitably be recognized as coming from the store of the canny Abrahams, since one corner had been cut off.
Burden worked his way to the exit and out into the crisp winter air, just fading into dusk. "The Little Marcy!" he repeated again. He could not reconcile the Christmas trivling with her daily air at dinner among the babbling, cheery actor-folk that made up, with the exception of Miss Marcy and himself, their boarding-house circle.
She would sit there like a weary princess, engrossed in her own thoughts, the piquant little face masked by indifference. Occasionally the childish bickerings or equally childish display of vanity of the actor-folk brought a flicker of mischievous mirth to her eyes. When Burden surprised that look he wondered whether he really understood the girl after all.
Burden loitered in the streets for a time before going home to dinner.

They were crowded with eager holiday crowds. There was snow underfoot, and an occasional duke was floating down. He had never seen so many smiling faces in the city before. He found himself smiling, too, and feeling vaguely excited, though he expected neither to buy nor to receive any presents.
Every one was in high spirits at dinner. The actor-folk had been through a matinee and were soon to hurry back for the evening performance, but they babbled constantly of the Christmas tree which was to be set up in the dining-room "after the show." Even Miss Marcy had a light in her indifferent eyes, and a delicate color in her cheeks. Burden realized with a start that when she looked like that she was pretty.
He did not feel in the mood to go out, so he retired to his room with a book. But in half an hour the landlady came knocking. She demanded his help to set up the tree, decorate it, and arrange the various presents. "We'll surprise them poor things," she said, with more kindness than grammar; "they'll be all tired out when they come in, and it's quite a task to dress a tree."
So they set up the tree, decorated it with candles and giegaws and started to arrange the packages. The sight of a familiar one attracted his attention. It was a light, heart-shaped box, decorated with sprigs of holly. The card on it—a card with one corner lopped off—bore these words: "To Miss Geraldine Marcy, with best wishes for a merry Christmas."
Burden excused himself abruptly. Donning hat and coat he went out into the street. So she had to buy her own Christmas presents. No friends to send her trinkets; no joyous looking forward to the holiday season! In the glow of pity for her loneliness he quite forgot that there was similarly situated, and that there would be no present on the tree for him.
He came to a resolution swiftly. It was to buy "the little Marcy" every thing which a young man can with



Decorated it with candles and giegaws

propriety buy for a young woman who is almost a total stranger and who passed him on the stairs or encountered him at dinner with the briefest and most formal of salutations.
First, there were flowers. He purchased a prodigious box of them. Next candy, plenty of candy, for did not all girls like to nibble at chocolates? Then music; Miss Marcy occasionally played on the boarding house piano. He invested in half a dozen popular songs, of varying degrees of inanity and tunefulness. And, last of all, he bought a book.
Ah, that book! It was a volume of love and dreams and longings in verse. He remembered it from his childhood days. He had wanted to possess a copy, but never dared to buy it, because it seemed incongruous for a man to care for poetry like that. Yesterday it would have seemed incongruous for Miss Marcy even. But in the light of that box of handkerchiefs, and all its purchase implied—yes, "the little Marcy" would like that book, he felt.
The tired actors and actresses came trooping home. They whooped with delight at sight of the blazing tree and the heap of presents. Wraps were tossed aside, Billy Cummins, the comedian, by reason of age and authority, assumed the role of Santa Claus. Never did he play a part more unctuously or sympathetically.
Burden watched the door furtively until Geraldine Marcy came in, head held high, the unwonted color still in her cheeks. There was a little touch of defiance in her manner to receive the box of handkerchiefs. Burden was afraid she would leave then, but she was a plucky little thing. She sat down, determined to stay until the end.
When her name was called again, a few minutes later, only Burden noted the start of surprise. When the great box of flowers was placed in her arms by the courtly Billy, there was a little clatter of applause. The actors, keen of perception where sentiment is concerned, saw something out of the ordinary in the glance of misty brilliancy she turned swiftly on Burden. As for that young man, his heart bumped suffocatingly for a second or two.
How did she know so quickly and so surely it was he who remembered her? How pretty she was!
They encountered each other in the hall when it was all over, and went up the stairs together. With an absurd sense of elation Burden was carrying another copy of the book he had bought for Miss Marcy. It had been a wonderful evening—and that was not the least wonderful feature of it—that she should not only have known and loved the book, but guessed unerringly that he knew and loved it, too.
At the first landing she paused and faced him, opposite her own door. So changed was she by the clear flush in her cheeks and the happy light in her eyes that Burden wondered. He tried to recall and could not how she had looked in that mask of scornful, weary indifference, which was but loneliness after all. Now she was bright with the gaiety which is girlhood's heritage and very lovable.
"I can't thank you," she began; "you have made this my happiest Christmas in years. I have been alone so long. I left the old home when my parents died and came to the city—and I've been among strangers ever since. And these—" She gazed down on the armful of his gifts.
"It was nothing—nothing," said Burden, hurriedly. "You've thought of me. This book, now—I've always wanted it, and I couldn't bring myself to buy it." There was a pause, awkward on Burden's part. Then he stumbled on. "By the way, I believe in giving one's self a treat on Christmas. I have tickets for 'The Buccaneer' tomorrow night—or rather, tonight. Would you care to go?"
Miss Marcy did not speak; but she nodded, while her eyes overflowed. With a sudden impulsive gesture she hugged his gifts to her breast and smiled through her tears at him.
"The little Marcy!" whispered Burden to himself, tenderly, as he went up the stairs. His heart was singing.

A Hymn Answered.
"Living on a street where there are two churches need not make a man sad," observed a Yonkers commuter to a Manhattan friend. "I live in Morris street between and within a dozen rods of the Central Methodist church and St. Andrew's Memorial church. One evening last summer I was sitting on the porch with my family. It was prayer meeting night, and there began to float out of the open windows of Central church the song 'Will There Be Any Stars in My Crown?' The worshippers were singing it right heartily.
All at once there came a song from St. Andrew's church. 'No, Not One; No, Not One,' ran its chorus. If the musicians had timed those pieces they could not have bettered the effect, as this combination continued to ring out: 'Will There Be Any Stars in My Crown?' 'No, Not One; No, Not One.' They were fine hymns, but their solemnity was lost on my family and me forever."
Negative Announcement.
"You said you were not a candidate,"
"Yes," replied the statesman. "I'd rather take a chance on being contradicted in that form of assertion."
The Reason.
"The money that fine house was built with came from selling dried apples."
"I suppose that accounts for its being such a swell affair."

PEASANTS OF BRITANNY

Share With You Contents of Cupboard and Will Not Ask for Pay.
In Brittany all peasants carry their own knives; and as for forks, they have no use for them. George Wharton Edwards tells, in "Brittany and the Bretons," of a visit to an inn where he met with the proverbial Breton hospitality.
An old withered Breton woman sat at the fireside, busily knitting at a jersey of blue wool, and three men sat at a table, playing some sort of game with dominoes.
The men gave no apparent heed to her entrance, but I knew we were being discussed in their patois.
We asked for bread, butter and a pitcher of cider, which was forthcoming, but no knives were brought. Noting our predicament, the three men at once produced their knives, immense horn-handled affairs, and after wiping them very carefully and considerably on their coat sleeves, they opened and proffered them to us.
"And now, madame," said I, "what shall I pay you?"
"Five sous for the cider, m'sieur. There is no charge for the bread, for is not that the gift of bon Dieu?"
Thus it is throughout this strange land of Brittany. One may travel from end to end away from the large cities, and everywhere meet with the same hospitality. The peasant will willingly share with you what he has in the cupboard, and will not ask for pay.
I left an offering of silver upon the window sill among the balls of woolen yarn.
TRADE IN WOODEN SHOES
Scarcity of Willow Wood Has Steadied Market, Which Was Unsettled by Overproduction.
Last year was unfavorable to the wooden shoe manufacturers in Holland owing to the keen competition of the Belgians and a decided overproduction here. This year's prospects are somewhat brighter.
The scarcity of willow wood, from which those shoes were formerly made, has caused the market to steady up a little. Poplar and some Russian woods are also being used more extensively than heretofore.
The cost of the wood from which the shoes are made is about \$6 per cubic meter, out of which 100 pairs of ordinary size can be made. The wholesale price of these shoes is 12 cents. One workman is able to make 12 to 15 pairs in a day, from which it can be inferred how narrow is the margin of profit in the industry.
Relatively few wooden shoes are produced by machinery for export, but with this exception all the wooden shoes are made by hand in Holland. About twenty different tools are required in the operation. A year or so ago several German capitalists started factories in this country to make wooden shoes by machinery, but failed. Machine-made shoes, it is said, are not well finished, and some handwork is always necessary to make them satisfactory.
Wanted by McGraw.
Stone throwing by children is not as common now as when the automobile was a novelty, but it still exists. A big limousine, occupied by a well known theatrical man and his wife, was running slowly down Riverside Drive, New York, a few days ago when a good sized rock, thrown by a boy not more than three years old, crashed through one of the windows. The chauffeur stopped the car and caught the youngster, who made no attempt to escape. The matter was referred to a policeman by the frate owner.
"What do you want me to do?" asked the representative of law and order. "Arrest this little lad?"
"Something ought to happen to him," protested the owner.
"Aw, well, he's only a kid. You can't do much," counselled the policeman. "Suppose, now, you take him and turn him over to McGraw. He's looking for this kind of talent."
83 and 75 on a Lark.
Mr. and Mrs. James Stead Biddell came into New York from their home in Passaic, N. J., yesterday to celebrate the fifty-fourth anniversary of their marriage.
"We always go for a lark on our wedding anniversary," laughed Mr. Biddell in their home last night. "We've never missed it."
Mrs. Biddell stood close to her husband and it was plain they were still sweethearts. As he talked she took his hand.
"We've always been happy," he said. "We never had a single quarrel." Then they laughed.
Mr. Biddell is eighty-three and his wife seventy-five. They were married in Flushing, L. I., but moved to Passaic half a century ago, when it was a small village. They look much younger than they are. He retired from business 16 years ago.—New York Telegraph.

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