

WHEN POP SWORE OFF.

When Pop swore off last New Year's My Maw was awfully glad. Although she sorter cried a bit, But that's a way she had. Pop said that he'd a done it. Jest after Christmas night, Except that he was waitin' for New Year's to do it right.

THE DRAMATIC RIGHTS TO "LAUREL CROWNS"

Martin Page, the author of "Laurel Crowns," sat at his desk, reading his letters. These letters were a daily renewed source of some pleasure and some bewilderment to Martin. He could not realize his own success, of which they were one outcome. His book had been of absorbing interest and enchanting delight to himself. That it was no less interesting and delightful to the great world seemed incredible.

While he lay awake in the night and planned it, the book had been no less real to him than his own breathing. During the hours in which subsequently he had written it, it had yet been as actual and vital to him as the hand which guided the pen; but the moment the book was published, he lost it. Instead of the thrilling joy which he had often imagined himself experiencing in the presence of his first printed book, he had a lonely little feeling toward it that made him begin to write a second book.

It will be seen that Martin had temperament. He also had youth and an almost childlike simplicity of outlook. The author of "Laurel Crowns" was kindly to a degree. Seven of his letters were requests for autographs. Martin wondered why anyone wanted his autograph, but he cheerfully wrote his name seven times. One correspondent requested the authorship of the quotation with which "Laurel Crowns" concluded. She enclosed no stamp, and the quotation was from the quality-of-mercy speech in "The Merchant of Venice," but Martin courteously wrote a reply.

Usually, he had little difficulty in answering his letters, but this mail had brought three, each of which demanded more than a signature, a postage stamp or a slight introduction to the plays of William Shakespeare. Martin read and reread them with increasing embarrassment.

The first was from his publisher:—"Dear Mr. Page:—" it said, cautiously. "If, as we are inclined to understand, Winfield Stone desires the dramatic rights to 'Laurel Crowns,' we would strongly advise you to accept his offer. He is, as you are aware, the most powerful theatrical manager in the country—" and then the publishers reiterated their strong advice.

"The second letter was brief to the point of curtness:—"Martin Page: Dear Sir:—I want the dramatic rights to 'Laurel Crowns.'" "Winfield Stone."

It is obvious that Martin would have had no dilemma whatever to face had there been no third letter, but there was a third letter. It was written on a small sheet of heavy, white paper, at the top of which, in old blue ink, were the letters J. C., faintly embossed in a fantastically obscure monogram. The handwriting was heavy and black and expansive. To persons who like to find a revelation of character in so arbitrary a thing as a signature, it might have suggested impulsiveness. The letter itself more than suggested impulsiveness.

"Dear Martin:—" it said, "Don't tell me you have already let some one else have the dramatic rights to 'Laurel Crowns.' I want them! The part of Ruth—why do you name her Ruth?—just fits me, precisely fits me; and I want to star in it. Yes, I do! To-day I went up and told Winfield Stone that I was first leading and wanted to star. Indeed, I did! He looked at me reflectively. I thought he was going to say: 'Exactly, exactly, I'll star you.' But he didn't! 'I cannot—star—you—' he began in that drawl which he sometimes uses, and I was so furious that I instantly left the place, without waiting for him to say another word. The idea of his saying he could not star me! Don't you think I can not well enough to star? 'The idea of Winfield Stone!'"

"But I shall star myself, if you still have the dramatic rights to 'Laurel Crowns.' Will you dramatize it—or get some one who is used to dramatizing things? Let me know instantly, if you still have the rights to 'Laurel Crowns.'"

"Hastily your friend, Jeannette Curtis."

As he held the letters side by side and stared at them in perplexity, he started. Jeannette's letter was dated a day in advance of Winfield Stone's. Martin's face cleared as if by magic. "I might have thought of that!" he cried. "Her's was written first! Careless girl, she forgot to mail it, as usual! That settles it!" He turned to his desk, and quickly began to reply to the no longer vexatious letters.

To Jeannette he said:—"My dear girl:—Of course you may have the dramatic rights to 'Laurel Crowns.' What do I know about starring? But I think you act well enough to do anything. I'll dramatize it, or you can, or we'll get some one to dramatize it, just as you prefer."

Martin concluded the letter with several additional betrayals of his naive ignorance in regard to the practicalities of dramatic affairs. As he had inferred, Martin knew little about starring; but he had known Jeannette Curtis from her childhood. The dramatic rights to "Laurel Crowns" were by no means first among his possessions to be bestowed upon her. Martin was aware that Jeannette might not want "Laurel Crowns" to large advantage; but he was very gentle, and so he was happy in the mere giving of his love and his bounty.

Taking out another sheet of paper, he wrote to Winfield Stone. His letter was as laconic as the manager's own:—"Winfield Stone: Dear Sir:—I have already disposed of the dramatic rights to 'Laurel Crowns.'"

"Martin Page." Martin slowly blotted the letter. "Won't he be surprised, though!" he thought. "He has always had what he said he wanted. It's a pity Jeannette has quarreled with him. He was making her career—and I don't believe she knows how to star by herself, even in 'Laurel Crowns.'"

Jeannette's letter had fallen to the floor. He reached for it, and laughed as he again unfolded it. "I've read it enough times," he reflected, "to know every word of it! 'Let me know instantly,' she says. I didn't notice that! Well, I will!"

He sprang to his feet, seized his letter to Jeannette, and taking his hat, rushed to the door. He threw it open, and then stopped short. A girl, a charming girl, who curiously resembled him in appearance, stood at the door, her hand lifted in the very act of knocking. She broke into a low, surprised laugh. "Why, Martin, what in the world—" she began. Her voice had a marvelous ringing tone, as soft as it was clear. Winfield Stone had said this voice was more than half of her professional equipment.

"Oh, Jeannette! Won't you come in?" Martin said. "I got your letter this morning, and I was just going to get a messenger to take an answer to it." He looked at her, and smiled mischievously. "You said to let you know instantly," he concluded. "Jeannette took the letter from his hand. 'I didn't say anything about your turning yourself into a cyclone over it,' she said. She looked up into his face; and then they both laughed."

She took the chair at Martin's desk. Opening her letter, she read it. Martin seated himself on an ornate little divan made of a steamer trunk and a Bagdad portiere, and watched her.

He did not know how strong was the resemblance between them. Jeannette's difference in coloring served to conceal it, even from persons more keen sighted than Martin. She was very fair; her face had almost no trace of color, her eyes were the gray silver, and her hair was the palest possible brown; but like Martin's face, Jeannette's was particularly eager and vivid. Like Martin's her eyes were strangely sent, but unlike Martin's, her mouth had a wistfulness in its curve, even when she smiled.

She looked up from her letter as she read it, and smiled. "I shouldn't say you did know much about starring," she said, critically. "I like that old Pompeian color," he added, as he gazed at her linen gown, "and that hat. Blondes hardly ever have enough artistic sense to wear red touched off with black; they usually go in for blue and ecrú—But you don't look warm."

"Well—I am," Jeannette insisted. "If you can't take me at my word—" she added, offendedly.

The author of "Laurel Crowns" laughed. "I can try!" he exclaimed. "Now, how shall I cool you off? A fan? I don't own a fan! I have it, I'll run over to the corner and get you an ice cream soda!"

Jeannette's conscience smote her when Martin had left the room; but she did not call to him to return. She waited until she heard the bang of the elevator door as he closed it; then she hastily searched among the letters scattered over the desk. She put her own letter impatiently aside, but the publisher's and manager's she grasped, and read with parted lips. She found the envelope and the other two, then she compared the post marks. A faint color came into her fair cheeks. "He got them all in this morning's mail!" she whispered.

In her haste she had moved the blotter, which Martin had left over his letter to Winfield Stone. The letter lay before her eyes, and she read it. Then she read again the letter Martin had written to her; then she stared unseeing at the floor for an instant, and then she covered her face with her hands, and trembled with a strange excitement.

"He loves me! He does really love me! But he shan't do it! I'll be leading woman all my life first! Winfield Stone wants 'Laurel Crowns.' Good gracious! Martin's fortune is made—and he loves me enough to unmake it! And to think I never would believe he loved me at all!"

Jeannette lifted her shining eyes. She seized her letter to Martin in one hand and Martin's pen in the other; then, laughing softly, she drew two heavy lines through the word "friend." "Think of the time and energy I've wasted making him believe I didn't love him! But truly I didn't! He really loved me, and I couldn't tell him I did love him!" she sighed, happily.

"You certainly look warm enough now," Martin remarked, when he returned. "You look positively overheated."

"I am," Jeannette replied; "but it would take something more than ice cream soda to cool me off! And, anyway, I must go. I've decided not to star—that is right away. Winfield Stone knows more about it than I do. I'm going right over to see him now about being leading woman again next year."

Birds and Their Tales.

Origin and Use of an Important Member of the Bird's Body—The First Airbrake.

Birds have not always had the graceful fan-like bunch of feathers which is the typical form of tail of most living species. Their ancestors, the lizard like birds, trailed along appendages composed of many little bones of vertebrae, with a pair of perfectly developed feathers growing from each separate piece of the backbone.

"I am not going to star, and I don't want them," she replied, her beautiful voice trembling. "If you don't let me go this moment, I'll write 'friend' in again!" she added, suddenly; and Martin let her go. She flew to the door and down the hall to the elevator. The door of the elevator had just been opened; Jeannette swept blindly into it, to the astonishment and very nearly to the annihilation of its one occupant. "I beg your pardon!" she exclaimed, without turning her eyes.

"God heavens, you should! You are the most precipitate person I ever knew. First you whirl out of my office, and then you—" Jeannette gasped. "Mr. Stone!" she said breathlessly.

"Exactly," replied the manager, urbanely. "I am going to ask Mr. Martin Page why he doesn't answer his letters promptly. Young authors are so conceited! Do you happen to know Martin Page?" he added suddenly.

"Know him!" cried Jeannette. "I've known him all my life. I—I am going to marry him."

"What?" ejaculated the manager. "Yes," said Jeannette, "I am; but you may have the dramatic rights to 'Laurel Crowns.'"

"But," shouted the manager, "but, you say! Are you going to retire now, after all I've done for you?"

"Retire?" echoed Jeannette. "Of course I'm not going to retire! I'll go right on being leading woman!"

The manager led her from the elevator into the hall, and scrutinized her face with genuine anxiety. "Would you object to telling me whether by any chance you have lost your mind?" he said.

"Perhaps I have," faltered Jeannette. "I would be sure," the manager drawled. "You told me you wanted to star—" "And you told me you couldn't star me," Jeannette returned.

"And you got up, and whirled off, as I have said before. If you had less suddenness and more serenity of manner, you would have waited until I had at least, finished my cigar, and then you might have said, 'What I started to say, was that I couldn't star you, unless I could get the dramatic rights to 'Laurel Crowns.'"

"For me?" cried Jeannette, wildly. "Exactly. For whom else? The part of Ruth just fits you—" "It certainly does!" put in Jeannette. "And you say I may have the dramatic rights to 'Laurel Crowns.'"

"Yes, oh, yes!" "And yet you said you wanted to go right on being leading woman—" "No, I don't," Jeannette exclaimed, excitedly. "I don't! I want to star; I want you to star me; I want to star in 'Laurel Crowns.'"

"Then what in heaven's name is all the trouble about?" the manager demanded, fiercely. Jeannette laughed like a happy child. "There isn't any trouble," she said with a new and lovelier ring in her rare voice. "There isn't any trouble in the whole wide world. And leaving the manager staring after her, she ran down the hall, opened the door without knocking, and rushing up to the astonished author of 'Laurel Crowns' flung her arms around his neck and kissed him. "Winfield Stone is in the hall," she said, "and I think you'd better take him out to the ice cream soda; he needs something!"

—By Elizabeth McCracken in The Cosmopolitan for December.

A Present for the President.

President Roosevelt has received a New Year's present from an ardent colored admirer named James Atkinson of Rome, Georgia. It is a wonderfully but somewhat crudely carved wooden cane which the donor asked the President to please stoop so low as to allow me to present this cane as a New Year's gift."

—Subscribed for the WATCHMAN.

Five Days on a Raft.

The Sufferings of the Survivors of a Shipwreck.

The stories told by the survivors found on the raft from the Elingamite, which was picked up by H. M. S. Penguin, leave no doubt of the terrible sufferings experienced by those on board, says a Wellington dispatch in the London Graphic. The raft left the wrecked vessel on Sunday morning with nineteen persons, three of whom were afterward taken off by one of the boats. With the sixteen remaining on the raft was still overloaded, the deck was submerged, and it was impossible to steer.

Once the raft passed within a hundred yards of the shore, but, despite the despairing efforts of the people on board, failed to make any headway, and was washed out to sea again. The other raft and some of the boats were more fortunate, and reached the land safely. By the next morning the raft had drifted out of sight of the shore. The only food on board consisted of two apples. On that Monday the sufferings of the castaways were dreadful. Their only food was one apple divided into sixteen parts. One passenger died that night on exhaustion, and two more were found dead in the morning. One of these was Mr. A. G. Anderson, a representative of the firm of Messrs. Lyburn, Sessie & Co., of Sheffield. On the Tuesday the weather was fine, but the sea was wrapt in mist. The distress of the crew grew in intensity. Reluctantly they cast overboard the bodies of the dead in order to lighten the raft. Notwithstanding all warnings, some drank sea water. During Tuesday night the castaways saw a steamer's light and shouted. A boat was lowered, and passed within fifty yards of the raft but missed it in the darkness, and the steamers ultimately steamed away, leaving those on the raft to their suffering. After this a passenger, who had been drinking sea water, became light-headed and jumped overboard.

On Wednesday morning the twelve survivors ate the second apple and chewed pieces of linen to stay their raging hunger. Before nightfall, occurred another tragedy. A passenger became insane, and in spite of the efforts of his companions to restrain him, leaped overboard. During the night yet another followed, singing deliriously as he drifted away. "O death!"

Next morning the survivors, soaked with sea water and blistered by the sun, had abandoned all hope. The stewardess, who was the only woman on the raft, and who had behaved heroically, died that morning and shortly afterward the second stewardess succumbed. Four hours later the warship Penguin came in sight and rescued the eight remaining persons. All of them are progressing satisfactorily.

Altogether 149 of the passengers and crew of the Elingamite have been saved. Three bodies were found on the scene of the wreck, eight died on the raft, and one woman died from exposure. One boat, which is still missing, is supposed to contain thirty persons. The Penguin and another steamer are still searching for it.

Portugal To-day.

Life Begins Early in the Day in Town and Country. Portugal in all parts being extremely hilly, you have, as a rule, only to go a few yards up the road to get a magnificent view wherever you may be. More often you get many magnificent views, stretching far away among hills and pines, with winding white roads and patches of white houses as far as you can see. The hills are great hills snow-clad for months of the year, and an incredible purple for the rest. The maize fields supply the bright green that might be missed in a country where grass will not grow, and you can look at almost any view without being confronted with its possibilities as a signed engraving at a guinea each. But the whole is curiously reminiscent of the Japan that Mortimer Memps brought home to us recently.

Life begins early in the day, whether in town or country—a suggestive state of affairs in connection with a people fabled as lazy and shiftless. Long before you get of rising yourself you may hear the fishwives crying their wares, and if you go on to the veranda in the sunshine of the morning you will probably find that the street is bright with gay garments. Hours ago the shepherdman from Matozinho and Leça, hoisted brown luteen sails to their peaked boats after a night's toil on the Atlantic fringe, and having crossed the bar are showing their shole-pinned oars through the water as they come on the tide to the market. The shore-side gang is carrying haalbah—dried, evil-smelling codfish from Newfoundland—into loads up the steep slope of the Rua Santa Catharina, and the ubiquitous Welsh schooners from Port Madoc have resumed the labor of taking the ballast. More ballast seems to go to Port Madoc than to any other place in the world—at least you are inclined to think so as you watch the stream of laughing, singing girls passing to and from the barges to the ship with their astoundingly heavy loads piled on their heads. Then, under your veranda, comes the sound of slow moving, grasses, wheels, and an ox-cart creaks up the hill as lazily as willing oxen will let it to an intermittent admonition of "E-e-Bue-e-e" and the pickrieps of an ox-goat. By these things you may know that Portugal is awake.—London Post.

John Mitchell's Family.

Miss Elizabeth C. Morris, private secretary to John Mitchell, writes interestingly in the current Independent on the labor leader's home life. Spring Valley, Ill., is his dwelling place. There, in June, 1891, he was married to Miss Katherine O'Rourke, the daughter of a prosperous miner, who was prominent in the local labor movement.

Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell made and yet retain their home in Spring Valley. They have a bright and interesting family of three boys and a girl, ranging in age from 9½ to 2½ years. A little son, born about two years ago, and called John Mitchell, died at the age of 6 months.

For seven years after their marriage Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell lived the lives of the majority of American people, happy in their home and busy with the training of their children, but with Mr. Mitchell's elevation to the vice presidency of the United Mine Worker's came that break in the home life which seems to be the common fate of men connected with the labor movement. Busy traveling from State to State, remaining scarcely long enough in any city to make headquarters there, Mr. Mitchell has been separated from his family practically 11 months of the year since 1898.

All the family are members of the Catholic Church, and the eldest, is an altar boy for his father's long time. friend, Rev. John F. Power, whose library furnished many of the books and whose genial heart prompted many of the lessons that guided the young miner during the formative period of his life.

Value of Weather Warning.

A Service That Has Cost \$1,250,000 a Year Has Saved Millions.

At the session of the American Scientific Association last week Prof. Willis L. Moore, Chief of the Weather Bureau, said that it cost \$1,250,000 a year to make the forecast; that the forewarnings of a few days ago in Florida saved millions of dollars to the people of that State, and the forewarning of a single cold wave recently saved shippers \$4,000,000.

Theosophy.

What the Members of the Strange Cult Believe.

The Tingley-Times libel case seems to have revived an interest in theosophy which has been lying dormant since the death of the notorious Madame Blavatsky. Her teachings, so amusingly caricatured by Kipling, in one of his early stories, and the clever jugglery of which she pretended to annihilate time and space, probably encompass all that the average reader knows of Esoteric Buddhism. But as a background of all this nonsense there lies a very ancient philosophy, strange and mystical, which gives a certain dignity to the cult, and makes it possible to understand how men of intellect and education have been drawn into the brotherhood.

From Buddha's time till now the esoteric science referred to has been jealously guarded as a precious heritage belonging exclusively to regularly initiated members of mysteriously organized bodies. To gain the supernatural powers, supposed to be possessed by a Mahatma, the initiated must live an ascetic and blameless life for many years. The ascetic then, purified and perfected, begins to practice supernatural faculties. He finds himself able to pass through material obstacles, walls, ramparts, etc., he is able to throw his phantasmal appearance, or astral body, into many places at once. He acquires the power of hearing sounds of the unseen world as distinctly as those of the common earth, and he can also read the most secret thought, of others. Last of all he can annihilate time and space as Madame Blavatsky pretended to do.

So much for the miraculous powers possessed by an initiated brother, who has become an adept in esoteric science, his philosophy or religion is not so easy to explain. He expects to reach, through a series of earthly incarnations, protracted, perhaps, through uncountable centuries, a state of perfect spiritual being known as Nirvana. Before reaching Nirvana, however, he stops and casts a backward glance. From this high spiritual plane he can look over the curious masquerade of earthly existences, even over the minutest details of any of these earth lives. This state is spoken of in esoteric literature as the threshold of Nirvana, and even here the almost spiritually perfect brother may linger for incalculable ages. Then comes Nirvana—a sublime state of conscious rest and omniscience.

The philosophy or religion is not without a certain mystic beauty, aside from the absurdities of the occult science. But it was the supposed possession of supernatural faculties which rendered Madame Blavatsky to dupe her many victims, and which has, of late years, given Mrs. Catharine Tingley complete authority over the California brotherhood. As the evidence brought forth by the libel suit shows, she believes that she has, while still inhabiting her earthly body, reached a state of spiritual perfection which renders her a Mahatma. In other words, she is a Buddha, or, earthly manifestation of the power and perfection of Gantama-Buddha.

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Four Eclipses this Year.

In the year 1903 there will be four eclipses, two of the sun and two of the moon, as follows: 1. An annual eclipse of the sun, March 29-29, visible to Alaska and the greater part of Asia.

2. Partial eclipse of the moon, April 11, visible more or less to North and South America, Europe, Asia, Africa and the Atlantic ocean. Eclipse begins 5.39 p. m. Middle of eclipse 7.18 p. m. Moon leaves shadow 8.59 p. m. Ends 10.05 p. m.

3. A total eclipse of the sun, September 21, invisible. Visible to southern part of Africa, the southern edge of Australia and the South Indian ocean.

4. A partial eclipse of the moon October 6-7, invisible. Visible in part to the western coast of North America, Europe and Africa, and wholly to Australia and Asia.

Jack the Kisser Caught and Beaten by Disguised Men.

"Jack the Kisser," who has been terrorizing women and girls in Homewood, Pittsburgh, for a couple of months, was caught and badly beaten by two Braddock athletes disguised as women recently. The youths were Roy Shaffer and David Herrington and they were accosted by a strange man who pursued one of the apparently frightened "girls," planting a kiss on "her" face, when he received a blow from behind that nearly broke his neck. The other "girl" then knocked him down by a blow between the eyes. The miscreant fought desperately, but after he had been given a good drubbing he was allowed to go on promise not to molest any more women.

State Will Build Bridges at Lewisburg.

The state board of property has decided to build the new bridge over the Susquehanna at Lewisburg, authorized by the legislature of 1901, without delay, and the plans will be drawn at once. The bridge will be about 1,200 feet long and will be constructed of steel with stone abutments. The construction of this bridge has been advocated for years and the bill for its construction, which was passed in 1901, is the only one which puts construction of a state bridge into the hands of the board of property. The other bridges have been built under direction of the board of public buildings and grounds.

Tragedy Which Occurred Near Lancaster Sunday.

Tragedy Which Occurred Near Lancaster Sunday. Jacob Zook, an Omish farmer, residing near Eden, two miles east of Lancaster, was driving from church on Sunday with his two daughters, Fanny, aged 18, and Katie, aged 9, at noon Sunday and was in view of his home. A trolley car crashed into his team, killing Fanny and maiming and inflicting serious injuries upon Mr. Zook and his younger daughter.

The accident occurred at a grade crossing on the New Holland turnpike, where the view is obstructed by a house. The motor-man sounded his gong as he approached view of the crossing. Fanny was caught in the wreckage and shoved along the track for several hundred feet before the car could be stopped. Her body was horribly mutilated, with the skull crushed and both legs cut off. Katie sustained a fracture of the leg and severe scalp wounds. She and her father, who was badly out of view of the house, was taken to St. Joseph's hospital. Both are believed to be hurt internally.

Lost To Friends 15 Years.

Indiana Man Turns Up And Begins Paying His Debts. Fifteen years ago James Christy, of Fulton county, Ind., asked a neighbor to go in bathing with him in Fletcher lake, and the two entered the water just after dark. After a few minutes Christy called to his friend that he had cramps, and asked him to go for assistance. When the friend returned Christy had disappeared. The lake was dragged several times, but the body was not recovered.

A year later Mrs. Christy sold her property and moved to Illinois, where her husband was forgotten except as a number of persons whom Christy owed.

Friday Christy appeared at his old home and began paying the old scores. He laughed over his disappearance and said that when his friend went after help he swam to the opposite side of the lake, put on some clothes that he had concealed there and went to Illinois, where he started anew and prospered.

The Biggest Liar.

A clergyman passing through a village street saw a number of boys surrounding a dog. Thinking that some cruel deed was in progress, the clergyman hastened towards the boys and asked what they were doing. One of the lads replied that they were telling lies, and the boy who told the biggest lie would get the dog. The clergyman was shocked at such depravity, and began to lecture them on the sin of lying, and concluded his remarks by saying, "why when I was a little boy I never told lies." The boys were silent for a second, when one of them said, sadly, "Hand him the dog."

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