

**Mrs. Van Vorst's**  
Lace Handkerchief  
By SARAH COMSTOCK  
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"This is the man," said Mrs. Van Vorst. She laid on the table the pretty silver pocket whistle with the satisfaction of having used it to good purpose. Then she stood back complacently to view the result.

A strange group was gathered in her study dressing room. In the midst of its gilt and whiteness and incense, its filmy curtains and tinted satin upholstery, stood two burly policemen gripping her father. Three frightened maids huddled in the doorway, too much terrified to come in and too curious to go.

"So ye found him thikin' with a drawer, did ye, mum?" asked one of the officers.

"I found the drawer open, and he was just putting the lace handkerchief into his pocket," replied Mrs. Van Vorst, indicating in an open drawer of the dresser with a sweeping oratorical gesture, for she had a keen liking for the dramatic, and this situation appealed to her. She was no coward, and there was something delightful in having entered her room to find a burglar, even though her own familiar butler, there before her. Perhaps the affair was more pleasing in that he had been such an oddly mild and obliging burglar.

"I came to my room only a short time ago," she went on, "and as I entered the door I heard the sound of a soft step. I thought that Filme had come in before me. Strangely enough, I did not even glance up at first, but stopped there by the door to arrange those orchids. While I was bending above them a voice spoke. Imagine my start when I heard a man's voice saying, 'I have stolen your handkerchief.' I represented a servant and looked up to recognize in this creature the man whom I have lately employed as my servant."

The man stood quietly before her while she went on with her story. The policemen kept a wary eye upon him, but relaxed their grip as they saw his confusion.

"What came next on the programme, mum?" the officer pursued.

"I cried 'Base wretch!' and seized the whistle that summoned you. He made no reply to me, but sat down calmly as if waiting to be arrested."

"And, faith, what did he do with the handkerchief?"

"He was putting it into his pocket at the time he called my attention."

"Which one?"

"The right waistcoat pocket."

"Two great hands of the law prepared to search."

The man spoke gently. "Don't trouble, gentlemen," he said. "I can get it for you easier." One of his hands was freed, and he produced an exquisite handkerchief of cobweblike lace. "And there's another thing I want to do," he started to reach for a hip pocket when a rough hand stopped him.

"None of that," snarled the officer.

"Then I'll thank you to reach in that pocket for me, sir."

The policeman did so. There was no revolver in it. He gave a grunt of chagrin.

"It's the money I'd like to have you get out, sir. I ain't afraid. Please give Mrs. Van Vorst \$5. That'll pay for the little perfume bottle I just broke while I was getting the handkerchief."

Mrs. Van Vorst stared in astonishment. Page was very unlike the burglars of stories. You do not look for courtesy from the man who robs you, and she felt for the first time in her life ill at ease. She was supposed to be mistress of any situation. Her own butler, a common thief, was baffling her.

The policeman took five jingling dollars from the man's pocket and laid them on the table.

"Sure, and it's a polite burglar he is, mum," said he. "The judge'll give him a chance to show his manners at an early date. We'll trouble ye no more now, mum. Good evening to ye."

As the officers marched their victim from the room he turned and spoke to Mrs. Van Vorst.

"I beg your pardon, ma'am, for the trouble and scare I've given you, and I'm much obliged to you for fixing it all up for me so easy."

Leaving her to ponder this puzzling remark, he disappeared with the officers.

From the light and warmth of the luxurious house the three hurried into the bleak rain without. The patrol wagon backed up to the sidewalk, its step conveniently ready for the guest. The horses jingled impatiently. The restless driver changed his gait.

"Hustle up there, your politeness," growled one of the officers.

As the man started to enter the wagon he was met by Costello, a policeman who had been waiting on the wagon.

"The devil and all!" cried Costello. "Sure and it's Bill Page!"

"It's me all right," answered the man with a friendly smile and entered the wagon.

Costello followed to act as guard, the gait changed, the horses started off with a dash, and the assembled small boys scattered, their faces being over.

"Faith and I'd like to know what ye mean by stalin' a handkerchief?" said Costello after the story had been told.

"Bill Page never saw the inside of the station in his life for anything but a drunk. Why, your honor, that was a barrel of good whisky."

"Didn't I make a pretty honest stein of it?" Page said evasively.

"Ye made the queerest stein in all me acquaintance. After takin' pleasure in announcin' to the lady that her handkerchief was in your loikin' ye staid peacefully down to wait for us, with an open window and a fire escape beside ye. I'd ye think ye'd wait for an umbrella before venturin' forth in the inclemency?"

Page dodged the questions goodly temperately. An hour later found him housed in the station.

It was an astonishment to every one who knew him when it was told that he had been found in a long time as a toper, but no one dreamed that he had any vice more serious than a love for the bottle. He had paid the penalty of being found drunk a number of times and was known to the force as a thoroughly good fellow when sober. Judge Marvin had given him a long sentence the last time, hoping to work reform, and he had endeavored himself to everybody about the jail, where he was entrusted with the care of the flower beds.

The formalities of another sentence passed quickly. Page was strangely cheerful about it all. Judge Marvin reprimanded him severely, all the time feeling that his words made no im-

**Mrs. Bittersweet's Proposal**  
By HARRIET WHITNEY DURBIN  
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"Peppers and pumpkins! A widow moved in right next door, and this boy?"

"No," returned Mr. Larkins plumply. "Not without solid reason."

"We'll," she continued, holding her breath at her own boldness, "would you still like me to—er—be—be—"

Her meaning rushed through Mr. Larkins like a bolt of lightning. He sprang out of his sitting room at a bound.

"Polly, if you're asking me if I'd like you to be my wife, I say yes—yes—yes. I didn't dare to ask you again, but you've a perfect right to do so, even if I hadn't told you to, for as long as you're here, what's the matter? You're as pale as ashes. What is it, darling?"

"Why, I've actually as good as asked you to marry me," gasped Polly. "Just what I've always declared I'd do rather than die. Oh, well, as Alonzo's strong on a proposition of any kind, her waist, I guess I was excusable this time. But, Alonzo, listen. Don't you ever, the longest day you live, let Henrietta Poddery know I did it—will you?"

"Never!" vowed Alonzo, kissing her.

**Water's Part in Colloquial Terms.**

"How many of our expressive expressions are built around some reference to water?" said a writer. "Take a few brief examples for consideration. If we think a scheme isn't very strong or a proposition decidedly weak we invariably say 'it won't hold water.' Do we infer that more wisdom lurks in an individual's head than he is ordinarily given credit for, what do we say? 'Still waters run deep.' When a person gets into some kind of difficulty, we say he is in 'hot water.' Rumors are always termed 'boats,' and when a business enterprise goes down we call it 'swamped.' A man struggles to 'hold his head above water,' according to our colloquialisms, and when he doesn't know what plan to pursue in order to accomplish certain ends it is said of him that he is 'all at sea.'—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

**French May Queens.**

**A Pretty Custom Which is Still in Vogue in Some Villages.**

An ancient custom which still obtains in many villages in the south of France is that of the May queen, the choosing of the May queen with which we are so familiar. The mayor and six of his political officers choose from among the village maidens the most beautiful girl. As soon as the choice is made known the queen, dressed in white, even to a long white veil and a wreath of white roses, assembles with her parents and all the villagers in front of the mayor's house. Here he and six friends, dressed in frock coats and top hats, form in procession, the mayor and queen leading, and march to the church, where there is a short ceremony.

They then march back to the mayor's house, where a fatted fowl is entertained at luncheon. When he proposes her health he enumerates her virtues, kisses her on both cheeks and hands her an envelope which contains the prize, \$200 in money. But the ceremony does not end here. They form in procession, the band leading this time, and in a sort of review the queen comes walk through the village, up lanes and over hills for three hours. That evening a ball is given at the inn, where the queen dances first with the mayor and his six friends and afterward with the lads of the village, and so the celebration ends. The queen's white veil, with the veil and wreath, are carefully folded away and are brought out again only when she becomes a bride.

**A Heavy Diet.**

**What the Pike in Tipperary Waters Like Most as Food.**

There is a professional fisherman of my acquaintance in Tipperary who kills many pike during the winter months, for which he finds ready sale in the town. He told me of one customer of his who was in the habit of so beating him down in price that he felt justified in resorting to somewhat questionable means to increase the weight of his fish. In the manner of the winner of the stakes in the celebrated "Jumping Frog" sporting event, he would introduce some weighty substance into their interior, stones, bits of iron railing, etc.

Once he went so far as to stuff two old handless flintons he had picked from a refuse heap down the gullet of one before taking it to his customer, who, having weighed it carefully and after much haggling, paid him a fraction less per pound for it than he might have perhaps obtained elsewhere. Meeting him next day, he was instantly aware there was trouble in the wind by the opening remark, "What do pike feed on, Paddy?" "Fish and innards," he answered, "your honor. He snarled a little that comes akin to thin linds," he answered. "Frogs and fish, sticks and stones they like well, but they would give their two eyes for flintons."—English Country Gentleman.

**He Likes Mothers-in-Law.**

That a mother-in-law is not always an unwelcome adjunct to the family is proved in a wholesale way in the case of a Bavarian who is steward on a large estate in Munich. His two wives, but in both instances after their death he retained the mothers-in-law, and now he has taken into himself wife No. 3, who comes into his home accompanied by her mother as well as three unmarried daughters, all as good women, who constitute his household. He is said to dwell together in peace and harmony.

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**DOCTOR OF DANCING.**

This Title Was Given to Beauchamps by Louis XIV.

In France during the reign of Louis XIV. dancing took a very prominent position among court festivities, and many members of the royal family took part in the complex ballets of the time. Louis himself, no mean performer, took lessons for twenty years from Beauchamps, who was called the father of all dancing masters and upon whom the king conferred the title doctor as a special mark of favor.

Beauchamps had the honor of appearing as partner with the king in the ballet, a dance which was introduced in 1650 in France, and no court ball was opened in Europe for a century and a half without it.

About the year 1651 a royal academy of dancing was formed under the auspices of Beauchamps, Lullu, Mollere and others, the object of which was to elevate the art and check all abuses. Of this academy Beauchamps was chief, with the title of director.—London Telegraph.

**A Story of a Scholar.**

Theodor Mommensen, the famous historian, had not only the appearance, but the manner of a scholar. Once during the half-hour drive from Berlin to Charlottenburg the car in which the professor rode went badly off the track. The rest of the passengers alighted, the horses were removed and the stranded car left until help could be found. Mommensen remained, reading his book. An hour passed, and the sound of levers and jacks and the plunging of horses' hoofs aroused him from his reverie. With no sign of discomposure he arose from his seat and went to the door. "Ah," said he, "we seem to have come to a standstill."

**Maine Counties.**

The three original counties of Maine had good old English county names, York, Cumberland and Lincoln. Only two, Oxford and Somerset, have been similarly named since, all the rest having good American appellations. For the names of Androscoggin, Arrostook, Kennebec, Penobscot, Piscataquis and Sagadahoc find their origin among the aborigines, while Franklin, Hancock, Knox and Washington bear the names of distinguished Americans of the white race.

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New York	10:00	10:00
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