The Post.

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THE POST.

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Poetry.

OLD CHRISTMAS.

BY THOMAS JOHN OGSLEY.

Prepare the cheer, the festive cheer,
Old Christmas fast is drawing near;
His days are short, his nights are long,
Yet joy's the burden of his song.
With holy wreath his brow is bound,
With berries red his head is crowned;
And, though his hair is white, his eyes
Twinkle with pleasure as he plies
The goblet filled with ruby wine,
Pressed from the full, rich, southern vine;
He heeds not fog, nor frost without,
But laughs with many a cheerful shout.

Dear, hale old Grandpa, in past time
We hailed the with a merry chime,
The pretty books, th' enticing toys,
The shrilly laugh of girls and boys;
The large plum pudding, snow-clad cake,
Plump raisins in the fiery lake;
Snap-dragon, game of hide and seek;
With many a rump and childish freak;
Riddles, conundrums, magic tales,
Of fairies, ships with silver sails;
Till weary, sleepy eyes attest
The night far spent, 'twas time for rest.

The blazing fire, the curtains drawn,
The rough wind howling o'er the lawn;
Grotesque, quaint shadows move and fall
Upon the crimson papered wall.
My father filled the old arm-chair,
My mother's face knew not a care;
He was a boy on Christmas day,
And she looked like a child in May;
Blooming in matron beauty shown,
Husband, wife, children, all were one;
The boy then is a father now,
The girl, a wife with anxious brow.

Yet thou, old friend, art just the same,
Thy face lit by the ruddy flame;
Thou'rt always old, yet ever young,
With kind words on thy silver tongue;
Whole generations rise and fall,
Yet none are born to hold thy pall;
When spring arrives, with staff in hand,
Thou journeyest to a far-off land,
Till autumn's dying voice you hear,
Wailing the close of the year.

Prepare the chear, the festive cheer,
The old loyal season still revere;
Revere with thanks for blessings vast,
And think of many a roofless head;
Give of your substance, freely, kind,
The storm lamb shivers in the wind;
Let pity claim your liberal hand,
To aid the helpless, outcast band;
If each one starving wretch would feed,
The act would cheer in sorrow's need;
Comfort the poor—and then you may
Welcome with joy old Christmas day.

Select Tale.

The Visit of an Angel.

A STORY OF CHRISTMAS EVE.

BY WILLIAM H. BURTESS.

"It is cold enough to freeze the heart out of a miser and make the white bear dance for joy," grumbled Tom Orton as he looked out of window upon the snow-covered streets. "How I wish I could stay at home to-night and take care of you and the babies, Jenny. And I would only for—"

He thought of how much poverty was pinching them, and would not sadden the hearts of them he loved by mentioning it.

"Only for what, Tom?" asked his wife from the bed, where, ill herself, she was taking care of their two sick children.

"Only that they'll be wanting me," he replied. "You know it is Christmas eve, and we've gotten up an extra entertainment."

"Yes, Tom, and a sorry day for us, now that I am sick, and the children wanting medicine and—" she would have said "food," but could not bear to add a feather's weight to his load—"and so much depends upon you."

"I know," he replied, hastily brushing the moisture from his eyes and striving to conceal his anxiety; "but I am well and strong, Jenny, and the winter is nearly over and we'll all be well again."

"[illegible] anything should happen to [illegible]tioned, with a heavy [illegible] much dan[illegible] as he [illegible]

[illegible] you do. [illegible] many chances for acci[illegible]

[illegible] fear, I'll take care of my[illegible] won't run any extra risk, and [illegible] have nothing to do in the latter [illegible] will be home early."

He stopped to the bedside, drew [illegible] the cover more closely about his [illegible]wife and children, kissed them, put [illegible] coal in the stove, though ev[illegible] lump was as a golden ducat to a [illegible]lock in his then situation, at [illegible]led to everything possible for [illegible]r comfort, and prepared to face [illegible] cold and go to his nightly em[illegible]yment. Yet an uncommon spell [illegible]med to chain him. He lingered [illegible]geted, glanced uneasily at the [illegible]ck.

"Isn't it time you were off, Tom?" [illegible]estioned his wife. "You know it [illegible] quite a walk."

"Yes, Jenny, but somehow I don't [illegible]el like leaving you alone."

"Oh, I am used to staying alone" [illegible] So she was, poor thing! "And [illegible]on said you would be home early."

"Yes, yes."

An active, sober man was he, and [illegible] skilled performer. He had been [illegible]ained to the profession from child[illegible]hood—knew no other, and, under ordinary circumstances, could easily "keep his head above water." But the "tenting season" had closed exceptionally early, the winter was hard, money was "tight," and every place of amusement suffered in consequence. To these things were added sickness and brave-hearted as he was he could not suppress a shiver of anxiety as the future stared him in the face.

He passed along the narrow street through more pretentious ones—passed the houses of millionaires and entered Broadway. That, at least, was brilliant and gay, as if there was nothing of poverty or human suffering in the world—as if none in the great city were familiar with hunger, and cold, and sickness—as if there never was to any awakening from a golden dream of luxury and pleasure.

"Ah! thoughtless wealth and fashion," he murmured, bitterly, as he saw fur-clad forms, and pampered steeds and richly-mounted harness, and gilded sleighs, and costly robes dash along, "how many ye will have to answer for in the day of final reckoning, for neglecting your poor, toiling, suffering brothers and sisters."

But no time had he to linger—the clock in a window told him that, and, with a sigh that his wife and little ones should not have their quota of the good things of this world, he passed on.

Suddenly a confused cry—a wild tumult—the drawing away of teams upon either side, or dashing into cross streets—startled him, and he knew something unusual was taking place. Then came the shout of "runaway! runaway!" and he felt that life or property, or both, were being whirled on to destruction.

"Are you mad? Do you want to be killed?" hurriedly asked many, as they ran to places of safety, and he remained standing upon the curb stone.

He gave no heed to the warning. He had braved death far too often to shrink from it in any event, and most certainly when at such a distance. His eyes were fixed up the street upon a team of noble bays that were tearing along, mad with fright, and surging the sleigh from side to side—were running at their utmost speed, each striving to outdo the other, straining every nerve—were running away driverless. Had that been all he would not have troubled himself, deep as was his affection for blooded steeds, for he was not at the moment particularly in sympathy with woman. It was quite another matter that chained him.

At the first outcry he sprang to and half climbed a lamp-post, and so obtained a clearer view—one that thrilled his heart to the very core, caused his breath to be more deeply drawn and his pulse to momentarily cease to beat.

In the sleigh was a young and beautiful woman, pale with terror, and clasping two lovely children to her breast. Orton thought of his Jennie and their little ones, and resolved to save. The impulse was noble, but how was it to be accomplished? Far beyond any human control were the frantic horses. To attempt to seize the reins as they dashed past, and to stop them, would be madness—would be to be dragged down and trampled to death. He saw this—saw that the course of the horses would bring them directly upon him, and, though the crowd furiously warned him back and warned him of his danger, he stirred not—only braced muscles and nerves and set his teeth with determination.

"*My God!*" exclaimed a man, who bolder than the rest, sprung forward, grappled and would have drawn him away. "You will be killed! instantly killed!"

Tom Orton shook himself off just as the horses reached him, watched his opportunity, seized upon the [illegible] they were sweeping past, [illegible] on the back of the [illegible] the reins, and, [illegible] affrighted women [illegible] children shouted: [illegible] keep quiet. I will save you."

And save them he did. Before a block had been traversed the horses had been made to realize that he was their master, and the sharp curb cutting deeply into their mouths brought them to a stand-still.

The crowd cheered lustily—the police assisted the women and children out, and carried them into a neighboring store, and, as soon as the former had in a measure recovered her senses, she asked for her preserver, that she might thank and reward him. But he was not to be found. All that could be learned was, that as soon as the trembling steeds had been taken charge of by others he had disappeared.

"Who could he have been?" questioned the lady, with still-ghastly face and bloodless lips.

"Can't say," answered a policeman constituting himself spokesman; "but he was a brave fellow, anyhow. I wouldn't have taken the risk he did for thousands."

"A brave fellow, indeed," was the response, "and I would have given very much to know his name and where he is to be found."

So would the policeman, that something of the glory might attach to himself. But the lady departed homeward, without obtaining the desired information, and the sensitiveness of Tom Orton caused him to lose the one opportunity of his life to have risen above iron-handed poverty.

Meanwhile he was hurrying to business. More time had been occupied in the rescue than he thought possible, and though applause was dear to him—as to all—yet he could not stay to listen, and, as for risking his life for money, he had not even dreamed of such a thing.

Out of breath, he dashed into the dressing-room, and was received with reproof for being late.

"Couldn't help it," he replied. "I saw a pair of fiery horses running away with a sleigh and a woman and two children—thought of my Jenny and the children, and had to stop and save them."

He told the story very briefly and modestly while getting ready—didn't seem to fancy he had done anything wonderful, and soon was dashing around the arena upon a spirited steed, "watching the world with wondrous horsemanship."

The audience applauded to the echo, and, carried away by the excitement, he rashly determined to execute his most daring acts—those given only upon the greatest occasions, forgetting that the horse he rode had not been trained to them—was young and wild.

The result was soon painfully apparent. Though some were accomplished in safety, yet when he attempted leaping over a banner the fluttering bright-red the horse, he bolted suddenly, and Tom Orton was hurled heavily to the ground!

He endeavored to rise and make light of pain, but a stranger sickness came over him, the lights flickered and grew dim, he gasped for air, and knew nothing more until somewhat revived in the dressing-room he heard familiar voices.

"Oh God! what will become of Jenny and the babies?" he gasped faintly. "I am done for, and—and—" his tears and sobs choked him.

"Don't fear for them, Tom," said a dozen hearty voices, and as many grasped his hands as could obtain them, "we'll see that you are taken care of."

Many unselfishly and unselfishly contribute the ring and the stage, but to the law of want and suffering their hearts shine upon the sufferer, and such charity is shown that none upon earth is brighter. And in all of humanity was as true as the heaven and sisterhood always lives and gives for the sake of others, there would be fewer of trial and suffering in the world. It is a double gift that lasts beyond even the sad scenes at the "Little Church Around the Corner," and is blessed by widow and orphan.

"Thanks, thanks," murmured the injured man. "But tell me the worst."

"A broken leg is all that appears serious," answered a gray-headed man—a strange physician who had been summoned. "Though I can not account for the marks upon your other side, my man."

"Probably he hurt himself when he stopped the runaway horses," was suggested, and the story told.

"Humph! A very dangerous business—next to foolhardy; not one in ten thousand would have escaped alive," replied the physician, with pursed lips and flashing eyes. "Well, all that can be done now is to get him home. Then I will make a more minute examination."

Very tenderly was the noble-hearted fellow taken to his humble abode, and the scene, when he was laid upon the bed, side with his sick wife and children, caused every eye to overflow with tears.

"Tom, dear Tom," said Jenny, as well as she could for her pitiful sobbings, "what will become of us—of of the children? We shall all starve and die together."

"Not while we have hands," replied his associates, and every heart was touched and every arm nerved to do the utmost toward relief.

They all looked around anxiously for the physician—had supposed he had accompanied them. But he was not to be seen, and their grumbling become loud and deep.

"I can bear anything," said Tom, "but for you, Jenny, and the children," and he entirely broke down.

"And *I* could curse that doctor for an unfeeling wretch," blurted out one of the passionate. "But it is ever thus. We give our lives freely to please the public, and when anything happens they care nothing for us."

Tom Orton groaned heavily. The sound awoke his little girl. She raised up in bed, strained her eyes, clapped her tiny hands and shouted in true childish glee and wonder:

"Mamma! Papa! See—an angel!"

All eyes were turned in the direction she pointed, and in the doorway stood a beautiful woman, leaning upon the arm of the physician!

Yes, an angel had come to them. Tom Orton had risked his life to save that of the daughter of Dr. Armitage and his grandchildren, and the merest chance had given them the knowledge who it was.

But never was an equestrian feat better rewarded, and never a more charitable angle appeared upon earth even upon the day when alike from hill-top and valley is proclaimed: "Peace upon earth and good will to men."

Christmas Times.

Christmas time again is here,
With its memories ever dear,
With its holly green and fair,
Wax adornings bright and rare,
With its lovely books and toys
For the merry girls and boys.
Now the stockings will be hung
By the chimney for the young;
There for Santa Claus to fill
With such presents as he will.
Down the chimney broad and black
With a bundle on his back,
So at least the story goes,
Wonder that he isn't froze!
But his clothes of fur are warm,
He can breast the wildest storm;
From his palace in the North
With his rein-deers comes he forth,
Comes with songs of bliss and cheer
O'er the country far and near.
Many years have passed away
Since that holy Christmas day,
When the blessed Mary smiled
On the sweet face of her child;
So soft could in white arrayed,
He was in a manger laid.
No rich drapery and lace
Decked that rude and humble place,
And the wise men from afar
Watched their guide, the shining star;
He was sent to pray and preach,
And the way of truth to teach,
That that world might better be
For the lamb of Calvary.
This is why throughout the earth
Christmas day is hailed with mirth.
Hurrah then for Christmas time,
Ring the bells with happy chime,
Let the peals sound loud and clear,
Merry Yule again is here.

SAVED AT LAST.

A cold Christmas night in a farmhouse. Father comes in from the barn, knocks the snow from his shoes, and sits down by the fire. The mother sits at the stand knitting. She says to him: "Do you remember that it is anniversary to-night?" The father is angered. He never wants any allusion to the fact that one had gone away, and the mere suggestion that it was the anniversary of that sad event made him quite rough, although the tears ran down his cheeks. The old house-dog, that had played with the wanderer when she was a child, came up and put his head on the old man's knee, but roughly repulsed the dog. He wants nothing to remind him of the anniversary day.

A cold winter's night in a city church. It is Christmas night. Busy hands have been decorating the sanctuary. A lost wanderer of the street, with thin shawl about her, attracted by the warmth and light, comes in and sits near the door. The minister of religion is preaching of Him who was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, and the poor soul by the door sobs: "Why, that must mean me; mercy for the roof of sinners, bruised for our iniquities; wounded for our transgressions!" The music that night in the sanctuary brought back the old hymn which she used to sing when with father and mother, she was upon God in the village church. The service over, the minister went down the aisle. She said to him: "Were those words for me? 'Wounded for our transgressions?' Was that for me?" The man of God understood her not. He knew not how to comfort a shipwrecked soul, and he passed on and he passed out. The poor wanderer followed into the street. "What are you doing here, Meg?" said the police. "What are you doing here tonight?" "Oh!" she replied, "I was in to warm myself;" and then the rattling cough come, and she held to the railing until the paroxysm was over. She passed on down the street, falling from exhaustion; recovering herself again, until after a while she reached the outskirts of the city, passed on into the country road. It seemed so familiar, she kept on the road, and she saw in the distance a light in the window. Ah! that light had been gleaming there every night since she went away.

On that country road she passed until she came to the garden gate. She opened it and passed up the path where she had played in childhood. She came to the steps and looked in at the fire on the hearth. Then she put her fingers to the latch. Oh, if the door had been locked, she would have perished on the threshhold, for she was near to death. But that door had not been locked since the time she went away. She pushed open the door. She went in and laid down on the hearth by the fire. The old house-dog growled as he saw her enter, but there was something in the voice he recognized, and he frisked about her until he almost pushed her down in his joy. In the morning the mother came down, and she saw a bundle of rags on the hearth; but when the face was uplifted, she knew it, and it was no more old Meg of the street. Throwing her arms around the returned prodigal, she cried: "Oh! Meggie. The child threw her arms around her mother's neck, and said: "Oh! mother, and while they were embracing a rugged form towered above them. It was the father. The severity all gone out from his face, he stooped and took her up tenderly and carried her to mother's room, and laid her down on mother's bed, for she was dying. Then the lost one, looking up in her mother's face, said: "'Wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities!" "Mother, do you think that means me?" "Oh, yes, my darling," said the mother. "If mother is so glad to get you back, don't you think God is glad to get you back?" And there she lay dying, and all their dreams and all their prayers were filled with the words: "Wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities," until, just before the departure, her moment of her face lighted up, showing the pardon of God had dropped upon her soul. And there she slept away on the bosom of a pardoning Jesus. So the Lord took back the one whom world rejected.—*Rev. T. D. Talmage.*

Making Christmas Presents.

Begin paying your little bills. If you owe a small account at the little shop round the corner, or the washerwoman has been kept waiting for her wages; or the milkman's bill is overdue, or there's fifty cents owing at the cobbler's and the seamstress has been told to call again, see to it. These are such little things that they slip the memory perhaps. Bills of this class do not come in with printed heads and ornamental envelopes; they are not put on the mantel-piece like those the postman brings; they are little scraps of paper, with a few figures scratched in the corner, or a boy or little girl calls to ask if it is "convenient," which it always ought to be. Some people seem to have an idea that the settling of these small accounts is conferring a favor—rather a meritorious act indeed—because, it is to be supposed, they might have been put off longer still. Especially is this true when the money is paid for services done, which passes quickly out of sight, while the new carpet and vases, the new coat and hat are reminders in themselves. All the more then, should there be reckoning when people are starting out with full purses to buy Christmas presents, and the question be asked, "How much of this money belongs to me?" It depends on the answer whether to go first to the purchase of expensive things or whether this, that and the other forgotten dues are set aside and carried to their respective owners.

Merry, Merry, Christmas!

"For behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." This was the promise and the fair beginning of time which was heralded by the birth of our Saviour. And ever since the spirit of kindness, charity, forbearance, friendship, love and happiness, seems to walk abroad in the world on Christmas day. No holiday or festival of merely human institution is so sacred to joy and jollity. It is a day for renewing the sundered ties of friendship, for regathering the scattered inmates of home. It is a day for making new resolutions and confirming old ones. It is a day of plenty for the hungry, of welcome for the stranger, of hospitality for all. It is a day for happy greetings of old comrades, for cheerful anticipation and holy remembrances. It is the day of days, the brightest in the calendar, for children. They celebrate it with a clear faith and a delightful unction. It is very meet that Christ's birthday should be children's day, for "they brought young children unto Him that He should touch them, and His disciples rebuked those that brought them; but when Jesus saw it He was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of God."

Concessions to Christmas.

It is not a little interesting to note how time and increase of that liberality which softens religious differences bring man very close together in matters in which they once stood far apart apparently separated hopelessly. One of the most striking illustrations of this tendency of men toward fellowship in things which were abhorred and hated by some, is given in the fact that Christians of almost all denominations in the present time celebrate in some manner the day that is accepted as the anniversary of the birth of Christ. Whether the 25th of December really is the day of the year upon which Christ was born is not known; the chances are that it is not. Among the early Christians there was wide diversity of opinion respecting the subject, and very many different days, extending from September to March, were honored as the birthday. It was not until the fourth century that an ecclesiastical authority fixed upon December 25th as the day that should be accepted by all Christians.

THE COUNTRY'S NEED.—A cotemporary wisely says: "What our country needs to-day more than the manufacturer, the merchant or the lawyer, is the farmer. It seems, however, next to impossible to get people to realize this fact, or to act on it when they do. In spite of the hard times young men continue to lounge around large cities, where is no possible hope of employment, waiting for something to turn up, and utterly neglecting the opportunities that are presented in the country. The truth is, people nowadays are too much afraid of hard work, and decidedly object to that sort of living which has to be earned by the sweat of the brow. They had much rather live by the sweat of somebody else's brow, if they can!"

Christmas Carol.

With round'ring awe,
The wise men saw
The star in heaven springing,
And with delight
In peaceful night,
They heard the angels singing,
Hosanna, hosanna,
Hosanna to his name!

By light of star
They traveled far
To seek the lowly manger;
A humble bed
Wherein was laid
The wond'rous little stranger.
Hosanna, hosanna,
Hosanna to His name!

And still is found,
The world around,
The old and hallowed story;
And still is sung
In every tongue,
The angels' song of glory;
Hosanna, hosanna,
Hosanna to His name!

The heavenly star
Its rays afar
On every land is throwing.
And shall not cease
Till holy peace
In all the earth is glowing.
Hosanna, hosanna,
Hosanna to His name!

A Christmas Home.

A loud and laughing welcome to the merry Christmas bells,
All hail with happy gladness the well-known chant that swells.
We list to the peeling anthem chord, we hear the midnight strain,
And love the tidings that proclaim a Christmas-tide again.
But there must be a melody of purer, deeper sound,
A rich key note, whose echo runs through all the music round,
Let kindly voices ring beneath low roof or palace dome,
For these alone, our Christmas chimes that bless a Christmas home.

A blithe and joyous welcome to the vines and to the leaves
That hang about our household walls, in dark and rustling sheaves,
Up with the holly and the bay, set laurel on the board,
And let the mistletoe look down while pledging draughts are poured,
But there must be some hallowed blooms to garland with the rest—
All, all must bring toward the wreath some flowers in the breast,
For, though green boughs may thickly grace low roof or palace dome,
Kind hearts alone will truly serve to deck a Christmas home.

NED WILSON'S TRAMP.

A Christmas Sketch.

BY JUDGE WHITE.

Ned Wilson was a printer by trade, a jolly good fellow by nature, but at the time I write a tramp by force of circumstances. Thus one bright day in May he found himself in the waiting-room of an Illinois depot, with just 70 cents in the pockets of a respectable-looking pair of pants, or what could be seen of them below the long, fashionable dress-coat, which looked well enough to justify the term. A small hand-satchel by his side also added to the effect of his appearance, for, though a tramp, Ned, was a high-toned young fellow, honest, industrious, and of whom one could find nothing repulsive, except the name of his present calling. Six months back he had held "cases" in a first-class office in the central part of the State, a few miles from the farm-house of well to-do parents. The general depression of business which preceded the winter of '77 threw him out of a "sit," and thus it came that, after tramping over Iowa and Wisconsin in a vain search for work, we find him again in Illinois, with just money enough left to take him home, discouraged, dejected and disgusted with his country, but more, especially the people that inhabited it.

The train was due in twenty minutes. Being of a social turn of mind Ned looked about him, and had just commenced a slate-and-pencil conversation with a deaf and dumb gentleman when three ladies came into the waitingroom. Something of a novice at the business, Ned made so many motions and grimaces in talking with his companion that the ladies mistook him for the dumb person. This was all the more apparent as the deaf gentleman passed for a moment to the platform leaving his slate with Ned.

"Mamma," said the youngest of the three ladies, a bright, happy miss, of some 17 years. "Mamma, do see this poor, deaf and dumb boy. Ask him how he lost his speech, do?" And the impulsive girl looked at Ned with eyes full of tender pity for his misfortune. "Hush, daughter, he will hear you." "Why, mamma, how can he? Say, Aunt Nannie," turning to the third lady; "isn't he handsome? See what large, intelligent eyes, and handsome complexion? I could fall in love with such a young fellow, if he wasn't deaf." And the young miss clapped her hands and laughed a silvery peal that resounded with the echo of the on-coming train. In came the deaf and dumb gentleman after his slate, picked it up and went to the open window of the ticket office for a ticket. Ned turned to the young lady and smiled. She saw her mistake in an instant.

"Why, you are not dumb after all; are you?" exclaimed the young lady.

"No miss," replied Ned, respectfully; my friend here is the "one unfortunate," so deserving your sympathy, I am nothing but a tramp."

And Ned laughed recklessly, which seemed to impress the young lady unfavorably, but she did not reply.

While they were speaking the train ran into the siding, the old lady gave the miss an annoyed jerk toward the western bound train, but not till the young lady had smiled on Ned a parting glance, at the same time dropping at his feet a solitary forget-me-not. It was not the thing for her to do, but, young and romantic, just from boarding school, she never thought, dear reader that she was doing wrong, and poor Ned could not be blamed for picking up the offering and putting it to his lips, as she was whirled out of sight.

Ned had just time to catch up his satchel and step onto the train, which in a few moments landed him at his father's door, ending his tramping days forever. Such a rejoicing there was among his friends over his return. Mother cried a little over him; father hum-hummed, and rubbed his glasses, while numerous little brothers and sisters and sisters climbed all over him into pockets went deft fingers, and the home-coming was mutually rejoiced over. Think of it—over a tramp!

Of course, Ned never mentioned the dark days when, hungry, worn and footsore, he had tramped thro' the dust of Iowa roads, wishing in his friendlessness and despair that he had the courage to end it all in the dark, muddy waters of some swift-flowing stream; but he expressed such a sympathy for the tramp that during the months that followed his home-coming not even the worst of the name were ever turned from that door empty-handed.

Good fortune had lately smiled upon his parents, and they had enough and to spare. Ned was helped into business, prospered, and was happy.

A year had passed by. Ned is still hard at work, making money. His office is in the busy town of I—, a place renowned for the beauty of its citizens and the number of its handsome young ladies. Among the first Ned is always reckoned, but in speaking of the latter they leave him out entirely, as he will have nothing to do with any of them. Why, they cannot guess. But shall I tell you his secret?

In a bright corner of his trunk at home is a faded forget-me-not. This is the one dropped on the platform at the depot, that day, long ago. Ned has not forgotten it, nor the giver. And often the Saturday evening train, going into Chicago, over the C. & N. W., carries a young and happy fellow into the presence of a certain pert miss, whose whereabouts had been discovered, acquaintance cultivated, and, it is whispered, affection won, by a certain young tramp, whom she thought she could love if he was not deaf. Now I have told you of the tramp, the coming Christmas must tell you what come of it.

The Christmas Stocking.

Matured friend, has the realization of your brightest hope of manhood ever excelled, or even equaled, the joy experienced at finding your boyhood's Christmas stocking? How welcome that well-knitted, well-filled foot and leg, the knobby projections made by the concealed treasure within, as you took it from the nail in the gray of the cold Christmas morning! Could to-day a fat legacy from a deceased rich uncle give you any more pleasure? Isn't it a little queer that while as we grow from youth to manhood the objects change which bring us pleasure, the amount of happiness realized varies but little? There seems to be a certain amount of the article implanted in us; no more, no less. The boy's sled gives place to the richly upholstered sleigh, the toy house to the imposing residence, the toy watch to a real one, the toy boat to an ocean yacht—but the first yielded quite as much pleasure as the last.

An energetic temperance man met a neighbor on the street badly under the influence of liquor. He determined to assist the neighbor home. With much trouble the two started, and the abstainer was put to it to keep himself and his wabbling companion from falling into the gutter. In his drunken enjoyment the inebriate sang and yelled until his home was reached, when he noisily persisted in being accompanied into the house by his friend, who stoutly refused to go. The noise finally awakened the neighbors, and in a few moments heads were out of the windows in all directions. "What's the troble?" asked one. "Nussing, nussing, ash all," yelled the drunken man, "cept Mr. S—and me's on a thunderin' big drunk, and I'm trying to get 'im home."

A Boston preacher said: "The little good any of us can do must be done with our hearts thumping against our fellow man." And every young woman in church looked at every other young woman and smiled approvingly.

Iowa boasts of a farmer who for thirteen months past has drunk [illegible] gallons of water daily, and [illegible] goes to bed thirsty every night. It is thought the cause of the latter treated drouth has now been discovered.