

she saw the miserable rags upon which Dinah and Jo and 'Thus'lem were all sleeping. For Jo was there, soundly sleeping as if innocent of everything of which they thought him guilty. How cold it was in that miserable place! How the wind whistled through the unplastered beams! How scant and wretched was their bed, their covering! How wicked she had been not to look after these poor creatures who had served her so long and faithfully! The crime, the fault, was partly hers.

But Harry had shaken Jo rudely by the shoulder. The startled crow limped out of his warm black resting-place and blinked maliciously at the intruders. Jo started to his feet in surprise.

A loud clink upon the old floor was distinctly heard, and by the light of Harry's lamp could be plainly seen the lost treasures. From under the ragged quilt had fallen the locket and purse.

"Oh, you miserable thief!" said Harry to Jo.

Jo's teeth began to clatter in his head, his eyes to roll wildly. He looked from one to the other in a dazed and bewildered way.

"Wot in de canopy's de matter?" said Aunt Dinah, rubbing her eyes.

"Matter enough," said Harry. "Jo's a mean, sneaking thief. See what he has stolen from mamma and me."

When Harry held up the little locket and the purse, it seemed as if Jo's eyes would start out of his head.

"Mas'r Harry, Mas'r Harry," he cried, "I neber fotched 'em here. I neber laid a finger on 'em; wisher may die on dis berry spot ef I did!"

The poor black had crouched upon the floor, and held up his shaking hands in entreaty. His teeth chattered in his head, and his face was over-spread with that ashen hue that can make even a black skin pale.

Harry had never seen such abject misery. It blunted the edge of his rage and disappointment. "Jo, Jo," he said, "don't add lying to your other crimes. Didn't we find the things here where you had hidden them?"

"Dis beats creation!" said Aunt Dinah. "In all the bressed borned days ob my life, I neber see de like ob dis. Jes you leab him to me, Mas'r Harry. I'll wollup de trufe out ob him, ef it takes me all night."

But Mrs. Malcom stepped forward and held her hands over the poor shrinking head of the little black boy.

"No," she said, "he shall no longer be treated like a brute. I will find another way to reach his heart. Oh, Harry! oh, my son! the fault is mine. I have cared nothing for poor Jo—for his body or his soul. Our dumb, soulless animals, are better cared for. I'll wait awhile, Jo; I'll go away, and leave you to think it over. By-and-by you'll remember all about it, won't you, Jo?"

Jo shook his head to and fro hopelessly. "Ef you wait until de day ob judgment, missus, I neber can 'member. It's a mos' drefful mystery how dem dar tings got here."

"Come, mother," said Harry, in disgust. "I wouldn't have had this happen for ten times the worth of the things."

"Nor I," said his mother, and they both sat sadly down to wait for the judge, who had been detained in town.

He was surprised and vexed, when he came, to find that Christmas-eve was being rapidly spoiled.

"That's the worst of these blacks, they will steal," said the Judge. "But don't you want to see my presents? They have been kept out of the reach of thieves."

The judge took from his vest pocket a tiny jewel-box containing a ring. Mrs. Malcom had never seen a finer diamond. She quite forgot poor Jo in her delight and surprise. Then the Judge took from his other vest pocket an American watch. As he handed it over to Harry, the lad's clouded face was bright with joy.

But as the Judge was placing the ring upon his wife's finger, it suddenly slipped from his hold, and rolled away upon the floor. All three of them stooped to look for it. It seemed scarcely to have left their sight. They lifted chairs and tables, looked closely around the solid base of the Christmas tree, but the ring had vanished. Again and again they fruitlessly hunted. Tired, vexed, bewildered, they looked at each other in dismay.

"Jo is not the thief, anyway. He didn't take it."

"Who did take it?" said the Judge. "I give it up," said Harry. "The place is bewitched."

The Judge looked blankly around the room, in utter bewilderment. Suddenly he put his finger upon Harry's arm.

"Hush!" he said. "Be perfectly quiet. I think I've got your thief as well as mine. He's black, but he isn't Jo. Look over there in that corner; don't you see a spark of light? Don't frighten the scoundrel. I'll lay a dollar he'll make off with that ring when I give him the chance."

True enough, a black object moved slowly along the floor, and with it something that shone like a star.

The Judge softly opened the parlor door. Out hopped 'Thus'lem, with the ring in his beak.

"It's worth the risk of the diamond to clear poor Jo," said the Judge to Harry, and carefully they followed the sly old crow. Up the back stairs he limped, through the hole in the plaster he squeezed his way, and soon he was clasped to the burning heart of his master.

"Why, why, 'Thus'lem," faltered poor Jo, "I woz afeard you'd turned agin me, an' believed all de slanderizin'. 'Pears ef I don' care to lib much longer, 'Thus'lem; my pore heart is 'mos' broke. Mas'r Harry he's done agin me, an' missus she's done gone wuss'n Mas'r Harry; an' dem dar tings dat fell out o' my bed quilt goes fur to show I'm a burgular. 'Thus'lem, even ef I don't know nuffin bout it. I s'pect I'll be put in jail; dere ain't nobody to help a pore black boy. 'Pears like as ef dat dar sky woz so fur away dat no star of Bethlehem eber shined dar—leastways for pore black people like you an' me, 'Thus'lem? Yer don' somehow tink dat yer could scrape 'long in a jail, does yer, 'Thus'lem? Yer could squeeze in 'an out de bars' yer know?"

"Yes, take him off to jail," said the voice of the Judge. "That's where he belongs, the rascal. 'Thus'lem's the thief, Joe. Look at him there with the ring still in his beak. I've heard crows will steal, but 'Thus'lem beats all the 'burgulars' I know."

"Jes so, jes so," chuckled the crow; and down fell the diamond ring, and rolled to the feet of the Judge.

Up jumped Jo in wonder and affright. Down he fell upon his

knees, and begged harder for 'Thus'lem than he ever did for himself.

"He's on'y a pore ole crow, Mas'r Judge, an' don' know no better. He mus' hab thought I woz mos' drefful pore, an' he tried to help me. He won't do so no more, Mas'r Judge. Will yer, 'Thus'lem?"

"Jes so, jes so," croaked the crow. "He's chock-full ob inikity," said Aunt Dinah, "an' his neck ought to be twisted dis berry minute."

"We'll spare his life for Jo's sake," said the Judge, "to show him that the star of Bethlehem did shine for everybody, black or white, and our blessed Saviour has compassion upon as big a thief as his wicked old crow."

"Jes so, jes so," chuckled the crow. So the Christmas mystery was cleared up, and everybody thoroughly happy at last, particularly Jo, who had plenty of presents. But dearer to him than the apple of his rolling eye was the gift of Mas'r Harry's second-best

From the OLD SOD!

THAT IS

Old England,

We have just received a splendid assortment of goods for the

Christmas Trade.

Among our list of Novelties you will find Silver Button Hooks, Fruit Knives, Silver Moustache Cups, Silver Moustache Spoons, Individual Egg Stands, Smoker's Sets, Gold Pens and Pencils, Rhinestone Back Combs and Jersey Pins, Opera Glasses, Silver Shoe Horns, Silver Shaving Cups, Solid Silver Napkin Rings, Individual Butter Plates and Cruets, Silver Card Cases, Silver Match and Tobacco boxes, &c. Besides these, of course, we carry a full line of REGULAR GOODS in the Watch, Diamond, Jewelry and Silver Line.

**Ryrie's
Jewelry
Store,
113 Yonge Street,
TORONTO.**

HOLIDAY GIFT

BOOKS.

THE ANNUALS.

Leisure Hour, Sunday at Home, Boy's Own Annual, each \$2.00; Chatterbox, \$1; Children's Friend, Infants Magazine, Friendly Visitor, Family Friend, British Workman, Cottager and Artizan, Christmas Graphic, and Christmas Illustrated News, each 50 cents.

FOR THE YOUNG.

Miss Sewell's Works, At the South Pole, 85 cents, and other Favorite Stories of Adventures, by Kingston, Ballantyne's Books for Boys, Marryatt's Work, Tom Brown, Farrar's Tales of School Life, Mrs. Carey Brock's Writings, A Modern Telemachus, \$1.50, and Chantry House, \$1.50; and other books by Miss Yonge, and thousands of others of the best books for boys and girls to select from. Prices from 15 cents upwards.

THE STANDARD AUTHORS.

The Poets in cloth binding, gilt, at \$1.25 each, in Morocco, gilt, and fancy bindings, at \$1.75, \$2.50, and upwards. Ruskin's Work, cloth, 12 vols., \$15.00; Macaulay's History of England, 5 vols., \$8.00; Green's History of the English People, 4 vols., \$6.00; Oliphant's Literary History of England, 2 vols., \$8.00; George Eliot's Works, 6 vols., \$9.00; Dickens' Works, 15 vols., \$22.50; Thackeray's Works, 11 vols., \$16.50; Matthew Arnold's Writings, 10 vols., \$15.50; John Morley's Works, 9 vols., \$18.50; The Waverley Novels, at \$12.00, \$18.50, \$22.50 per set; Milman's Gibbon's Rome, 5 vols., \$8.75, and numerous other choice sets of the best known authors.

USEFUL TO THE CLERGY.

Farrar's History of Interpretation, \$3.75; Farrar's Sermons and Addresses in America, with portrait, \$2.00; Bishop of Derry's The Great Question, and other sermons, \$1.50; Bishop Magee's The Gospel and the Age, \$2.00; Cross' Coals from the Altar, 2 vols., \$3.00; Luckcock's After Death, \$1.50. Archbishop Benson's The Seven Gifts, \$2.00; Pennington's Epochs of the Papacy, \$2.50; Steele's Sermons at Harrow, \$2.50; The Day Hours of the Church of England, 50 cts; Peloubet's Smith's Bible Dictionary, \$2.00, and many other new and standard works.

ILLUSTRATED GIFT BOOKS.

An Old Story of Bethlehem, \$1.10; Book of Ages, Jesus lover of my Soul, The Lord's Prayer, Just as I am, each 50 cents; Collects of the Church, \$2.00; Havergal's Songs of the Master's love, \$2.00; Hark! the Herald Angels sing, \$2.50; Days with Sir Roger de Coverley, \$2.00; Land of the Pharaoh's, \$2.75; Swiss pictures, Canadian pictures, Scottish pictures, Australian pictures, each \$2.75; Windsor, a description of the Castle, Park, Tower, and neighborhood, with Etchings, \$6.00; Clarkson's Violet among the Lilies, \$5.00; Irving's Brackenridge Hall, and Old Christmas, each \$2.00; Poetical Works of Frances Ridley Havergal, \$5.00, and many others.

Selections made for those unable to choose personally, and every book mailed post free to any address.

Books for Sunday School Libraries and Prizes. Catalogues in preparation.

**Rowsell & Hutchison
74 & 76 KING ST., EAST.
TORONTO.**