

## MERRY CHRISTMAS

so? Has the world forgotten its sympathy with the lost children wandering in the wood?"

"All the world," I heard Time murmur with a sigh, "is wandering in the wood." But out loud he spoke to Father Christmas in cheery admonition: "Tut, tut, good Christmas," he said, "you must cheer up. Here, sit in this chair—the biggest one—so—beside the fire—let us stir it to a blaze—more wood—that's better—and listen, good old friend, to the wind outside—almost a Christmas wind, is it not? Merry and boisterous enough for all the evil times it stirs among."

Old Christmas seated himself beside the fire, his hands outstretched toward the flames. Something of his old-time cheeriness seemed to flicker across his features as he warmed himself at the blaze.

"That's better," he murmured. "I was cold, sir, cold, chilled to the bone: of old I never felt it so; no matter what the wind, the world seemed warm about me. Why is it not so now?"

"You see?" said Time, speaking low in a whisper for my ear alone, "you see how sunk and broken he is? Will you not help?"

"Gladly," I answered, "if I can."

"All can," said Father Time, "every one of us."