

to palm it off on my patrons as it is,' he retorted, angrily.

Huldah's heart sank within her. There was no other place where she could sell the mince-meat, and they were really in need of the groceries she had ordered. The family purse was empty, and Tom and his chum would be there next day. She glanced down at her shabby shoes, too, and thought of the sorry appearance they would make before the young man, and for a moment a sharp little struggle went on in her heart.

After all, it might be no harm would come of it if she put the brandy in. No harm ever had come of it before, so far as she knew, but—but there was only one right way, and that was the sure one.

'Very well, Mr. Sampson, I'm sorry to have displeased and disappointed you,' she said, looking at him steadily, the color dying out of her face, and leaving it very pale.

Without further words Mr. Sampson picked up the tub and carrying it outside, put it into the waggon with a bang.

Huldah climbed in and drove homeward with a heavy heart but a clear conscience, while Mr. Sampson went back into the store grumbling.

'If the old lady doesn't come to her senses and send the girl back here with that mince-meat well brandied, as it should be, I'll miss my guess. They're in a bad fix just now, I know, because the old man has been laid up a month or two, and they have had hard luck all summer. I wouldn't be afraid to wager they're clear out of groceries, and will have to come back and ask me for credit.'

This was said half to himself and half to Judge Dougherty, who had been looking over a paper as he waited for Mr. Sampson to have leisure to make out his bill.

The Judge did not reply, but sat for a few minutes looking intently at his paper without seeing a word. Presently he went over to his office and wrote a note to a friend living in the city, who was a temperance man, and also a dealer in groceries.

As a result, Mrs. Mariner received a letter next day, ordering all the mince-meat she had for sale, and as much more as she chose to make during the winter.

This lifted a great load from the hearts of the two women, and with the mince-meat that Huldah shipped that day went an order for necessary groceries, much to the chagrin of Mr. Sampson, whom Judge Dougherty had delighted to inform of the transaction.

When Tom and his friend got off the train at Mapleton that evening, and had to wait a short time for Huldah, who had been unavoidably delayed, the Judge repeated with great gusto the whole story of the mince-meat.

'I tell you, Tom, Huldah's a sister any man might be proud of. I saw her looking down at her little half-worn out shoes, when Sampson said he wouldn't take the meat unless she put the brandy in it, and I thought sure she'd give up then, but she didn't. Principle before either shoes or groceries for her every time. I tell you she's a plucky little thing, and she melted my old heart up so completely, that I resolved then and there, neither cider nor brandy should ever go into any cooking at my house again, to tempt me or mine, or any other man at my table.'

Tom listened with a heart swelling with brotherly love and pride.

'It's just like Huldah. She'd wade through fire and water before she'd go back on her principles,' he said with glistening eyes.

'Wait till you know her, Ned, and you'll stop your cynical nonsense about the shal-

lowness, selfishness and insincerity of women, won't he, Judge?'

'He will if he has half as much sense as he looks to have,' said the old Judge bluntly.

And so it proved. Before the two weeks of vacation had passed away to Ned Oakley it seemed as if the whole world had changed.

The simple, wholesome, cheerful atmosphere pervading the old farm-house, the kind, motherly heart of Mrs. Mariner, the cheerful, uncomplaining spirit of her suffering husband, and Huldah's steadfast earnestness and sunny unselfishness had revealed a phase of home life of which he had had no previous conception.

And when the glad Christmas day was ushered in with whirling flakes of feathery snow that transformed the old homestead into a winter idyl, Huldah first helped her mother to prepare the bountiful dinner, the crisp vegetables, the plump big turkey, and delicious temperance mince-pies, then with Tom and Mr. Oakley snugly tucked up in the sleigh, drove down to Mapleton to join in singing the joyous anthems, and to listen to the old, sweet message of 'Peace on earth, good will toward men.'

And in her life a new star had arisen; for she had read in Mr. Oakley's loving eyes as she fastened her pretty hood upon her head, that

'Tying her bonnet under her chin,  
She tied a young man's heart within.'  
—'Union Signal.'

## A Christmas Carol.

It came upon the midnight clear,  
The glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the earth,  
To touch their harps of gold;  
'Peace on earth, good will to men,  
From heaven's all gracious King,  
The world in solemn stillness lay,  
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come  
With peaceful wings unfurled,  
And still their heavenly music floats  
O'er all the weary world;  
Above its sad and lowly plains  
They bend on hovering wing,  
And ever o'er its Babel sounds  
The blessed angels sing.

For, lo! the days are hastening on  
By prophet-bards foretold,  
When with the ever-circling years  
Comes round the age of gold;  
When peace shall over all the earth  
Its ancient splendors fling,  
And the whole world give back the song  
Which now the angels sing.

Edmund H. Sears, D.D.

## The Saviour's Birth.

Why in tones so sweet and tender  
Sing those angels from on high?  
Why that star so brightly beaming  
In the glorious eastern sky?

'Tis to tell a wond'ring people  
Of a gentle Saviour's birth;  
That He brings (this Prince of glory)  
Peace to men, good will on earth.

'Tis to spread the words of comfort,  
That to each and all He'll bring;  
That the sil'ry star is beaming,  
And the white-robed angels sing.

Then will we, in songs of gladness,  
Sing His praises far and wide;  
Glorifying God above us  
For the joyful Christmas-tide.

—'Waif.'

## Ed's Christmas Money.

(By Elizabeth E. Backup.)

Ed had a feeling of profound pity for himself. It never occurred to him that it was either weak, or selfish, or wicked, to cherish this sentiment. Of course he loved his mother, and was sorry for her, but then a boy must consider himself occasionally. It was a shame to be pinched in this way. When his father was alive, Ed had his mice money, and the money for shovelling snow, and he was paid for lots of little odd jobs. Now he set the trap and caught the silly mice just the same, but he never got his ten cents as he used to. His mother said they were poor, but Edward was not satisfied with this solution of the problem. Ed brooded over the subject, and at length his reflections brought forth fruit in kind.

'Do you know you can get milk at Brown's for five cents?' said Will Adams, one day.

'Is that so?' said Ed. 'Why, we pay six at Seymour's. Good milk, is it?'

'Good as any store milk,' Will replied; 'when we get extra, I buy it there, and pocket the other cent—see?' and Will grinned, hideously.

'Humph!' said Ed, thoughtfully; 'and your mother, she knows?'

'No, indeed!' said Will; 'she'd declare the five-cent milk wa'n't as good as the six-cent. Trust this child for holding his tongue! You were bemoaning your hard luck, and I thought I'd let you into my scheme for getting a bank account. You buy other things for your mother, and I can tell you the places where you can get cheap goods.'

'Cheap in quality as well as in price, p'rhaps,' said Ed, doubtfully.

'Not a bit of it,' said Will. 'I save a cent or two on lots of things mother sends me to buy. There's nothing like having one's eye-teeth cut;' and Will smiled complacently.

'I want awfully to get some money for Christmas,' said Ed; 'but I never see a cent nowadays 'cept when I'm sent on some errand. It's mighty rough on me. I wish I could earn some money. It's a pretty scarce article up to our house.'

'Well, here's your chance, and all perfectly above board. Your mother gives you so much to buy a thing, you get it for less, and the difference is yours. But mum's the word, or you'd have to fork over your change.'

Ed did not accept Will's suggestion very enthusiastically, but he turned it over and over in his mind until he made it seem quite right and reasonable.

'Mother needn't be so stingy,' he argued with himself; 'then if I weren't going to spend every cent I get on mother and Edith, it would be different. Will spends his money on himself. There may be a slight hitch in the principle of the thing, but in my circumstances it's just as right as right can be.'

'I believe when I want extra milk I shall be obliged to order it from the milkman,' Mrs. Walton said, one day. 'It's pretty poor stuff you bring from Seymour's these days.'

Ed colored, but said nothing. Similar criticisms were occasionally made upon other articles which Ed had purchased, but he pocketed his ill-gotten gains and remained silent. Snow came, and with it some opportunities to earn money by shovelling paths for the neighbors; and yet Ed was a long distance from a bloated millionaire.

'I've been counting my money to-day,' he said to Will, 'and with all my scrimping I possess the munificent sum of ninety-five cents. It won't get half the things I want.'