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CHRISTMAS EVE.

The children dreamed the whole night through
Of stockings hung the hearth beside;
And bound to make each dream come true,
Went Santa Claus at Christmas-tide.

Black stockings, red, brown, white and gray—
Long, little, warm, or patched and thin—
The kindly saint found on his way,
And, smiling, popped his presents in.]

But as he felt his board grow light,
A tear-drop glistened in his eye;
"More children on this earth to-night,
Than stars are twinkling in the sky."

Upon the white and frozen snow
He knelt, his empty bag beside—
"Some little socks must empty go,
Alas!"—said he—"this Christmas-tide.

"Though I their stockings may not heap
With gifts and toys and Christmas cheer,
These little ones from sorrow keep;
For each, dear Lord, to Thee is dear!

"Thou wert a little child like them"—
Prayed he—"For whom I would provide,
Long years ago in Bethlehem,
That first and blessed Christmas-tide!

"As soothe Thee then Thy mother's kiss,
And all her comforts, sweet and kind,
So give them love lest they might miss
The gifts I know not where to find!

"That sweetest gift, dear Lord, bestow
On all the children far and wide;
And give them hearts as pure as snow"—
Prayed Santa Claus—"at Christmas-tide!"

MARGUERITE MERINGTON.

CHRISTMAS HOLLY.

DECEMBER, bleak and hoary, is here, robed in her mantle of snow with her necklace and jewels of icy crystal. Yet December touches the human heart more kindly than May for it brings us Christmas, the very source of eternal hope and love. December is nature's sadness, and nature's gladness. Light appears in the darkness, joy comes from the sorrow. Mankind's sin brings the Redeemer whose light is to be man's light, whose life is to be man's life. Rejoice then that Christmas is near, for Christmas brings us tidings of great joy that Christ is born for us, in Judea. Listen and you can still hear those Angels whose "Gloria," on the mountains, was the sweetest hymn that nature ever heard. How well the Holly symbolizes all that Christmas means. Its circle of briars, its white blossoms, its green leaves and its red berries made it a welcome decoration in Home and Church, for men thought it brought good luck.

"Holly Briars!" You tell of Bethlehem and its Manger, with the beginning, amid the briars of suffering, a life which is to end only when the lance of Calvary shall pierce His Heart.

"Holly White Blossom!" You tell of the flower blossoming on Aaron's rod! You recall the Child of Bethlehem whose hand fashioned earth and heaven; the white blossom of God's power, His very word whose fragrance is to atone for man's ingratitude and heal the ills of mankind.

"Holly Green Leaves!" Human gratitude, as an evergreen, is to spring from the crib which is to all a source of man's undying love for God. Years may pass, Summer may go and Winter may chill, but never shall the human heart be

without hope, for Christ is born in Bethlehem.

"O, Red Berries of the Holly!" You tell of blood! Christians, can you not see the red berries around the brow of the Infant Saviour, that tell of that bleak Christmas night and its suffering, that tell of Calvary, whose Cross may be seen hovering over the Manger!

Thorn-Shod, Red Berried, Evergreen Holly, you belong to Christmas! and your branch carries good luck to the faithful soul. Gather, then, the Holly; wreath it round and round. Fitting emblem for our Infant God as he lies in the Crib of Bethlehem. A Happy Christmas to all.]

CHRISTMAS NIGHT.



THE HERMITS VISION.