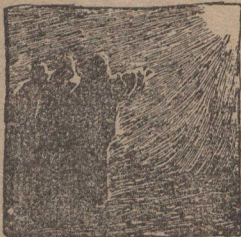


Travelers Three.

Whither, travelers, do ye fare,
Thro' the solemn midnight air?
Rome is many a league away,
Many a toilsome night and day,—
Ere her palaces arise
On your longing, wondering eyes,
Ere great Cæsar's glory blaze
On your rapt, adoring gaze.
Tempt no more the fearsome night.
Tarry till the morning light.



Not to conquering Cæsar's Rome,
Journey we from kith and home,
Than his sceptre, mightier far,
Him we seek, whose Herald Star
Shining long in prophecy,
Gladdens now the eastern sky.
God, who doth His Herald send,
He will guide us to the end!

Will ye say, O travelers three,
Where your monarch's throne may be?



Wheresoe'er night follows morn,
Lo! the promised Christ is born!

Christ is born? Oh, blest are ye
At His feet to bow the knee!
Haste, oh, haste ye to your goal.
Bear the worship of my soul,
Haste, His beauty to adore,
Haste, and tarry nevermore!



Over desert's burning sands,
Mountain steep and weary lands,—
Cheered by Faith's deep mystery,
Onward sped the travelers three—
Till they knelt in holy joy
Low, before the Virgin's Boy!
Not the manger's stolid kine
Saw they, but the Love Divine,—
Word incarnate, Truth and Grace,
In the silent infant Face!
Spirit-led and cheered, may we
In our earthly manger see
Not its sordid, soulless cares,
Not the grossness that it wears,
But the Peace and Beauty born
Of the first glad Christmas Morn!

ZITELLA COCKE.

—'Youth's Companion.'

It wasn't for this I could not hear from my patients nor treat them without going to see them. Some seasons I have to go. Specially at this season. Terrible hard work. Glad you came right here. Difficult case. I'm almost afraid I can't reach you. Sit down there, sir,' he commanded sternly, pointing to a large arm chair near a heavy table.

Mr. Van Gelt sat down. The doctor's face, all of it above his white beard and moustache, and under his fur cap, grew redder and almost angry. He was just tall enough to press his ear against Mr. Van Gelt's side and listen.

'I thought so!' he exclaimed, savagely. 'Take those in your hands. I'll bring your heart right out and you can see for yourself.'

They were just such battery handles as might belong to any electric machine, but Mr. Van Gelt had something strange to look at and felt very queer.

'I'm kind of empty,' he remarked. 'What's that on the table? Is it my heart?'

The doctor picked up a hammer and rapped smartly upon the thing that lay on the table. It did not ring, but there was a leaden thud. Then he asked:

'Do you feel anything?'

'Sort o' startled, that's all,' replied Mr. Van Gelt.

The doctor took the tongs and lifted a large, white-hot coal from the grate and laid it carefully upon the heart on the table, remarking: 'Grip tight, now. I've turned on all the lighting. How do you feel?'

'A sensation of warmth, almost,' said Mr. Van Gelt. 'Now you know the trouble is with my heart—'

'Sit still!' roared the doctor. 'You've come for treatment, and you're going to have it!' He wheeled the chair up to the photoscope. At the same time he whirled two slender side-arms with large, metal plate things at their ends, up to the very sides of Mr. Van Gelt's head.

'Look!' said the doctor. 'Look till you see something. Listen, too.'

Mr. Van Gelt seemed to hear, first, a kind of buzz behind him, in the room, but he could not have turned his head if he wished to, and he leaned forward and put his eyes against the goggles of the photoscope.

'I see something!' he exclaimed. 'She is awfully ragged. Shivers, too, and so does the little girl. No use for them to look in at the window. Hark!'

Anybody in that room could have heard, perhaps, as well as Mr. Van Gelt's left ear did, the childish voice that said:

'O, mother! Aren't they beautiful? Don't I wish I had some! I never did.'

Then a low, sad voice poured into his right ear and into the room:

'No, Nelly; you never will. We had better wish for something to eat. Oh! what a Christmas ours will be.'

'I see,' said Mr. Van Gelt. How suddenly this thing changes. What do they crowd around a stove for, when there is no fire in it? Six of them, beside the father and mother. She is hugging the baby—'

The left ear telephone worked first. Then he heard a small boy say:

'Snug up close, Sis. If we don't keep close together we shall freeze. I wish we had furs, like Santa Claus.'

The buzz in the room was really getting exciting, and Mr. Van Gelt even tried to put his hands to his ears, just as the doctor asked him:

'How do you feel now? Have you any particular sensation?'

'Yes, I have,' said Mr. Van Gelt. 'I have a strange feeling, as if I would like to do some counting.'

'I will let you out for a minute or so, then,' said the doctor. 'I think it is safe. Let me see you count.'

Mr. Van Gelt began to feel in his pockets and take out the change.

The coppers and the nickels came first, and he counted them as they came. It was slow work, but as fast as he counted anything it suddenly disappeared.

A weary, hungry kind of wail came feebly into the room from the telephone.

'There,' said Mr. Van Gelt, 'I heard that before;' and now he counted quite a lot of silver pieces, but even some new dollars went out of sight, and Mr. Van Gelt was looking around the room as if to see what had become of them, when a sobbing voice from the right telephone seemed to say:

'Mother, won't he come at all?'

'Ah! My pocketbook,' said Mr. Van Gelt, and he began counting again.

There were many bills in that pocketbook when he began, but just as he spread out the last one he discovered that there were none left on the table.

'Where are they?' he gasped. 'I'm sure I counted correctly. I always do. It's all the money I had with me. Doctor?'

'Look,' commanded the doctor. 'There is something to see this time. All my reports are coming in.'

Mr. Van Gelt was looking. He was shuddering, too, and his face was puckered into wrinkles by the feeling in his mouth.

'I see them!' he exclaimed. 'Oh, oh! What a pity! I might have helped them and I did not—'

'How do you feel now?' asked the doctor, pulling back the chair.

'Feel?' said Mr. Van Gelt. 'I don't want to hear any more. I want to go right out and do something. Just hear those things that are coming in! There isn't any time to lose. Come on!'

'Hurrah!' shouted the doctor. 'You can hear them without any machine. You'll do first rate. But you can't go out in that rig. Put this on.'

The fur cap and the furry overcoat and a load of things to carry changed Mr. Van Gelt a great deal, but he was too tall and too thin, and he had no long, white beard. He was not anywhere nearly so fine looking a man as was the doctor.

Every telephone in the room seemed to be working at high pressure and Mr. Van Gelt was getting nervous.

Out they went, and it seemed as if they looked more and more alike every moment.

Late, late, nobody knew how late, the door opened again, and it was almost as if two doctors come in; but one of them said:

'Sit right down, Mr. Van Gelt.'

'I feel so warm,' said the patient, 'and so good, and I am so tired.'

Then there was a long silence, and the room would have been dark if it had not seemed to be smiling to itself in a wonderful kind of starlight.

Mr. Van Gelt slept soundly in the great high-back chair before the photoscope. At last he was startled by a grip of a hand on his shoulder, and a loud, cheery voice shouted in his ear. 'Wish you Merry Christmas!'

It was as if a thousand echos poured into the room and the doctor exclaimed:

'Look! Listen! Sit there till breakfast time. Do you more good—'

Mr. Van Gelt laughed till he cried.

'See them? Hear them? Only listen to