

## MERRY CHRISTMAS

first streaks of dawn. "The world that once you knew," said Father Time, "seems broken and destroyed about you. You must not let them know—the children. The cruelty and the horror and the hate that racks the world to-day—keep it from them. Some day he will know"—here Time pointed to the kneeling form of Father Christmas—"that his children, that once were, have not died in vain: that from their sacrifice shall come a nobler, better world for all to live in, a world where countless happy children shall hold bright their memory forever. But for the children of To-day, save and spare them all you can from the evil hate and horror of the war. Later they will know and understand. Not yet. Give them back their Merry Christmas and its kind thoughts, and its Christmas charity, till later on there shall be with it again Peace upon Earth, Good Will toward Men."

His voice ceased. It seemed to vanish, as it were, in the sighing of the wind.

I looked up. Father Time and Christmas had vanished from the room. The fire was low and the day was breaking visibly outside.

"Let us begin," I murmured. "I will mend this broken horse."