

Parish and Home.

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A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

By JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

"What means this glory round our feet,"
The magi mused, "more bright than
morn?"

And voices chanted, clear and sweet,
To-day the Prince of Peace is born."

"What means that star," the shepherds
said,

"That brightens through the rocky
glens?"

And angels answering overhead
Sang "Peace on earth, good will to
men."

'Tis eighteen hundred years and more
Since those sweet oracles were dumb;
We wait for Him like those of yore;
Alas! He seems so slow to come.

But it was said in words of gold
No time or sorrow ere shall dim
That little children might be bold
In perfect trust to come to Him.

All round about our feet shall shine
A light like that the wise men saw,
If we our loving will incline
To that sweet life which is the law.

So shall we learn to understand
The simple faith of shepherds then,
And, clasping kindly hand in hand,
Sing "Peace on earth, good will to
men!"

And they who do their souls no wrong,
But keep at eve the faith of morn,
Shall daily hear the angels' song.
"To-day the Prince of Peace is born!"

JOHN'S THANKSGIVING.

By MYRA G. PLANTZ.

"You must think I am a fool,
Carrie!" No answer. "Or else
you think money grows on trees
in the back lot." This last was
too ridiculous to pass unnoticed.

"No, John, I don't; but I do
think we could afford to send

Widow Harrison a sack of potatoes for Thanksgiving, and the preacher a couple of chickens, and have a Thanksgiving dinner like other folks ourselves," replied his wife with some spirit.

"You women think we men are made of money. For my part I never could see any sense in making a fuss over Thanksgiving, or Christmas, and the like. Turkey's as good to me one day as another. Wish we raised them. Besides, I have nothing particular to be thankful for. Dear knows I have worked hard enough for all I have got," and with this John buried himself in his paper, which meant, "Bother me at your peril."

Mrs. Roberts sighed as she took up John's mending. She was thinking of the winter before their marriage. John never refused her anything then, nor after, till in the hard race to be a successful man he had learned to prize his hard-earned dollars more than his wife's comfort or the needs of those around him. "I'm saving it all for Carrie and the children," was his excuse, and she excused him in her own heart by thinking, "He's a good, true man. I suppose every man has a queer streak that's hard to get along with; I'll keep praying over it." So, as most wives are compelled to do, she loved, but did not admire, her husband, as she might have done.

While she was thinking this over something roused John from the political editorial in which he had plunged. He looked around. Carrie had gone, and the baby in its cradle by her side. He found himself in a village street where everything had a most unnatural appearance. An old woman, evidently dying, lay on the pavement. A forsaken baby was crying near. Fumes of liquor, mingled with horrid oaths, came from an open door near. He noticed a feeble looking man pass by; another leaped from a dark corner and plunged a dagger into him, snatched his victim's money, then left him dying in the street.

"What kind of a place is

this?" John cried. "Have I struck the infernal regions? In God's name, help this dying man!"

"Sir," said a hard-faced fellow near, "that name must not be mentioned except in a curse. This is a country that does not admit God, or His laws. We can be as wicked as we please."

"How thankful I would be to be in my own country again where we are protected by God's laws," cried John.

In a moment Carrie's patient face and the rosy little sleeper beside her were in view. In another instant they had vanished. The room became long and narrow, with rows of little beds on each side. The strangest thing of all was, John found himself a prisoner in one of them. The air was heavy with chloroform, and John noticed a sense of exquisite pain through the body. Near by stood a group of grave-looking men, talking to a kind-faced woman, and this woman, though she bathed his face with water, with a gentle, experienced touch, was not his own dear Carrie.

"Where am I?" he moaned.

"Be quiet," answered the eldest man. "You have met with an accident, so to save your life we have taken off one of your limbs. If you are patient and mind this good woman you will some day go home to your wife and little ones as good as new, except the crutches."

Go back to Carrie and the children as a miserable cripple! He felt hot tears scalding his face as he groaned, "How thankful I would be if I only had my legs again!"

The narrow walls faded, the room took on the form and colouring of his own cosy sitting-room. He felt the warmth of his own glowing grate. He stretched out his limbs with a delicious sense of their perfect strength. Yet before he could speak to make sure this was the reality and the other a dream the walls contracted to those of a rude cabin on his farm. The children were crying, his wife looked thin and pale.