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TWO CHRISTMASSES IN MY LIFE.



OBINA, come here." It was my Mother who called me from the other room, and I immediately left the work which I was doing and went to her. She was lying on the sofa in our little sitting-room, for she was very ill, dying, the doctor said, of heart disease. It was hard for Stewart and me to realize this, for only a month before Mother had been perfectly well, and in such good spirits.

We expected Father home for six weeks, and were in a great state of excitement in consequence. He was captain of a merchant vessel running between Liverpool and Montreal; but as we did not live in Montreal, but some distance from

it, we seldom had him home for any length of time together. We had made our little house look as pretty as possible, and were all prepared for his coming, expecting that each day would bring a telegram, to tell us that he had arrived.

A week went by, and he did not come; still we were not anxious, only disappointed, for he had often been delayed before. But when another passed, and still no word, we began to get very uneasy.

Poor, dear Mother! every ring at the door bell would drive the color from her face, and bring on a fit of trembling, which frightened us very much, for we had never seen her like that before.

At last one morning Mother came into my room, looking almost happy again. "Robbie, dear," she said, "we have been very foolish not to think of sending to the post-office, for perhaps Father may have been unexpectedly