"It Saved My Life"

is a common expression, often heard from those who have realized, by personal use, the curative powers of Ayer's Cherry Pectoral. "I cannot say enough in praise of Ayer's Cherry Pectoral, believing as I do that, but for its use, I should long since have died from lung troubles. — E. Bragdon, Palestine, Tex.

About six months ago I had a severe Hemorrhage of the Lungs, brought on by a distressing Cough, which deprived me of sleep and rest. I had used various cough balsams and expectorants, without obtaining relief. A friend advised me to try

Ayer's Cherry Pectoral.

I did so, and am happy to say that it helped me at once. By continued use this medicine cured my cough, and, I am satisfied, saved my life. — Mrs. E. Coburn, 18 Second st., Lowell, Mass.

I have used Ayer's Cherry Pectoral for over a year, and sincerely believe I should have been in my grave, had it not been for this medicine. It has cured me of a dangerous affection of the lungs, for which I had almost despaired of ever finding a remedy. — D. A. McMullen, Windsor, Province of Ontario.

Ayer's Cherry Pectoral saved my life. Two years ago I took a very severe Cold which settled on my lungs. I consulted physicians, and took the remedies they prescribed, but failed to obtain relief until I began using Ayer's Cherry Pectoral. Two bottles of this medicine completely restored my health. — Lizzie M. Allen, West Lancaster, Ohio.

Ayer's Cherry Pectoral,

Prepared by Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass. Sold by all Druggists. Price $1; six bottles, $5.

NOTICE!

ALL persons having bills against the Municipality of the County of Annapolis, must render the same, duly attested, to the Clerk, stating the character of the service rendered, the number of days actually employed, travel and all other necessary data, at least thirty days previous to the annual meeting of Council on the second Tuesday of January, 1888, in accordance with By-Law No. 8, of said Municipality.

O. T. DANIELS,
Municipal Clerk.

Bridgetown, Oct. 10th, 1887.

Salesmen Wanted!

FONTHILL NURSERIES.

465 Acres. the largest in Canada. 465 Acres.

Head Office, Toronto, Ont.; Branch, Montreal.

Hardy Canadian We want agents to sell our **NURSERY STOCK**

Steady employment at fixed salaries. MEN and WOMEN can have pleasant and profitable work the year round. Agents are earning from $40 to $75 per month, and expenses.

Send photo with application. Address

STONE & WELLINGTON,
Toronto, Canada.

J. W. BEALL, Manager. Aug. 8th, '86 1y.

MONEY to be made. Cut this out and return to us, and we will send you free, something of great value and importance to you, that will start you in business which will bring you in more money right away than anything else in the world. Any one can do the work and live at home. Either sex; all ages. Something new, that just coins money for all workers. We will start you; capital not needed. This is one of the genuine, important chances of a lifetime. Those who are ambitious and enterprising will not delay. Grand outfit free. Address, True & Co., Augusta, Maine.

Notice of Change of Partnership.

The Law Firm of

T. D. & E. RUGGLES,

Office on Queen Street, Bridgetown, N. S., will henceforth be known under the name and style of

T. D. RUGGLES & SONS,

consisting of T. D Ruggles, Q. C., Edwin Ruggles, B. A., and Harry Ruggles, B. A.

Dated December 16th, A. D., 1884. tf

MANHOOD

How Lost, How Restored!

We have recently published a new edition of **Dr. Culverwell's Celebrated Essay** on the radical and permanent cure (without medicine) of Nervous Debility, Mental and Physical Incapacity, Impediments to Marriage, etc., resulting from excesses.

Price, in a sealed envelope, only 4 cents, or two postage stamps.

The celebrated author in this admirable Essay, clearly demonstrates, from thirty years' successful practice, that alarming consequences may be radically cured without the dangerous use of internal medicines or the use of the knife; pointing out a mode of cure at once simple, certain and effectual, by means of which every sufferer, no matter what his condition may be, may cure himself cheaply, privately and radically.

This lecture should be in the hands of every youth and every man in the land.

Address,

The Culverwell Medical Co.,
41 Ann St., New York.

Post Office Box, 450.

WORKING CLASSES ATTENTION! We are now prepared to furnish all classes with employment at home, the whole of the time, or for their spare moments. Business new, light and profitable. Persons of either sex easily earn from 50 cents to $5.00 per evening, and a proportional sum by devoting all their time to the business. Boys and girls earn nearly as much as men. That all who see this may send their address, and test the business, we make this offer. To such as are not well satisfied we will send one dollar to pay for the trouble of writing. Full particulars and outfit free. Address George Stinson & Co., Portland, Maine.

CURE for the DEAF!

Peck's Patent Improved Cushioned Ear Drums.

PERFECTLY RESTORE THE HEARING, no matter whether deafness is caused by colds, fevers, or injuries to the natural drums. Always in position, but invisible to others and comfortable to wear. Music, conversation, and whispers heard distinctly. We refer to those using them. Send for illustrated book of proofs *free*. Address, F. HISCOX, 853 Broadway, N. Y. 17y

Executrix's Notice.

ALL persons having any legal demands against the estate of the late David Johnson, of Port Lorne, farmer deceased, are requested to render the same, duly attested to, within three months from the date hereof; and all persons indebted to said estate will make immediate payment to,

MRS. AVIS JOHNSTON,
Executrix.

Port Lorne, Nov. 7th, '87. 3m

EXECUTOR'S NOTICE!

ALL persons having legal demands against the estate of the late George Neily of Brooklyn, Annapolis, deceased, are requested to render the same, duly attested, within six months from date; and all persons indebted to the said estate are notified to make immediate payment to

FREEMAN FITCH.
Executor.

Clarence, Oct. 25th, '87. 3m

Executor's Notice.

ALL persons having legal demands against the estate of late LEVOSE BENT of Granville, in the County of Annapolis, farmer, deceased, are requested to render the same duly attested to, within six months from the date hereof, and all persons indebted to the said estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

EDMUND BENT,
AMBROSE BENT,
Executors.

Bridgetown, Nov. 1st, 1887. 3m

YOU can live at home, and make more money at work for us, than at anything else in this world. Capital not needed; you are started free. Both sexes; all ages. Any one can do the work. Large earnings sure from first start. Costly outfit and terms free. Better not delay. Costs you nothing to send us your address and find out; if you are wise you will do so at once. H. Hallett & Co., Portland, Maine.

Weekly Monitor.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR PATRONS.

VOL. 15. BRIDGETOWN, N. S., WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1887. NO. 38.

PARSONS' PILLS

These pills were a wonderful discovery. No others like them in the world. Will positively cure or relieve all manner of disease. The information around each box is worth ten times the cost of a box of pills. Find out about them, and you will always be thankful. One pill a dose. Parsons' Pills contain nothing harmful, are easy to take, and cause no inconvenience. One box will do more to purify the blood and cure chronic ill health than $5 worth of any other remedy yet discovered. If people could be made to realize the marvelous power of these pills, they would walk 100 miles to get a box if they could not be had without. Sent by mail for 25 cents in stamps. Illustrated pamphlet free, postpaid. Send for it; the information is very valuable. I. S. JOHNSON & CO., 22 Custom House Street, BOSTON, MASS.

Make New Rich Blood!

LAWRENCETOWN PUMP COMPANY,

(ESTABLISHED 1880.)

N. H. PHINNEY, Manager.

THE CELEBRATED

Rubber Bucket Chain Pump,

—ALSO:—

FORCE PUMP,

with Hose attached if required.

We are prepared to Manufacture WOODEN WATER PIPES for underdraining or conveying water under ground. Can be delivered at any station on the line of Railway. Send for Price List.

DRYDSALE & HOYT,

—MANUFACTURERS OF—

MONUMENTS, TABLETS, HEADSTONES, Etc.

IN AMERICAN AND ITALIAN MARBLE. Also

Granite and Freestone Monuments in the most Graceful Designs.

Curbing and Fencing Lots in Cemeteries

A SPECIALTY.

MANTLES, TABLE TOPS,

SOAP STONE, FOR STOVE LININGS, TO ORDER.

WE respectfully beg to solicit a share of public patronage, and hope by strict attention to business, square dealing and promptness in filling all orders, to merit the same.

Our Mr. Drysdale achieved a reputation throughout this County during his connection with Mr. O. Whitman, as foreman of his marble works, for the excellence and perfection of his work, and all persons favoring us with their orders may rest assured that the same careful attention in all details will be exercised.

WE WILL BE FOUND FOR THE PRESENT,

Near the SKATING RINK,

BRIDGETOWN, N. S.

A. J. DRYSDALE. W. J. HOYT.

FARMERS ATTENTION!!

—WE HAVE OPENED A—

Warehouse at Bridgetown, in Charge of E. A. CRAIG,

and are prepared to give the Farmers in the Annapolis Valley

FARM MACHINERY

of the BEST KIND and at LOWEST PRICES Ever Offered.

A Full Stock of Plows, Harrows, Cultivators, Seed Sowers, Drills, Mowers, and Rakes. Always on Hand.

TOP BUGGIES A SPECIALTY.

TIPPET, BURDETT & CO. - - E. A. CRAIG, MANAGER.

PIANOS! ORGANS! ORGANS!

ACADIA ORGAN CO.,

—:ARE STILL:—

MANUFACTURING THEIR FINE ORGANS

Which are Selling Fast and the Demand Steadily Increasing.

—THE PRICES ARE—

BELOW THE IMPORTED INSTRUMENTS,

Therefore the Intending Purchaser need not send his Money away for ORGANS when he can buy one of the Finest Instruments at Home.

PIANOS!

We have secured agency for several of the best makes of Pianos, such as STEINWAY & SONS., J. & C. FISHER, J. HERR, LANSDOWNE MANUFACTURING COMPANY, CHICKERING & SONS, and many others.

—Those who have been—

WAITING TO BUY CHEAP

and have an opportunity of selecting for themselves, will please call and see our Stock

WE CAN SELL AT CITY PRICES.

—We have in connection with our Organ business a lot of—

Dining Extension Tables,

made by the well-known maker, MR. JOHN EMSLIE, now in stock, and shall continue to keep them. Call and inspect. Mr. Emslie will also

REPAIR FURNITURE AT REASONABLE RATES.

CALL AND SEE US.

N. H. PHINNEY,

Stipendiary Magistrate

—:AND:—

COMMISSION MERCHANT.

STOVES, PLOWS, HOLLOWWARE, GROCERIES

FLOUR and MEAL, AT BOTTOM PRICES

—:FOR:—

CASH.

Lawrencetown, Feb. 7th, '87.

J. M. OWEN,

BARRISTER - AT - LAW,

Notary Public, Real Estate Agent.

United States Consul Agent.

Annapolis, Oct. 4th, 1882—

FOREMOST

In Life Insurance in the World.

The MUTUAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

—OF—

NEW YORK.

Established in 1843. - - Assets, Over $115,000,000.

THE subscriber is prepared to explain the different Forms of Policy issued and exhibit results attained in this Grand Old Company never equalled by any other.

All information promptly given or sent by mail upon application.

CALVIN RAYMOND,
Special Travelling Agent for Western Nova Scotia.

P. O. Address, Yarmouth, N. S.

RUBBER STAMP with your name in Fancy Type, 25 Visiting Cards, and INDIAN INK to mark Linen, only 25 cts. (stamps.) Book of 2000 styles free with each order. Agents Wanted. Big Pay. THALMAN MF'G CO., BALTIMORE, MD.

Poetry.

Beyond.

Autumn is dying; Winter is come,
Dead leaves are flying; the rivers are dumb;
The wind's like a knife—one's fingers grow numb;
There is snow on the mountain, ice in the pond,
Winter is with us, but spring is beyond.

The old year is dying; its glory is dead,
The days are all flying—their glory has fled,
The bushes grow bare as the berries grow red;
There is snow on the mountain ice in the pond,
The Old Year is dying, but the New is beyond.

We are all growing old, and life slips away,
There is bare time for work, and still less for play;
Though we think we grow wiser, the longer we stay;
But there's life in us yet—no need to despond:
This world may wax old, but heaven is beyond.

—*B. C. J., in Chambers Journal.*

Christmas Story.

Captain Santa Claus.

BY CAPTAIN CHARLES KING, U. S. A.

(From Harper's Magazine.)

(*Concluded.*)

'Maudie is a baby who cannot realize our position. Philip is my brave little knight and helper. It—it is so hard for mamma to say it, my boy, but if we buy what she so longs for at Christmas, there will be nothing left for the skates, and I know how you want them, and how many other things you ought to have. You have helped mother so often, Phil. Can you help her once more?'

For all answer he only clung to her the closer.

And now holiday week was near at hand. It was Friday and school would close that afternoon, and for two blessed, blissful weeks there would be no session at all. Christmas Day would come on Tuesday, and the Forties were running riot in the realms of anticipation. They hugged each other and danced about the street when the express agent told them of the packages that were coming almost every day for captain Ransom, and the little Townies, who were wont to protest they were glad their papas weren't in the army, were beginning to show traitorous signs of weakening. It was a sore test if every regiment had its own Santa Claus, as the Forties said.

And older heads were noting that for some time Captain Ransom drove not so much townward, up the valley as down; and that there was a well-defined sleigh track from the lower gate over to "the ranch." Officers coming up from the stables were quick to note the new feature in the wintry landscape, and to make quizzical comment thereon. Then, on Sunday, the third in Advent, a heavy snow-storm came up during the morning service, and the wind blew a 'blizzard.' It was only a few weeks after the Captain's arrival, but his handsome roans were well known in the valley already, and the ladies looked at each other and nodded significantly as they saw the team drawn up near the chapel door when the congregation came shuddering out into the cold. Mrs. Colonel Cross, who had a charming young sister visiting her for the holidays, and Mrs. Vane, whose cousin Pansy had come over from her brother's station at Fort Whittlesey, had both offered Ransom seats in their pews until he chose his own; but he had chosen his own very promptly, and it was well down the aisle opposite that to which Mrs. Carleton had humbly retired after her father's death. As a consequence the higher families reached the door only in time to see the Captain bundling the widow and her little ones in his costly robes, and driving away through the whirling storm.

That night the wind died away; the snow fell heavily, and all the next day it lay in silent, unruffled, unfurrowed beauty over the broad level below the fort, and though the Captain's sleigh went townward toward evening, and the butcher's 'bob' tore an ugly groove along the lower edge, there was now no trail other than the foot-path along the willow-fringed river-bank joining the garrison with the widow's gate. When Friday came, and the plain was still unfurrowed, Fort Rains was unanimous in its conclusion: Captain Ransom had offered himself again, and been rejected.

The households of Vane and Potts, and the ladies at least at the Colonel's, breathed freer. Captain Ransom was invited to Christmas dinner at all three places, and begged to be excused. He explained that he purposed having all the children at his house from eight to ten for general frolic that evening; and would not the ladies come over and see the fun? Mrs. Vane and 'Pansy' were for changing their dinner hour to five o'clock, if thereby the Captain could be secured, and Vane 'sounded' him, but without the hoped-for result. He would have to be at home, he said. Mrs. Carleton was narrowly watched. Women who had been dispose to treat her coldly could have hugged her now, if they could be sure she had really refused the best catch in the cavalry, and left a chance for some one else. But Mrs. Carleton gave no sign, and she was a woman they dared not question. What staggered the theory of renewed offer and rejection was the warmth and cordiality of manner with which they met in public—and they met almost daily. There was something that seemed to shatter the idea of rejection in the very smile she gave him, and in the reverence of his manner toward her. Estrangement there certainly was none, and yet he had been going over to the ranch every day, and his visits had suddenly ceased. Why? They scanned his face for indications; but, as Mrs. Vane put it, 'he always was an exasperating creature; you could no more read him than you could a mummy.'

Monday before Christmas had come, and Colonel Cross, trudging home from his office about noon, caught sight of the tall and graceful figure of Mrs. Carleton coming toward him along the walk. He was about to hail her in his cheery style, when he saw that her head was bowed, and that she was in evident distress. Even while he was wondering how to accost her, she put him out of doubt. Her lips were twitching and her cheeks were flushed; tears were starting in her eyes, but she strove hard to command herself and speak calmly.

'You were so kind as to order the 'special' for me this morning, Colonel, but I shall not need it; I cannot go to town.'

He knew well that something had gone wrong. Blunt rugged old trooper that he was, he had been her father's intimate in their cadet days, and he wanted to befriend her. More than a little he suspected that there was not a path of roses among the ladies at Rains. In his presence they were on guard over their tongues, but he was not born commanding officer of several garrisons for nothing.

'Mrs Carleton,' he impetuously spoke, 'something's amiss. Can't you tell an old fellow like me, and let me—ah—settle things? Surely it is something I can do.'

She thanked him warmly. It was nothing in which he could be of service, she declared, trying hard to smile; she was a little upset and could not go to town. But he saw she had just come from Mrs. Vane's, and he knew that estimable and virtuous woman thoroughly, and drew his conclusions. Whatever was wrong it was not unconnected with her monitions or ministrations—of that he was confident. As for Mrs. Carleton, she turned quickly from the fort and took her lonely, winding way among the willows to her valley home, a heart-sick woman.

Counting her ways and means, she had found that to pay for the items she had promised Maud and had ordered for her boy—the latter being the suit sent 'C. O. D.' from Chicago—she would have to ask a favor of her patrons at the fort. She had arranged with the proprietor of the big variety store in town that he should set aside for her a certain beautiful doll and one of the prettiest of the doll carriages, and that she would come and get them on this very afternoon. To meet her bills and these expenses, and that there might be no disappointment, she had addressed to the parents of her few pupils a modest little note, enclosing her bill, and asking as a kindness to her that it might be paid by Saturday, the 22nd. Courteous and prompt response had come from all but two, and with the money thus obtained she had settled her little household accounts. Mrs. Vane and Mrs. Potts, however, had vouchsafed no reply, and it was to the mothers, not the fathers, her notes had been addressed. On Monday morning, therefore, when she went to give Miss Adele her lesson, she ventured to ask for Mrs. Potts, and Mrs. Potts was out—spending the day at Mrs. Vane's. So thither she went, and with flushing cheeks and deep embarrassment inquired if the ladies had received her notes. Mrs. Potts had, and was overcome, she said, with dismay. She had totally forgotten, and thought it was next Saturday she meant; and now the Captain had gone to town, and there was no way she could get at him. Then came Mrs. Vane's turn. Mrs. Vane, too, had received her note, but she was not overcome. With much majesty of mien she told the widow that she always paid her bills on the last day of the quarter, and that her husband was so punctilious about it and so methodical that she never asked him to depart from the rule. Mrs. Carleton strove hard to keep down her pride and the surging impulse to cry out against such heartless superiority of manner and management. There was a tinge of reproach in the plea she forced herself to make for her babies' sake. 'You know there are no more lessons this term, Mrs. Vane; my work is done; and I so needed it for Christmas, or I would not have asked.' And she smiled piteously through the starting tears. Mrs. Vane was sorry—very sorry. She could hardly ask her husband to depart from his life-long practice, even if he were here—and he, too, had gone to town.

Yes, everybody seemed to have gone or sent to town for Christmas shopping. Her little ones were alone in having no one to buy for them. Harold Ransom too was going, for she saw the handsome roans come dashing up the drive, as she rose, with a burning sense of indignity, to take her leave. She came upon Miss Pansy in the hallway, all hooded and furred, and beaming with bliss at the prospect of a sleigh-ride to town—behind the roans, no doubt. Never mind that now. Her heart was full of only one thought—her babies. Where were now her long-cherished schemes? All Fort Rains was blithe and jubilant over the coming festivities; Maud was wild with anticipation; and she alone—she alone, who had worked so hard and faithfully that her children might find joy in their Christmas awakening—she alone had seen her hopes turn to ashes. In her pride and her vehement determination to be 'beholden' to no one, she would seek no help in her trouble. She went home, asking only to be alone, thankful that the children were spending the day with friends in the garrison, and could not be there to see the misery in her eyes.

Full an hour she gave to her uncontrollable grief, locked in her room, sobbing in utter prostration. Her eyes were still red and swollen; she was weak, trembling, exhausted, when the sudden sound of hoof-beats roused her. The blood flew to her cheeks. Despite her prohibition, then, he was here. He had come again, and something told her he had fathomed her trouble, and would not be denied. She heard the quick, firm tread upon the steps, the imperative rat-tat-tat of the whip-handle on the door. She would have called to her faithful slave Mrs. Malloy, the 'striker's' wife who had known her from her babyhood, and bidden her tell the Captain she must be excused, but it was too late. Bridget Malloy had seen her face when she came home; had vainly striven to enter her room and share her sorrow; had shrewdly suspected the cause of the trouble, and through the key-hole had poured forth voluble Hibernian fealty and proffers of every blessed cent of her savings, but only to be implored to go away and let her have her cry in peace. Even had Mrs Carleton ordered her to deny her to the visitor, it is probable that Mrs. Malloy would have obeyed—her own instincts.

'Sure it's glad I am to see the Captain!' was her prompt greeting; 'and it was a black day that ever let ye go from her. Come right in, an' I'll call her to ye. It's all broke up she is.'

And so she had to come. There he stood in the little sanctuary where Philip in photographed beauty beamed down upon her from over the mantel, and Philip's rusting sword hung like that of Damocles by the fragile thread of sentiment that bound her to the past. There he stood with such a word of tenderness, yearning, sympathy, and suppressed passionate love in his dark eyes! She came in, almost backward, striving to hide her swollen and disfigured face. He never strove to approach her. With one hand on the mantel, he stood gazing sorrowfully at her. With one hand on the door-knob, with averted face, she silently awaited his words.

'I have discovered you, Kate, though I left my sleigh and came on Roscoe. I have tried to accept what you said eight days ago, but no man on earth who has heard what I have heard to-day could obey you longer. No. Listen! he urged, as she half turned, with silencing gesture. 'I'm not here to plead for myself, but—my heart is breaking to see you suffering, and to think of your being subjected to such an outrage as that of this morning. Of course I heard of it. I made them tell me. The Colonel had seen your distress, and told me you had abandoned the trip to town. I found out the rest. Yes, Mrs Carleton, if you so choose to term it, (for she had turned with indignant query in her eyes), 'I *pried* into your affairs. Do you think I can bear this, to know you are in want—for want it must be, or you'd never have stooped to ask that vulgar, purse-proud, patronizing woman for money? Do you think I can live here and see you subjected to this? By Heaven! If nothing else will move you, in Philip's name, in your children's name, let me lift this burden from you. Send me across the continent if you like. I'll promise to worry you no more, if that will buy your trust. I've lived and borne my lot these eight or nine long years, and can bear it longer if need be. What I can't bear, and won't bear, is your suffering from actual *poverty*. Kate Carleton, won't you trust me?'

'How *can* I be your debtor, Captain Ransom? Ask yourself—ask any one—what would be said of me if I took one cent from you! I *do* thank you. I *am* grateful for all you have done and would do. Oh, it is not that I do not bless you every day and night for being so thoughtful for me, so good to my little ones! It wasn't for myself I was so broken to-day; it was for my—my babies. Oh, I—I *cannot* tell you!

And now she broke down utterly, weeping hysterically, uncontrollably. In the abandonment of her grief she threw her arms upon the wooden casing of the doorway, and bowed her head upon them. One instant he stood there, his hands fiercely clinching, his broad chest heaving, his bronzed, honest, earnest face working with his weight of emotion, and then, with uncontrollable impulse, with one bound he leaped to her side, seized her slender form in his arms and clasped her to his breast. In vain she struggled; in vain her startled eyes, filled with resolute loyalty to the old faith, blazed at him through their mist of tears; he held her close, as once again, despite her struggles and her forbidding words, he poured forth his plea.

'You *can* take it, you *must* take it. For your own sake, for your children's sake—even for his!—give me the right to protect and cherish you. I—I don't ask your love. Ah, Kate, be merciful!' and then—fatal inspiration!—but the face he loved was so—so near; he never would have done it had he thought; it was only an utterly unconquerable an impulse as his wild embrace; his lips were so tremulous with entreaty, with love, sympathy, pleading, pity, passion, everything that impelled and nothing that restrained, that with sudden sweep they fell upon her flushed and tear-wet cheek, and ere he knew it he had kissed her.

There was no mistaking the wrath in her eyes now. She was free in an instant, and bidding him begone. He begged hard for pardon, but to no purpose. She would listen to nothing. Go he must—his presence was insult. And he left her panting with indignation, a vengeance-hurling goddess, a wild-eyed Juno, while he at full gallop went tearing through the snow-drifts, recklessly, dolefully, yet determinedly, back to the post. In half an hour he was whipping to town.

When sunset came, and the evening gun awakened the echoes of the snow-shrouded valley, and the red disk went down behind the crested bluffs far up the stream, a sleigh came out from the fort, and Captain Vane with curious mixture of cordiality and embarrassment, restored Phil and Maud to the maternal roof, and begged to hand her the amount due from him and from Captain Potts for family tuition. He had only heard a—accidentally—a few minutes before, of her request. And wasn't there something else he could do? Would she not go to town with him to-morrow morning? She thanked him. She hardly knew what to do. Here was the money at last, but it was Christmas Eve now, and there was no time to be lost, and town lay full six miles away. Perhaps she wished a messenger now, suggested the Captain—he would send a mounted man gladly. Knowing no other way to secure her treasures for her little ones, she breathlessly accepted his offer, briefly explained the situation, and told him how she longed to have the presents there, with the trifles she had made for them, to greet their eyes with the coming day. The messenger could go to the store and get the coveted doll and carriage; there would surely be sleighs from the fort that would bring them out for him, and he would find the box from Chicago at the express office, and could pay the charges and sign the receipt on her written order to the agent. It was arranged in a moment, and with reviving hope she gave the children their tea and strove to get them early to bed.

Ten o'clock came. The little ones were at last asleep. She had filled the stockings with such inexpensive but loving remembrances as she could afford, and had tottered dangerously near the brink of another flood of tears, when Malloy and his wife came in, the one with a box of tools for Phil, the other with a set of china for the doll house. She had finally bidden those faithful friends good-night, and having arranged the few gifts she had for the children, she threw over her shoulders a heavy shawl and went to the gate to listen for the messenger's return.

It was a perfect night — clear, still, and sparkling. The moon shone brightly upon the glistening mantle of snow, and tinged with silver the pine crests across the stream. Westward, on a little rise, were the twinkling lights of the fort. Far beyond, far up the narrowing valley, other lights, dim and distant, marked the position of the town. She could hear the faint muffled sound of shots with which the benighted but jubilant frontiersmen were hailing the coming of the sacred anniversary, like some midwinter Fourth of July, with exuberent and explosive hilarity. Then, nearer at hand, soft, sweet and solemn, there floated out over the valley the prolonged notes of the cavalry trumpet sounding the signal 'Lights out,' the 'good-night' of the garrison. Then all the broad windows of the barracks were shrouded in sudden gloom; only in the quarters of the officers, on the opposite side of the parade, were the lights still twinkling. In one of them, nearest the gate, high up aloft, and close under the gables, there gleamed a brighter light than all the others. Even in the chilly air she felt the flush of blood to her cheeks. That was Ransom's house. She well knew he had chosen it, farthest from the quarters and stables of his troop, simply because it was at the end of the row, over-looking the valley, and nearest her. Two weeks since he had said to her that he could not rid himself of the thought of her isolation. Through off the beaten track a full three-quarter mile, and within long carbine range of the sentries, she was still far away almost unprotected. Though Indians were no longer to be feared, there were such things as tramps and blackguards in the settlements. She laughed at his fears. She had lived there three years, and never heard a sound at night other than the occasional howl of a coyote and the distant watch-cry of the sentries. She had brave old Malloy—with his gun, and Bridget with her tongue and nails; she had Philip's sword, her own brave spirit, and her boy; what had she to fear?

All the same, struggle against it though she would, it was sweet to hear his anxious questioning. Even if unmolested by marauders, something might go wrong—Maudie have croup, a kerosene lamp burst. She might need help who knew? 'I shall put a bright lamp and reflector in the little round garret window every night as soon as I get home,' he said 'and should you ever be in danger or need, throw a red handkerchief over your biggest lantern, and show it at the top window. If the sentries don't see it at once, fire Malloy's gun.' She promised, laughingly, though repudiating the possibility. She had told herself that Philip's spirit was all the protection she needed; but the night landscape of the valley, the night lights at the fort, had acquired of late an interest they never knew before. She would have scourged herself had she believed, she would have stormed at any one who suggested, that she went to look for his light; but if ever it failed to be there, at ten or eleven or later, she knew it. Whatever might be his evening occupation at the fort—a dinner, a card party, officers' school, 'noncoms.'' recitation—it was his habit on reaching home to go at once to the garret and post his sentinel light. What would he not have given for an answering signal?

And there was the light now. He was home, then, and despite her anger and his banishment, he was faithful. Christmas Eve, and only ten, and he was home and watching over her. She was still quivering with wrath at him for that ravished kiss—at least she told herself she was, and had told him a great deal more. Was it quite fair to drive him from her home, as she had, when Phil was so fond of him and Maudie loved him so, and he was so devoted to them? What could he be doing at home so early? There was a party at the Adjutant's, she knew. She had been obliged to decline. She had three invitations for Christmas dinners, and had said no to all, gratefully. There were many who wanted to be kind to her, but she had only one dress she considered fit to wear, so too had little Maud, and as for her brave boy Phil, he had nothing—unless the suit from Chicago came in time. Without that he could not go to the Captain's Christmas tree. Why did not the messenger return? She was becoming feverishly anxious.

It was too cold to remain out-of-doors. She re-entered, and paced fitfully up and down her little parlor. She went in and bent over her sleeping children, and rearranged the coverlets with the noiseless touch of the mother's hand; she leaned over and kissed them softly, and now that her surcharged nature had had free vent, and the skies were cleared by the morning's storm, she felt far gentler, happier. Her cry had done her good. Her hopefulness was returning—but not the messenger. What *could* detain him? Where could he be? It was eleven, and long after, when at last she sighted a shadowy horseman loping across the moonlit plain, and slowly he dismounted at her gate and came to her—empty-handed. He was a soldier of Vane's troop, and his tale was doleful. He had been set upon in a saloon, robbed and beaten. The money was gone, he had brought back nothing but bruises. As consolation he imparted the fact that 'twas too late to get the doll and carriage. The last ones had been sold that evening, as she had not come to claim them. Then he had stepped in to take a drink, because he was cold, and then the catastrophe had occurred. True or false as might be the story, there was no doubt of the veracity of that portion which referred to the drink. Conscious that it was too late to do anything at this hour, she simply dismissed him, bidding him go at once to the post, barred and locked her door, and sat down, stunned and heart-sick. This, then, was the joyous Christmas for which she had worked so long and hard! She raised her arms in one last appeal to Heaven; then threw herself upon her knees besides her little ones, and buried her face in her quivering hands. What would their early waking bring to them now but disappointment? For half an hour she knelt there helpless, stunned. Then lifted her head—started.

Somebody was fumbling at the storm-door. With her heart in her throat she listened, incredulously, fearful, then convinced. The boards creaked and snapped beneath a healthy, steady tread. She heard beyond doubt a muttered question, a reply. There were two of them, then! All was darkness in her parlor now, only the light burned in the children's room. Her heart bounded, but she stole, despite trembling knees, noiselessly, into the parlor, stooped, and peered through the slats, and, sure as fate, two men, burly, muffled so that they were unrecognizable, were bending down at the storm-house in front of her parlor door. Quickly she rose, scurried through the parlor, up the stairs to the room above the kitchen, where she rapped heavily at the door. 'Malloy! Malloy!' she cried. No answer but a snore and heavy breathing. She rattled the knob and called again. This time with success.

'Who is't?' was the startling challenge.

'It is I — Mrs. Carleton! Quick, Malloy! Two men are trying to break in at the front door.'

She heard the bound with which the old soldier leaped to the floor. She ran into the front room. One quick glance showed her Ransom's signal-light blazing across the mile of snow. One moment more, and muffled in red silk, her biggest lantern swung glowing in the window. Then down the stairs she hurried to her children, just as Malloy, with his carbine, and Bridget, with a six-shooter, swept gallantly into action. She heard his fierce summons, 'Who stands there?' and listened breathlessly. No response. 'Who's there, I say?' Dead silence. Not even scurrying footsteps. She crept to the window and peered out. No one near. She raised the sash, threw open a shutter, and gazed abroad. The little piazza was deserted, unless both were hiding inside the storm-house. No! See! Over among the willows by the stream there are shadowy figures and a sleigh.

'They've gone, Malloy! They are up the river-bank with a sleigh!' she called. And then she heard him furiously unbarring the parlor door preparatory to a rush. She heard it swing open, an impetuous sally, a collision, a crash, the clatter of a dropped carbine against the resounding woodwork, a complication of anathemas and objurgations from the dark interior, and then a dialogue in choice Hiberian.

'Are ye hurted, Terence?'

'I am. Bad scran to the blagyards that left their trunk behind 'em!'

Trunk! what trunk? She bore a light into the parlor, and revealed Malloy, with rueful visage, doubled up over a big wooden box planted squarely in the doorway. Robbers, indeed! Mrs. Bridget whisked him out of the way, ran and closed the children's door, and in another moment had lugged the big box into the parlor, and wrenched away the top. The two women were on their knees before it in an instant.

First they dragged forth a great flat paper box, damp and cool and moist, and this the widow opened tremblingly. A flat layer of white cotton, dry; then paper; a flat layer of white cotton, moist; and then, peep! Upon the fresh, green coils of smilax, rich with fragrance, sweet, moist, dewy, exquisite, lay store upon store of the choicest flowers—rose buds and rose blossoms in cream and yellow and pink and crimson, carnations in white and red, heliotrope and hyacinth, and fairest pansies and modest little violets, and gorgeous tulips, even great cactus—the first flowers she had seen in years. Oh, Captain Santa Claus! who taught you Christmas wooing? Where learned you such art as this? Beneath the box was yet another, bearing the stamp of the great Chicago firm, sealed, corded, just as he had got it from the agent that evening—Phil's long-sought-for suit. She hugged it with delight, while tears started to her dancing eyes. How good he was! How thoughtful for her and for her little ones! There, beneath was the very white doll carriage, blue lining, umbrella top, and all, wherein reposed a wondrous wax doll, the like of which Maud had never dreamed. There was a tin kitchen with innumerable appendages. There was a glistening pair of club skates of finest steel and latest patent, the very thing that Phil so longed for and had so lovingly resigned. There were fur cap and gloves and boots for him, and such an elegant shawl for Mrs. Malloy! He could send them all he chose, and no offence. But to her—on her he could lavish only flowers.

And then her Irish allies returned to their slumbers, and left her to the rapture of arranging the new presents and the contemplation of her flowers; and she was hugging the pasteboard box and gloating over her treasures when there was sudden noise without, a rush up the steps and before she could drop her possessions the door flew open, and in came a wild-eyed, breathless captain of cavalry, gasping the apparently unwarrantable query, 'What's the matter?'

For an instant she stared at him in astonishment. Holding tight her flowers, she gazed at his agitated face. 'Nothing,' she answered. 'How could anything be wrong when you have been so—so—'But words failed her.

'Why! your red light's burning!' he explained.

'I declare! I forgot all about it!'

Then another silence. He threw himself back in an arm-chair, breathing hard, and striving to recover his composure.

'Do you mean—didn't you mean to signal for help?' he finally asked.

'Yes, I did'—an arch and mischievous smile now brightening her face. 'When I swung it I wanted you to come quick and drive—yourself away.'

Then she put down her box, and stepped impulsively toward him, two white hands outstretched, tears starting from her eyes the color surging to her lovely face—'Where can I find words to thank you, Captain Santa Claus?

He rose quickly, his face flushed and eager, his strong hands trembling.

'Shall I tell you?' he asked.

Her head was drooping now; her eyes could not meet the fervent love and longing in his; her bosom heaved with every breath. She could only stand and tremble when he seized her hands.

'Kate, will you take back what you said to-day?'

She stole one glance into his passionate, pleading eyes, and her head dropped lower.

'*Can't* you take it back, Kate?'

A moment's pause. At last the answer. 'How can I, unless—unless you take back what you—what caused it?'

Never before had the little Carletons waked to such a radiant Christmas morning. Never had the Forties known so royal a Christmas tree. Never before was 'Uncle Hal's' so thronged with beaming faces and happy hearts. But among all the little ones whom his love and thoughtfulness had blessed there was no face that shone with bliss more radiant, with joy more deep and perfect, than that of Captain Santa Claus.

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