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A Christmas Letter.

"What are you writing?" asked Margaret Regan, as she surprised little Frances Moran with pencil and note paper.

"I am writing a letter," a long, long letter," replied the scholar of seven summers with old fashioned ways, reflecting the manners of grown up persons.

Margaret was Frances' school teacher. The meeting between the two at the latter's home was but an incident in a long standing intimacy between the Moran and Regan families,—an intimacy so much the more appreciated by Margaret as she was without near relatives and without other friends in whom she could confide. As often as she wished to come, their house was as free to her as her own home. Hence we will not be surprised to learn that Margaret was Frances' best friend, always excepting, of course, papa and mamma, and her brother Fred, who used to make things so pleasant when he came from college to spend his holidays.

"Writing to Santa Claus, and Christmas still ten days away?"

And Margaret smiled on the winsome face upturned to hers, but the smile soon died away in spite of herself at the memories that thought of Christmas awakened in her mind. Could Christmas ever be pleasant for her again? Alas! happiness in this world was past and gone as far as she was concerned. Too many tears had been shed to think of the approaching festival with