The Two Stockings

BY J. W. YEAGLEY.

Two little stockings side by side,
Hung on the chimney wall,
Hung in the joyous Christmastide,
Awaiting Santa's call;
One it was made of lambskin's fleece,
And one of cotton threads.
The little owners, wrapped in peace,
Slept in their quiet beds.

Within one stocking was inclosed
A note to Santa Claus,
In which the writer said, "I s'posed
I ought to tell the cause,
Why I, the only child that's here,
Have hung, as I have done,
Two stockings for you, Santa dear,
Instead of one.

"One stocking is a little girl's,
Sweet as the summer skies,
Whose tresses hang in golden curls
About her merry eyes;
Her father's dead, her mother's ill,
And playthings she has none,
No little joys her heart ere thrill,
Her home's a cheerless one.

"The other stocking's mine, but then
I easily can wait,
Until some time you come again,
My patience won't abate;
And do not think my soul you'll mar,
Or make my heart to grieve,
For I have heard 'tis better far
To give than to receive.

"And now, please, Santa, if you will,
And you have aught to spare,
From out your store our stockings fill,
Which we left hanging there;
But if your stock is getting low,
And you should be hard run,
Then let my little stocking go,
And fill the cotton one."

Old Santa down the chimney swung,
Clad in his furry coat,
And found the stockings for him hung,
And read the little note;
And as he read the tear-drops fell,
Suffused his loving eyes,
"The little darlings!" said he, "Well!
I'll give them both a prize.

"I'll fill both stockings to the brim,
I'll make them overflow,—
The little maid has learned of Him
Who came long years ago,
Who taught us to ourselves deny,
To render others good,
And ne'er forget the golden tie,
Of human brotherhood."

The Turning Point

A child looks on Christmas as the turning point in his calendar, so the nations count time from the first Christmas as if nothing which happened before was worth recording, as if the years before seemed like long rows of ciphers with no numeral preceding them to give them value, as if the world was beginning anew. Every time men use the abbreviations A. D. on their letter heads, they testify to the fact that Christ's coming was the turning point of history. Of course it is not true that events preceding the first Christmas are not worth recording, for Christ was in the world before Jesus slept His first sleep in Bethlehem's manger, but it is true that they are of worth in proportion as they are related to this central fact of history. They are like tidal rivers which flow to Him, and the ebb of the tide bears back into these streams of events a fulness of meaning borrowed from the central figure of history from which they ebb.

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