

"I'm not invited." At this Myra began to cry, and Holly running from his hiding place said, "Please sir, it was I who woke this little girl when I tried to kiss her, and she has taken all the blame in a most lady-like manner." "And she's not at all selfish," chimed in Mistletoe, because she gives her baby brother by far the biggest share of the bed. Look at him now, sir." "But I really know her the best," broke in Blaze, "she can't often afford to invite me in, but when she does, I notice that she always lets the other children sit around me, while she herself sits out in the cold." "Well, if this is true," said Santa Claus, "you deserve a merry Christmas, Myra." "Hurrah," shouted the three goblins, "hurrah, give her three wishes!" "Yes, she shall have three wishes," answered Santa Claus, "so come now Myra, first wish." "I would like a nice, big fairytale book for Polly." "Yes," said Santa Claus, "now, second wish." "And I would like a big dolly that goes to sleep, for Dottie," answered Myra. "Yes," said Santa Claus, "now for your last wish." "I would like a nice, red cloak for—no, no—a big, painted ball," sobbed Myra, "and, and it's for baby." "Bravo!" said Santa Claus, "Baby shall have his painted ball; here Holly, take this for baby's stocking." Holly darted away, then Santa Claus turned to Myra again, and throwing some of his magic sleeping powder in her eyes, said, "Good night Myra, and a Merry Christmas." Myra did not answer for she was asleep, neither did she hear the whispered "good nights" of the goblins as they departed. The sleeping dust had done its work well.

Early next morning when most little boys and girls were sleeping, Myra was suddenly awakened by loud shouts of "Myra, oh Myra, a happy Christmas, Myra," and rubbing her sleepy eyes Myra saw her two sisters standing beside her bed. "Look," cried Polly, "look what Santa Claus has left me!" and she showed to the wondering eyes of Myra the fairytale book she had wished for. Then in chimed little Dottie with, "And look at my big doll Myra, and it goes to sleep, too!" Then before Myra could answer both Polly and Dottie cried out together, "Look, Myra dear, what's on the end of your bed?—the red cloak you so wished for." And they handed her a beautiful red cloak, and inside she found this note: "From a very old friend who begs you never to forget him again." Poor Myra was so surprised that for a moment she could not answer. Then kissing her sisters she said, "So he did leave me it after all." Of course, Polly and Dottie didn't know what Myra meant by this, but they knew that she was happy, so they shouted, "Hurrah for Santa Claus, and a merry Christmas, a merry Christmas to everybody."

### Down and Out.

BY HELEN M. RICHARDSON.

He is old and bony, feeble and worn,  
With a halting gait and a drooping head;  
Day by day from the sunlit morn  
Till nightfall his plodding hoof-beats tread.

His driver a boy with an urging whip,  
Thoughtless, unconscious, with youthful zeal,  
Holding the reins with a jerking grip  
That pulls on the grinding bit of steel.

The crowd goes its idle or busy way;  
Who cares for a horse that is lame and old?

There's never an hour in the busy day  
But one is beaten or one is sold.

The proud high-stepper, — ah, mark him well!  
Nor fail to note as you pass him by,  
His arching neck and his nostrils' swell,  
His pawing hoof and his flashing eye.

It may be the wreck that you see today  
Was once in a harness like his as bright;  
He may have stepped in the selfsame way,  
Proudly erect and with footstep light.

Yet someone sold him to be a slave;  
To be lashed, ill-treated, ill-fed;—no doubt.

Somebody loved him, sometime, but now  
He's just a horse that is down and out.

—Our Dumb Animals.

### The Holy Three in Egypt.

BY M. WOELLWARTH.

When in Egypt lived the Three  
We call the Holy Family,  
All their humble dwelling round  
Lay a tiny strip of ground.  
Here Mary walked at eventide,  
With Child Jesus at her side,  
And where her robe's hem touched the earth

Sprang flowers white and blue to birth:  
Eastern poppies glowing shone—  
Flower lamps lit by the sun.  
'Twixt the low hills and the sky  
Snowy birds went fluttering by.  
When the last pale rays of light  
Were lost within the veil of night,  
Then those dear and holy Three  
Went to rest all silently—  
Mary close beside her sweet,  
Gentle Joseph at their feet.

Now the things without a soul  
Came gliding out from tree and hole—  
Desert eagle, flying bat,  
Leopard, lion, mouse, and rat;  
Shy wild goat and prancing kid  
Between the lynx and vulture slid;  
All the things that creep and run—  
Lizard, asp, chameleon—  
Round the house till break of day  
A strange and silent guard they lay.  
When morning tossed the gay sun up,  
A golden ball in sapphire cup,  
Of Mary saw with wondering eyes  
Her little Son awake and rise.  
There He stood in short, white gown,  
Pink and flushed and golden brown.  
She watched Him cross the cottage floor,  
She watched Him slip out through the door;

And when the beasts saw Him advance,  
Each made a quaint obeisance.  
She saw His tiny hand thrust through  
The lion's mane, as though He knew  
His power to subjugate  
By love divine all fear and hate.  
The wild ass and the fox He led:  
A white dove fluttered round His head.  
The others softly followed Him  
Until He reached the desert rim;  
For where the desert-line began,  
He clasped His hands and off they ran.  
When from this entrancing game  
Back on dancing feet He came,  
Mary ran her Lord to meet,  
Kissed His robe, His hands, His feet;  
And often, when she sat apart,  
Pondered this thing in her heart.  
—From Ave Maria.

### A Christmas Story..

BY ALICE LYTLE.

"Hark, the herald angels sing," the choir voices rang out. "Peace on earth good will to men." The old Christmas carol died away, the echo sounding softly as the silvery haired pastor raised his hands and with voice trembling with emotion prayed for the struggling suffering world. With tears in his eyes he prayed for that lasting peace when good will would again reign among the children of men. With the closing "Amen," the congregation sank to their knees in silent prayer, and then, rising, went quietly from the church.

One tall woman dressed in deepest black walked proudly down the aisle, bowing coldly to some and passing others without even a glance.

Outside the snow fell silently, softly covering everything with a soft downy mantle. As the woman passed up the pathway leading to the large stone house she paused and looking around drank in the beauty of the scene. Post and pillar were soft with a clinging garment of white. Gently the branches of the old evergreen trees dipped and swayed with their snowy burden, sending little showers of snow with every movement. From the windows golden lights shone, making a ruddy haze through the falling snow. How quiet and peaceful it looked.

Mrs. Carlisle sighed heavily as she went up the broad steps. To-morrow would be Christmas Eve and she would spend it alone as she had spent the past five. Five years! How long ago it seemed since she and her son Derry had disagreed and he had gone angrily away. She had not written him to come back; at the end of two years she heard he was married. Through the same friend she had received the news of his enlisting. Even then she had not written his wife, not till the deadening

word came that Derry, decorated with the Victoria Cross, was missing. Then the proud mother broke down, shutting herself up in her misery. When she could bear it she wrote Derry's wife imploring her to come, only to have the letter returned. Mrs. Carlisle had gone many weeks before, leaving no address.

Eagerly the mother scanned the paper, but months went by bringing no word, and finally she gave up all thought that Derry was alive.

No one knew how her heart ached when the men in khaki marched by, nor how she longed to take the boys by the hand and wish them God speed. The words of the carol still rang in her ears as she went slowly up the stairs.

Putting aside her wraps she stood long at the window. The snow had ceased to fall. Softly the city lights quivered and gleamed, while on all sides curling spirals of smoke showed against the deep blue of the sky. A merry jingle of bells roused her and she glanced down as a cutter flew by laden with parcels. To-morrow would be Christmas Eve. Why should she spend it alone? For a moment she stood frowning thoughtfully and then raising her eyes she looked up smilingly at a splendid silver star, a twinkling silvery fairy of the sky. Still smiling she went slowly down the stairs. To-morrow would be different, yes, very different.

Calling her old housekeeper she gave that astonished person an order for the best Christmas dinner she could prepare.

"Get Sadie to help you Mary, I want the table arranged for twelve." She smiled at Mary's evident astonishment. "Tell John to bring the car round at seven to-night, I am going down town."

"Yes, Mrs. Carlisle; will you come to dinner now?" Mary was quite pleased with the prospect of "company" it would indeed be a welcome change from the quietness of the big house.

As the big car went rapidly down the street Mrs. Carlisle looked about with a new feeling in her heart. On every side people hurried by with arms laden with parcels.

Going from shop to shop she spent money lavishly. A large box of crimson roses was despatched to the pastor's home. A bunch of fragrant violets and dewy moss went to the old couple, lately from the country, who sat near her pew in church. Soft slippers and shawls went their way bearing good wishes. To the little woman who did her washing, she sent an immense goose, gayly decorated with sprays of holly and mistletoe. A Christmas tree and a load of glistening holly and fragrant flowers completed her purchase. Strangely content she turned towards home, tired but with a little smile on her lips.

"If Derry were only here!" the thought kept beating on her brain. Stifling a sigh she went into the house, her arms laden with parcels.

All next day with Mary and Sadie, she worked till the place was a perfect bower of loveliness. From the kitchen came faintly the sound of busy workers. All the guests had promised to come, cars calling for them.

Promptly twelve girlish figures were ushered in; these lonely girls whose thoughts were with the home folk so far away. So it was a happy party that sat around the beautifully arranged table. Always an ideal hostess, this time Mrs. Carlisle surpassed herself.

Afterwards the laughing girls gathered about the glittering tree; the tallest one had been given the honor of taking off and distributing the parcels. With delighted cries they were opened, disclosing a box of bon bons and a quaint silver bracelet.

As the girls were talking and admiring the peculiar design of the bracelets which Mrs. Carlisle had explained as some peculiar Eastern charm of "Good Luck," one of them came quietly forward and laid a huge bunch of golden-hearted roses in Mrs. Carlisle's arms.

Picking up the card she read, "The girls to whom you have given such happiness wish you all the peace and joy of the Christmas and New Year."

The last stroke of the big clock died away. The girls had gone an hour ago. Mrs. Carlisle sat looking into the glowing fire which sent rays of light across the polished floor. As she looked around her eyes rested on the glittering tree, now bright, as the light from the fire flashed on it, now dark and shadowy. How often the happy hearted Derry had danced around such another tree. Mrs.

Carlisle buried her face in her hands and as quickly raised it and started to her feet as the door bell rang sharply through the quiet house. As she stood holding back the heavy curtain Mary went quickly to the door but paused as a strange little sound came to them. Again the soft knocking as of baby hands pounding on the big door. "Open it, Mary,"—Mrs. Carlisle was strangely excited.

As the heavy door swung back, a tiny figure all in red, with golden curls, stepped in and stood blinking in the light. Then catching sight of the tall woman held up its little arms and lipsed with baby voice "Merry Tismas Gama."

In a moment Mrs. Carlisle had the little one in her arms. Mary looked on in bewilderment but stepped back with a startled cry as a girlish figure and a tall one in khaki came softly forward.

"Derry, my son, my son!" again and again she repeated the words as she held him in her arms.

Late in the night they sat and talked, Derry telling over again the story of his miraculous escape from the enemy, how he had been wounded and had lain unconscious for days and was now home, honorably discharged.

Little Billy had been carried upstairs and tucked in his father's little crib. Mrs. Carlisle would allow no hands but hers carry the sleepy baby and cover him softly.

The telephone had been called into use. She had been fortunate in getting the big store before it closed and, late as it was, a load of parcels was delivered.

Derry and Jean had arranged the tree for its second donation, and had laughed happily as the beaming grandmother handed a motley array of childish toys to be tied on.

As Mrs. Carlisle knelt by her bed breathing out words of thankfulness, the chimes from a distant church pealed out a Christmas carol. In her heart echoed the sweet refrain, "Peace on earth, good will to men."

### The Windrow

Not only Belgian but also Polish people are being deported to Germany to work. For months the *Kurier Lodski* has been protesting against the deportation.

Most of the great writers of Britain have seen the war at first hand. H. G. Wells is now getting a glimpse of it in the Trentino (Italy); John Masefield saw its horrors on the Gallipoli Peninsula; Hugh Walpole has been continuously with the Russian Red Cross on the eastern battle line; Conan Doyle has been on "three fronts."

British nurses, going to Serbia, have cut off their hair, for greater convenience and time-saving. The two field hospitals and transport, now with the Serbians, are staffed exclusively by women who do everything, even to the grave-digging.

All bird lovers will rejoice to know that a treaty has been entered into between the United States and Great Britain to protect migratory birds in this country and Canada. By three great highways the birds and the waterfowl pass back and forth between the two countries. One is along our Eastern Atlantic coast, another is by way of the land included in the Mississippi valley, the other is the Pacific slope west of the Rocky Mountains. There is also a northern, or breeding zone, and a southern, or wintering zone. While in passage, and while in the north or in the south, our migratory insectivorous birds will have the protection of both governments, the game birds also will be protected under laws and regulations agreed upon.

The last two or three years have been wonderful years for the birds in the way of the legal protection obtained for them. On the one hand economy, claiming that toward a billion dollars a year is lost to the farmers because of insect pests, which the birds, if not destroyed, might largely have cared for, and on the other hand the sportsman, seeking protection for game birds that he may still have his hunting season, have joined with the real lovers of birds to bring this about. Wise men have long insisted that from the point of view of economy alone, the protection of our birds would ultimately arouse, as it has, the interest of the nations.

—Our Dumb Animals.

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