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CHRISTMAS CAROL.

There's a story olden, golden,
Laden with the sweetest peace,
Of a stranger in a manger,
Couched on autumn's rich increase,
Robed not in sable, for a stable,
With its rude and dust clad walls,
Formed a shelter, where did sweeter
Cattle in their stilled stalls.

Then from heaven's azure river,
Blazed a star of radiance bright;
Glorious, victorious,
It palmed the other stars of night.
In its glimmered, gleamed and shimmered,
'er the town of Bethlehem;
A brighter, nearer, richer, clearer,
urned the star of glory then.



Above the stable's pointed gables
Did that star of heaven stand;
While adoring, wealth outpouring,
Kneel the men from Judah's land.
Softly saying, 'mid their praying,
While their eyes with tears were dim,
From afar we've seen his star,
And hither come to worship him!
Then came winging, sweetly singing,
Hosts on hosts of cherubim,
'Glory, glory, hear the story!
'Peace on earth, good will to men!' — O. H.

MOTHER'S MENAGERIE.

BY OLIVE HARPER.

Some sixty years ago Madison street in
New York was one of the most aristocratic
streets in the city, and on both sides it
was built with stately stone mansions, with wide
halls, immense parlors and large handsome
rooms, and each had a garden in the rear.
Now the wealthy old Quaker families who
once inhabited them are gone and the whole
street has degenerated until it is known as a
"tenement house district," and these old
houses are full of ragged, half starved chil-
dren; pale, wretched women, and a generally
honest but rough class of men. Every
house has a family in every room, where
they eat, work and sleep, and even where
there is the most sobriety there is still enough
of noise, unhealthiness and misery. In most
of them men's drunken curses and women
and children's shrill screams are heard al-
most hourly.

In the attic room of one of the handsomest
of these old houses there lived a widow with
her two children, Ruth and Robert. No
words can picture the bare desolation of that
room, but in spite of the bitter poverty so
apparent it was neat and clean. The young
mother was born in this house, as had been
her father, and though she now owned
nothing on earth but the wretched furniture
about her, and she could barely pay the rent
of this cheerless attic, her heart clung to the
old house and here she staid. Her father had
died suddenly, as had his father before him,
and Abby, his only child, had married a man
who was unworthy his trust and in a short
time he had dissipated every dollar they
possessed and then had died, mercifully for
his wife and little children.

Abby Hicks had tried to earn a living since
then, but with delicate health and two help-
less babies she could not do much. Like the
great majority of women, she had no resource
but her needle, and she found employ in a
shirt factory, and by slaving night and day
as long as her poor little hands could hold the
work, she managed to keep her children and
herself alive. Their clothes were the last of
those of better days, and were almost falling
off them from sheer age, though the patient
little fingers had patched and darned them
over and over, and her heart sank as she
wondered where she could get more.

Her grandfather had been a thrifty old man,
and everybody had supposed him rich; but
when he died it was found that this house
and a few thousand dollars, which was of in-
terest, was all he had, and it was never quite
understood; but no amount of searching in
papers or banks brought to light anything
more and the search was finally dropped,
though the question was often discussed.

It grew too dark to sew and not quite dark
enough to light the lamp, and this hour the
little mother usually took to run out and do
her marketing for the next day; and so tell-
ing the children to lie still in bed, for it was
bitterly cold up there so near the roof, she
took her threadbare shawl, and throwing it
around her started out.



THE SNOW BEFORE THE WIND.
The snow was falling in great soft flakes
and lay thick upon the pavement, and she
bent before the wind as she made what haste
she could. As she walked along she wondered
for a moment at the holiday aspect of the
street, and then she suddenly remembered,
with a great pang, that it was Christmas
Eve, and two sudden tears rolled from her
eyes and trickled slowly down her cold cheeks.
Everybody she met, even in that poor loca-
tion, seemed to have something in their hands
— toys, cheap and tawdry, it is true, but still
something to bring joy to a child's heart—Lat

this poor little woman could buy nothing, not
even so much as a bit of candy, for stern
necessity had laid too strong a hand upon this
desolate little family for the spending even
of one penny on anything but food, fuel and
rent. Choking back the unruly sobs that
would mount up the little woman at the
reached the butcher's shop where she dealt,
when she had anything to buy with, and here
she bought a soup bone for ten cents, a car-
rot, a turnip and two potatoes for five cents,
and then as the fat butcher's fatter wife put
them in a paper bag she slyly added two rony
apples from a barrel and two big red onions,
and the butcher being busy just then selling
a fine turkey to the proprietor of a boarding
house did not see it.

"For the babies, ma'am, with my love,"
said the jolly woman, "and I wish it was
more."
Abby Hicks stood a moment irresolute,
with the red spots of shame burning in her
cheeks, for never before had she accepted a
gift, and yet her heart was glad for her
children and lighter for the womanly sym-
pathy which she felt had actuated this meager
gift.

"Thank you," was all she could trust her-
self to say, and she hurried away, and from
there she went to the little corner grocery
where her wants were supplied when accom-
panied by cash. Here she bought a five cent
loaf and a pail of coal.

"Nothing else?" asked the grocer's clerk.
"We have some fine turkeys and cranberries;
chickens, too, first rate Philadelphia dry
pickled raisins, apples, jellies, celery—nothing
at all!"
"No, thank you," said Abby, hurrying
away.

The coal had taken her last cent. She got
out again into the street on her way back
and hurried onward, only anxious to get
back to where she could weep her heart out
in her woe, for where is an agony keener for
a mother than to deprive her children of the
joy that is rightfully theirs on Christmas
day? Dear little Robbie! He would hear
the other children blowing their tin trumpets
and beating their drums, and his sturdy
little heart had always desired one and the
other by turns. And good, gentle Ruthie!
How her motherly soul had longed for a real
doll! Not the old rag doll, but a real one,
with fair hair and blue eyes. And this
mother had promised long ago that she
would write a long letter to Santa Claus and
tell him what good little children they were,
and now they would grieve over his neglect.
What should she do? She had nothing to
sell that they could buy any possibility spare.
Everything had been sold long ago that could
bring anything at all; and now, to add to
her despair, a huckster's wagon, loaded
with cheap toys, stopped just in front of her,
and the strong lunged hucksters began cry-
ing out their wares. Again she quickened
her pace, and went on blindly up the stairs to
her miserable home, all the while her heart
nearly bursting with its agony as memory
pictured this home as it had been only ten
short years ago. Yes, on this very anniversary,
and she stood in white satin, with
pearls and beautiful lace, was the envied
beauty of the great ball. Where now were
all those brilliant lights, the flowers, the ser-
vants, her sweet faced mother and noble
father?



THE MENAGERIE.
All were gone, and she left alone to battle
with such a hard work. Had it not been for
those two little children up stairs, the icy
river would have soon closed her book of sor-
row.

She reached her room. The children were
fast asleep, and she lighted the lamp and sat
down by the little stove.
"If we starve," she said, "I cannot work
to-night."
By and by mechanically she went about
and put the little room to rights, and hung
the children's worn clothing over the chair-
back, and took the meat for the next day's
dinner and supper from his bag. The vegeta-
bles lay upon the table, with the apples.
Then she wiped softly and then sat down
again, looking at them in a dream. Sud-
denly she gave a nervous little laugh, saying:
"I will. It will amuse them at any rate."
Then she took a knife and piece of kind-
ling and in a little while cut it in small
sticks, and these she counted until she had
the number she needed, and set to work.

She found the two potatoes adapted to her
plan, which was to make horses of them by
sticking four legs, a tail and two ears into
them. Treated the same way the two real
onions made rather awkward but pretty
colored cows, and the turnips became a tiger
and the carrot an alligator.

These made quite a little menagerie when
set upon the table in a position to attract the
children's attention. The first thing in the
morning, and a red apple was thrust into
each well darned stocking and they were hung
upon the board which served for a mantel-
piece.

Thus out of nothing mother love devised a
bit of Christmas for her little ones, and when
this was done, somehow her heart was
lighter and she blessed God for the inspira-
tion and that she had her children and
health, and thanked him while she lay down
beside the two pretty if pale children.

The noise of drums, trumpets and child-
ren's shouts in streets and hall waked the
children almost before daylight, and they
began to ask each other and their mother
what it was all about, and she told them that
it was Christmas, and lying then for once
idle during the daylight hours she told them
all the sweet story and then they began to
wonder if Santa Claus had been to them, and
they bounced out of bed to see.

The apples were very rare and beautiful to
them, but the menagerie of wonderful animals
surpassed anything they ever dreamed of,
and as the mother told them:
"You see, dears, they are nicer than any
wooden toy animals could be, for we can
play that they are real, truly animals and
we can kill them and dress them and cut
them all up into little bits and cook them by
and by just as the butchers do."

"Oh, yes!" said Ruthie in ecstasy.
"I don't want my alligator cut up," de-
clared Robbie, stoutly. He was pacified, and
the children played contentedly all the morn-
ing with their animals, though it required the
constant service of mamma to replace broken
legs, horns and tails, and the children did
smell rather strong of onions; still they were
happy and her heart lightened. But when
the time came for the final part of their play

Robbie would not allow a single one of his
precious "animals" to be sacrificed, and at
last he became so obstreperous that his
mother was obliged to punish him by shutting
him into a good sized closet which had
always stood behind the chimney and the
gable window. Robbie did not enjoy his im-
prisonment and kicked and cried until he
made the very rafters ring, but suddenly
after a rather more violent outbreak than
usual there was a silence, and his mother
waited a while, surprised at this new freak,
and then she opened the door and looked in.

There on the floor sat Robbie, with a piece
of the baseboard lying flat, and disclosing a
hole within which was a tin box. This he
was trying to pull out, but it seemed too
heavy for him to move, and soon Mrs. Hicks
had it out and was examining it. When she
had wiped off the dust (she found painted
upon it in white letters "Owen Hardware")
It needed no more to take every bit of
strength she had and make her sink white
and suffocating on the chair. This was her
grandfather's name! What if this box con-
tained the money he was supposed to have
hidden somewhere? It was heavy enough.
A moment's reflection convinced her that, as
she was the only living member of all the
family, this box and its contents were hers,
and so with a knife and piece of wood she
prried it open and found even as she had
hoped. The box was full of gold, and also
contained several valuable diamonds, so that
this woman, who had the night before been
on the verge of despair from poverty, and
who had had to make a travesty of her
meager dinner to give her fatherless babies a
little of the joy that Christmas brings, was
lifted above want again.

But, though she had found this treasure,
and she knew it was her own in all right, she
was too sensible a little woman to bait the
news about, and so they sat down to their
Christmas dinner of soup made out of a
whole menagerie, and up to this day, though
she lives in a different way now, the lawyers
never got wind of her inheritance nor share
in it. Robbie and Ruthie have pretty toys,
but probably none of them have ever been
so dear to their little hearts as the
strange animals their mother's breaking
heart wrought out for their pleasure.

A CALIFORNIA CHRISTMAS, 1852.

BY KATE VAN NORMA GIBSON.
We reached California late in the fall of
1852, and before we knew it could be winter
in a country where the grass was freshly
sprouting and the trees bright and green,
Christmas was upon us, and no turkey in the
state. The children held a solemn convoca-
tion and concluded that Santa Claus could never
get so far, besides there was no snow for his
sleigh to travel on.

As I said, there was probably not one
turkey in the whole state, and though there
were a few chickens, no one would have con-
sented for a moment to kill them when eggs
were worth \$1 apiece. So our hopes for an
old fashioned Christmas fell far below zero,
and in spite of our best endeavors we felt a
little blue and homesick.

There was plenty of the poor Spanish beef
to be obtained, and also veal, but a sucking
pig would have been an impossibility, and
there was absolutely no fruit in the country
except such as grew wild, and, of course,
there was none at this season, but the genius
of women for making something out of nothing
is proverbial, and the men of the family
thought the women would pull through some-
how, though how was that to be without fruit,
eggs, milk or cream, or, indeed, anything ex-
cept taylor loaves, Spanish beef and a very
few potatoes, and no onions to season any-
thing with, nor knives! This was in what is
Oakland now, but at that time there were but
three wooden houses and a few tents there.

The two women put their heads together
and finally decided that they could at least
make a plum pudding, but in the little
"store" there were no raisins, nothing but
dried apples. They bought six eggs, paying
\$8 for them, considering the season, and took
over night and on Christmas morning they
were chopped into small bits, and with the
eggs and a plentiful supply of molasses, flour
and suet, a big pudding was put into a bag
and sent for a moment to boil. This success stim-
ulated the women to try an apple pie as well.

In the meantime a big rib of beef was duly
salted and peppered and surrounded with
potatoes, and was made ready to put in the
oven when Uncle Charlie, who was a mighty
hunter, suddenly made his appearance with
a big fat goose in one hand and a fine big
turkey, as we thought, in the other, both
plucked and dressed, ready for the oven.

Some one was sent to buy an onion, as the
grandmother said the goose really must have
onion in the stuffing, and for that one little
onion, no larger than an egg, we paid \$1
and were glad to get it at that price. Grand-
mother brought out her wonderful bag of
herbs and a little of very precious sage, and
summer savory was sifted into the dressing,
and the two fine birds were put down to cook,
and we all began to rejoice that even in far
off California Christmas was not quite lost.

The two birds now cooking had been shot
early that morning. One was a honker
goose and the other was an enormous sand
hill crane, or, as they were then called, Cali-
fornia turkey. These immense birds grow
very fat and are really delicious eating, as
we found at dinner time. And when the
table was laid out with the finest linen and
choice dishes that had followed the family
fortunes "around the Horn," that dinner
was voted a success, but the pudding, covered
with blazing brandy, looked just as Christ-
mas like as if it had been a real plum one,
though it had a sprig of "live oak" instead
of holly in it, and although it did not take
quite as good.

After dinner we had games, and though
the children missed the hanging up of the
stockings, they went to bed happy in the
hope, afterward fulfilled, that Santa Claus
might get there by New Year's, seeing that
they lived too far away for him to reach
them on Christmas.

THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING.

From the shelf I hang, suspended
In the firelight's glow, suspended
Till my sides are almost split with everything
that's good;
I'm so full that it's a question
I don't have indigestion—
Never yet was I so stuffed with such peculiar
food.
In my toe (oh, goodness gracious!)
I declare it is vexatious!
Some one's put a big potato and it makes me feel
so strange;
I wonder, now, what made them do it.
Do you know that right next to it
They have put a lot of candy—something sweeter
for a change?
Then a bank to save up money,
And a man that acts so funny.
When you pull him sharply by his stringy hempen
tail;
A picture book, some small tin fishes
And a set of tin dishes
Pair of mittens, popcorn and a little wooden pail.
Then on top a piece of paper,
Isn't this a funny caper?
Perhaps they want to burden me with some new
fancied dish.
Let me try my best to con it.
Why, this is what they've written on it:
"May you have a merry Christmas in my hearty
wishes."
—Tom Mason.

Holiday Headquarters.

Hallet, The Jeweler.

1125 O Street.

Christmas being at hand and the New Year about to be ush-
ered in I take pleasure in directing the attention of the public-
my friends and patrons, to the immense line of holiday goods in

Jewelry,

Watches, Diamonds, Clocks, Etc.,

That I have now on exhibition at my store. This line is a
new, nobby and unique and was purchased with particular
care for the Christmas trade. In it will be found the

Latest Novelties in Jewelry

Embracing a magnificent line of bracelets, Chains for Ladies
or Gents, Bracelets, Opera Glasses, Rings from \$1 to \$500,
Shirt Studs, Scarf Pins, Ear Drops, and in short anything you
may desire in the Jewelry line, all of which will make most
desirable presents, and can be bought at lowest possible prices.

It will pay you Doubly to Trade with Hallet

As for every Five Dollars worth bought you have a chance to
win \$100.00 worth of Groceries, and select them yourself.
Don't fail to ask for your tickets. This prize is given during

Our Removal Sale

Which is now in progress, to advertise our new location, No.
113 North 11th [Fawell's old stand], to which we will move
on or about January 1st. Take advantage of this sale. Buy
now while prices are low and inducements big.

E. HALLET,

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AT COST. AT COST.

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Everything in our store at exact cost. We do this in order
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