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CHRISTMAS CAROL.
There's a story older, golden,
Laden with the sweetest pollen,
Of a stranger in a manger,
Cooched on a humble's rich increase,
Rode not in a stable,
With a wife and child and all,
Formed a shelter, warm and sweet,
Cradle for their little stall.



Above the stable's pointed gables
Did that star of heaven stand;
While the manger, wealth outpouring,
Keels the men from their beds.
Silly saying, 'mid their praying,
'Tis the child who with love dim,
From after eyes seen his star.
And have come to worship him,
Then came winking, and singing,
'Glory, glory, glory to thee!'
'Peace on earth, good will to men!'

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.

THE MENAGERIE.
All were gone, and she left alone to battle with such a hard world. Had it not been those two little children up stairs the river would have soon closed her book of sorrow.
She reached her room. The children were fast asleep, and she lighted the lamp and sat down by the little stove.
"If I 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 its bag. The vegetables lay upon the table, with the apples. These she wiped softly, and then sat down again, looking at them in a dream. Suddenly she gave a nervous little laugh, saying: "I will. I will amuse them at any rate." Then she took a knife and pieced out the string in a little while cut it in small sticks, and these she counted until she had the number she needed, and set to work.

ON THE RAPPAHANNOCK.
BY JOHN R. PATTON, PRIVATE COMPANY, G. 14th Nebraska Volunteer.
There was an old comrade, Sergt. Nelson, who had gathered somewhat, and was not highly polished, and who, on occasion, dropped into profanity as he went along. Now I wonder which Nelson God will keep, and which Nelson he will throw away?

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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.

A HAPPY THOUGHT STRIKES ME.
I started for Richmond in July, 1862, a lad of 19 years old, a junior in college, and chafing at the law of my father, a lawyer of the name of Brown's school, since it did not require a knapsack, or three day's rations, or a canteen, or a hat during the night for sleep, and my father's law was to be broken before Christmas, 1862. I was a dejected young patriot, wishing I hadn't done it, shivering in the open weather, my knapsack full of books, and my father's law to be broken before Christmas, 1862. I was a dejected young patriot, wishing I hadn't done it, shivering in the open weather, my knapsack full of books, and my father's law to be broken before Christmas, 1862.

THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING.
From the shelf I hang, suspended
In the freckled glow of distance,
Till my sides are almost split with everything that goes.

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A DIFFICULT PROBLEM.
In my toe I find, goodness gracious!
I declare it is vexatious!
Some one put a big potato and it makes me feel
I wonder now, what made them do it.
Do you know that right next to it
They have put in a candy—something sweeter
For a change?

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