

Before they could go out to find Mary, as a dozen would have done, she was at the threshold, alone. She seemed to understand without wonder why they were there, and with perfect naturalness she turned to them to share her trouble.

"He hasn't come," she said simply. Her face was quite white, and, because they usually saw her with a scarf or shawl over her head, she looked almost strange to them, for she wore a hat; also she had on an unfamiliar soft colored wrap that had been her mother's and was kept in tissues. She had dressed carefully to go to meet the child. "I might as well dress up a little," she had thought, "and I guess he'll like colors best."

Almost before she spoke they put in her hands the telegram. They were pressing toward her, dreading, speechless, trying to hear what should be read. She stepped nearer to the light of the candles on the little table, read and reread in the stillness. When she looked up her face was so illumined that she was strange to them once more.

"Oh," she said, "it's his train. It was late for the local. They've put him on the express, and it'll drop him at the 'draw.'"

The tense air crumpled into breathings, and a soft clamor filled the rooms as they told one another and came to tell her how glad they were. She pulled herself together and tried to slip into her natural manner.

"It did give me a turn," she confessed. "I thought he'd been—he'd got!"

She went into the dining room, still without great wonder that they were all there. But when she saw the women in white aprons and the table arrayed and on it Ellen Bourne's Christmas rose blooming she broke into a little laugh.

"Oh," she said, "you done this a-purpose for him?"

"I hope, Mary, you won't mind," Miss Mortimer Bates said formally. "It being Christmas so. We'd have done just the same on any other day."

"Oh," Mary said, "mind?"

They hardly knew her, she moved among them so flushed and laughing and comfortable, praising, admiring, thanking them.

"Honestly, Mary," said Miss Moran finally, "we'll have you so you can't tell Christmas from any other day—it'll be so nice!"

The express would be due at the "draw" at 8:30-8:33. After told her when he came back "washed up," Mary watched the clock. She had not milked or fed the cows before she went because she had thought that he would like to watch the milking and it would be something for him to do on that first evening. So when she could she took her shawl and slipped out to the shed for the pails and her lantern and went alone to the stable.

Mary opened the door, and her lantern made a golden room of light within the borderless shadow. The hay smell from the loft and the mangers, the even breathing of the cows, the quiet safety of the place, met her. She hung her lantern in its accustomed place and went about her task.

Her mind turned back to the time that had elapsed since the local came in at the Old Trail Town station. She had stood there, with the children about her, hardly breathing while the two Trail Town men and a solitary traveling man had alighted. There had been no one else. In terror lest the child should be carried past the station, she had questioned the conductor, begged him to go in and look again, parleyed with him until he had swung his lantern. Then she had turned away with the children, uttering unable to formulate anything. There was no other train to stop at Old Trail Town that night. It must mean disaster—indeed, disaster—that had somehow engulfed him and had not pointed the way that he had gone. She recalled now that she had refused Buff Miles' invitation to ride, but had suffered him to take the children. Then she had set out to walk home.

On that walk home she had unlied her plans. Obscure speculations, stirring in her fear, at first tormented her and then gave place to the conclusion that John had changed his mind, had seen perhaps that he could not afford all let the child go so far, had found some one else to take him, and that he would bring a letter to tell her so. In any case, she was not to have him. The conclusion swept her with the vigor of certainty. But instead of the relief for which she would have looked, that certainty gave her nothing but desolation. Until the moment when the expectation seemed to be she had not divined how it had grown into her days, as subtly as the growth of little cell and little cell, and now the weight upon her, instead of lifting, soaring in the possibility of the return of her old freedom, lay he more heavily, and her sense of oppression became abysmal. "Something going to happen," she had kept saying. "Something has happened."

So she had got on toward her own door. There the swift relief was like a new bearing into another air, charged with more intimate largess for life. Now Mary sat in the stable in a sense of happy reality that clothed all her being—rather, in a sense of super-accept. So, slowly singing in her heart as she sat at her task, came that which had waited until she should open the door.

In the stable there was that fusion of shadow and light in which captive faces reveal all their mystery. Little faces of brightness, of functioning: dimness, then the deep, bright—

in which surfaces of worn door, livered wall, dusty glass, showed hues more specific than those of color. Dimness in which gray rafters with wavering edges, rough posts, each with an accessory of shadow; an old

harness in grotesque loops, ceased to be background and assumed roles. The background itself, modified by many an unshadowed promontory, was accented in caverns of manger and roof. The place revealed mystery and beauty in the casual business of saying what had to be said.

Mary filled her arms with hay and turned to the manger. The raw smell of the clover smote her, and it was as sweet as spring reprimand. She stood for a moment with the hay in her arms, her breath coming swiftly.

Down on the marsh, not half an hour away, he was coming to her, to be with her, as she had grown used to imagining him. She had thought that he was not coming, and he was almost here. She knew now that she was glad of this, no matter what it brought her—glad as she had never known how to be glad of anything before. He was coming! There was a thrill in the words every time that she thought them. Already she was welcoming him in her heart, already he was here, already he was born into her life.

With a soft, fierce rush of feeling not her own, it seemed to her that her point of perception was somehow drawn inward, as if she no longer saw from the old places, as if something in her that was not used to looking looked. In the seat where her will had been no will. But somewhere in there, beyond all conflict, she felt herself to be. Beyond a thousand mists, volitions, little seekings for comfort, rebellions at toil, the cryings of personality for its physical own, she stood at last, herself within herself. And that which through the slow process of her life and of life and being immeasurably before her had been seeking its expression, building up its own vehicle of incarnation, quite suddenly and simply flowered. It was as if the weight and the striving within her had been the pangs of some birth. She stood, as light of heart as a little child, filled with peace and tender exaltation.

These filled her on the road which she took to meet him—and took alone, for she would have no one go with her. ("What's come over Mary?" they asked one another in the kitchen. "She acts like she was somebody else and herself too.") The night lay about her as any other winter night—white and black—a clean white world, on which men set a pattern of highway and shelter; a clean dark sky, on which a story is written in stars, and between—no mystery, but only growth. Out toward the drawbridge the road was not well broken. She went, stumbling in the ruts and hardly conscious of them. And Mary thought:

"Something in me is glad. It's as if something in me knew how to be glad more than I ever knew how alone.

"For I'm nothing but me here in Old Trail Town, and yet it's as if something had come, secret, on purpose to make me know why to be glad.

"It's something in the world bigger than I know about.

"It's in me, and I guess it was in folks before me, and it will be in folks always.

"It isn't just for Ebenezer Rule and the city.

"It's for everybody, here in Old Trail Town as much as anywhere.

"It's for folks that's hungry for it, and it's for folks that ain't.

"It's always been in the world, and it always will be in the world, and some day we'll know what to do."

But this was hardly in her feeling or even in her thought; it lay within her thanksgiving that the child was coming and he only a little way down there across the marsh.

"Are you her?" he asked soberly. "What's the new little boy's name?" asked Tab.

"Nobody knew. That would be something to find out.

"Well," Tab said, "tomorrow morning, right after breakfast, I'm going to bring Theophilus Thistle down and lend him to him."

"Ain't we going to bury Sandy Claus right after breakfast?" demanded Gussie.

And all the children, even little Emily, answered: "No; let's not."

They all went on together and entered Mary's gate. Those within, hearing the singing, had opened the door, and they brought them through that deep arch of warmth and light. Afterward no one could remember whether or not the greeting had been "Merry Christmas," but there could have been no mistaking what everybody meant.

At his gate in the street wall lined with snow bowed lilacs and mulberries Ebenezer Rule waited in the dark for his two friends to come back. He had found Kate Kerr in his kitchen methodically making a jar of Christmas cookies. ("You've got to eat, if it is Christmas," she had defended herself in a whisper.) And to her stupefaction he had dispatched her to Mary Chavah's with her entire Christmas baking in a basket.

"I don't believe they've got near enough for all the folks I see going," he explained it.

While he went within doors he had left the bobbyhorse in the snow close to the wall, and he came back there to wait. The street had emptied. By now every one had gone to Mary Chavah's. Once he caught the gleam of lanterns down the road and heard children's voices singing. For some time he heard the singing, and after it had stopped he fancied that he heard it. Startled, he looked up into the wide night lying serene above the town and not yet become vexed by the town's shadows and interrupted by their lights. It was as if the singing came from up there. But the night kept its way of looking steadily beyond him.

It came to Ebenezer that the night had not always been so unconscious of his presence. The one long ago, for example, when he had slept beneath this wall and dreamed that he had a kingdom; those other nights when he had wandered abroad with his star glass. Then the night used to be something else. It had seemed to meet him, to admit him. Now he knew, and for a long time had known, that when he was abroad in the night he was there, so to say, without his permission. As for men, he could not

tell when relation with them had changed, when he had begun to think of them as among the externals, but he knew that now he ran along the surface of them and let them go. He never met them as "others," as belonging to countless equations of which he was one term, and they playing that wonderful, near role of "other." Thus he had got along, as if his own individuality were the only one that had ever occurred and as if all the mass of mankind—and the night and the day—were undifferentiated from some substance all halmic.

Then this vast egotism had heard itself expressed in the mention of Bruce's baby—the third generation. But by the great sorcery wherewith nature has protected herself, this mammoth sense of self, when it extends into the next generations, becomes a keeper of the race. Ebenezer had been touched, relaxed, disintegrated. Here was an interest outside himself which was yet no external. Vast, level reaches lay about that fact and all long unexplored. But these were peopled. He saw them peopled.

As in the cheer and stir within the house where that night were gathered his townsmen, his neighbors, his "hands." He had thought that their way of meeting him, if he chose to go among them, would matter nothing. Abruptly now he saw that it would matter more than he could bear. They were in there at Mary's, the rooms full of little families, getting along as best they could, taking pride in their children, looking ahead, looking ahead—and they would not know that he understood. He could not have defined offhand what it was that he understood. But it had, it seemed, something to do with Letty's account book and Bruce's baby.

Gradually he let himself face what it was that he was wanting to do. And when he faced that he left the bobbyhorse where it was under the wall and went into the street.

He took his place among the externals of the winter night, himself unconscious of them. The night, with all its content, a thing of explicable fellowships, lay waiting patiently for those of its children who knew its face. In the dark and under the snow the very elements of earth and life were obscured, as in some clear wash correcting too strong values. He moved along the village, and now his dominant consciousness was the same consciousness in which that little village lived. But he knew it only as the impulse that urged him on toward Jenny's house. If he went to Jenny's, if he signified so that he wished not to be cut off from her and Bruce and the baby, if he asked Bruce to come back to the business, these meant a lifetime of modification to the boy's ideals for that business and modification to the lives of the "hands" back there in Mary Chavah's house—and to something else.

"What else?" he asked himself. Mechanically he looked up and saw the heavens crowded with bright watchers. In that high field one star, brighter than the others, hung over the little town. He found himself trying to see the stars as they had looked to him years ago, when they and the night had seemed to mean something else.

"What else?" he asked himself. The time did not seem momentous. It was only very quiet. Nothing new was there, nothing different. It had always been so. The night lay in a sovereign consciousness of being more than just itself. "Do you think that you are all just you and nothing else?" It was seen to be compassionately asking.

"What else?" Ebenezer asked himself. He did not face this yet. But in that hour which seemed pure essence, with no attenuating sound or touch, he kept on up the hill toward Jenny's house.

Mary Chavah left ajar the door from the child's room to the room where, in the dark, the tree stood. He had wanted the door to be ajar "so the things I think about can go back and forth," he had explained.

In the dining room she wrapped herself in the gray shawl and threw up the two windows. New air swept in, cleansing, replacing, prevailing. Her guests had left her early, as is the way in Old Trail Town. Then she had had her first moments with the child alone. He had done the things that she had not thought of his doing, but had inevitably recognized—had delayed his being going, had magnified and repeated the offices of his journey, had shown her the contents of his pockets, had repeatedly mentioned by their first names his playmates in Idaho and shown surprise when she asked him who they were. Mary stood now by the window conscious of a wonderful thing—that it seemed as if he had been there always.

In the clean inrush of the air she was aware of a faint fragrance, coming to her once and again. She looked down at her garden, lying wrapped in white and veiled with black like some secret being. Three elements were slowly fashioning it, while the fourth, a soft fire within her, answered them. The fragrance made it seem as if the turn of the year were very near, as if its prophecy, evident once in the October violets in her garden, were come again. But when she moved she knew that the fragrance came from within the room, from Ellen Bourne's Christmas rose, blossoming on the table. Above her eye fell on the picture that Jenny had brought to her on that day when she had all but emptied the house, as if in readiness. Almost she understood now the passionate expectation of those who in her dream had kept saying "You."

One for the way it all begun. Two for the way it all has run. What three'll be for I do forget. But what will be has not been yet. So holly and mistletoe. So holly and mistletoe. So holly and mistletoe. Over and over and over, oh!

Between songs the children whispered together for a minute.



"Are you her?" he asked soberly. "What's the new little boy's name?" asked Tab.

"Nobody knew. That would be something to find out.

"Well," Tab said, "tomorrow morning, right after breakfast, I'm going to bring Theophilus Thistle down and lend him to him."

"Ain't we going to bury Sandy Claus right after breakfast?" demanded Gussie.

And all the children, even little Emily, answered: "No; let's not."

They all went on together and entered Mary's gate. Those within, hearing the singing, had opened the door, and they brought them through that deep arch of warmth and light. Afterward no one could remember whether or not the greeting had been "Merry Christmas," but there could have been no mistaking what everybody meant.

At his gate in the street wall lined with snow bowed lilacs and mulberries Ebenezer Rule waited in the dark for his two friends to come back. He had found Kate Kerr in his kitchen methodically making a jar of Christmas cookies. ("You've got to eat, if it is Christmas," she had defended herself in a whisper.) And to her stupefaction he had dispatched her to Mary Chavah's with her entire Christmas baking in a basket.

"I don't believe they've got near enough for all the folks I see going," he explained it.

While he went within doors he had left the bobbyhorse in the snow close to the wall, and he came back there to wait. The street had emptied. By now every one had gone to Mary Chavah's. Once he caught the gleam of lanterns down the road and heard children's voices singing. For some time he heard the singing, and after it had stopped he fancied that he heard it. Startled, he looked up into the wide night lying serene above the town and not yet become vexed by the town's shadows and interrupted by their lights. It was as if the singing came from up there. But the night kept its way of looking steadily beyond him.

It came to Ebenezer that the night had not always been so unconscious of his presence. The one long ago, for example, when he had slept beneath this wall and dreamed that he had a kingdom; those other nights when he had wandered abroad with his star glass. Then the night used to be something else. It had seemed to meet him, to admit him. Now he knew, and for a long time had known, that when he was abroad in the night he was there, so to say, without his permission. As for men, he could not

tell when relation with them had changed, when he had begun to think of them as among the externals, but he knew that now he ran along the surface of them and let them go. He never met them as "others," as belonging to countless equations of which he was one term, and they playing that wonderful, near role of "other." Thus he had got along, as if his own individuality were the only one that had ever occurred and as if all the mass of mankind—and the night and the day—were undifferentiated from some substance all halmic.

Then this vast egotism had heard itself expressed in the mention of Bruce's baby—the third generation. But by the great sorcery wherewith nature has protected herself, this mammoth sense of self, when it extends into the next generations, becomes a keeper of the race. Ebenezer had been touched, relaxed, disintegrated. Here was an interest outside himself which was yet no external. Vast, level reaches lay about that fact and all long unexplored. But these were peopled. He saw them peopled.

As in the cheer and stir within the house where that night were gathered his townsmen, his neighbors, his "hands." He had thought that their way of meeting him, if he chose to go among them, would matter nothing. Abruptly now he saw that it would matter more than he could bear. They were in there at Mary's, the rooms full of little families, getting along as best they could, taking pride in their children, looking ahead, looking ahead—and they would not know that he understood. He could not have defined offhand what it was that he understood. But it had, it seemed, something to do with Letty's account book and Bruce's baby.

Gradually he let himself face what it was that he was wanting to do. And when he faced that he left the bobbyhorse where it was under the wall and went into the street.

He took his place among the externals of the winter night, himself unconscious of them. The night, with all its content, a thing of explicable fellowships, lay waiting patiently for those of its children who knew its face. In the dark and under the snow the very elements of earth and life were obscured, as in some clear wash correcting too strong values. He moved along the village, and now his dominant consciousness was the same consciousness in which that little village lived. But he knew it only as the impulse that urged him on toward Jenny's house. If he went to Jenny's, if he signified so that he wished not to be cut off from her and Bruce and the baby, if he asked Bruce to come back to the business, these meant a lifetime of modification to the boy's ideals for that business and modification to the lives of the "hands" back there in Mary Chavah's house—and to something else.

"What else?" he asked himself. Mechanically he looked up and saw the heavens crowded with bright watchers. In that high field one star, brighter than the others, hung over the little town. He found himself trying to see the stars as they had looked to him years ago, when they and the night had seemed to mean something else.

"What else?" he asked himself. The time did not seem momentous. It was only very quiet. Nothing new was there, nothing different. It had always been so. The night lay in a sovereign consciousness of being more than just itself. "Do you think that you are all just you and nothing else?" It was seen to be compassionately asking.

"What else?" Ebenezer asked himself. He did not face this yet. But in that hour which seemed pure essence, with no attenuating sound or touch, he kept on up the hill toward Jenny's house.

Mary Chavah left ajar the door from the child's room to the room where, in the dark, the tree stood. He had wanted the door to be ajar "so the things I think about can go back and forth," he had explained.

In the dining room she wrapped herself in the gray shawl and threw up the two windows. New air swept in, cleansing, replacing, prevailing. Her guests had left her early, as is the way in Old Trail Town. Then she had had her first moments with the child alone. He had done the things that she had not thought of his doing, but had inevitably recognized—had delayed his being going, had magnified and repeated the offices of his journey, had shown her the contents of his pockets, had repeatedly mentioned by their first names his playmates in Idaho and shown surprise when she asked him who they were. Mary stood now by the window conscious of a wonderful thing—that it seemed as if he had been there always.

In the clean inrush of the air she was aware of a faint fragrance, coming to her once and again. She looked down at her garden, lying wrapped in white and veiled with black like some secret being. Three elements were slowly fashioning it, while the fourth, a soft fire within her, answered them. The fragrance made it seem as if the turn of the year were very near, as if its prophecy, evident once in the October violets in her garden, were come again. But when she moved she knew that the fragrance came from within the room, from Ellen Bourne's Christmas rose, blossoming on the table. Above her eye fell on the picture that Jenny had brought to her on that day when she had all but emptied the house, as if in readiness. Almost she understood now the passionate expectation of those who in her dream had kept saying "You."

and on the walk footsteps. The three men stepped into the rectangle of lamplight—Abel Ames and Simeon, who had left the party a little before the others and, burrying back with the gifts that they planned, had met Ebenezer at his gate, getting home from Jenny's house. In Abel's arms was something globed, like a little world; in Simeon's, the tall, gray gown St. Nicholas taken from the Exchange window, the lettered sign absent, but the little flag still in his hand, and Ebenezer was carrying the bobbyhorse.

"Has the boy gone to bed?" Abel asked without preface.

"Yes," Mary answered. "I'm sorry."

"Never mind," Simeon whispered. "You can give him these in the morning."

Mary, her shawl half hiding her face, stooped to take what the three lifted.



The Three Men Stepped Into the Rectangle of Lamplight.

"They ain't presents, you know," Abel said her positively. "They're just—well, just to let him know."

Mary set the strange assortment on the floor of the dining room—the things that were to be nothing in themselves, only just "to let him know."

"Thank you for him," she said gently. "And thank you for me," she added.

Ebenezer fumbled for a moment at his beaver hat and took it off. Then the other two did so to their firm fixed caps. And with an impulse that came from no one could tell whom, the three spoke—the first time hesitatingly, the next time together and confidently.

"Merry Christmas, merry Christmas!" they said.

Mary Chavah lifted her hand. "Merry Christmas!" she cried.

THE END.

NORWAY.

According to Christiania correspondents there exists a widespread fear in Norway at present that the country may, in spite of itself, be drawn into the war. The Aftenposten, the largest and most influential paper in Norway, said in its issue of Nov. 13: "It were folly now to shut our eyes to the fact that there is great danger. The situation is such that we may at any moment find ourselves involved in the war and without even a chance to decide for ourselves which side we want to take." This is a grave statement and everybody in Norway admits that the country is far from prepared to meet such a danger. The army is small and poorly equipped and in the matter of food supply on hand the country is not in as good a shape as are the other Scandinavian countries. In spite of everything, however, the authorities in Norway have taken drastic measures against all anti-defense agitation. A provisional order has been issued threatening punishment of fine and imprisonment to any one who speaks against the government work of defense or participates in any demonstrations against the same. The order provides that any person who is not a Norwegian by birth, or who is not a citizen after three years' continuous residence in the country, will be banished as soon as he begins any agitation against the doings of the government in the matter of defenses. During the first months of the war the government revenues of Norway decreased about 2,500,000 crowns. The decreased revenue on distilled liquors alone amounted to 600,000 crowns. It is said that the revenue to the government from this source has been as much as 12,000,000 crowns a year. According to reports of the last several months the country will be short about one-third of its revenue from this source and the authorities are puzzled to know what to do to secure funds for carrying on the government and meeting the expenses of maintaining the neutrality of the country.

Christiania has a greater number of newspapers and periodicals than any other city of its size in the world. There are not less than eighteen daily papers and about 180 journals and periodicals. Just how the city can support so many newspapers is a mystery, but it seems that Christiania is the home of newspapers and never tires of lectures. There are more lectures held in that city than in any other European capital.

The Norwegian steamer Sanefjord, which sailed from New York for Copenhagen with a cargo of cotton, was brought into Halifax, N. S., Nov. 30 as a prize of war. It is suspected of having contraband of war on board and the report that it has balloon silk and also copper stored beneath the cotton will be investigated.

King Gustaf recently notified the American minister to Sweden, Ira Nelson Morris, that he has signed the peace treaty recently agreed to between the United States and Sweden.

The Swedish steamer Fridland, which sailed from New York Oct. 28 for Copenhagen and arrived at Kirkwall, Scotland, Nov. 10, has been taken into Shields, Eng., as a prize.

Count Carl Axel Wachtmeister, Swedish diplomatic agent and consul general at Cairo, Egypt, returned to his post a short time ago after enjoying a visit to Stockholm.

The Socialist members of the Norwegian storting have proposed that this year's Nobel prize be given to Hjalmar Branting, Swedish Socialist.

Denmark.

An effort is being made by the United States government to ascertain officially who is responsible for the placing of mines in the North sea. This is one result of representations made to the state department by the governments of Denmark, Holland, Sweden and Norway that their maritime commerce with the United States has been paralyzed by the placing of mines outside of territorial waters in violation of The Hague treaties. The United States was asked to join with these governments in an effort to have the warring European powers abate this danger to navigation. Whether it will do so is under consideration, but meantime the inquiry is being made to determine the responsibility for the mine laying and to what government any representations on the subject should be addressed.

Peter Hansen-Spandet, a Danish-American farmer, has, according to the Chicago Daily News correspondent in Copenhagen, arrived in that city after being imprisoned seventeen days in Schleswig. Hansen-Spandet is a resident of Iowa and a citizen of the United States. He attempted to return to America at the beginning of November after a visit to his parents at Cramy, on the Schleswig-Denmark frontier, but was stopped by German soldiers and in spite of his documents as an American citizen was arrested, taken to Flensburg and shut up in a military prison without any examination. Finally he was liberated without apology.

The Danish steamer Mary of Esbjerg was sunk by a mine in the North sea. Her crew of fourteen took to two boats, one of which was picked up by the steamer Juno and landed at Grimsby, Eng., on the night of Dec. 1, according to London dispatches. The other boat, containing the Mary's chief officer and six men, is missing.

MARION S. NORELIUS.

CHAPTER XV. Merry Christmas.

It seemed quite credible and even fitting that the mighty, rushing, lighted express, which seldom stopped at Old Trail Town, should that night come thundering across the marsh and slow down at the drawbridge for her sake and the little boy's. Several coaches' length from where she stood she saw a lantern shine where they were lifting him down. She ran ankle deep through the thinly crusted snow.

"That's it!" said the conductor. "All the way from Idaho!" And swung his lantern from the step. "Merry Christmas!" he called back.

The little thing clasping Mary's hand suddenly leaped up and down beside her.

"Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas!" he shouted with all his might.

Mary Chavah stood silent, and as the train drew away held out her hand, still in silence, for the boy to take.

As the noise of the train lessened he looked up.

"Are you her?" he asked soberly.

"Yes," she cried joyously. "I'm her!"

Their way led east between high banks of snow. At the end of the road was the village, looking like something lying on the great white plate of the meadows and being offered to one who needed it. At the far end of the road was Old Trail road hung the blue arc light of the town hall, center to the constellation of the home lights and the shop lights and the street lights. There, in her house, were her neighbors gathered to do no violence to that Christmas paper of theirs, since there was to be no "present trading," no "money spending." Nevertheless they had drawn together by common consent, and it was Christmas eve. She knew it now. There is no arti-