

SARAH CAROLINE J. NICKELS, Administratrix on the estate of **JAMES M. NICKELS**, late of Worcester, in said County, deceased, having presented her first and final account of administration to the Probate Court of said County.

Ordered, That notice thereof be given, three days at least, by publication of this order, once each week, in some newspaper published in Belfast, in said County, that all persons having claims against the said decedent's estate, do hereby be notified to file and prove the same, if they have any, at Belfast, on the second Tuesday of January next; and after the expiration of said term, if the said account should not be allowed.

GEO. E. JOHNSON, Judge.
A true copy. Attest—JAMES P. FIELD, Register.

WALDO SUMNER. In Court of Probate, held at Belfast, on the second Tuesday of December, 1890. **SALOMA P. RICH**, Administratrix on the estate of **JAMES M. NICKELS**, late of Worcester, in said County, deceased, having presented her first and final account of administration to the Probate Court of said County.

That notice thereof be given, three days successively, in the Republican Journal, of said County, that all persons having claims against the said decedent's estate, do hereby be notified to file and prove the same, if they have any, at Belfast, on the second Tuesday of January next; and after the expiration of said term, if the said account should not be allowed.

GEO. E. JOHNSON, Judge.
A true copy. Attest—BOWEN P. FIELD, Register.

In the County of Waldo, deceased, by giving bond as the law directs, she therefore requests all persons who are indebted to said decedent's estate to make immediate payment, and those who have any demands upon the said decedent's estate to bring them to her.

BRECKIN E. THOMPSON.

The subscriber hereby gives public notice to all persons interested, that she has been appointed and taken upon herself the trust of Executrix of the estate of

ANNIS WELMOUTH, late of Montville,

In the County of Waldo, deceased, by giving bond as the law directs; she therefore requests all persons who are indebted to said decedent's estate to make immediate payment, and those who have any demands upon the said decedent's estate to bring them to her.

ANNIE AYER.

The subscriber hereby gives public notice to all persons interested, that she has been appointed and taken upon herself the trust of Executrix of the estate of

J. A. C. NICKELS, late of Searsport,

In the County of Waldo, deceased, by giving bond as the law directs; she therefore requests all persons who are indebted to said decedent's estate to make immediate payment, and those who have any demands upon the said decedent's estate to bring them to her.

HENRIETTA T. NICKELS.

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notice is valuable.) 1400

A TIMELY GREETING.



MERRY CHRISTMAS!

CHRISTMAS CAROLS.



ING loudly, O
my soul,
A psalm to the
Lord!
His goodness,
grace and
love extol,
And for his
mercy
Upon the
sensitive roll,
Give thanks in glad
accord.

For on this happy
day
A star from heaven
was born,
To blaze out the
humble way
To where our Lord
was born,
And change earth's
twilight, cold and
gray,
To spiritual noon.

Rejoice, my soul, and know
That Christ is born anew.
His grace new mercies daily show,
His words our work unfold;
And to the world his words outgo
In endless love and true.

WILLIAM E. S. FALES.

not be forgotten. These epistles he took with him in his flight, and a day or two later entrusted them to Sam McCorkle to post, but that individual, fearful that the route of departure would be guessed by the postmark, calmly destroyed them, although he solemnly declared to Albert that he had deposited them in the postoffice of a considerable town through which they journeyed. And so the two boys were quite cut off from the old world of semi-servitude.

That a father should be sorry for the flight of a son is but natural; that he should, while a spark of pride or anger remains, tell any one of his sorrow would be contrary to all recorded precedents in such cases. William Merritt was not the man to violate precedents of discipline. He held himself stiffly, waved away the subject complacently, and said when he spoke at all: "Oh, he'll soon get sick of his flit—he'll be glad enough to come back." But late summer yielded to autumn, and autumn gave place to winter, and a sad Christmas day had come, for Albert Merritt had made no sign.

When Helen Blake was told that Albert Merritt was a "runaway boy" she merely said, "Ah, indeed," and bent very low over her work; but she knew very well he had gone—knew it, indeed, about as well as he did.

Ere long she and Mrs. Merritt seemed to have a good deal to say to each other. They seldom if ever mentioned Albert, but it always seemed that the mother was much cheered after a visit from Helen. In her own desponding heart the mother said: "He will never come back, he is too much like his father," a favorite delusion with mothers, by the way. And so, on this sad Christmas day, the two sorrowful women exchanged deep sympathies without exchanging a word on the subject nearest their hearts, and the mother felt that night as if volumes had been spoken on the subject, when in fact it had not been mentioned. And thereafter Helen came oftener and oftener, and somehow after each visit the mother felt an assurance that all would be right, and felt it just the same whether Albert's name was mentioned or not.

Now, after the first shock was passed, Helen Blake never felt a doubt in her bosom that she would in good time receive some word from Albert Merritt, and she would have risked much on her conviction that she would hear before either of his parents, though she could not have told you why, and probably would not if she could, for the best farm in Jackson township. Yet she knew it all the same, and visited the Merritts often, and at each visit it somehow felt out that something rather singular happened.

On one occasion she grew quite hilarious in reminiscences of a certain school exhibition, and told how the teacher had photographs of the whole class taken, a set for all, and how childish the pictures looked now, and how everybody had changed, though it was but six years ago, and then she brought out the photographs—cheap, tawdry things they were, but among them was one of a tall, fair boy, with all the glow of class leadership in his eye, and light hair curling around a bold forehead, and under it, in round boyish script, was the autograph, "Albert Merritt."

A pang shot through the father's heart, and he lingered for a moment to talk of his boy, but she rattled on about Tom and Jennie and Mattie, and soon hastened home.

But the mother noticed that Helen "had forgotten her pictures," and so they lay on the looking glass stand for many a day, where the father often saw the presentation of his boy, but he never touched it, and they lay there till Helen came again.

This time she brought a "story paper" for Mrs. Merritt, saying that the main story in it had interested her very much, and after she was gone William Merritt picked it up and pished and psawed and rambled the pictures, but he read the story. It was a commonplace novel sort of a story, which died from a harsh father and enlisted in the Federal army, and who was sick almost to death in a southern hospital, and how a Sister of Charity wrote to the father, who came and patiently nursed his boy back to life and love and forgiveness. A commonplace story—one of ten thousand war stories of the time—but the father's hand trembled as he read, and he rushed to the field and drove his work with unusual energy and shouted louder than ever at his team, and at night was stern and silent and solemn to a degree that surprised even his long suffering wife.

The other children would occasionally venture a reference to Albert, and now when Helen came the father would blame the run-away; but she only listened quietly and asked if they had ever heard of him, and turned the talk to their school days. And so two years passed away and the third Christmas came. In celebration of the day the Merritts were to be the guests of the Blakes, and when they gathered in the big room of the great farm house it happened that all the young people present were of that last day class at the head of which Albert Merritt had stood. Of course Helen Blake never thought of alluding to such a fact—it just happened so; her parents thought—but there were plenty in a class of eight young people who could talk as fast as they could think, and usually did it, too. And so the conversation rattled on about that glorious day, and the father, whose heart was literally pounding against his ribs, and whose internal struggles were such that he could not tell whether he was eating turkey or oak chips, talked badly and aggressively to those at his end of the table, and quite overbore Mr. Blake on politics, and finally offered to bet "the pick of his horses again a year" that his candidate for the presidency would have 300,000 majority over any man the other side could put up next year.



JUMPED TO THE GROUND.

Now Helen was quite satisfied in her own mind that the little surprise had done its work, but that evening her brother brought home the weekly mail, and in it, after all her weary waiting, a little surprise for her. It was a copy of The Tekeewah (Kan.) Bugle, and great was the wonder in the family as to the why and wherefore of its coming; but Helen knew. There wasn't a mark of any kind on the printed sheet, so she set herself resolutely to read every line. Never had far western publisher in the most heated campaign a more devoted reader, and at last, in a leaded article in the page headed "Local Intelligence," she found a list of members of a new fire company, and among the names was "Albert Merritt." A writer in the "County Correspondence" of the next issue of The County Democrat told of "our fair ladies who charmed the audience



with their music" at a certain Christmas eve church festival, and by request conveyed in a note inclosing the stamps. The publisher directed a copy to "A. Merritt, Esq., Tekeewah, Kan." And this sort of thing went on for eight months more, and the gold-mining set in, and the country was most mightily stirred over the presidential election, and the Blakes and the Merritts began to look forward with strangely mingled feelings to another Christmas.

William Merritt was the same, and yet not the same. His hair, which was just streaked with gray when his son Albert had left him, was now white and visible. His broad, burly shoulders had begun to stoop. His hard eyes had lost some of their steeliness, and occasionally there were lines denoting mental pain visible in his masterful countenance. His voice, too, sometimes quivered in a way that astonished no one more than himself. And one day just after the sordid cut in a wild, vicious beast, he was breaking to the saddle—had almost thrown him on the way to town, he had caught himself suddenly wishing that Albert, who must be a tall, grown strong man by this time, were there to help subjugate the animal.



"CAN'T WE GET ALBERT BACK?"

And so when Helen next said the Merritts wanted a visit she found the fortress of the old man's heart ready to yield. She had the day before received a copy of The Tekeewah Bugle, in which she found the following paragraph half way down a column written account of a fire in that enterprising town:

"We should utterly fail in our duty to our readers if we omitted to mention the passing note of the heroic conduct of one of our young townsmen, a prominent and efficient member of Avonshire Engine company No. 1. Of course we refer to Mr. Albert Merritt, than whom a braver man never drew breath. No sooner had it become known that a child was in the burning building than at the risk of his own life, Mr. Merritt rushed into the smoke and flames, dashed up the stairs almost at a bound, and, groping about in the stifling heat, found the infant, fought his way through the fire to the window, for by this time the stairway was burning, and jumped to the ground with his precious burden safe on his arms. He was greeted with such a cheer as only Tekeewah throats can give. We regret to be obliged to add that Mr. Merritt suffered a painful, though not necessarily dangerous, injury in the breaking of an arm, which was struck by a falling timber. He was also rather severely burned. It is hoped, however, that he will soon be himself again."

This paper Helen brought with her but carefully hidden. She had determined, if need be, to show it to the stern father, but she proposed to hold it for the last resort, but her manner did, though ordinarily calm, she was now much excited betrayed her, and as soon as William Merritt looked into her face he knew that she knew something of Albert; and her unvoiced agitation, as he gazed fixedly at her, convinced him that something was amiss with his son. Mrs. Merritt was about to speak when her husband interrupted her in strained, quivering tones:

"Helen Blake," he said, "is Albert dead? Tell me the truth!"

There was a world of paternal love in the old man's voice now. But for a moment Helen said nothing, for she felt that were she to speak she would instantly and completely lose her self control. So with a deprecating gesture and a white face she walked to the window to compose herself, while the father and mother waited in suspense. After a little she turned again to them, and, with a reassuring look toward Mrs. Blake, who sat with clasped hands and parted lips, she took the paper from her pocket.

"I would like to read to you an article from The Tekeewah (Kansas) Bugle," she said, in as steady a voice as she could command. And then she read the account of the fire, from headlines to dash, without a break, and without looking up. When she had done she raised her eyes. Mrs. Blake was crying quietly and the old man was quite broken down.

"Helen," he said, reaching out both hands to the girl, "it's no use. I can't be a hardened old fool no longer. Can't we get Albert back here with us? Hadn't I better go out to

Kansas and get him? Poor boy, may be he's hurt worse than it says." And then the old man let the tears flow uncontrolled.

That night a letter was mailed to Tekeewah, Kan. It was written by Helen, though unsigned, and bore a copy:

Mr. Albert Merritt:
The account of the recent fire in Tekeewah and the heavy display by yourself on that occasion has worked a great change of opinion in certain quarters, a change which would have come soon, however, in the natural course of things. Your father is very much broken and anxious to see you.

A Father.
When Albert Merritt received this letter he was curiously seated, lying on the bed of the best room in the Tekeewah tavern, while Sam McCorkle was standing in the center of the floor telling some adoring friends for the twentieth time how "they paid here saved that gal lady." "I tell you," he said, "it takes the best of a year to get things straightened out. I mind me one time before I came west of you little dumpy Jones fell into the river, he jumped right in without stopping to peel a bit." And then he roared off a wholly imaginary yarn of his own bravery, while Albert smiled and the rest listened open mouthed. When Albert read his letter he said quietly:

"Sam! The going home for Christmas. I shall start as soon as I can do it safely."

Sam was astonished, but he did not reason, and finally concluded to try a trick "just to take care of Al," he explained to the boys. But secretly he was glad of the excuse.

The next issue of The Tekeewah Bugle contained this paragraph:

"Our well known townsman, Mr. Albert Merritt, is about to visit his old home in Indiana, where he will probably spend the holidays. He is very much well of the injuries sustained at the recent fire. He will be accompanied by his fast friend, Mr. Sam McCorkle, the well known lightning rod expert."

The stage was set to pass William Merritt's house at two o'clock on Christmas eve, but the roads were bad and it was quite dark when, with a sweeping curve, it swerved to the side of the pike and stopped in front of the house, in the open front doorway of which, in strong silhouette against the flood of light within, stood the burly form of William Merritt, his hands outstretched with trembling hopefulness.

"Come along, Sam," said one of the young men who dismounted from the back seat of the high stage, "I need you yet."

There was a cry, in which resignation, welcome and forgiveness were all blended from the figure in the doorway, and an answer from the under of the travelers, who still carried one arm in a sling. And a moment later William Merritt led his one into his house.

"Mother," he said, "your boy has come back."

In the ecstatic joy of meeting his mother, Albert had forgotten Sam McCorkle, and when he looked for him that individual had disappeared. As he afterward explained, he "didn't feel like he was any use when folks was all merryin' and a-wa-ah and fallin' on each other's necks, so he just dropped."

But Albert did not look for Sam very long. He had much to tell of his new life in the west, where he had been fairly successful, and his father and mother and brothers and sisters had quite as much to tell him.



THERE WAS A CRY.

The next day there was such a Christmas gathering at William Merritt's house as had never been there before. Such roast turkey with cranberry sauce, and such juicy mince pies, and such mealy potatoes, and such, fine, white home made bread, and such good things to eat generally as they who sat down at the dinner table partook of have never been excelled. All the Blakes were there, and so were all the members of that class of eight, whose photographs were the first weapon Helen had employed in storming William Merritt's dirty old heart.

And Sam McCorkle, too, the drunken shoe-maker's son, full of far western dash and historian of the time "Al rescued the baby." He was "Mr. McCorkle," an honored guest,

and no one received greater respect than he. But he did not rise to the height of his glory till evening, for at the dinner table Albert would not suffer his own praises to be sung in too high a key. But when Albert, seeming to have something particular to say to Helen, whose great, brown eyes sparkled unwontedly and whose cheeks persisted in blushing furiously, led her away with him into a quiet corner and left the field to Sam, that individual chanted his hero's deeds to his heart's content, and everybody else's delight, though he did not let slip the opportunities to tell of some things he had himself accomplished in the west.

The close of this voracious history may be clipped from The Tekeewah Bugle of March 15, 1890:

"Mr. Samuel McCorkle, the gentlemanly and enterprising agent for Flash & Hitten's justly celebrated lightning rods, has returned from Indiana healthy and happy. His friend and our former townsman, Mr. Albert Merritt, has concluded to remain east, where he will settle down upon his father's extensive farms. A little bird has whispered that the blind god had something to do with Mr. Merritt's decision to forego a share in the golden future sure to come to Tekeewah. Those who are curious in this matter are directed to the notices in the marriage column on another page headed 'Merritt-Blake.'"

HENRY DAWSON.

A HUMBLE CHRISTMAS DINNER.

There was not very much on the table—in fact, it wasn't very much of a table, being made of a dry goods box stood on its side. The room belonged to the grocer, but he had told them they could have the use of it for Christmas night. In the corner there was a little, cracked stove, which was so hot that it shone like a big lump of Christmas cheer in the semi-darkness.

Pretty soon "Swipesy" came in out of the roar of the city street. He had a few unsold papers under one arm and a small—a very small—bundle under the other. With him was his sister Suzie. They were orphans trying to make their own way. She had had good luck and had sold all her papers. She took what was left of Swipesy's stock and spread a nice clean paper over the dry goods box. Then he unrolled his bundle.

"Oh, Swipesy," said the girl.
There was a can of cooked corn beef and a little box of ligs.

Pretty soon the others began to come in. There was "Mickey" with a little packet of coffee, some sugar, and (what luck!) some cabbage that the apple woman on the corner had cooked and given him with big tears in her honest, Irish eyes when he told her about the dinner.

"It ain't much, Mickey," she said, "but may the good saints make it taste as relishin' as if 'twas as big as a barn and cooked in a gold skillet."

There were five charter members of the dinner party, so to speak. "Rocks" (so named from his manner of defending himself in his frequent "scraps") came into the room next. He too had a little bundle which was undone with due ceremony. When "Piper" came in he stopped a minute just inside the threshold, and held the door open while he beckoned to some one on the outside.

"Cmon in," said he. "The fellers'll be glad ter see yer."

Then there entered a little fellow not more than six years old. He was very much embarrassed, and held his finger to his lips. Piper, by way of introduction, said:

"Fellers—and Suzie—this 'ere little cove" (Piper himself was a big cove, having seen thirteen years, and being the oldest member of the dinner party) "is comin' to our Christmas. He's just gone into the paper sellin' biz, an' he ain't got no boddie. I'm a takin' care of him till he gets started. See?"

For a minute an embarrassed silence hung over the little group. Then the little people opened their hearts to the newcomer and they were big hearts for such very small bodies, and he was one of the dinner party.

Piper explained to him:

"You see," said Piper, "we fellers and Suzie had heard a bit about Christmas. We don't know 'exactly what it is, but we do know that everybody, wot is anybody, has a Christmas dinner. So we jes' clipped in, and— and" (waving his hand around the room "here 'y are.")

"But I ain't clipped in," said the newcomer.

"Well, wot if y' ain't. Y' can nex' time."

So that was settled.

Suzie in the meantime had produced a pail from somewhere, and an old stew pan from somewhere else, and some broken crockery from still another place.

"You'll make the coffee and warm the cabbage and meat, darlint," said Mickey. "Ye are the only woman here."

So Suzie went at it.

It wasn't long before everything was ready, and they gathered around the box. The savory odor from the coffee pot and stewpan had tickled the twelve little nostrils, and the six mouths were as eager to taste the poor little dinner as ever yours was to pick your succulent Christmas turkey bones.

They fed at once.

"I'm 'frail the coffee ain't very good," said Suzie. But she smiled the satisfied smile that every housewife smiles while deprecating her own dainties, and was as pleased as you ever were, my fine lady, in similar circumstances, when Rocks exclaimed in amazement:

"Finner'n Debnoids, I'll bet."

Before very long the dinner had been eaten. They sat around and talked for awhile, and the little 6-year-old fell asleep with his head on Suzie's knees, and her fingers passed lovingly over the little fellow's dirty forehead, and by-and-by she leaned over and kissed him.

The tallow candle burned low in its green bottle candlestick, and when "Piper rose and quivered:

"Well, fellers—and Suzie—has we had a merry Christmas? A fervent 'You bet!' went from the mouths of every one but the 6-year-old, and he smiled in his sleep.

The dinner party was over. D. E. M.

The Drumstick.

Behold my rotund wealth of meat,
With all its juices, rich and sweet!
How firm, how solid, are my parts,
And how I go straight to the hearts
Of children, with distended jaws,
In wait to hide me in their maws.

Al! how I love to lie in state
Upon the table, while you wait
With eager eyes and teeth that burn,
Until it comes to be your turn.
How crisp my skin, and, oh! how brown,
And how I tickle going down,
And, then, my bone, oh! what delight,
To pick it till it's clean and white.

How would you like, on Christmas Day,
To tramp all over and then, we'll say,
To come back home, well almost starved,
And find me waiting, nicely carved?
Between your finger and your thumb
You hold me up, thus (yum, yum, yum!)
I tickle every nerve, I thrill
Your stomachs, and I fill the bill,
And with all men I nothing lack—
In fact, I have the inside track!

TOM MASON.

"A merry Christmas" far and wide
Rings out this wish on every side,
A greeting glad this Christmas tide,
Re-echoing through all the land.

