

# The York Herald.

THE YORK HERALD

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ALEX. SCOTT, PROPRIETOR.

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**A CHRISTMAS CAROL.**  
Wake the tide of cheerful song,  
Loud and gladome anthems sing,  
Round the blazing firelight throng,  
Let each home with gladness ring.

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ening with a genial glow the red berries  
and dark-green leaves of the Christmas  
evergreens. It was just the moment  
for a fireside story; and as Uncle Her-  
bert was known to be learned in legends  
and German fairy-tales, which he was  
wont to narrate with much quiet humor,  
our little cousin's request met with  
general approval. Uncle Herbert did  
not immediately reply, but sat appar-  
ently reflecting; and the flickering fire-  
light played over his face, showed us  
that he was in a serious mood. Aunt  
Alice glanced up to him enquiringly;  
and I thought to myself that I had  
never seen her bright young face (for  
she was many years younger than the  
rest of our aunts and uncles) look more  
perfectly beautiful than it did that  
night; and I caught myself wondering,  
half-unconsciously, how it had come to  
pass that she should have married one  
so much older, and to all appearance so  
unlike herself, as sober, grey-headed  
uncle Herbert.

"Well, my dear," said Uncle Her-  
bert at last, "I will tell you a story, a  
true story. I don't think it is quite  
what you mean by a Christmas story;  
but the events about which I am going  
to tell you happened at Christmas time,  
on this very night indeed, twenty-seven  
years ago."

We all settled down to listen, and  
after a minute's pause he went on:  
"It was Christmas-eve, or rather  
Christmas day, for twelve o'clock had  
struck, and the few people left in the  
streets were getting gradually fewer and  
fewer, till it seemed as though the police-  
men and the watchmen were the only  
sight to be seen. It was a bitter cold  
night, and snow was beginning to  
fall. Most of the houses were dark and  
silent, though here and there lighted  
windows and stray sounds of music and  
happy voices showed where a household  
was seeing Christmas in, and giving a  
merry welcome to the happy season.  
Out of a brilliantly lighted house in one  
of the West End streets there came a  
young man who looked as though he  
felt but little share of the general rejoic-  
ing. He was barely twenty years of  
age; but though so young, his cheeks  
were flushed and his gait unsteady with  
wine, and his face was contracted with  
a look of hopeless despair. And little  
wonder! The house which he had just  
left was a noted gaming-house. He had  
been tempted by bad companions, and  
had gambled and lost—lost far more  
heavily than he could afford! One sin  
brings of another. In the vain hope of  
recovering his losses—with the insane  
persuasion common to all gamblers,  
that he must win in the end if he could  
but play a little longer—he had taken  
without leave a large sum of his employ-  
er's money, had staked it, and lost.  
And then, all at once, a horrible remorse,  
a mad despair, seized upon him. Now  
that it was too late he saw the full mag-  
nitude of his crime; he knew too well  
that the money which, when he expected  
to be able to restore it secretly, he had  
thought of as borrowed, the law would  
call by a very different name. He knew  
now that, disguise it as he might, the  
taking of that money was a theft.  
Already he felt in imagination the offi-  
cer's hand upon his collar, the handcuffs  
upon his wrists. He could see the wit-  
nesses come forward to bear testimony  
to his crime; he could hear the voice of  
the judge pronounce sentence on the  
thief. He dared not meet the conse-  
quences of his sin; in his mad despair,  
fearing to face an offended man, he  
had resolved to rush, by suicide, into  
the presence of an offending God. He  
was now hurrying home to drink his  
last draught on earth, the draught that  
brings the awful sleep whose waking is  
eternity.

With his hands tightly clenched, and  
his hat crushed down upon his forehead,  
he was rushing madly on, when sud-  
denly he heard a sound of shouting, and  
the tramp of galloping horses. He  
looked up and saw that the sky above  
him was red with a lurid glare; and  
then a runner passed him with the terri-  
ble cry of "Fire!" A house was on  
fire on one of the streets through which  
he had to pass; and with a strange feel-  
ing of relief, he turned aside from the  
road to his death—to see the sight.  
He bowed his way through the crowd,  
which gave way right and left at the  
pressure of his muscular arms. The  
dwellers in the burning house had been  
somewhat got out, and now stood half-  
naked and shivering in the street. All,  
it was thought, were safe; but just as  
he reached the group there was a fearful  
shriek, for it was found that there was  
one, the youngest, missing. The poor  
mother sobbed and screamed, and was  
only held back by force from re-enter-  
ing the burning house, and perishing  
with her little one. The father, wring-  
ing his hands like one distracted, offered  
a thousand pounds to the firemen if  
they would rescue his child.

"It can't be done, sir," said one of  
them; "not if you said a hundred thou-  
sand, it couldn't be done. The floor  
will fall in in five minutes, and it's cer-  
tain death to enter that house again."

The red flame was already shining  
through the first floor windows, and  
through the open door could be heard  
the roaring of the fire, which was fast  
gaining hold upon the staircase. A  
thought flashed across the young man's  
mind. His minutes were numbered, his  
life was worthless; its last act should  
be a worthy one, at all events. With  
quick eager questions he ascertained  
where the child was. The firemen  
guessed his intention, and held him  
back.

"Don't go, sir, for God's sake! It's  
wasting two lives instead of one. We're  
not cowards, sir, but this is certain  
death. If you attempt it, the Lord have  
mercy on your soul!"

"Amén!" said the young man; and  
throwing off the hands that held him  
back, he rushed into the house and up  
the staircase, which creaked and crack-  
led under his feet.

"The fire was raging on the first  
floor, the child was in the floor above.  
The first-floor landing was already in  
flames, but the young man, with a fierce  
leap, sprang past the burning spot, and  
in another second was in the room  
where the child lay. The room was  
already filled with smoke, and here and  
there the flames were darting through  
the crevices of the flooring. He could  
not see the bedstead, but a little fright-  
ened voice, sobbing, 'Papa, dear; do  
come, papa!' guided him to the spot  
where the child lay. 'I will take you  
to your dear papa; don't be frightened.'  
Then, quick as thought, he wrapped the  
little one in the blanket and began to  
retrace his perilous route. Quick, how-  
ever, as he had been, the flames had  
gained ground, and scorched his feet as  
he stepped over the burning floor. He  
rushed to the window, thinking that by  
means of a ladder they might escape  
that way; but pouring from the win-  
dows below him was a sheet of flame.  
The burning staircase was the only  
road. Tying his handkerchief round  
his mouth and nose, to keep out the  
suffocating smoke, he groped his way  
to the door. To his horror, he heard a  
crash—one half of the staircase had  
gone.

"A deadly terror seized upon him;  
the last hope of escape was lost. The  
life which a few minutes since had  
seemed a burden too heavy to bear, sud-  
denly seemed utterly precious. His  
eyes were blinded, his throat scorched  
by the thick black smoke, and tongues  
of flame were leaping up around him,  
seeking to devour him. With awful  
distinctness all the evils of his life  
crowded into that fearful moment, shone  
out clear as noonday before his eyes.  
Instinctively, good advice spurred  
good resolutions broken, rose up before  
him; and one and all seemed to drag  
him down—lost, lost, lost, forever and  
ever! A moment since he had not  
dared to live, now he did not dare to  
die. That awful horror lent him almost  
superhuman strength. Threading his  
way through the flames, which were  
now rising all around him except down  
as far as he could, and then, grasping  
the broken handrail, swung himself  
over, and dropped, as best he might, a  
depth of some fifteen feet into the hall  
below. Fearfully burnt, he had just  
strength—still holding his burden in  
his arms—to stagger into the street,  
and fall senseless into the firemen's arms.

"For many weeks he hovered be-  
tween life and death in the intensest  
physical and mental agony. For the  
most part of the time he was delirious,  
and haunted by the memory of that  
awful moment when, standing on the  
brink of death he had looked over into  
the abyss of eternity. As he regained  
his reason, a new terror came over him,  
the dread of the consequences of his  
crime. He never woke without fear-  
ing to find the officers of justice at his  
bedside, waiting to carry him before the  
judge. But this last feat and loss of  
former horror; being, as it were, swal-  
lowed up in a more overwhelming thank-  
fulness at having been saved from a far  
greater crime than he knows no repentance.  
On his bed of pain he prayed as never  
before—prayed with a poignant and  
thankful heart; and by the time he was  
able to sit upright, he was ready to an-  
swer without flinching the shame and  
pain of his punishment. For some weeks  
the evil day was delayed; but at last,  
as he was beginning to regain strength,  
a visitor was announced, and his em-  
ployer entered the room. With a beat-  
ing heart, but still resigned, he felt that  
his hour was come, and nerved himself  
to meet it. To his surprise, his master  
made no allusion to his misconduct, but  
kindly praised his conduct and his  
daring deed; and the thought flashed  
across him that his folly and sin were  
still unknown, and if he did but keep  
his own counsel, might so remain for-  
ever. The tempter whispered, 'Be  
silent! and for a moment he was in-  
clined to yield; but his good angel tri-  
umphed. With bowed head and down-  
cast eyes he told the story of his sin,  
and waited to hear his sentence from  
the man he had wronged. For a few min-  
utes the old man (God bless him!) was  
silent, and then, he said with tears in  
his eyes:

"My lad, I am glad that you have  
told me this, very glad, although I knew  
it before. You have committed a great  
sin, and you have suffered a heavy pun-  
ishment. Thank God, who in his mercy  
has saved you from a far greater sin—  
sin whose punishment is forever and  
ever. You have been through a fiery  
trial; let your future life show that you  
have been truly 'purged in the fire.'  
For your offence against myself, God  
forbid that I should add to your pun-  
ishment—I forgive you with all my  
heart, my boy, and you need have no  
fear about coming back to your old  
place in the office, for no one except  
myself will ever know a word of the  
matter. One thing, however, you must  
promise—never to enter a gambling-  
house, or to stake money at play again."

"That I do, sir, upon my honor!" he  
began, and then stopped short, as the  
unfitness of the word, from one in his  
situation, flashed cruelly upon him.

"Nay, lad," said the old man, hold-  
ing up his hand, "don't take it back;  
that is just the way in which I want  
your promise. Upon your honor, mind  
to be affirmed, &c."

It is a little tarnished now; let it be  
the labor of your life  
it bright."

"And, with God's help, he did. He  
rose from that bed, where for so many  
weeks he had lain in peril of his life, an  
altered man. His former friends won-  
dered at the change, and declared that  
he had left his youth in the fire; but  
they knew nothing of the fiercer fire  
which during those long weeks had  
raged in his bosom, and had scorched  
away the selfish for youthful follies.  
Having stood so awfully near death, he  
had learned to value life, and strive to  
use life that death should be no longer  
terrible. Add so striving, God pro-  
spered him. The father of the little  
girl he had saved was a wealthy man,  
and with generous kindness helped him  
even against his will. His kind old  
master stood his faithful friend, and  
even made opportunities of showing his  
confidence in him; and for many years  
past he has been a partner in the firm, a  
rich and respected merchant. Very  
few people know his story. It is not a  
very merry one, but it was uppermost  
in my mind when Effie asked for a  
story—it mostly is on Christmas-eve—  
and therefore I have told it to you."

"Who was the young man, uncle?"  
said a childish voice. "Have we ever  
seen him?"

"Yes, my dear, you know him very  
well."  
"But what became of the little girl  
that was saved, uncle? Is she alive  
still?"

"My dear," said Uncle Herbert, "the  
little girl is now your aunt Alice."  
Just then the firelight, which had  
grown dim, flickered up in a blaze.  
Aunt Alice bent over Uncle Herbert's  
hand and kissed it, and as she raised  
her head we could see that there were  
tears in her eyes.

And we guessed the rest of the story.  
—English Society.

**Excitement Among Bachelors.**  
The report circulated yesterday  
that about fifty marriageable girls  
from Lowell were on the emigrant  
train on their way to Los Angeles,  
and would be in Truckee about mid-  
night last night. The report was  
true, so far as the number of girls and  
their coming was concerned. The  
excitement among the bachelors in  
this place, in consequence of the news  
that such a precious invoice of freight  
was near at hand, was most immense.  
Some of the most susceptible young  
men, who had been boasting of the  
superiority of the Eastern girls over  
California daughters, went down on  
the 11 o'clock P. M. passenger train  
to Boca, in order to come on the em-  
igrant train, and thus to have a fair  
view and make the acquaintance of  
some of the fascinating Lowell dam-  
sels. The train, with its feminine  
cargo, arrived here shortly after mid-  
night. The bachelors who went down  
to Boca are mum over their trip.—  
They got awfully sold. There was  
scarcely a pretty girl in the crowd.  
One had lost her teeth, another was  
deaf, and several had glass eyes,  
while the most promising looking  
one in the crowd was tongue-tied.  
One of the bachelors undertook to  
pay his addresses to this, the most  
likely one of all, and actually offered  
his hand, name and a home in Truck-  
ee. She puckered up her mouth for  
a half an hour in the vain endeavour to  
answer him, and probably would have  
succeeded had not the remorseless  
conductor cried out "All aboard!" and  
started up the train.—Truckee, Nevada,  
Republican.

**Saved by His Paper.**  
The San Francisco Call says:—  
"Near the Golden Gate Park, San  
Francisco, lives one Hughes, a bachel-  
or, who raises hogs for the market.  
On Monday afternoon Mr. Hughes fell  
into his well, and being unable to  
get out, was obliged to wait patiently  
for help, meanwhile standing up to his  
waist in water. As no one passed  
near the place, he shouted until hoarse  
in hopes of making some one in the  
Park hear him. On Tuesday morn-  
ing the carrier of the Call left a paper  
at the house, and the man in the well  
bearing footsteps, called loudly, but  
the carrier was in a hurry, and did not  
know where the sound came from,  
and had no time to investigate. On  
Wednesday morning the carrier not-  
iced the paper of the preceding day  
on the steps, and hearing at the same  
time a voice, he thought something  
must be wrong, so he got off from his  
horse, and finally found Hughes in the  
well. He immediately procured as-  
sistance, and the man was taken out  
alive, although, of course, in an ex-  
hausted condition. As he is a man of  
good constitution he will probably  
recover. He continues to take the  
Call."

A young lady at Quincy played a  
hand organ on the street for three  
hours, and won a new serge dress.

The Governor of Wyoming wound  
up his late Thanksgiving proclama-  
tion in this style:—"Give thanks  
unto the Lord, for His mercy endu-  
reth forever. In witness whereof  
I have hereunto set my hand, and  
assumed the great seal of the Territory  
to be affirmed, &c."

A young lady became so much dis-  
tressed by her nervous system, that she  
was obliged to leave her home, and  
was confined in a sanitarium for  
several months. She is now recovering,  
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Four years ago (writes an Ameri-  
can sailor) I left the port of Boston,  
the master of a fine ship, bound for  
China. I was worth ten thousand  
dollars, and was the husband of a  
young and handsome wife, whom I  
had married but six months before.  
When I left her, I promised to return  
to her in less than a twelvemonth. I  
took all of my money with me save  
enough to support my wife in my  
absence, for the purpose of trading  
when in China, on my own account.  
For a long time we were favored with  
prosperous winds; but when in the  
China seas a terrible storm came up-  
on us, so that in a short time I saw  
the vessel must be lost, for we were  
drifting on the rocks of an unknown  
shore. I ordered the men to provide  
each for himself in the best manner  
possible, and forgot the ship, as it was  
an impossibility to save her. We  
struck—a sea-throw me upon the  
rocks senseless, and the next would  
have carried me back into a watery  
grave, had not one of the sailors  
dragged me further up the rocks.  
There were only four of us alive, and,  
when morning came, we found that  
we were on a small uninhabited is-  
land, with nothing to eat but the wild  
fruit common to that portion of the  
earth.

I will not distress you by an ac-  
count of our sufferings there; so I  
will only say that we remained sixty days  
before we could make ourselves known  
to any ship. We were taken into  
Canton, and there I had to beg; for  
my money was at the bottom of the  
sea, and I had not taken the precau-  
tion to have it insured. It was nearly  
a year before I found a chance to  
come home, and then I, a captain, was  
obliged to ship as a common sailor.  
It was two years from the time I left  
America that I landed in Boston. I  
was walking in a hurried manner up  
one of the streets, when I met my  
brother-in-law. He could not speak  
nor move, but he grasped my hand,  
and the tears gushed from his eyes.

"Is my wife alive?" I asked. He  
said nothing. Then I wished that I  
had perished with my ship, for I  
thought my wife was dead, but he  
very soon said, "She is alive." Then  
it was my turn to cry for joy. He  
glung to me and said, "Your funeral  
sermon has been preached, for we  
have thought you dead for a long  
time." He said that my wife was  
living in our little cottage in the in-  
terior of the State. It was then three  
o'clock in the afternoon, and I took a  
train that would carry me within  
twenty-five miles of my wife. Upon  
leaving the cars, I hired a boy, though  
it was night, to drive me home.

It was about five o'clock in the  
morning when that sweet little out-  
rage of mine appeared in sight. It  
was a warm, moonlight night, and I  
remember how like heaven it looked  
to me. I got out of the carriage and  
went to the window of the room where  
the servant girl slept, and gently  
knocked. She opened the window  
and asked, "Who was there?"  
"Sarah, do you not know me?" said  
I. She screamed with fright, for she  
thought me a ghost, but I told her to  
unfasten the door and let me in, for I  
wished to see my wife. She let me  
in and gave me a light, and I went  
upstairs to my wife's room. She lay  
sleeping quietly. Upon her bosom  
lay our child, whom I had never seen.  
She was as beautiful as when I left  
her, but I could see a mournful ex-  
pression upon her face. Perhaps she  
was dreaming of me. I gazed for a  
long time; I did not make any noise,  
for I dare not wake her. At length  
I imprinted a soft kiss upon the  
cheek of my little child. While do-  
ing it, a tear dropped from my eye  
and fell upon her cheek. Her eyes  
opened as clearly as though she had  
not been sleeping. I saw that she  
began to be frightened, and I said,  
"Mary, it is your husband!" and she  
clashed me about my neck and faint-  
ed. But I cannot describe to you  
that scene. She is now the happy  
wife of a poor man. I am endeavor-  
ing to accumulate a little property,  
and then I will leave the sea forever.

The otter or Alaska seal, is the  
most valuable of all the furs that pass  
under the name of seal skins. The  
fur is exceedingly soft, and velvety,  
perfectly black in full season, but  
at other times of a shining, deep  
sopha, or of a rich chestnut color.  
The sea otter formerly commanded  
in China from \$80 to \$100 the skin.  
It was a tradition among sailors, forty  
years ago, that all the sea-otter skins  
went to China, because no other peo-  
ple could handle a fur so fine. Now,  
however, it is a fashionable fur in  
Europe and America, and its imita-  
tions are even more fashionable.  
Other otter skins are also highly  
prized.

T. Lane Emory, residing near Tay-  
lor, in Bel Air county, Md., recently  
lost two valuable horses by hydropho-  
bia. The first intimation he had that  
either of them had been bitten was  
while driving on the road. One of  
them began to act very strangely,  
frothed at the mouth, and becoming  
very ungovernable, in a frantic rage  
seized his companion by the neck,  
tearing out a piece of flesh, thus com-  
municating the disease to it. Both  
horses died. A number of hogs in the  
neighborhood were also bitten by the  
same dog that is supposed to have  
bitten Emory's horse, and died with  
the same dreadful disease!

A young lady at Quincy played a  
hand organ on the street for three  
hours, and won a new serge dress.

The Governor of Wyoming wound  
up his late Thanksgiving proclama-  
tion in this style:—"Give thanks  
unto the Lord, for His mercy endu-  
reth forever. In witness whereof  
I have hereunto set my hand, and  
assumed the great seal of the Territory  
to be affirmed, &c."

A young lady became so much dis-  
tressed by her nervous system, that she  
was obliged to leave her home, and  
was confined in a sanitarium for  
several months. She is now recovering,  
and is expected to return to her  
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