

was just in college, and had come home for the holidays, and he went with some other boys to get the Christmas tree. Hannah had a piece of woodland covered with a fine growth of young hemlocks, and the boys went straight there and cut one. They never asked permission. I don't suppose it entered their heads that any human being would grudge one of all those hemlocks for a Christmas tree. But they didn't know Hannah Stone. They were getting down the mountain slope in great style with the tree on the ox-sled, all the boys laughing and hurrahing, when out came Hannah to her gate.

"Where did you get that tree?" said she.

Billy Snow, who was driving—they were his father's oxen—shouted to them to stop, and young Thomas spoke up sort of bewildered.

"We got it in the woods just above here," said he, pulling off his cap.

"Them is my woods," said Hannah.

Then young Thomas and the other boys looked at one another.

"I don't let folks have my trees for nothin' unless I set out to give them," said Hannah.

"But this is for the Christmas tree down to the church," said young Thomas, as red as a beet.

"That don't make no difference," said Hannah.

"How much do you want for this tree?" said young Thomas.

"Two dollars," said Hannah.

Well, the boys clubbed together and paid it, then they started up the oxen and came home pretty mad, and in an hour the story was all over the village. After that Caroline and I didn't have as much stock in Hannah's doing for the Christmas tree, but, as I said when I begun, nobody can tell about anybody else till things get through happening to bring them out; and as they never do get through happening, it follows that nobody ever does know, though they may make a sudden jump ahead in knowledge, as we did with Hannah Stone.

Caroline and I worked very hard get-

ting up that Christmas tree. We went to Boston once to buy things, but we bought mostly in Rye, the big town six miles from our village. Several times when we were coming home from Rye, we met Hannah all wrapped up in her sleigh, with a lot of bundles. Once she stopped and spoke to us, and asked how we were getting on with the Christmas tree, and then I spoke right out; I couldn't help it. "We are getting on very well, and no thanks to you, Hannah Stone," said I.

"What do you mean, Kate?" said Hannah.

"I mean," said I, "that if I had known what a mean woman you would grow up to be, a woman mean enough to grudge one tree out of a whole grove for Christmas, and make those poor boys pay for it, I would never have sat next to you when we went to school if I'd been whipped for refusing to; that's what I mean," said I.

Hannah she never said one word back, and I slapped the reins over our horse and we went on. Caroline said she didn't know but I was most too harsh to speak so to Hannah, but I said it was no more than she deserved.

Well, the day before Christmas came, and Caroline and I had been hard at work in the meeting-house ever since eight o'clock in the morning, and had just run three o'clock in the afternoon to get a cup of tea and a mouthful to eat.

At a sudden Caroline, who was facing the window, cried out: "My sakes, just look!" said she. "Just look, Kate!"

Then I looked, and Caroline and I both jumped up and ran to the window, and there she was! There was Hannah Stone standing on her ox-team, driving, and there was the dummy man, all wrapped up in a buffalo coat which Hannah had bought for him on account of his consumption, holding on to a tree all set up in a butter firkin. And the tree was a splendid hemlock, as straight and evenly pointed as if a special gardener had tended it on purpose, and it was loaded down with presents. We could see the dolls dancing, and the