

SOUTHERN CROSS.

It was about 4 o'clock on Christmas eve and business was over as I closed my desk and rose with a weary yawn.

So I had them good night, promising to see them in the morning and with hearty thanks for their thoughtful kindness and watched them as they trudged away toward the battery quarters.

I sent my groom home with the precious puddy, and mounting my pony, threaded my way around the orderly files of natives and Chinamen who thronged the narrow street and filled the air with their uncouth gabble.

"Well," continued the "medico," "I have a fellow countryman of yours very kind and generous in Malacca (native quarter), a sailor, only ten days out of the Spanish jail for thumping a guardia (policeman) last year.

"Good evening, sir," they both called out, and Mrs. Hale added: "Wish you a merry Christmas, Mr. B. My, you're a handsome fellow."

"That's a fact, father," she said. "Why, 'twouldn't seem the least like Christmas if I couldn't give presents, whether I be in Heaven or not."

"I don't know but what I be, Maria," she acknowledged the captain, and she went on to make a list of her experiences while "Christmased" in out of the way Chinese and African ports with children and peals of laughter that set Pedro grinning by force of example.

"Trust the old lady to know what boys like," said the captain. "We had a boy once ourselves. He'd be just about your age now," he added in a lower tone, glancing at his wife.

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

Ye nations hear the story— Today we'll sing a song— Bring forth the silent harp— And sing the angel's song— A Saviour's love to you.

Step out softly, kind old doctor— Come with me to see the sun— Glimmering in the sky— Behind the great volcanic range,

Beasts and Birds Have a Prominent Place in Christmas Lore. The story of the hunting of the wren in the isle of Man every Christmas is well known.

In the Tyrol they say the ravens used to have snow white plumage, but one day Jesus wanted to drink at a stream and they splashed and so befouled the water that he could not, so he said, "Ungrateful birds, you are proud of your snow white feathers, but they shall become black and remain so until the judgment day."

The ass is the most sacred of animals because he carried the holy family to Egypt by night. He has had a cross on his back ever since.

The tree is always lighted on Christmas eve in Denmark, and the family all gather together then. The older people get the presents on a plate at their places at the table, and the children's gifts are on the tree.

The doctor shook his head. "If we could get him up north now, I'd say he'd get well with the constitution here. It's the heat of the place that keeps him down."

"I fancy an English Christmas is too well known to need much description. English people have described it fully, and the English illustrated papers at Christmas time give a good idea of the festivities.

NORWAY AND SWEDEN.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF THE UNITED STATES.

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THE RETURN.

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SAVE THE BABY!

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Who is Will Whitener?

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