

## THE HEATHEN

Little giggles went around the Fourth Grade room when Suzanne entered. Even though the Very Kind Lady had sewed until the wee hours of the morning to make Suzanne's clothes look in the current fashion, short enough and dapper enough, Suzanne looked different from the other ten year old girls in the room. Her eyes were unusually bright. Her manner was too assured for a stranger; her hair too curlily natural and thick; her speech too trippingly correct. Suzanne was a target for the great American ~~fun~~ game of fun-making at the expense of the stranger who is different.

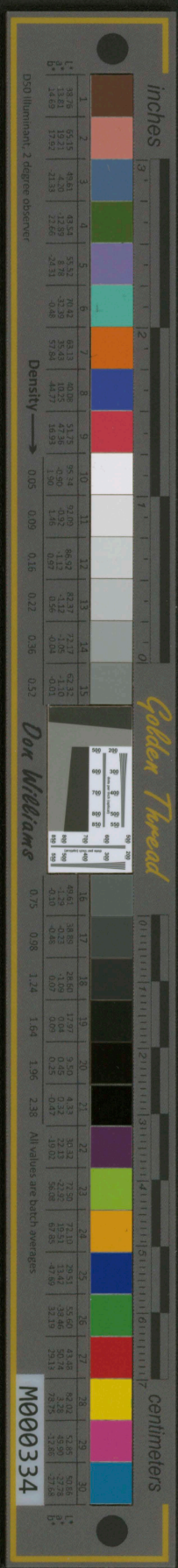
"Another monkey-chaser!" was the audible comment which went around the class.

The first "monkey-chaser" being masculine and from Jamaica, had won his way into the hearts of the class by the very simple process of smashing the face of the prevailing bully, and turning up his already tip-tilted nose at the belle of the room. Thereafter no Rudy Vallee had an easier way with the maidens, and no Babe Ruth a more assured access to the hearts of the males than had Clive Harden.

Suzanne answered quietly and distinctly the questions which the harassed Little Teacher Dear asked in a hurried voice, and was assigned a seat near the reigning belle



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For a Fourth Grader she had an uncanny knowledge of arithmetic, but her answers in the geography class were paralyzingly ridiculous. Maudie, the belle, clinging to the ragged fringe of Clive's affections, laughed loudest and longest of all the pupils, for she had noticed a keen and sympathetic glance from Clive, resting almost affectionately upon the new-comer.

"Just to think," Maudie was almost hysterical in her mirth at recess, when the children were clustered in the halls, "Just to think, she argued with Teacher Dear about the size of Trinidad, and said it is larger than the United States."

The peals of laughter of the little girls reached Suzanne, standing painfully alone in the great bare halls filled with children all friendly to everyone but the new comer. Her black eyes filled with tears, but she bit a proud lip to keep them back.

"I like your hair," said a shy voice at her elbow.

It was Clive, the Magnificent. He held out a piece of sugar cane, peeled and cut into tempting slivers at the end. "I bought it at the fruit stand," he confided, "I thought you'd like it. When I first came here it was the only thing that helped me to forget these people."

He indicated with a wide gesture the United States of America, New York and the people therein.

Maudie peeped at the two through her shock of fashionably bobbed and synthetized hair, and gathered her forces around her for a conflict that she knew was to be bitter and merciless. Outside the snow sifted down in deaden-



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ing whiteness, and the chill crept into Suzanne's heart.

In view of the snow and the tinkle of, <sup>the</sup> sleigh bells *of the Salvation Army lassies* without, Teacher Dear allowed the language hour to be given over to an oral lesson on the approaching Great Festival, and the little talks in carefully corrected sentences and paragraphs moved on to an interesting climax.

"Perhaps our little new friend would like to tell us about Christmas in her home," prompted Teacher Dear.

Thus encouraged, Suzanne stood up, her eyes widening in delight, her nerves a-tingle with relief from repression.

"In my country", she began, and her quaint accents flowed on delightedly. Orange hunts, the shoe without the door, the gift offerings to Mother and Father, the races run to the river, the songs and early service-- she paused breathlessly, and Clive, his eyes alight with joy, prompted wildly, "Don't forget the sugar sticks!" After all, Jamaica is not so far from Trinidad.

<sup>u</sup> Madie leaned back in bored indifference. Pooh, it was all very uninteresting, this droning of a hot climate, where there were strange, uncouth customs. The other little girls, true copyists, mimiced her air of boredom, and yawned openly. Clive's championing of the queer little stranger set the pace for the attitude of the boys, and after all, what Suzanne was saying had the tang of far countries, the lure of romance and adventure.

Maude was on her feet as soon as Suzanne had taken her seat. With a sneer, veiled under an assumption of





interest she asked questions of this strange Christmas. Was there no sleighing? No Santa Claus? No Christmas tree? No stockings? No Christmas carols? No stores trimmed in holly? No Salvation Army Santa Clauses on the street? As she answered No to each question, Suzanne's face grew more and more troubled. The gleam of her bright eyes blurred in a tear haze. Her lips quivered as she made a brave attempt to defend her birth-place.

"It seems to me," said Maudie, very correctly, as is proper in a language lesson, "That this country of Trinidad is a heathen place, Teacher Dear."

Clive was on his feet in doughty defence of the strange damsel in distress, "It's not a heathen place," he shouted, "it's like my own home, and I'll dare anyone to say my country is a heathen land."

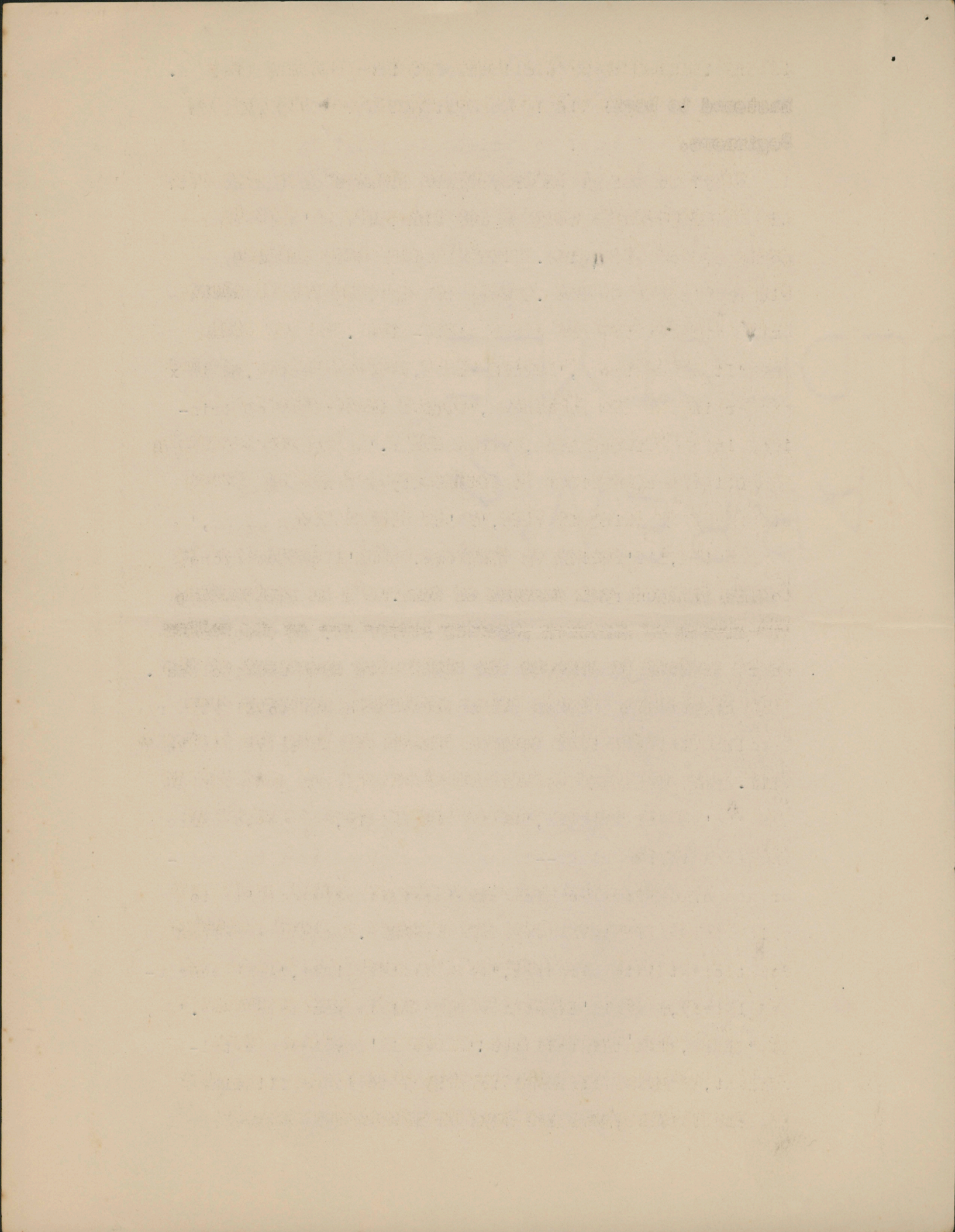
It was a gross defiance of discipline, and Teacher Dear was stern as she restored order to the upset class.

But Suzanne was not one to allow another to fight her battles without aid and assistance from her brave little self.

"We're not heathen," she said primly, "we go to church and we have the Bible--" her brow clouded over in remembrance of the long church service yesterday morning to which the Very Kind Lady had taken her. A shadow of doubt crept into her eyes, "We have the Bible," she concluded lamely, "but it's not the same Bible you have here."

"There, didn't I tell you!" Maudie's voice was triumphant, and she settled into her seat with a flirting and smoothing of her skirts that showed she had arrived







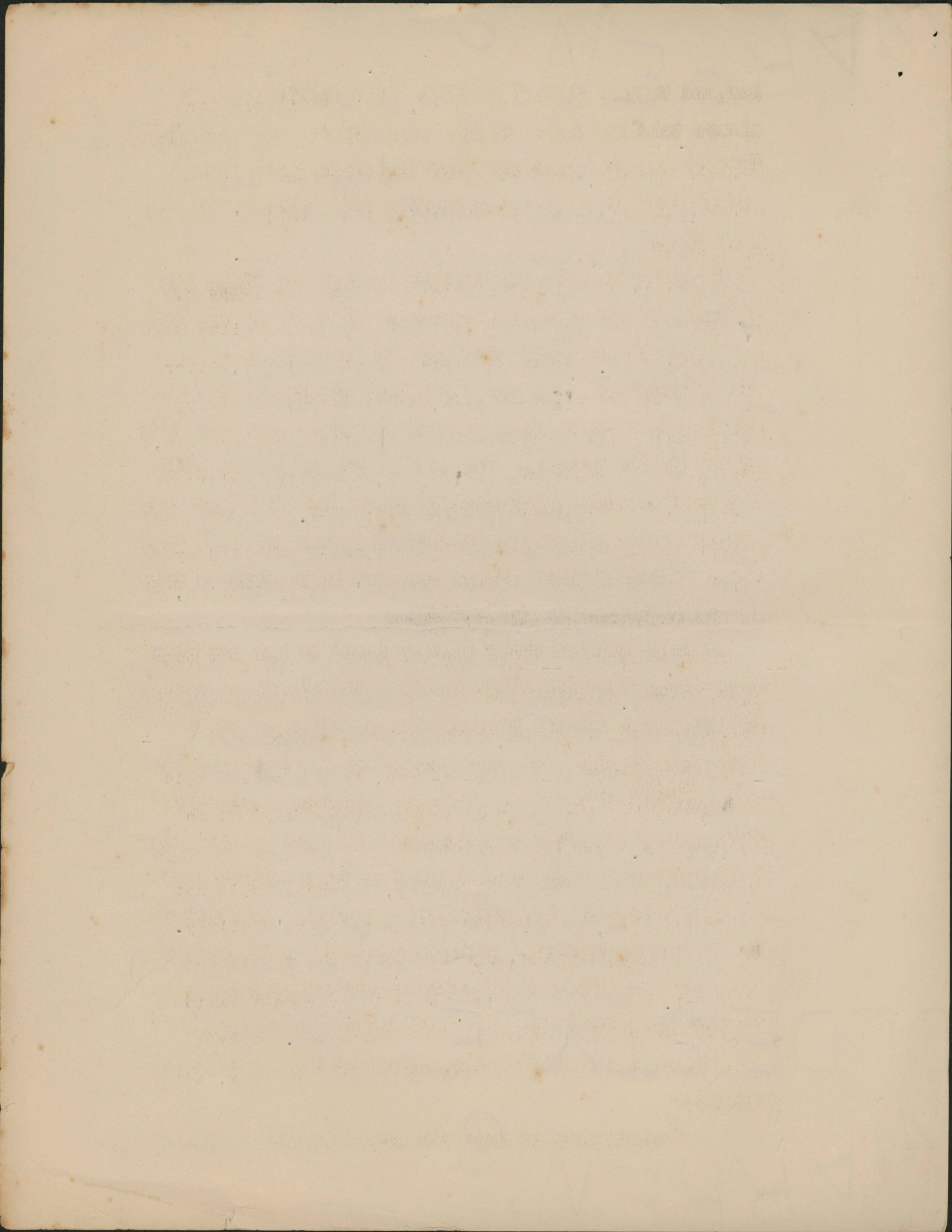
at the conclusion of the whole matter. Teacher Dear hastened to begin the next lesson, American History for Beginners.

"Heathen Girl," Maudie dubbed Suzanne from that hour and "Heathen Girl" clung to her in spite of Clive's brave little fists, and Suzanne's own sharp tongue. "Heathen Girl" walked stoutly to and from school alone, while Maudie drew the other girls away from her with shocked whispers. "Heathen Girl" swallowed tears, bitter as the sap of the <sup>in</sup>cañona tree, but stood unbelievably high in arithmetic and reading and spelling and language, floundering hopelessly in geography, and asking wierd questions in American History for Beginners.

A fresh outburst of taunts, carefully marshalled by Maudie followed each success of Suzanne's in recitation, the echoes of derision floating behind her as she walked --she scorned to run--to the sheltering apartment of the Very Kind Lady. Nights threw comforting darkness over her little white iron bed, and hushed her sobs for Mother - in-Heaven and Invalid-Father-at-Home, who had sent her to the Very Kind Lady to educate her so that she might go home to teach.

Christmas Eve came on Monday, so school would not close until noon, and then for a long ten days' holiday. Suzanne welcomed the holiday as a rest from Maudie and the school. She wondered if she could ever go back to the class-room and the insults and the snubs. Very Kind Lady asked her each morning if she were happy, and if the little girls and boys in school were kind to





**Golden Thread**  
*Dor Williams*

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14.71	16.99	11.31	11.71	14.31	18.11	14.71	14.77	15.73	13.96	12.66	12.07	12.56	12.07	12.01
15.07	13.24	21.44	22.85	20.28	15.07	11.81	14.77	14.93	12.96	12.66	12.07	12.56	12.07	12.01

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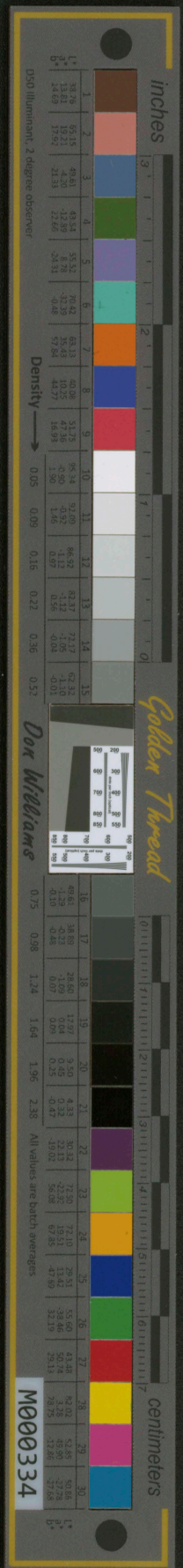
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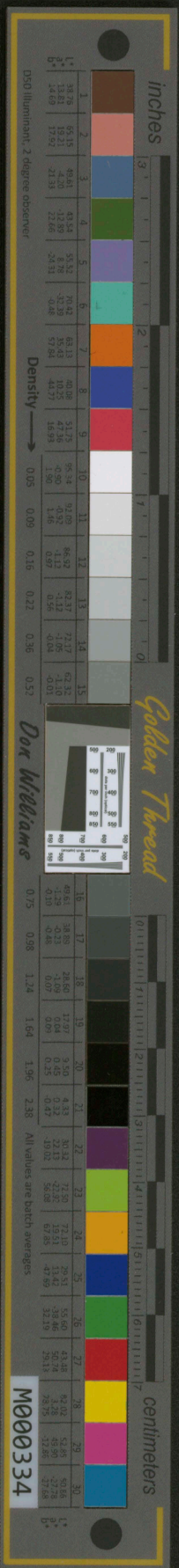
her, and Suzanne fibbed bravely. Mother-in-<sup>2</sup>Heaven had always told her never to wear her heart on her sleeve, and Invalid Father had always said jocosely, "Never let a person know where it hurts; they'll know where to hit the next time."

Christmas exercises! Subdued murmurs and tense expectancy on the wonderful morning. No tardy pupils to-day but halls filled early with boys in stiffest of collars and shiniest of faces and flowingest ties; girls frilled and starched and ironed, bedecked and pertly, proudly conscious of new dresses. "Teacher Dear" had a desk piled high with presents, handkerchief boxes tied with red ribbons, calendars, vases, little ruffled aprons and lacy collars. "Teacher Dear" always received more presents than any other teacher in the building.

Suzanne slipped shyly in, very proud of her new blue serge Peter Thompson, which the Very Kind <sup>H</sup>ady had bought already made. It was an epoch in her life; her first ready made frock. She laid before Teacher Dear her offering, a <sup>quaint</sup> little stone jar of guava jelly, tied with red ribbon, and a poinsettia twisted in the knot at the top. The spirit of the day had warmed the frozen corners of her little heart. Almost had she forgotten the cruelties of the past weeks. Olive slipped a little gift, a tiny pin of island workmanship into her hand. But all the morning she clung to a little fat bundle under her arm, and never let it slip, even in her greatest excitement.

Parents came to hear the songs and the recitations,





and Very Kind Lady sat among the visitors, meeting Suzanne's shy smile with a kindly glance. Christmas had not touched the acidity of Maudie's rancor. She explained in an audible whisper to a visitor that the girl about whom the visitor asked, because of her brilliant black eyes was "only a poor little heathen child." The visitor who was long on impressions, and short on geography and history, adjusted her glasses, and murmured that she didn't know that heathen looked like that.

"Teacher Dear" was proud of the contribution of her room to the general exercises, "Christmas in Many Lands" it was called. Suzanne's description of Christmas in Trinidad, and Olive's enthusiastic echoes about Jamaica had given her the idea. On the platform in the Assembly Hall some dozen or more of the Fourth Graders took their places in time to the march, haltingly chirruped by the school orchestra. One by one the quaint customs of the foreign lands were shouted in shrill recitation, by the chosen representative of the country, followed by soft singing of the Christmas song of that land. Germany and Kris Kringle and Stille Nacht; Picciola and Jean and Nicolette; Hans and Gretel; Juan and Juana and the poinsettia blooms, and so on to Olive and Jamaica and then to Suzanne, of the shining eyes.

"In Trinidad, in MY country---" ah, no one could put quite the inflection of pride in their voice--the little recitation tripped on. There was no song to follow Suzanne's recitation. Teacher Dear had hurriedly decided that after a painful attempt on Suzanne's part to sing a



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D50 Illuminant, 2 degree observer

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38.12	65.43	49.87	44.26	55.56	70.82	63.51	39.92	28.86	16.19	9.29	86.42	82.72	71.42	52.79
13.24	19.27	23.96	22.85	24.49	16.19	13.06	21.71	70.82	92.02	80.13	68.43	52.79	42.02	31.41
14.07	13.24	22.85	22.85	24.49	16.19	13.06	21.71	70.82	92.02	80.13	68.43	52.79	42.02	31.41
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49.87	38.12	28.86	16.19	9.29	4.33	30.34	72.50	72.01	29.51	55.60	43.98	82.02	52.85	50.88
13.24	19.27	23.96	22.85	24.49	16.19	13.06	21.71	70.82	92.02	80.13	68.43	52.79	42.02	31.41
14.07	13.24	22.85	22.85	24.49	16.19	13.06	21.71	70.82	92.02	80.13	68.43	52.79	42.02	31.41
0.04	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.05	0.06

All values are batch averages

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little ditty which the others could catch and learn. Maudie's wilful flattening of notes in the wrong places had made it out of the question.

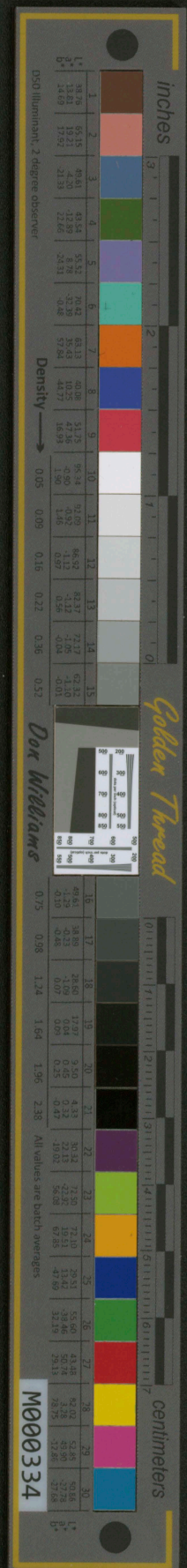
Teacher Dear at the piano was pleased with the little flutter of approbation caused by the pretty inflections in Suzanne's voice. Teacher Dear would be glad when the contribution of the Fourth Grade was over. It had required tact to keep up the morale of the class, when Suzanne was given so prominent a place on the program. But what was this? Her ears caught an unfamiliar phrase in the recitation---

"In MY country," Suzanne was saying, "We read out of our Bibles about the Child Jesus and the angels' song, just as you do here, but we think a lot more about one part that I do not hear so much of in this country-- 'Peace on earth, good will to men.' " Suzanne held out the fat little bundle, which she had hugged all morning--a little brown Bible, opened at a marked passage.

"Ah, little Suzanne," thought the Very Kind Lady, "it is your own home of which you are thinking, and the teaching of your father and mother you think is the teaching of your whole land."

"But it is not so here," Suzanne's voice trembled with unshed tears of bitter memories, "your Bible does not teach of peace every day, and I hear nothing of good will. It is the difference in our Bibles."

There was a hushed silence, then Teacher Dear, bending her head low over the piano keys hurriedly struck the chords of "Silent Night", and the children wonderingly







sang it the second time.

The principal blew his nose while the Fourth Graders were marching off the platform.

"I hope the parents present," he said in his Christmas address, "will remember the words of the little girl from Trinidad. After all, it is the spirit of the home which counts. We cannot go any higher."

But Maudie was examining the fat little Bible, which Suzanne had brought.

"It's just like ours," she said dubiously, "What did you say it wasn't for, if it was?"

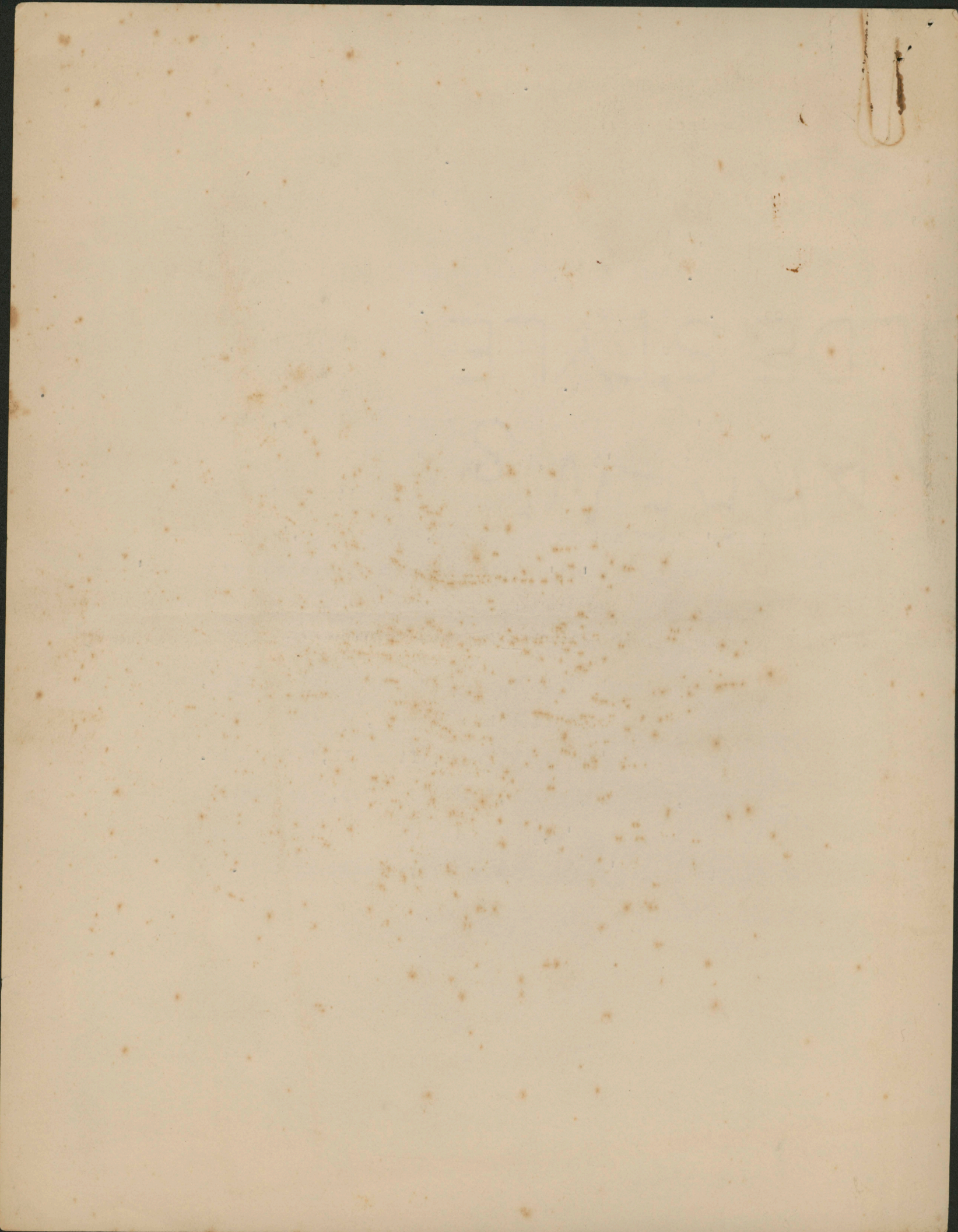
"But the minister in church said it was in the Bible, 'I come not to send peace, but a sword,' and I heard Teacher Dear say 'It's an ill wind that blows nobody good' and nobody in school said a word about peace or good will all the Christmas month--"

Maudie impulsively threw her arms about Suzanne, and pushed a holly tied gift in her hand,

"I guess we're the heathen, after all," she said.

"Yes, I guess you are," agreed Clive, a protecting hand slipped in Suzanne's, as the three walked away hand in hand to Maudie's house to see her Christmas tree.





inches

Golden Thread

centimeters

D50 Illuminant, 2 degree observer

Density →

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38.12	65.43	49.87	44.26	55.56	70.82	63.51	40.08	51.78	95.14	92.02	86.92	82.47	72.77	62.14	40.61	38.62	36.56	34.42	32.19	29.87	27.48	25.12	22.79	20.50	18.24	16.01	13.80	11.61	
13.24	19.21	14.30	12.82	16.19	21.28	18.43	10.55	14.78	-0.40	0.52	-1.12	-1.12	-1.26	-1.10	-0.13	-0.23	-0.30	-0.34	-0.37	-0.39	-0.40	-0.41	-0.41	-0.41	-0.41	-0.41	-0.41	-0.41	
15.07	18.11	13.96	11.81	16.99	24.46	22.85	12.28	16.81	1.06	1.81	3.09	4.53	6.04	7.63	9.31	11.07	12.90	14.80	16.76	18.78	20.85	22.98	25.16	27.39	29.67	32.00	34.38	36.81	