

**HOW JOHN NORTON  
THE TRAPPER KEPT  
HIS CHRISTMAS**

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How John Norton the Trapper Kept His Christmas by W. H. H. Murray

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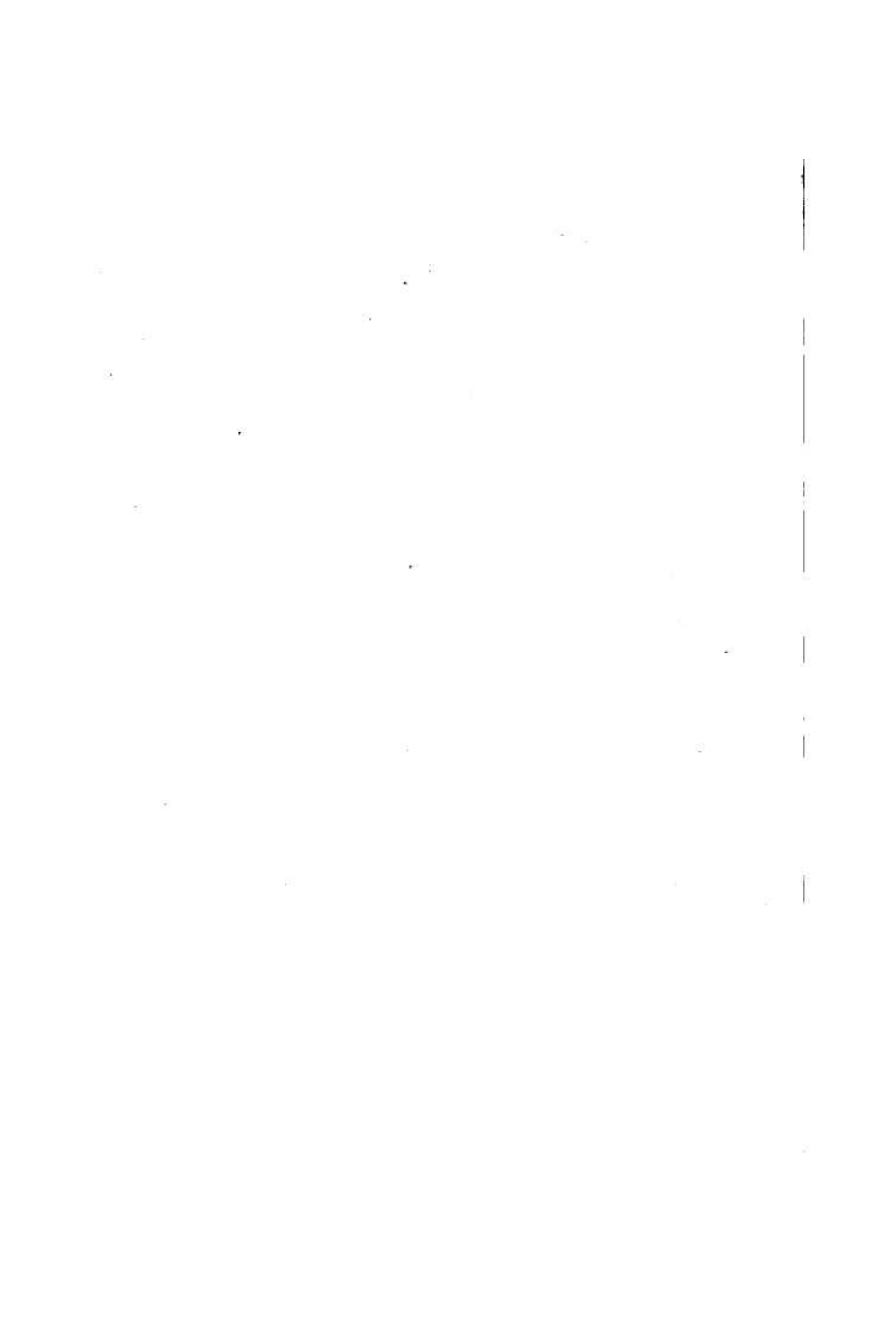
**W. H. H. MURRAY**

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KEPT HIS CHRISTMAS.

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I.

A CABIN. A cabin in the woods. In the cabin a great fireplace piled high with logs, fiercely ablaze. On either side of the broad hearth-stone a hound sat on his haunches, looking gravely, as only a hound in a meditative mood can, into the glowing fire. In the centre of the cabin, whose every nook and corner was bright with the ruddy firelight, stood a wooden table, strongly built and solid. At the table sat John Norton, poring over a book, — a book large of size, with wooden covers bound in leather, brown with age, and smooth as with the handling of many generations. The whitened head of the old man was bowed over the broad page, on which one hand rested, with

the forefinger marking the sentence. A cabin in the woods filled with firelight, a table, a book, an old man studying the book. This was the scene on Christmas Eve. Outside, the earth was white with snow, and in the blue sky above the snow was the white moon.

"It says here," said the Trapper, speaking to himself, "it says here, 'Give to him that lacketh, and from him that hath not, withhold not thine hand.' It be a good sayin' fur sartin; and the world would be a good deal better off, as I conceit, ef the folks follered the sayin' a leetle more closely." And here the old man paused a moment, and, with his hand still resting on the page, and his forefinger still pointing at the sentence, seemed pondering what he had been reading. At last he broke the silence again, saying,—

"Yis, the world would be a good deal better off, ef the folks in it follered the sayin';" and then he added, "There's another spot in the book I'd orter look at to-night; it's a good ways