

**CHRISTMAS CLASSICS**



**THOMAS NELSON PAGE**

**THE  
CHRISTMAS  
PEACE**

# **The Christmas Peace**

**Thomas Nelson Page**

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## **The Christmas Peace**

### **I**

They had lived within a mile of each other for fifty-odd years, old Judge Hampden and old Colonel Drayton; that is, all their lives, for they had been born on adjoining plantations within a month of each other. But though they had thus lived and were accounted generally good men and good neighbors, to each other they had never been neighbors any more than the Lévite was neighbor to him who went down to Jericho.

Kindly to everyone else and ready to do their part by all other men, the Draytons and the Hampdens, whenever they met each other, always passed by on the other side.

It was an old story—the feud between the families—and, perhaps, no one now knew just how the trouble started. They had certainly been on opposite sides ever since they established themselves in early Colonial days on opposite hills in the old county from which the two mansions looked at each other across the stream like hostile forts. The earliest records of the county were those of a dispute between one Colonel Drayton and one Captain Hampden, growing out of some claim to land; but in which the chief bitterness appeared to have been injected by Captain Hampden's having claimed precedence over Colonel