

sand years ago a Little

came into this world through a stable. Probably stables weren't very clean and sweet two thousand years ago -not nearly as nice as they are today. But the things that Little Child brought to the world were so dear and beau-

tiful and good that most of us have come into the way of thinking that his memory and ever-living presence and influence are exclusively the property and the privileges of the righteous, of those who abide in ways and places which are clean.

But it is nevertheless true that the soft tug of the Little Child's baby hands is felt today by folks who are not very nice and who live in places far more deplorable than ever was that Nazarene stable. Wherefore:

Cowles and Roberts watched the waiter set down the glasses and turn away. Then they laughed, each at the other, but without gladness.
"Bobs," said Cowles, "you don't

seem to yearn for your medicine." "No. Charley," sneered Roberts, "and I don't observe an absorbent haste on your part. What do you

suppose is the matter with us?" "We're 'fraid, Bobs," said Cowles. "That's what's the matter with us. We're 'fraid. 'Fraid of starting in. You've seen the kids on that slide thing down at Luna park. They hunch themselves along toward the start and then hang there until somebody from behind pushes them off. That's the way I feel. I'm walting for somebody to come along from behind and give me a start. 'Cause I know, just as those kids know, that I am going to get bumped, and scraped, maybe, good and plenty before I reach bottom."

"Right!" said Roberts. "That's just the way I feel, too." He looked around the room critically. "And as yet nobody seems at all inclined to start us along on the descent. What's the matter with the old place, Charley? Here it is half past nine o'clock, Christmas eve, and there are less than twenty people here—and all of them cross. What are you looking

"There's a bronze-haired, brazenfaced little person sitting right back of you, Bobs-don't turn; she's looking right at you. I've seen her before. I ought to know who she is. But I can't remember for the life of

"One of those Where-have-I-seenthat-face-before' situations?" Roberts cautiously looked obliquely into the mirror and studied the woman's face.

"I'll bet you know her, too," retortd Cowles. "She is probably the lady cashier who used to smile across her desk at us languishingly when she gave us our change for our beef and beans-before you got plutocratic and married and shook all your friends. By the way, how is the family? This is a lovely joint for a six-months' bridegroom to be in on Christmas eve. But I've been so long watching you young men, 'reformed by mar riage'-beg your pardon, old man!" he cried, as he looked away from the hauntingly reminiscent face of woman opposite and caught the hurt look of his friend. "What's the mat-You're not having any trouble at home, are you? You haven't been scrapping with Rose?"

"Why do you think I'd ask you to meet me at a joint like this, tonight of all nights, if there wasn't trouble with Rose?" growled Roberts. "I'm



"We're 'Fraid Bobs.

not fit to be married to a girl like Rose, or any girl, anyway. Charley, and I-" his voice broke a little; he caught himself and went on. "Let's drop it, Charley!"

They both stared at the table, for a moment

"Bobs," said Cowles, after awhile, speaking slowly and low, "you can kick me for being fresh, if you like. know it's none of my business But l like you too much not to tell you that I hate to see you starting out on a tear because you've got a grouch on your wife Now, I'm hopeless and my grouch isn't with anybody I care a hoot about, anyway. But you, Bobs--

"Drop it, Charley! Drop it!" Roberts laughed bitterly. "Let us proceed with that stirring melodrama which I suppose you would call The Souse's Christmas Eve." He glanced again at the girl whose face he could see in the mirror. "I know who she is, Charley," he said. "The girl opposite you, I mean. Do you remember Sadie Cargill? The girl who sang 'Coraline' and 'If You Wouldn't-Then I Would; at the Casino about five years ago? Don't you remember that everybody was crasy about her?"

Cowles looked up cautiously. But what in the world is she in

this place for? Sadie Cargill in Big Jimmy's! Whew, what a come-down! "I seem to remember somebody was saying the other day that she had gone pretty well to pieces," said Roberts. "Didn't take care of herself. Whoever it was said he had seen her in the chorus of a fly-by-night musical



Studied the Woman's Face.

comedy out Kansas City way and that "Yes," said Cowles, studying the girl's face, "It is Sadie, all right. She seems to have kept all her good looks, too, except that her face has hardened terribly. Don't you remember what a soft-cheeked, innocent,

merry little thing she always was?" Roberts nodded and looked again hato the mirror. He shook his head at what he saw. "Yes," he murmured, "she was. And now, before you recognized her, you called her 'bronze haired and brazen-faced,' and she is.

"I hope," spoke up the young woman, with startlingly distinct voice and with unlimited acidity of intonation, "that the next time you two see me you'll remember me! Take a good look.

Both men sprang to their feet, snatching off their hats.

"I beg your pardon," said Roberts. earnestly, "but really I didn't realize that you could see from the mirror how I was staring at you. I'm awful ly sorry and very much ashamed Really I am-we both are."

Miss Cargill looked him over with approval and was obviously mollified. "Oh, that's all right," she said, with a tired smile. "I'm sorry I barked at you that way. A woman is a good deal of a fool to make a kick when a man looks at her in Big Jimmy's But I'm sore on the world tonight and kind of cranky. Come on over here, both of you. Perhaps you can talk me out of it."

Cowles and Roberts looked at each other and laughed. And because any's today and I did And she picked Sadie, despite the hardening, was undeniably charming with the old graciousness of the Casino days, they carried their glasses to her table. still full, beside hers.

"We were afraid, too," he explained. "You in trouble, too?" She sighed. "Well, I'm used to it. Better tell your old auntie your poor little sorrows. Maybe I really can do you some good," She turned to Roberts. "First off, what's biting you?"

Cowles interrupted precipitately "Let me tell mine," he urged "I'm the worst case. I've just lost my job. I'm a newspaper man and I've never been noted for my saving disposition." Miss Cargill nodded with a smile which seemed reminiscent. Almost involuntarily she hitched her chair burts over a little closer to Cowles The instinct of the stage lady to cuddle up to the youth who may some time "get ber name in the papers" is as | ment imperishable as the instinct of selfpreservation

"Well," continued Cowles "my rent comes due in a week. Also all the bills. Also it is the Merry Yule Tide when the young blood gets square with all the nice girls who have been especially nice to him. And I've been canned! Fired! Lost my job! And by the latest count I have on my person just thirteen dollars and forty cents good and lawful coin of the United States and nothing more com-

Roberts took up the story. "No. It isn't all, Miss Cargill-I beg your pardon," he cried as he saw her

"It's all right," she said wearily. "Don't bother. It's all right. I haven't turn. Cowies whistled in astonish-used that name for some time and I kind of hoped nobody would remember it. Fact, I'd rather like you boys to call me that tonight. Christmas

eve's kind of different. Go on." "Charley didn't tell you how he lost his place. He lost it because he took the blame for a bad break made by another man-the other man had a flock of kids, and Charley wouldn't see their Christmas spoiled-that's

why!" "Nice boy," she said softly. "Nice boy!" And then, after a moment: "And, anyway, this is the first job you ever lost, isn't it? Thought so. It's nothing when you get used to it. I know." Her voice was even; but her foot was tapping the floor under the table. "It's when you get used to it, and think you can always get another and one day find that nobody will believe you when you say that you're going to steady down and be good-that's what hurts. This time next year you'll be laughing at your-

self for feeling down." "No, I won't!" growled Cowles. "I've done my best for three good years and I've been decent when I didn't have to be decent and I've he looked up quickly. "It didn't get been straight with myself and the

"Sure!" he said. "That's who she cut loose now and take things as they come.

> Miss Cargill studied the ugly blaze in his eye intently and shook her head. The hard lines in her face became more rigid. Cowles reached for his glass. She

> "No." she said. "let's all start even.

I want to know your friend's trou-"Never mind about mine," said Roberts, looking away from them

both. He was almost, but not quite, surly. Cowles shook his head at her surreptitiously. "Don't be afraid," she murmured.

"I won't make any breaks. And he needs help more than you do." She turned to Roberts again. "Married?"

"How did you know that?" he asked, his face still turned away. 'Oh, I knew," she said.

"Well?" he said.

"You've been having trouble at Roberts nodded.

"Tell me! What about?" She eaned across the table toward him, peaking very softly with misty eyes. Roberts did not raise his head.

"Christmas presents," he said. She drew back her head and laughed, just three or four pearly notes and then became grave again-

"Now, see here," Roberts blurted out, looking straight into the woman's pitying eyes. "I am going to tell you about it. I know it isn't decent. But I haven't told anybody and I know I'm right-anyway, more right than she is!-and you've been up against things a lot-and I want to tell you about it.'

"That's right," she whispered as gently as though she had been petting a curly head at her knee.

"Well." he recited in a monotone. she asked me to meet her at Tiff-



"It Is Sadie, All Right."

come within five hundred dollars of paying for it unless-unless I broke my promise to increase my brother's Cowles smiled as they set them down, college allowance. And she was hurt and then she was angry and she said things. You don't know-but there was a man-a rich man-an old man -over in Brooklyn and-when she first met me she had almost made up her mind to marry him. Anyway -ehe said things and I said things and both of us were nasty-and bitter. This was all going uptown in a cab And when we got to the door she said she wasn't going to get outthat she was going back to her own people in Brooklyn-and I said I didn't care And I don't!" His voice broke, even on the deflant note. "But it and don't you think I

was right?" Cowles was staring at him somewhere between amazement and amuse-

"And is that all?" be began, "that

"Stop!" Miss Cargill said to him sternly. "It's enough! Let me tell you two something. Now this isn't to print." She looked at Cowles. He nodded, that simple nod of the genuine American reporter which is worth all the gold bonds of Wall street. "It never got out why I left the Casino. But it was because I was married on the quiet." She looked up and saw the waiter standing near. She plucked a pencil from Cowles's waistcoat, tore the margin from a newspaper sticking out of his pocket and wrote a name on it.

"Married to him," she said, showing the slip to Roberts and Cowles in



"Charley Didn't Tell You How He Lost His Place."

ment. Roberts stared at the paper with dimmed eyes; they cleared and

out," she explained, "because I really cared. I didn't want any press agent foolishness about him Besides, I was going to quit the business, anyway. I did, all right, all right!" She laughed sourly and went on. "He was just "do I come in?" out of college, and I was a lot younger than I am now and different-I was erts' hand. sort of different from anybody around

the Casino, I guess," Her voice caught, but she tossed her head and continued: "And that made him like me. And I liked him and we were of course. "Thank you," she said quietly. married and went away. But as soon as he came to know me better he found (what I'd known all along) I wasn't up to his family standard. He

knew he would have to tell them about our being married, and that when the time came and they looked me over the Christmas tree had been put in. I wouldn't exactly stack up with his "I'll meet you," he called to them, people-manners, you know, and when to do things and how to do them and the sort of people I liked. And he

tried to tell me. And I got mad-and we came back on different boats. And if I'd told him how much I wanted to learn to be the way he wanted meif he'd told me that he wanted me to try-why then-why then it would have been just one of those funny little married tiffs. But I was mad.

they came and took my baby. I didn't care. I've never cared. "Well, that was just a starter, And after the very first, I didn't care any more. Something broke and all the care dropped away

from me. You've got your troubles of where to eat and sleep and drink," she said to Cowles. "And you've got a heart that's pretty near to breaking-and maybe will," she said to Roberts. "But as for me, I've had all those troubles for years and I haven't cared. Because I haven't any heart.' Her eyes began to shine and her eyelashes became wet suddenly. "At

I said I didn't care. Not even when

least I thought I didn't, until today. "I live about twenty blocks uptown You know what these New York flats are. And in the flat under me there's some respectable married people, with a baby. A little girl about five. And she's been sick. And I guess the father hasn't had a job in a long time. Anyway, the other day I saw him taking a china clock under his coat-it looked like a wedding present and I guess people don't bock their wedding presents until pretty near the last. And the floors are so thin you can hear everything that goes on down there. And the baby-anyway, the little girl began asking two weeks ago about a Christmas tree. And yesterday they told her that Santa Claus was getting snobbish nowadays and wasn't interested in poor people-or poor people's little girls-not even when they were sick. And she cried all day. She was crying when I came out last night. She was still crying when I got home this morning. She's cried all day today. And I'm broke. I've only got ten dollars between me and the river. And my rent's two weeks overdue and I've got to pay that before I quit, because the landlord's been dead white to me. And I've never cared before for four years, but -I care now-I care-I can't help it.

1 do 1 do." She dropped her hands to the table and her head on them. She sobbed: they were long, dry, heartbreaking sobs

"Don't cry, Miss Cargill," urged Cowles, patting her shoulder clumsily. "Don't cry-Sadie!" She jerked away from under his hand and cried on. "Miss Cargill," said Roberts, leaning over toward her and speaking very softly, "you have been very kind to both of us. Will you let us be kind to you. Please stop crying. Please!

And then try to tell me just how much money you need." She lifted her head and glared at

"What good will money do that poor baby when she wakes up tomorrow morning and finds-" She gritted her teeth and reached for her worn and rusty gloves and then for the long untouched glass.

"Wait!" cried Cowles in a tone that made them all start. His voice fairly rang. "Wait, wait!" he repeated, pulling out his watch and looking at it. They were both staring at him

curiously. "It's Christmas Eve," he said. "The stores are open until midnight! It's only a little after ten o'clock. Come on for a cab and Eighth avenue! Here's where we knock the eye out of one set of troubles!"

The fat little proprietor of the Eighth Avenue Five and Ten Cent Emporium was galvanized from weary somnambulance into new life when two young men and a very fluffy (even though a bit shabby) young woman leaped out of a cab to his counters. He bounced around and scolded his clerks into a state of thorough irritation. But their work-sick wrath gave way to curiosity and then hilarity as the three customers went laughing, quarreling and consulting, up and down the disheveled counters. fat proprietor went down into the cellar and came up with an armful of pasteboard packing cases in which two clerks especially detailed laid away each toy as it was singled out. There were dolls and tin railroad trains and whirligig things and rattles and stuffed rabbits and woolly dogs that squeaked, and more dolls and building blocks and flying machines and Noah's arks and little stoves and doll's furniture and more dolls-to say nothing of candelholders and sil-

vered angels and shiny balls. "Time! Call the game a minute!" cried Cowles. "Let's count up. How much have we bought?" The fat proprietor, exuding greasy

appreciation, made figures on a pad. 'Fifteen dollars and thirty-six cents.' and with a burst of generosity, added: "I'll throw off the six cents." Roberts laughed, but Cowles was

serious.

"Robs," he said, "I'm afraid we've do," cried Roberts. "Only let's hurry. gone far enough. Half of fifteen is Because I am going over to Brooklyn about as far as I really ought to go. to get Rose and tell her what a cad I know I am. And" (not without the "But where," insisted Miss Cargill, gently shouldering between them. hurry of embarrassment),

She thrust a five-dollar bill into Rob

"No," said both of them in breath. She flushed, and in the next breath they both cried: "Why, yes,

In a hansom laden with bundles and a Christmas tree cut away from the sidewalk decorations of the Emporium, Miss Cargill and Cowles departed northward. Roberts couldn't go because there wasn't room after

"at Big Jim-no, not there. At the little drug store on the corner above Merry Christmas to the kid."

It was nearly twelve when Cowles alighted at the drug store and met the



"She Picked Out a Ring."

eager Roberts in the middle of the sidewalk. "Tell me about it," demanded Rob-

erts. "How was it?" Cowles' eyes were brimming.

"We had to wake the family up in the flat below," he said. "At first they were sleepy and kind of mad. Thought we were patronizing them. But Sadie was so everlastingly tactful and sweet

. pretty soon they began to cry, and I thought we'd never get the darned old tree up, for the mother's hugging her. Say, it was the grandest looking tree since the Garden of Eden. Honest! . when it was all fixed, the folks wanted to go in and wake up the baby and bring it out, and light up, and let Sadie see the fun . . . Sadie wouldn't have it. She laughed a little

said she didn't believe in Christmas Eve trees, morning was the time to have 'em. I didn't laugh. Couldn't . . I saw her face and It 'most broke my heart. . . morning; she said she couldn't. Said she was going away on a long journey before morning-oh, no, Bobs, it's all right; she may have meant to kill herself-I think she did-but she won't now; it's all right. Wait till I tell you. And we walked up to her flat . . . Oh, I forgot to say, that on the way uptown she got to crying like a little girl because she didn't have any dolly of her own, and I bought her one; horrible thing; painted china face and most as big as she was . . we walked up to her flat; she had the doll in her arms with her head down on it. I lighted the gas.

She walked into her bedroom laid the doll under the cover with its head on the pillow and threw herself down beside it. "I started to say something and she

lifted her head and told me to get out and the quicker the better then she fell down beside the doll again and began to cry. I never heard



"We Had to Wake the Family."

anybody cry like that. I went out to the door and r ttled the handle sneaked back to her door again, be cause I didn't dare leave her-you know-after the way she had been feeling and talking. She had cried herself to sleep with her arm out across So 1 turned the that doll. lights out and came away."

"What are we going to do now?" said Roberts after a while.

"I tell you what we're going to do." sald Cowles. "You and I are going down to the Metropole and get hold of Ted Tonwill and make him give Sadie Cargill a chance-a good chance in his new show. He'll do it if we ask him, both of us together. And she will keep steady and make good And we'll send her a telegram about it so she will get it first thing in the morning, before she gets to thinking any more about long journeys."

FOUGHT THE FLOWING BOWL

Eastern Monarchs and Religious Leaders Long Ago Lifted Their Voices Against Drunkenness.

Temperance movements and prohible tion crusades date back at least 3,000 years. It was China that first tried to be bone-dry. Early reforms along temperance lines are attributed to the priests of India and Persia. But the Chinese claim that in the eleventh century before Christ their emperer, disgusted over the prevalence of drunkenness, ordered all the grapevines in the kingdom uprooted.

A hundred years before this bonedry effort, in the twelfth century before Christ, King Wen tried partial reform in China. Wen, founder of the Chou dynasty, promulgated an "Announcement Against Drunkenness," according to ancient Chinese documents handed down by Confucius.

"Good! Of course that's what we'll

want to wake her father up any later

Cowles reached out and took his

hand and gripped it, saying not a

In twenty steps Roberts

But

word. They turned toward the Met-

stopped short and pulled Cowles un-

"But look here, Charley," he said,

"what are you going to do? We've

fixed Miss Cargill up all right. And,

I don't see that either of us has done

"You have done just this," said

Charley, a little unsteadily. "Instead

of taking to the rosy and thorny path

of graft, I'm going over to the sta-

Statonville where I've got an aunt

who has been begging me to come up

over Christmas. And when I've got

a little rested and my nerves steadled

down, I'm going to take a night desk

on the Planet that's been offered me,

only I was soured on the game. But,

Through a break in the roar of the

city's night came the far-off tinkle of

chimes ringing in the Christmas morn.

Cowles looked up at the sky. So did

Roberts. The sky was dark, all but for

a single star twinkling through the fly-

ing clouds, over the dome of the Grand Central station. They looked at each

other and then, because they both

saw things in their faces that wouldn't

quite bear looking at, turned their

"But, Bobs," continued Cowles soft-

ly after a while, "this has always

been a day for beginning things over

I who helped-or you-or even Sadie

Cargill. It was-a Little Child."

. And it wasn't

eyes away and walked on.

again, rather.

in to get the one o'clock train for

bless her, she has fixed me up.

than is necessary."

der a street lamp.

anything for you."

ropole.

Bobs-

King Wen declared "drinking has ong been a national vice." He ordered that wine he used only in connection with sacrifices-and even then drunkenness was not to be tolerated.

The temperance reforms also existed in Egypt centuries before Christ, Here's what a teacher said to a youth who had been looking upon the flowing bowl too freely:

"Drink not beer to excess. The words that come out of thy mouth thou canst not recall. Thou dost fall and break thy limbs and no one reaches out a hand to thee. comrades go on drinking; they stand up and say; 'Away with this fellow who is drunk.' If anyone should then seek thee to ask counsel of thee, thou wouldst be found lying in the dust like a little child."

Petroleum in Mexican Lake. For hundreds of years Mexican Indians had a horror of what they called the pest spot of Lake Chapala, near the shore at Tizapan. They would not bathe in it or sail around it, declaring that the water was oily. Then, after a time, they cautiously began to paint wooden boats with this oil, which proved so effective in keeping out the water that it became the general custom to use it. They did not know that this was petroleum gushing up through the water-a magnificent flow, about two miles out in the lake, which to this day gushes apparently without varying. When the water is low petroleum floats in solid masses, each large globule weighing about 25

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