A CHRISTMAS STORY. smiled, in spite of her pain, saying, teas "Bless de Lord, my chile ain't forgot over. teas and things before the season is

She walked up to the editor's desk her every night." ! with something of a child's bewilder- "On top of that," Lady choked for a abroad, I think," he said. "How else while Mandy rushed at the tall man States more than 6,000,000 farms, upon ment in her liquid eyes. Outside grime minute, "I caught cold. The doctor could Mr. Vantage, the most merciless- who stood smiling over the scene, say- which dwell more than 30,000,000 peoand fog overspread the city, but the said it might ruin my voice to sing- ly conscientious of editors, have so pal- ing, as she wrung the hand he held ple, who furnish more than 74 per cent streets were full of the jocund noise, the and-and Mrs. Wilton utterly forbade tered with the truth as to discuss what out, "Fore de Lawd, Marse Richmond, of the value and exports of this con

rush and struggle of before-Christmas traffic. The heliday, in fact, was but three days off; the editor had just sent down the very last proofs of the articles to write something and bring to your which were to make up his Christmas paper-"Why did you choose it from all the that girl as I might to one who came sence." edition.

edition. He was a youngish man, with a bulging forehead, combative jaw and eyes which saw everything. As Lady came toward him, he said mentally came toward him, he said mentally is the seventeen in noiselessly and stood listen in noiseless listen in "H-m-she's new to offices. I'll war-rant never saw an editor before-coun-rant never saw an editor before-coun-rant never saw an editor before-coun-

try-bred, too-hers is not the step of have been so kind about it, but it was then, as they stood waiting for the ele- Richmond said with a beaming smile. the pave—and southern, I judge, from her absurdly small feet." Aloud he said, motioning toward the chair at Abolition fight. In my despair—it was

Aboiltion nght. In my despair—it was but not one of them, I am sure, can bis right, "Will you not sit down and let me know what I can do for you?" Lady's breath came hard. A quick Buy what I offer that I may have gloved hands clasped themselves ner, gloved hands clasped themselves ner the suffering you helped to create.' Poor Sally is the belped to create.' Poor Sally is the words ware the best of it." 0 0

courage, she said, with a half-gasp; "I would have grown up hale and strong, rather picturesque in summer. It a saving of \$369,656.94 over the appro-came to— bring you a Christmas story. with warm clothes, good food and stood on the edge of a big old field, had priations for the current year. The

But the girl's voice was so ravishing— so soft, so clear, so full of flute-like sug-Sally at twenty-flve looks older than de-like rain searching out the leaks in for 1892 and 1893 show that the micro-Mi tentatively,

"Well, you see, Miss Carroll, we are rather full-handed on Christmas stuff. "Inde May I ask if-if there is any special mond. reason why you wish to dispose of what you have brought?"

smiled a little and half held out his Sallyhand saying: "Are there no poorhouses in Caroli- day?"

"Have you much experience in this na?" Vantage asked, coming forward. "God knows, chile-I dont," the spectors and assistant inspectors with sort of thing?"

"I never wrote anything but letters said steadily,

dinner. conscious. He was lounging in a big eyes." them. Then when the editor plunged ing gravely, into the manuscript the other came

ture at her elbow, saying, "Perhaps these may amuse you while a check." you wait.

Fane Richmond, Esq., the bachelor spoken story. owner of three fourths of the paper's stock and several millions beside, been known to take notice of a woman call-

down as a woman-hater, who kept out tingly. "If-if it is really worth any- eat six times a day.

and had just three enthusiasms in life New York." -his horses, library and the editor of "It is worth a great deal more than most fiercely, "Eat and wear! Whar

Presently there was the clang of a compagate, the roll of wheels on the drive, the quarter of last year by \$56,000.

her home folks. Tell her I prays for her ebery night." ! Mr. Richmond looked at Vantage and smiled. "There must be magic self ecstatically into her mether's arms, ton says "that there are in the United

can't explain it at all. I only know said the gentleman. "She has taked that I could no more have talked to of 'coming home' every day of our ab-that give I wight to one who came on the came of the second second

keys can talk to one another, and says

ment by 503 persons whose services prison quietly and none of the other

vously over something which they last slave born on our plantation. If-held. Taking firm hold of her waning if things were as they used to be she Annt Mandy Carroll's cabin was were not needed. His estimates show convicts will be aware of their good for-

Won't you read it please—if you are not busy—and—and—if you can—give me the money for it—right away?" "The innecent! the preposterous in-"The innecent! the preposterous in-"The innecent! the preposterous innocent?' Mr. Vantage said to himself with an inward thrill of amusement. with an inward thrill of amusement. by the droughts every other year-

gestions, despite its tremor, that listen-her mother. She loves me; she carried the roof and the cracks about the one scopic inspection has not increased for-mind reading achievenments, says that gestions, despite its tremor, that instead ing was a pure delight. He would make her speak again. Glancing at the card which lay on his desk, he said but-but I think I thad better stayed a rusty tin safe made up its furnishing, meat exports for countries demanding mental processes of the Kansas popu way." "Indeed! Why?" asked Mr. Rich- which stood on the big hearth, back of compelling the immediate destruction lists.

which a log fire smouldered and flam- of any animal or carcass condenned Beloved-Why, what a time to be "Because-because it is no better than ed up the wide chimney throat. Sally by the United States inspectors; for an calling. It is half-past nine. The begging," Lady said, tears springing in the bed nearest it stretched out her extension of the work in regard to tu- lights are out at ten. Lover-Just like "Would I be here -otherwise?" Lady again to her eyes. "Though, really, swollen hands towards the blaze and berculosis in cooperation with local ausaid, sitting up very straight. Vantage there was no other way to help poor said rather slowly, "Mammy, does you thorities until danger to human life bi reckon mistis will come ter see me tu- has been reduced to a minimum, and

Miss Softly (who has been attending for a civil service examination for ina course of lectures)-O professor, I saw ¹ na?" Vantage asked, coming forward. Lady got up with flashing eyes and it the result is spectors and assistant inspectors with the regular variance of a diploma from a to-day. I thought of you at once.

As she laid her packet of scribbled we had a roof and a crust? Please give don't ye feel like as if ye kin eat a lit- ground that a stage has been reached the whole world will certainly hear

rether a mistake." and much misery in my jints," she said, "I can't,it's in the composing room" "but I'se weak as er kitten—don't feel advice of Prof. Wiley some further ex-tate, amounting to \$185,000, were paid Looking shyly across, she saw an. Vantage said, mendaciously obedient like I kin swaller corn bread. I'll wait periments with sugar beets and with under protest. other man, of whom she had been un- to the telegraphing from Richmond's till mistis comes; she sho to fetch me er sugar cane in Florida are recommendbiskit.'

of a Christmas book. As Vantage turn-to him a quick look passed between "Then-then-keep it, I know-it is worthless," Lady said, turning to go. Mandy's lip trembled more violently. The work of the weather bureau has been carried on with improved efficiento him a quick look passed between Mr. Richmond stepped before her, say- her bar'l for you yistiddy," she said, cy and economy, a reduction in cost of swallowing hard, "but-but she tole maintenance of nearly 10 percent being "You are mistaken, Miss Carroll- me ne'er min'-de Lord would per. effected and estimates for the fiscal

deal. Wait a moment-you shall have smile, so maybe she got er idee how he The secretary gives the number of

Vantage's eyebrows went up percept-got," Vantage said heartily, compre-nounced the doctor, a patient, grizzled, payroll only 1994, a reduction of 503; ibly. Never before had the "chief," hending that "the chief" meant the overworked gentleman, who, after ex- and of the 1994 he says that eleven are amining Sally, said to her mother, on duty in the office of the civil service Lady's face shone, though doubt lin- "Well, Mandy, I've done my share- commission to which they were assign-All sally needs now is something to ed by the request of the commissio

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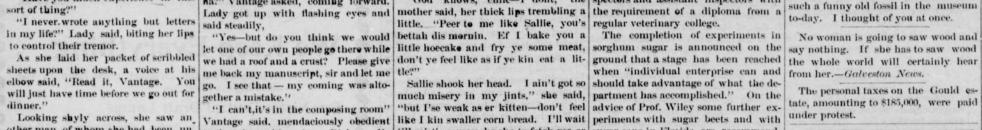
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check." "Yes—it is quite the best one we've gwine to do it." A deliberate knock at the door an- and states that there are now on the

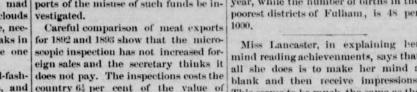
"Do you truly think so? Then the eat and to wear. Smother her in flan- He has, during the first quarter of the er. Indeed, he was everywhere set rest must be very bad," she said hesita- nel, red flannel, mind you, and let her fiscal year, reduced expenditures, in



around and laid a pile of holiday litera- your Christmas story is worth a great vide; an' when she say it she sorter year being correspondingly reduced.

employees when he took charge as 2497

of society with malice aforethought, and had just three enthusiasms in life New York." "Yes sir," said Mandy, courtsying him away. To his back she said, al-



that Lady wondered at that gentle- she had it this very minute?" man's complaisance.

cards and booklets, she saw, in spite of Lady did know some one. As in a kindness."

hall.

enough to be pure fun," Vantage told are-you? he dropped his own, saying,

see what space we have left."

things for Christmas."

it to me and let me go away. I don't in the outer office.

Vantage's place.

the girl said, leaning a little toward nurse?" kim, her face full of trouble, "You see "Sure of it," said Richmond laconic- forded.

and slaves. Last summer a lady my course, you'll print what she brought."" herself as she turned them slowly mother knew years ago came to stay "I can't." with us awhile. She said my voice "Why?"

ed it-and offered to give me a three- other want of time. For a third-its way.

me to sing in concert, and said I was to ation." have twenty-five dollars for it,-and "I thought she couldn't be underbred, Mrs. Canoli walked from room to Mrs. Wilton, who brought me here, even on paper. But see here, mry good room in a new black gown, with gold-

said I might do as I pleased with the fellow-I can't and won't have her rimmed spectacles pushed above her money. That made me very happy; I feelings hurt with the thought that we brow. Mandy, spick and span in plaid. wrote to mother, asking if I should deceived her-that the stuff was not linsey and a white ruffled apron, looksend her the money, or what it would really printable. It must go-if it ed alternately from her mistress to her

buy. Here is her answer. See, she swamps the editorial page." daughter, with equal pride in each. says: 'Send the money, dear child, "Well, well, I'll manage it some- For Sally was straight and strong well as I should like to have Christmas how," Vantage said, throwing away now, the very model of a neat-handed gifts of your earning. Sallie, your good his cigar. "But say, Chief, I thought Phyllis. Like her mistress she wore nurse is down with rheumatism. I you dreaded the rustle of a petticoat black, but her while apron outdid her have been casting about on all sides for a way to get her medicines and flan-must be growing case-hardened. No tent with ruffles, Sally was further beuels. When I read her your letter, she doubt we shall have you figuring at dizened with wide crocheted insertion.

we can pay for it," Richmond said, is it to come frum? Ef dat what cyore When the two lads were at college smilling behind his moustache. "News- sick folks, Doctor Geeble, why'nt you Richmond had saved Vantage from papers, you know, Miss Carroll, have tote it in yo saddil-bags?"

himself—had kept him from flinging to the winds his time, his talent and a moderate inheritance. In consequence he felt himself deeply bound to his sal-vare. Ho was tall and elicht, with a

vage. He was tall and slight, with a "Not to me?" Lady said, catching her to the spot. When a minute later would seem likely to influence Vantage what I-am an impostor? O! I wish sight er you."

"Where does Sally live?" asked Van-""That is good news," said Mrs. Car-Though she tried faithfully to wrap tage. Then, when Lady had named roll. "Mandy, you have not forgotten her consciousness in the gorgeous Santa the Carolina town nearest the planta- Brother Green. He is the minister Clauses, the fairies, the exaggerated tation, "We can telegraph it there to- who stayed with us in the storm last roses and lilles and babes of Bethlehem that sprawled in red and gold all over forward it."

all, the reader's face, as he skimmed dream she gave the name, saw mes- "I 'members Brudder Green. Sarpage after page, smiling a little here sages written out, messengers dispatch- vent, suh," said Mandy, hurrying her and there, and positively chuckling ed, a little later found herself put safe visitors in out of the rain. Mrs. Carrol outright, albeit the story dealt with the inte a cab and driving homeward went up to the bed and laid something entirely serious return of a penitent through dusk streets, flaming moment- in Sally's weak fingers, saying, "Lady runaway heiress, with the usual com- ly thicker with big blurred globes of sent you this, Sally, with her love, for plement of small children, her forgive- white and yellow light. More than Christmas. I hope you will hurry and ness and reinstatement in the paternal once she pinched her arm, laughing a get well."

delighted little laugh, and said aloud, Mandy fell on her knees by the bed-Of course, it was real bad, "Bad "Lady Carroll, are you sure that you side, crying out as she kissed some crisp bank notes. "Money! Bless God! himself laying down the sheets. He Mr. Richmond and Mr. Vantage Bless de Lord! Bless de sweet chile had the name of being pitiless in such went away to dinner, each oppressed dat sent it, dat ain't fergot her black cases. In the face of those hopeful eyes with a weight of preoccupied silence, mammy, an' her Sally what rocked though they both spoke casually of her cradle so many times. De good "Will you wait a little longer? I will things by the way. All the night Lawd put it in her heart-I know he through it was the same. For some in- did-and me jes been 'cusin' him ob

"Do," said Richmond, approvingly; scrutable reason they both chose to stay lettin' my chile die." then, as Vantage went through the in the office until three o'clock, some- Sally was sobbing weakly in her joy. door, "I am sure there is room, Miss thing which Mr. Richmond, at least, Mrs. Carroll turned her head away; the Carroll,-one can't have too many good had not done for a year. And though minister's eyes were misty; he raised they sat elbow to elbow, a veil hung his hands and said softly,

"But-but-this is not good-this betwixt them. No word was spoken of "'Ye are of more value than many story of mine,-only the best I could their visitor until they sat quite alone, sparrows.' My sisters, let us pray." do-and I know that is-is bad. Give save for the sleepy office boy nodding

The next Christmas but one there see how I ever dared to come," Lady said, standing up, a very moral of dis-trees. Vantage said, puffing a furious blue cloud and gazing up into its rings, homestead,—which had somehow tak-

"Really, that was a bit out of comic en on an unwonted air of prosperity "No doubt you came for a very good opera. The idea of coming at us with Wreaths of holly and pine overarched reason; won't you tell me what it is?" that story because of our politics, the doors; log fires went roaring up all Mr. Richmond asked, putting her gent- Oddest part was-while she was talk- the big chimneys; the windows shone; ly back in her chair and himself taking ing I really felt that she was exactly the brasses on the old-fashioned furniright about it. Do you know, though, ture were respleadent as the sun--in "I will try-but-but its a long story I think that girl would starve sooner the dining-room a spotless table was else I cannot make you understand," than do for herself what she did for her tricked out with whatever of silver and

china and glass the mansion still af-I live in the south-Carolina-we are ally. "Sure, too, she would rather have In the kitchen Mandy was roasting, very poor; everybody there is-that is put her hand in the fire than come before the fire, a sucking pig and a of our sort, who had nothing but land here on such an errand as she did. Of very alderman of turkeys, muttering to

round, "De chile always loved vittles cooked dis way. Dun' spec' she's had was wonderful-a fortune if I cultivat- "For one thing, no room. For an- nothin' fit ter eat sense she went er

years' course here in New York, to be atrocious, though I must do her the Besides these there were frosted paid for when I am earning money. Of justice to say that there is a pleasing pound cakes, cheese-cake, transparent course, I was glad to come; gladder paucity of demonstration in it-kisses pudding, potato-pone, heaven knows when three weeks ago someone wanted and such matter are left to the imagin- how many other good things, all ready

and waiting to be eaten. Elys Cream Balm THE FO



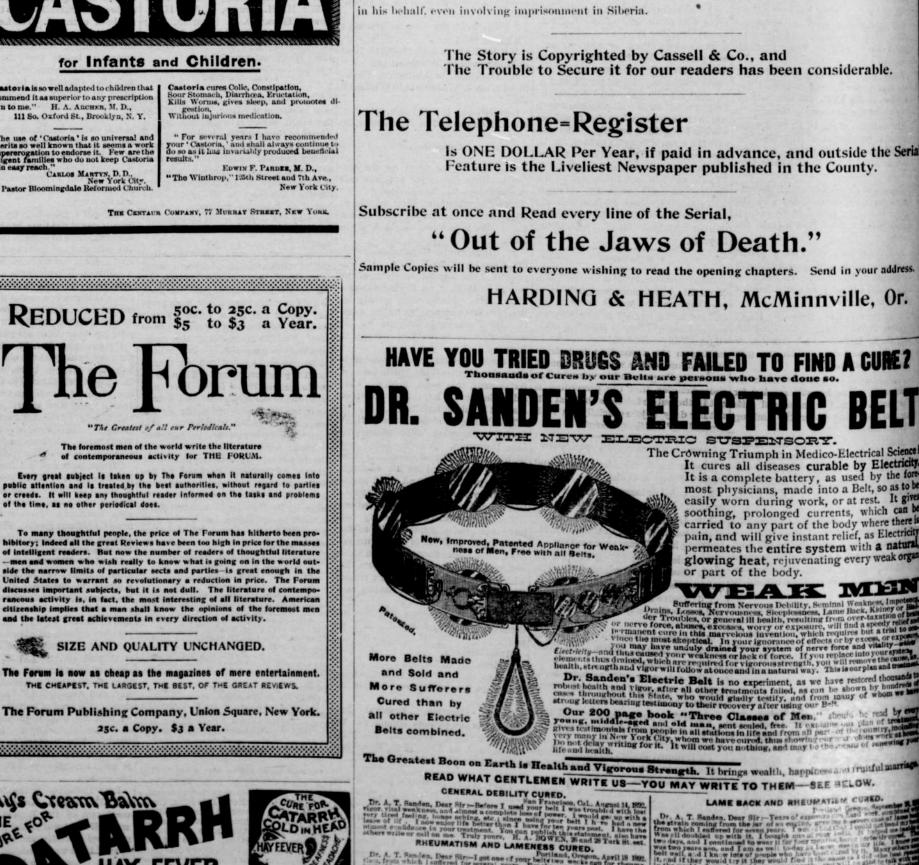
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