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TORONTO, ONT.

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'T WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

To-morrow—Christmas!

On the streets and in the shops a tired, hurrying, laughing, jostling Christmas crowd, bundle-laden. Old darkies selling holly wreaths and mistletoe disputed the curb with ferret-faced, raucous-voiced young men, who jingled the small silver in their pockets and loudly besought passers-by to stop and watch the tumbling Bear Alley children with pinched, dirty little hopeful faces, scurrying through the crowd hand in hand, taking a vicarious Christmas joy in the store windows. All the world roundabout selling, buying, planning, seizing the pleasures of the moment, enjoying in prospect those of the morrow. High carnival in honor of Father Christmas, with peeling snowflakes for confetti.

Christmas—yet not peace, and never since the angels sang their inspired message to the shepherds at Bethlehem had war so racked the world.

"Men of good will" who this day a year ago had come home gift-laden to cheerful firesides and happy children lay to-day huddled under a frozen blanket of earth, with the winter's snows for coverlet. Over half the fields of Europe their homes stood like a snaggled teeth, a bit of broken wall and a cold chimney. No good St. Noel would fill the little shoes this year with toys and sweetmeats. War had frightened the jolly old saint away, and the little shoes were in tatters from endless miles of wayfaring.

In the big, hurrying city of the new world where Jason Blake had made his fortune the war, thank God, was little more than a many-colored, melodramatic motion picture, showing morning and night on the thrilled pages of the newspapers. It drew tears twice a day. Sometimes it drew tears from the eyes of the many, and money from the pockets of the few. Moneyed men, like Jason Blake, had damned the war wholeheartedly at first, but had taken to smiling contentedly instead as foreign exchange got back to a working basis and foreign orders for shoes and blankets and automobiles, for grain and beef and army mules began to flag a golden song over the Atlantic cables.

Jason Blake was secretly proud of his reputation as "a hard man." A newspaper paragraph had lately described him as a "commercial dreadnaught." Blake had shown the clipping to some of his cronies at the club. "The dreadnaught, however," he had observed with a pleased pomposity, "is sometimes vulnerable. The best of us have our weak side. Now, I think mine must be my fondness for children. I could never be harsh to my child."

"An admirable weakness," his friends told him—which, of course, was what he wanted to hear. Blake was the more complacent over this "admirable weakness" because his 10-year-old daughter, Dorothy, was the image of her mother, who had used the banker very badly, indeed. He would not have minded being called a widower or a man whose wife had run off—not to be with another, but to be away from himself. However, he was indulgent to little Dorothy, with her spun gold hair with its trick of curling in little tendrils about her temples, just as her mother's had done, and her mother's imperious, romantic, knight-errant temperament.

The banker was spending his afternoon in his office downtown over a report on some timber properties in Alaska. The report pleased him, as did the snowflakes he could see when he raised his eyes from the typewritten pages to the window. It was snowing hard, which he thought was quite the proper thing for the day before Christmas. He liked snow. It never inconvenienced him. The child had the wet helped him be thankful for his far-fetched coat and electrically heated blouse. He would be very comfortable at the club this evening.

It was one of his idiosyncrasies that he never spent Christmas eve at home. It was on a Christmas eve eight years ago that his wife had left his home. There had been an unpleasant scene. She had told him that he had a money bag for a heart and that the money in it was counterfeit. His only offence was that he was ten years older than the girl he had married, and a man of affairs. He had given her everything that a rightly-organized woman's heart should crave—jewels without stint, dresses beyond telling, French maids and French motors, a cottage at a modish watering place, a town house that was the envy of their fashionable neighbors. And yet she had gone. The fact that he had given her so little of his society and less of his love was, he

felt, only incidental. He had married late in life and money, though perhaps it will not cover a multitude of sins, like charity, should at least cloak a few peccadilloes.

Their second baby had been born a month after she had left his house. It was characteristic of the man that he had never seen its face. He had not even inquired whether it was a boy or a girl. And perhaps it was characteristic of his wife's steadfast pride that she had sent him no message. He had heard of the event quite casually, and had commissioned his lawyers to interview her for him. She sent back word that she could take care of herself and the baby very well. That closed the incident. Jason Blake sometimes wondered how she managed, as she had no money of her own. She had put on her oldest clothes when she left, and had left the jewels he had given her. Well, he had been willing enough to support her. He would never run after her with money. It was a sop to his vanity to reflect that women who are about to become mothers sometimes do strange things.

It was growing dark in his private office. Time for the club, a cocktail and dinner. A solitary clerk was hovering about the outer office, anxious to get home to the real work of the day, trimming the Christmas tree. Blake never liked employees who watched the clock. "You seem very anxious to be gone, sir," he said coldly to the clerk.

"I've got a little Christmas tree to trim at home, sir," explained the clerk. "You know it's Christmas eve, sir." The clerk wasn't very sure whether big men like Jason Blake ever gave a thought to very small events like Christmas.

"Stran," said Blake, smiling. "Good night to you, Waters, and a merry Christmas." The clerk stared. Jason Blake had regained his good humor. He was mentally comparing the poor devil's lopsided dollar tree with the magnificent affair that half a dozen carpenters and decorators and electricians were at that moment installing in the drawing room of the Blake mansion.

Dorothy Blake still believed in Santa Claus. She loved him as she would a doting, but somewhat stern, old grandfather. He was alternately a threat and a promise. She couldn't understand, though, why Santa Claus, who was a saint, and therefore had all Heaven to draw upon for beautiful playthings, so often overlooked poor girls and boys. Maybe the girls had little children of their own who wanted toys for Christmas, and Santa had only left-overs for the rest of the world. Then, of course, the rich children would have to come first.

Dorothy was sitting alone, curled up in a big leather chair in front of the fire in her father's library, at the close moment when Jason Blake handed his beautiful seal-lined overcoat to the boy at the Cosmos Club. Old Mrs. Kennard, her nurse, had seen no harm in slipping out for a cup of tea with her widowed cousin—especially as she knew from long experience that the master never came home before midnight Christmas eve.

Dorothy had been "drawing pictures" in the smoldering logs. She had summoned out of her childish fancy and heart's desire a gentle mother face in the glowing heart of the embers, and the image of a playmate, a little brother she thought it must be. A brother would be delightful, even better than Brownie. She had Brownie beside her now, tucked warmly under her arm. He was a soiled and ragged old Teddy Bear, her playfellow since three Christmases ago. He was the dearest thing in her lonely little world. She played with him, scolded him, loved him all day long.

"Brownie," she said to him, in her solemn childish voice, "you're only a teddy bear, so I don't suppose you can see my mamma and little brother tucked in the tree. I do wish they'd really and truly come to live with us." She nudged him up in the firelight and looked at his whiskered, fuzzy little face. "Why, Brownie, I do believe you're crying. There, now, don't be a jealous old teddy bear. You're mother's own little pet. I love you just the same if I had a million little brothers. Yes, indeed I would." She leaned back in the big hollow of the chair, crooning and hushing him, and then held him very tight.

She heard the knob turn and the big mahogany door swung on its hinges. Some one walked over to the big library table. There was a rustling and a discreet retiring step. She watched and saw the solemn back of the butler vanishing over the threshold. "Wake up, Brownie," she commanded. "It's the evening papers, come, let's you and I read them." She spread the one with the most pictures on the hearth rug. Newspapers were a forbidden diversion to be pilfered from when opportunity offered. A puzzled over when opportunity offered a

poor Belgium little boys and girls—let's read it." Dorothy and Brownie were old acquaintances of a place called "Trenches," where all the fighting seem to occur day after day, and of that strange piece of field equipment known as "Heavy Casualties." She wondered why it always was so heavy, and if the poor soldiers grew very tired of carrying it with them, like the sack of wicked deeds in Pilgrim's Progress.

She read Brownie the story of the "Little Belgium boys and girls." It seemed that the American children had sent them a shipload of toys for Christmas. "You see, Brownie," he explained, "Santa was afraid he might get shot if he went to Belgium, and then he could never come back to the other little boys and girls. So he told the American children to send all their old toys on a ship, and he would bring them new ones."

She wished she had sent something on the ship. She was very sorry for the little children whose fathers had gone to war. "I know what we'll do," she whispered, excitedly. "I'll send our presents right now. We won't bother about any old ship. We'll just go out ourselves and keep right on walking till we meet some little Belgium children." Her geography was a little vague.

She had made up her mind what her gift would be. For a brief unhappy moment she feared that she ought to sacrifice Brownie because he was her favorite, and a gift ought to be the best one can afford. But he was too worn and tattered to be held desirable by anyone but herself. So she chose her new blue doll. It came next to Brownie in her love.

It took but a moment to get the toy from the nursery, dressed in its winter finery. She slipped on her own little fur coat and hat to match, and tucked at her rubber overshoes, and kept him warm. With the doll in her arm she tip-toed down the polished hardwood staircase. The hall was empty. One moment her small hand was on the knob of the front door; the next, she was out in the storm.

Dorothy had as little knowledge as Brownie of the intricacies of the city's streets. She only knew that she must walk straight ahead. She would be bound to find the "Belgium children." The city was so big that they must be somewhere.

The snow was blown by a blustery wind. The streets were crowded, and a little girl like Dorothy would be simply swallowed up in the vortex of hurrying clerks and shoppers. She walked ahead boldly, turning corners when it seemed good to do so, getting more hopelessly lost every minute. She never thought of time. She saw only one issue at a time. At present it was her task to find the "little Belgium children."

Once she thought it might be well to ask the traffic policeman at a street corner. "Have you seen any little Belgium children?" she demanded. "A Merry Christmas to you, little miss," said he, "but don't be plaguing a body with simple questions like that. You'd better run home before you catch your death of cold."

Not very satisfactory, that. So she kept straight ahead. Not a square farther her persistence had its reward. She was off the business streets and in a neighborhood somewhat down at the heels. She saw a little lad in a worn overcoat and old wooden cap industriously trying to brush the snow off the broken steps of one of the houses. The door stood half open behind him. A gas jet without a globe disclosed broken plaster and ragged wall paper, and a long, bare flight of steps back in the shadow. It was so different from anything Dorothy had ever seen that she judged she had reached the goal of her quest. Also she was getting a bit tired. So she went boldly up to him.

"Little boy," she inquired, "are you a Belgium?" The little boy stopped weeping.

"Is it something nice?" he asked. "It's nice to get Christmas presents," she replied, "and the little Belgium boys are all going to get them. But their fathers have to be dead."

"My father is dead," said the boy. "And I want a Christmas present. So I guess I must be a Belgium."

"All right," agreed Dorothy. "Then I'll give you this lovely doll." She showed it proudly. The boy's face fell. "I ain't a little girl—what do I want with a doll?"

"Well," said Dorothy, "I guess I'll have to go look for a little Belgium girl—I never thought of that."

"Hold on," said the boy. "I've got a mamma, and maybe she'd like to have a doll. She told me Santa Claus wouldn't bring her any present to-morrow. She said he only brought them to little girls—and she wished she was still a little girl. So maybe she'd like a doll. Come on in and we'll see."

He led the way up to the second story. It was only a short flight of steps. The house wasn't as big as the garage in the back yard of Dorothy's home. She asked the boy if anybody else lived there. "We used to have some boarders," he answered, "but we haven't any more. Most of them lost their jobs and couldn't pay mamma anything. So we live all by ourselves now. Mamma says the landlord is going to put us out because we can't pay the rent."

He opened the door of the front room. A pretty woman—"she looks just like my dolly grown up," Dorothy whispered to herself—sat sewing beside a little old stove turned very low. She had a shawl thrown around her shoulders to keep her feet off the chill of the room. One of the window panes had been broken and was stuffed with a balled newspaper.

"Sweet already, Brother?" she asked, without looking up from her work. "No, mother," he answered, "but here's a pretty little girl I brought up to see you. She has a doll for the little Belgium children. I guess I'm here because father's dead, and she wants to give it to me. But I'm a boy, I told her, and maybe you'd like to have it."

The woman looked up and smiled. "Oh, Brownie, here's all about the

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a bit drawn and tired. The kind of face, Dorothy thought, that she had seen in the heart of the embers.

"That's kind," said the woman, in a voice as sweet as her face. "But, Brother, you know, I have always told you that we could not take gifts from anyone. And you're not a little Belgium, you know. They're even poorer than we are."

She looked again at Dorothy. "You sweet little darling," she said softly. "So you wanted to give your best doll to the Belgians? It was a pretty thought, but the Belgians are far away, over across the broad ocean, and they would never get your gift in time for Christmas. Better keep it dear. And how did you get into this neighborhood all by yourself?"

Dorothy felt like crying. She had never been so dreadfully disappointed. She rubbed her eyes with her chubby fist. "Brownie and I just walked," she explained. "Here's Brownie—my Teddy Bear. He's the dearest little fellow in the world. You know, I've never afraid with Brownie."

"Do you know where you live?" asked the mother.

Dorothy looked blank. It hadn't occurred to her before. She had heard of lost children, and she thought that she was lost herself seemed as strange as it was terrifying. But she did not cry. "I live in a great, big house with marble doorsteps and a silver door knob, and a butler and a governess, and next the cook and Pat, the chauffeur, and Mrs. Kennard, my nurse—and, and I don't know what street it's on, but it's a beautiful big street, with lots of houses and automobiles."

"And is your name Dorothy Blake?" asked the mother.

"Yes," said Dorothy, beginning to sob, "but I just know poor Mrs. Kennard will catch it for letting me go out. I'm a bad, miserable girl, and I guess Santa won't bring me anything."

"You poor little darling," murmured the woman. "Come right here and sit on my knee."

She took the little girl in her arms and hugged her close. Dorothy nestled under the shawl. The woman with the sweet face was kissing her and crying a little. It was more comfortable than the big, easy chair at home by the fire, and Dorothy didn't feel a bit afraid. So she fell asleep in the swift way children have. The woman disengaged one hand and, leaning, raised the wick of the oil stove, though herose had gone up the stairs to a quiet again, and the can out on the window sill was almost empty.

Jason Blake was slipping his high ball and smoking an exceedingly good cigar when the page called him to the telephone. He listened a moment, hung up the receiver without a word to the circle at the wide fireplace. They stared in amazement. He had never left the club so early Christmas eve for years to their certain knowledge.

He called a taxicab at the stand down the street, dashed home for a moment, threw the servants into consternation by a rapid trade of abuse that left him choking and them ashamed, and bolted off again; this time in his own automobile, for the police station.

The police can set the wheels in motion quickly when the lever is thrown over by a man of wealth and influence. Blake went straight to headquarters and sought out the captain of detectives. He described Dorothy minutely. Word for word, the description was dictated over the open wires of every police station in town. More tersely it was spoken by every house sergeant to the men on the beats when they "pulled the box" the hour. By 10 o'clock Christmas eve the town was being combed for the lost child.

Blake smoked cigar after cigar in the captain's room at detective headquarters. Then came the first flash. Policeman Mulvihill, of the Twelfth district, remembered seeing the child. It was a clew, anyhow. Blake took four of the best headquarters men in his machine and dashed to the Twelfth. He stayed there to wait while they got out on the trail, taking Mulvihill's crossing as a base and sweeping in four directions.

It was Mulvihill, who had begun to puzzle out what the child had meant when she asked about the "Belgium children," who hit the right street on his beat, and began to inquire at shops and houses. A grocer who was keeping open late to catch the Christmas trade had seen Dorothy talking to the boy and vanishing in the house with him. The grocer

Mulvihill, a mild-mannered man, found Dorothy still asleep in the woman's arms, and the oil heater burned nearly out. The boy, still in his prefer to keep warm, was sitting quietly beside the girl. It puzzled and angered the policeman to be told, in answer to the child's question, that she belonged to her and shouldn't stir out of the house.

"I'm sorry, ma'am," said he, "but you will have to tell that to the lieutenant."

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You've never yet tried anything half so good as Nerviline for any sort of pain. It does cure rheumatism, but that's not all. Just test it out for lame back or lumbago. Gee, what a right fire cure it is for a bad cold, for chest tightness even for neuralgia headache it is simply the finest ever.

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They went to the station house in a taxicab to save time.

"I'll take the child, ma'am," he suggested, "so's not to wake her." She had fallen asleep again. Brownie clutched tight under her arm.

"You'll not," said the woman. "A mother's always strong enough to carry her own baby."

Jason Blake confronted her at the lieutenant's desk. Her head was bent close to the little rose face under its fur-trimmed bonnet. He put his hand on her arm roughly.

"Give me my child," he commanded. The woman looked up. "Hush," she said shily, "you'll wake her. You know she's my child, too, Jason."

"Dorothy!" he exclaimed. He whipped off his seal-lined overcoat and flung it around the woman's thin shoulders. "You should have better sense than to come out like this—you'll catch your death of cold."

The woman smiled. "Here is the boy, Jason. He has your eyes. I named him after you."

"Good night, gentlemen," said Jason Blake, "and a Merry Christmas to you." He handed the lieutenant a tight little package that showed yellow under the electric lights.

"This is Mrs. Blake," he continued, "and we're going home to help trim the Christmas tree."

As the limousine sprang forward he leaned over and whispered "and I've got the handsomest present in town for you, Dorothy my dear. It's been waiting for you all these eight long years."

Moral Crisis of the War

It would be a singularly unfortunate thing if any European public should mistake the present outbreak for peace agitation in the United States. For the real opinion of this country for the real opinion of this country is represented in the sincere pacifists, who belong to precisely the same group which in France and Great Britain proved more useful to Germany than the Prussian army corps; second, those who, seeking personal or commercial advancement, have seized upon peace talk and activity as the cheapest and most advantageous method of advertising personalities otherwise obscure or wares on sale in every market place; third, the German propagandists, who are eager to use every tool and every agency to assist their fellow countrymen in harvesting the fruits of their great labor and sacrifices. This is the census of the contemporary peace movement in the United States, and it is in no true sense representative of American opinion.

As contrasted with these groups there is a considerable well-defined group of Americans who recognize that the moral crisis in the great world war has now arrived, and the next few months will decide whether the war is to prove one of the greatest landmarks in human history, one of the most beneficial and splendid struggles for liberty and righteousness that has ever taken place, or whether a premature and illusory peace is to perpetuate the evil that the war has disclosed, and leave the new generations to wrestle with the same perils and the same dangers which have for nearly 50 years turned back the wheels of progress and subtracted so much from the development of the world.

The military crisis of the great war came in August and September, 1914; it was met by France almost single handed, and it was met and mastered. On the field of the Marne it was decided that the Prussian dream of world supremacy, attained by one gigantic, terrible, merciless sweep, by a defiance of all the laws of men and God, was not to be realized. Inferior in numbers, resources, preparation, the French, by devotion, genius, sacrifice, rolled back a third barbarian invasion upon the civilized world, and threw back the Hun and the Arab.

So much France did, with but a handful of British and Belgian troops rendering valiant but slight aid. This was the French contribution to the sum total of human happiness and freedom, a contribution no whit inferior of which are even now too little understood by English-speaking nations. This done, there remained to hold the barrier erected against the flood, to man the walls which, like those the Romans built in their time against the outer darkness of barbarism, were the sole protection of our civilization against a destruction as terrible as that which laid Rome in ruins and carried fire and slaughter over the face of the world that had been civilized.

Such was and remains the French contribution. This Americans day by day are learning to appreciate more fully and admire more generally. What Marathon and Valmy were to the human race, what Poliers and Châlons were to mankind, Americans

are slowly beginning to understand the battle of the Marne was to another world, threatened by a storm which burst upon earlier generations of men. But there remains another task. It is still for the organized forces of civilization to restore to the world that was so shaken and injured by the barbarian outbreak of 1914, and to bring from the savage invaders themselves the last semblance of a reward which they have gathered solely by their violation of all the rules and laws that represent the sum total of civilization and human progress.

Peace now would not mean immediate Prussian supremacy. The worst of the dangers that threatened us all a year ago is banished. But peace now would mean that Germany, the Germany that is expressed by those who now dominate and direct Teutonic fortunes, would take home from this struggle rewards which would be but the incentive to new invasions and fresh efforts to complete the conquest of Europe and the utter destruction of the liberties and happiness of the small peoples and the numerically weaker races. It would mean that Prussian rulers would still have something to show their people as the fruits of their leadership and the justification of their command.

A premature peace would be but an interruption to the progress of a campaign and a crusade of Germany against all civilization. It would mean that those who conceived, planned, directed the present onslaught would have a new opportunity to gather up their strength, profit by their errors, extend their preparation. It would mean that the next generation of men would have to go back to the trenches in which the present have lived and died for so many months. It would postpone, but it would not abolish the peril.

For what the French and British are now fighting is not a nation, it is not a people, it is an idea. It is the idea which carried Napoleon from Madrid to Moscow and led French armies from the Channel to the Holy Land. It is the idea of world domination, of the superior race, of the right of one nation and one race to enslave, subdue, crush other races, merely because it possesses greater numbers and a larger genius for adapting to the work of destruction the lessons and discoveries of the modern age.

There is no question of dividing Germany, there is no question of partitioning the provinces whose people are by choice and loyalty Teutonic. No such ambition to-day stands in the way of world peace. Peace is impossible because the Germans, having invaded Belgium, France, Poland, Serbia, claim as the reward of their efforts the right to rule over France, Belgium, Serbian and Polish people, claim the right to transform the violence and might people who would be what ancestry and tradition make them into unwilling Germans, that the grandeur and power of the German people may be expanded, and the empire of the Hohenzollerns and the vassal Hapsburgs may be the mightiest on the face of the earth.

So long as this German idea remains peace would be an empty sham. Until that day when the German people are willing to renounce the dream of domination over alien people and unwilling races, there can be no peace, and every temporary truce is a danger, not a respite. The time when the German people will renounce this dream has not yet come. So far as it is possible to judge, the rulers of Germany maintain now as faithful to the doctrine of world power as sixteen months ago, when they launched their thunderbolt. For the people, not yet is it possible to believe that they are willing to make sacrifices which are essential to an enduring peace.

This, then, is the moral crisis in this tremendous conflict, and in this crisis the gravest responsibility must rest with the British people. The French have done their part, and what they have done will remain forever prized by those who love liberty. Much the British have done, but their sacrifice as compared with the French, is still slight. The great work which is to be done must be done by the nation whose resources are still undiminished, whose numbers have known no such losses as France has suffered in her magnificent campaigns.

For many Americans the chief interest, the real concern, now must be as to what part the British people will choose to play. Peace on terms which will mean little or no immediate sacrifice for the British can be had at any time. But such peace as is now possible will leave France and Belgium, if temporarily evacuated by the Germans, exposed to a new storm a few years hence. It will leave the Serbs still at the mercy of the Austrians and the Poles under the domination of the Prussians, whose rule must be a new era of slavery in world history.

THE GERRYMANDER.

Gilbert Stuart's Cartoon Made the Political Trick Notorious.

Gilbert Stuart, who is best remembered for his portraits of Washington, was also a cartoonist, and it was he, according to James Melvin Lee, in *Cartoons Magazine*, who designed the famous Gerry-mander cartoon.

In 1811, writes Mr. Lee, the struggle between the Democrats and the Federalists for the control of Massachusetts was extremely bitter. The Democrats had elected Elbridge Gerry governor and had carried both houses of the legislature. To retain his supremacy they remapped the senatorial districts and divided the power of their political adversaries by paying no attention to county boundaries. In Essex county the relation of the district to the town was most absurd, and a map of the county thus laid out hung in the office of the Massachusetts Sentinel.

One day as Stuart gazed at the map he remarked that the towns as they had been assembled looked like some monstrous animal. A few touches of his pencil added the wings and claws, and he christened the creature a "salamander." The name was changed to "Gerry-mander." The cartoon thereafter was called "The Salamander," and frequently appeared in a "broadside," while the term became one of reproach.