## DESERET EVENING NEWS: SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1905.



caused his undoing, poor kid.

the boy's and give me the shudders.

Father John's or the river, he had said

-and he knew as well as I that the

"Nagga shan't touch you!" I swore,

and made the sign of the gang, and

yent it wasn't so easy as the saying so,

But here I was and here was the

baby. To hand him over to the police

and life tastes good at 20 even if one

has to fill one's stomach by emptying

other people's pockets. To answer any

'ad' that might appear was just as dan-

gerous-1 was as helpless as the baby.

But I wouldn't lose hope; all night I

lay and thought and planned, and every

time I came near despairing the pres-

sure of that little head would make me

were pillowed on my arm; he lay there

until it ached, but I loved the ache, for

he slept calm as if he'd been on

his own mother's breast, and trusted

friend a poor forlornity ever owned.

We went to school together-for I did

garet Mariner by her teacher for 'being

a good girl.' A good girl-oh, Bob!

was to land myself behind the bars-

but I would, somehow, I would!



12

smooth as plush the | ing like castenets I dipped a towel in way Nagga planned but when I got baby's face, It was like coming into the spot and saw the sunshine after a taste of a dunhe big crowd geon when I saw the white lips open appendicitis." round the window and the long lashes lift. In the dusk nd a tall blue-coat of the gloomy room all he could see,

his eyes working the four ways of the | hair as I bent over him. That's what compass, it somehow got into my knees | made his arms go up in such a happy and made them webbly as a marlonette's. That's what spolled it. When my nerves do a turn they want the felt the tears come as I let his little whole stage and work it all over me till arms close around my neck and his I'm deaf, dumb, blind and numb. moist lips cling to mine-the first baby Naggs would have raved if he'd known, | that ever kissed Meg Mariner! -but it was mighty different with him .- having watched the millionaire baby for weeks, and me with only the velvet suit and yellow curis to go by. | me to deal with; and from that minute Ten years in Sing Sing for kid-napping doesn't sound so had when you read it over coffee and eggs in the woman who had darned and patched morning, but when it rings in a girl's and loved-oh, he breathed love, that ears when she's going at her first big | baby! job-it chokes. But I wasn't the daughter of Crooked Charley for nothing.

"The ransom old Copper Clarkson 'Il give fer that kid 'll make a hairess of ye, Meg, and bloated capitalists of every man jack of us," Nuggs had said. And that meant-oh it meant enough to eat, a warm place to side p, clean things to wear-pretty thingsand for once a chance for the gang to draw a long breath without feeling like a bunch of white rabbits out in the open with the hounds at their heels. river was less to be dreaded.

That nerved me, and I edged in closer among the crowd, If Christmas had been the next day instead of a week Meg Mariner has never yet been known off, the jam around that toy-window to break that oath. How I was to precouldn't have been any thicker. And out of that jostling, pushing swarm of nurses, mothers, and children big and little, rich and poor, I was to single out the three-year-old with yellow curis and a velvet suit! It took just ten minutes of it to convince me that Naggs was worse than an Idlot. Disgustedly I turned to elbow my way back to the curb when-Yellow Curls tripped over my very feet.

It takes a long time to tell it, but it didn't take long in the doing-to step in between that midget and the woman who, was grasping for him; to pick up set my teeth again. His yellow curls Master Velvet and tuck him under my long cloak and then lose myself and him in that vast kindergarten. Velvet didn't even know who had him until we were around the corner with room enough for him to kick. And then-a me (me!), youngster howling because his nurse It was nearly morning when I thought is tearing him away from a toy-shop is of Sergeant Bob of the Salvation too common a sight to excite suspicion. Army, Yes, a queer friend for Meg The burly pollceman didn't even deign Mariner to have-but the best to glance our way. Then the milte of chloroform on my handkerchief-just a harmless drop-did its work, and Yel- go to school once. If you don't below Curls drooped on my breast and lleve me I can show you a picture of the big cloak kept the secret till I George Washington presented to Marreached my little den.

I tossed my bundle on

trick seemed | hands trembling and my knees kneck- | "It's what I am,-we can't either of us blink that, But cold water and rubbed it over the this time my nerves, 1 suppose you'd call it my conscience, hurts worse than

"I knew it would someday!" Bob gave a glad cry. ast opposite with I suppose, was a woman's face and I slienced him with a look, "It isn't usual to hurrah over appendicitis. I need a docway as he crisd, "Mother!" tor quick,-will you be it?" I suppose it was silly of me, but a Flippant as my words were they had a serious meaning. It wasn't every to confers to those honest blue eyes that his old schoolmate had 'That's what settled it, then and there:

robbed a mother of her baby. the man or woman who offered to harm "Please tell me, Meg.-I a hair of that baby's head would have was never quick like you at guessing riddles. What's one thought possessed me-to find the your trouble and how can I woman who owned those kisses, the help?" Bob looked as stern as his gentle mouth would let him.

For answer I took away And he was such a pretty thing-wide the crude screen that hid brown eyes that trusted everything and the window. Little Velvet everybody; a diminutive nose that sat In the sill playing with an nomehow spoke of birth and breeding old cracked ten-pot and some lumps (Oh, I know it, even if I was raised on

of sugar. the East Sidel), sweet full lips and a "That's what I stole," was all I mop of yellow ouris-the curis that had said.

For a full minute Bob never spoke, heard him give an exclamation: Every once in a while Naggs' dark, but I could see his blue eyes grow evil face would come between me and dark with pain and his hands go out "Isn't he?" I asked with as much voice was as solemn as the long stop on

as if he wanted to push away the pride as though I'd owned him.

"What a pretty boy!"



## A CHRISCMAS SCORY Chrice Winner of the news Prize Story, By Miss Edyth Ellerbeck,

attic room, but clung fear- my imagination run riot. All the with Mother Googe sprinkling a few attic room, but clung tear-fully to my finger as he Laura Jean Libbey romances I'd ever feathers down now and then in a frojtrudged manfully up the stairs. What a grand place it was!--cut glass and bricit was!-cut glass and price of my duster, before I thought what a I went in with his breakfast, and I must have been the might just as well been and I and the side board a Tiffany show case of solid silver and gold. In my mind's eye I saw Meg Mariner turned loose in that pasture!

"Pretty!" cried Velvet pointing an ecstatic finger at the glittering array-and then I came to. I wasn't Meg, but Margaret now, and in honor bound to "be good" for Bob's sake-and the mire even smudges on my nose. baby's. I felt the itch go out of my fingers; I grew blind to the glitter, deaf to all save and they are poor, very young and-" the still, small voice. And?-my eyes asked.

an organ, and her face as long as Trin-

"Broken-hearted," he said, half un- for many a day. That house was a maze of stairs and corridors. Where willingly. they all led to was a Chinese puzzle; it gave me a head? ache trying to count the doors. But with all asked.

"It was hard not to," he returned, At once-just what I wanted. To | the grandeur and luxury about, it felt get away before Naggs came was all I lonely, somehow; not a footfall soundasked for now. As I pinned on my ed on the padded carpets of the long drawn off, but the police are working with her, shabby and delicate looking hat I saw Bob studying Velvet, and halls, not a laugh came from behind the closed doors. It might just as well you even for her."

How he shamed me! I could feel my that hurt still, I could see, have been a tomb. Even the cook's face grow hot.

back without risk."

thing better!" I cried passionately. his Christmas present flew into his-But he shook his head. "Then listen-" and I told him of the

Mystery upstairs. my discovery.

"Such an imagination!" he teased when I had finished. Nobody relishes but the result made us forget all our an anticlimax like that and it made tiredness. We had emptied the Tiffany me rather cross. "If old Sour-face in there didn't have her lips glued togeth- it looked as if a cloud-burst of diaer I'd have the whole story out of her." I cried.

"She hasn't been here long," Bob said thoughtfully, "But Mandy was here for years-I'll ask her." and still incredulous, he left me.

But Mandy's story brought him back with another look on his face. He was a living exclamation point, while I fairly bristled with "I told you so's," It was an old story, for all its tragedy and suffering. Isn't it funny how everybody blunders in the same old way and nobody ever learns any better? Of course old man Denby's money was at the bottom of it. (Here Bob brought in a moral which is so detestably obvious that I won't repeat it.) The young feliow in the picture was the poor, deserving young man, the girl the

through the big house to our | with a capital M .- was enough to make pretty world that day, cold and frosty,

devoured were insipld in comparison. | icsome sort of way, When Bob came the next afternoon I In spite of me a "Merry Christmas" greeted him with a triumphant flourish would come bubbling over my lips as fright I must look with my hair tied up might just as well have dashed ice. in a cap, a huge, shapeless apron giving water in his face. If glances could me the figure of a flour-barrel. That annihilate, Meg Mariner's remnants is what made all the more surprising would have been pretty generally dis-

the look of honest admiration that shone tributed by the one he threw at me, in his blue eyes. I flushed uncomfort- He made me shut the windows tight ably under that glance and I felt all at so that he shouldn't hear the church once what a show I was-with Velvet bells, and I believe if he could he'd poking a sticky face from behind the en- have put his ears in his pocket. I veloping folds of that gingham apron. knew something that would change all But that was the way with Bob: so that in a twinkling and I could hardly long as I looked domestic he could ad- wait till the big moment came.

When the door-bell gave its whirr He didn't wait for me to begin, but down in the kitchen, even Sour-face said quietly, "I've found them, Meg, went crimson with excitement, and listened breathlessly while I answered the door that hadn't admitted company

There stood the lady of my picture; I felt my breath catch oddly; I could I knew her in a minute. But not the fairly see that fresh girl-face cloudel fresh, sweet girl-face any longer, A by my cruelty. "Did you tell her?" I sweet face still, but thin and white and so wan-my heart that had been full to bursting all day sank like a "but it wasn't safe, yet. Naggs has lump of lead. Velvet's father was on the case, and I couldn't endanger as though he had been ill. But his lips had a proud curve; he bore a wound

But the proud look all went when the "I offered to help," he went on to two of them caught sight of that save me from speaking just then, crushed and broken old man. Old 'And when we can give a reasonable Denby's lips hadn't smiled for so long, explanation I think I can take him 1 suppose they'd forgotten how; & queer trembling was all the motion "Take him now-I don't deserve any- they could make. But it was enough-

arms-and then I closed the door. It was dusk when I next opened it to announce dinner. I did it caimly Bob is a little bit slow sometimes and enough, but my nerves were leaping persisted in wearing an openly incred- | and I felt light-headed in the stomach ulous smile as I dramatically told of | as I raced downstairs again to arrange my tableau.

We had fairly slaved over that table, show case on to the gleaming then, and monds had suddenly descended, while a bunch of long stemmed roses towered in a vase and mingled their blossoms with the crimson berries that dripped from the holly on the chundeller. Oh, it was lovely! But the masterplece-t It stood on the big chair in grandpa's place, a little mite in a shabby Veivet frock, and Bob's army cap slop of the gold curls that danced with a delicious excitement; in each hand a wooden drum stick with which he justily belabored a toy drum-his feet beating time,

his baby-laugh rippling an accompaniment to the vigorous drubbing. If you could only have seen him! Bob and I had our heads together atthe pantry slide and I could feel my heart thumping against his arm like a

touch of bravado-my first big job done without a hitch!

"Good girl, Meg!-yer a chip o' the old block!" cried Naggs as he bent over Velvet, who lay in a heavy drowse.

For five minutes he stood gloating over the unconscious prize, while I watched him, thrilled by the same thought. Then suddenly to my horror I saw the evil smile on his face change subtly, and a doubt, faint at first but growing into a terrible certainty, creep. into its place. With an oath he sprang to the child and grasping one of his feet pointed a shaking finger at me.

"You, you!" he cried, "-look here: a millionalre's baby-with holes in his shoes-darns in his stockings-patches on his coat-you-i"

With a gasp I leaned nearer, only to confirm what he said. Velvet it was, but velvet darned and patched, threadbare stockings, and pathetic holes in the stumpy little shoes. Literally "struck all of a heap." I

sank down by that cot and cried like a baby, while Naggs stamped around me room like a madman. "Great baby-snatcher you are!" he

taunted when his string of blasphemous baby saw that I wasn't his mother names gave out. "Turning philanthrop- His grief made a limp rag of me-I ist, I reckon-making us into a pauper asylum. Oh, yer a wonderful talented creatur'!"

But I had my turn at saying things next, and there weren't many choice epithets left after I got through. I bath and breakfast that a laugh riphadn't been raised by the gang without acquiring a vocabulary. When we'd both come to the end of our string, Nagga quieted down some. "Well, what d'ye purpose doing with

yer prize?" he asked sneeringly. "I carried out instructions and the blunder is as much your fault as mine,

when you've a scheme that shows people had seen better days"-came to sense. I'll do my part. I'm not scared me then. As I pressed the clasp of of any risk-but next time prove that the locket I dreaded to see the usual it's worth my while." There was no locks of hair-useless as clues cowing me, and I looked Naggs in the even to a female Holmes. But face as I said it.

Naggs sat and thought furiously for a woman's with the some wide I didn't! I forgot that any one has morrow morning-Velvet's people have drawn a picture of them both!"

seen better days and they wen't be The baby peered down into my hand. glad to lose him. They may be able "Mother!" he cried, and then the hapto raise enough dough to make the py laugh came. thing worth while. 'No risk, no gain.' A line to headquarters brought Ser-

ye can make up for the running trick such eyes. ye've played us. I'll look in if there's "In trouble, little woman?" he asked anything doing." And with that he with a band laid protectingly on my left me alone with Velvet. Maybe it was the disappointment, or the scolding, I don't know, but some-I wholk my head "Not this

how my nerves got to going again, and Bob.-the trouble's in me. It's a funny as I sat there looking gloognily at that thing isn't it, for a thief to want to once seemed curlously while, the body with?" Imp and lifeless. The chloroform-a But Bob only seemed to hear one

Not an eyelash quivered. Then with my head a little higher.

"We'll eddlcate her, Naggs," my father had said, "for the more ye eddlcate 'em the smarter rogues they he Why if yo 'n me was edicated, Naggs, we wouldn't be crackin' safes at our time o' life-we'd be runnin' a life in-

surance company!" And so I went to school just long enough to learn to love cleanliness hetfor than filth, to love sunshine better than gloom, to use my wits to get the better of stupidity, and to know Bob and despise him for his stupid bellef in goodness. Why, he even believed me good at heart! I'd battered that be--lief pretty hard, heaven knows, and laughed in his face when he asked me to be his wife-I had a picture of myself in a hideous poke-bonnet collecting pennies in a tambourine. I know a quicker, quieter way of 'collecting' pen-

nlesi I hadn't seen Bob for months: only once or twice I'd heard his big, funns voice ringing out above the others' on the street-corner. It would mean a fight with my pride to appeal to him now; I'd boasted so of my "easier way!" But pride hadn't the ghost of a show when morning came and the hated myself worse than Bob hates sin How I coaxed for a smile, harder than

I ever coaxed Dad to let me out of a thoughts that would come. But at last trouncing when I came home emptyhe spoke. handed. But it wasn't until after a word hurt him- and me. pled over his pretty lips again.

I could face Nagge any time, but not I came across something wonderful Bob. I didn't even look his way as I as I undressed him. I had let him stammered: "But it was to be for only sleep in his clothes, for covers aren't a little while-till a ransom was paidplentiful in Meg's "apartment." That and I meant to take such good care of was nothing more nor less than a gold focket underneath his little shirt attached to a slender thread of a chain. I knew what he hoped and that made Get your wonderful head to work and Nagg's shrewd guess-that "Velvet's it still harder to go on. "I was to have taken a rich man's

"Meg-you-didn't-do-that

"I know, Meg," and his tone was

"Don't!" I wineed under that lash-

you imagine what that poor child's-

child-and got the wrong one." ' "But-a baby, Meg-even a rich man's haby has a mother." "I never thought of that, Bob-honest no-two faces looked out, one

a minute, his fingers drumming nerv- trusting eyes as the baby's; the other a mother-I never had one, Bab!" cusly on his chair. Then in his usual a man's, young and fine, the nostril calculating tone he began to think proud, the lips as sensitive as a girl's. soft again as he said it. "But can't aloud. "There'll be an ad fer him to- "I knew it," I cried, "I could have

help me. Naggs won't lift a finger un-We'll feed and keep the kid till we see geant Bob in double-quick time, his the game's up-then Father John or blue coat matching his eyes in a way the river. Keep dark, Meg, and see if to startle one. Men have no right to

> shoulder. (Bob always acts as if there wers a great hungry llon around the

"And then?" I shook my head. "Not this time. "Pli never trouble you again, Bob-If it's Sing Sing," sleeping infant, the little face all at return something she's got clear away "Don't!" It was Bob's turn to wince, "Don't say that. I hope there won't

ever be any more trouble, dear, but If horrible, cold fear clutched my heart word. "Don't call yourself that, Mar- there is I want to know it. I'll help and I sprang breathlessly to the cot. garet -- it hurts." Once in a while Bob you now, of course-I know just the "Baby, baby!" My own voice fright- | calls me by the old school name, and place, and I'll trust you Margaret, you ened me it was so shrill and scared. I never can hear it without holding know, to the end of the world. But you must come at once."

## CHRIST BLESSING LITTLE CHILDREN.

Bob had stepped to the child and lity steeple.

was about to lift him up, when Velvet . Only one question did I venture to waved him off peremptorily. "Gway, put: "Who lives here?"-- to which the man," he said shortly. "Me'n Meg play housekeeper grunted a curt reply, out both arms with a smile. Contradictory as it may seem, that transfixed me with a glare. stupid fellow fairly beamed. "He loves you, Margaret," he said.

"I know!" I cried, glorying in the in the roof of my mouth. wonder of it. "And I love him-that's Poor Mr. Denby, I thought, if he what made me know how SHE must had to scatter himself over all that feel," For a minute I revelled in the house. But I took back the thought touch of the yellow curls against my when I found how helpless the cheek. Bob watched me keenly. "Bables know," he said.

Incorrigible Bob!-he believed in me It was to a big country house over

faced housekeeper let us in at the backdoor. Bob had already told me that she was an Army convert who thought it only consistent with her serious conhadn't I thought till my brain was victions to wear a sort of "world withbruised? "That's my trouble, Bob, I've out end Amen" expression habitually, got to take him back-and you must | and never permitted herself the levity of a smile.

less there's money in it, nor let me for "This is the new maid who's to take fear of the risk. Find me a place, a | Mandy's place till she is well," Bob safe place, where I can stay with the | explained briefly, and the woman gave , baby till you find his mother, You a curt nod. Not a question did she can trust me-I won't touch a thing nsk-Sergeant Bob was sufficient guaras long as i've got him. I'll promise antes of my character, (poor Bob!)-but anything you want-Pil be good till his I saw her glance rest curiously upon own mother has him safe and sound." Velvet till I spoke up. "I've nowhere to leave my little-brother," I said

> do my lying for me, he who had never told even a white lie in his life. "Will you mind if he stays with me?"

> feet." was her surly reply.

Hfe.

quickly to forestall Bob. He shouldn't

"Not if ye keep him from under my

usual amount of jealousy to set the plot bubbling; stolen money and unjust suspicions.

Only the girl still trusted in her hero, (oh. Velvet, can't I read eyes?) and when the end came it was his lot she chose to share. For three years the poor rich old man had nursed his jealousy and suspicion,-and then the real thief was run to earth. Then had followed a fruitless search for the illused couple; and since the young man had pride to match his poverty, it was likely to go on indefinitely. Unless-"Oh Bob," I cried as I saw the glor-

ious possibilities, "if we can-it will make amends a little-just a little -won't it?" And when he nodded a cheeriul as-

sent, I nearly squeezed the life out of Velvet. I did the rest of the planning, for,

as I've said before, Bob is terribly good-but slow. But it needed his honesty and earnestness to win over that wronged and unhappy pair. Perhaps the mother's own loss made her feel the more for her lonely old father, but it took Bob to say just the right thing, Somehow Bob's words have a way of sinking like seeds into the most rocky

soil, and bearing fruit where it is least expected. I had to take Sour-face into my confidence-in all but one thing. The man-

the of her charity, I feaded, hadn't quite breadth enough to cover a Meg Mariner-if she had known she would tea-puty!' And turning to me he held "Mister Denby." And when another probably have kept one eye on the query half tumbled after the first, she silver. As it was the news was as

> "Mister Denby," she repeated, and left me with curiosity burning a hole

and bake, fry and fricases, steam and stew, till between them they drove the master of the house was. So far from being "scattered" Mr. Denby spent his days in a chair, tidbits until I trembled for the darns his world bounded by four walls in his shabby little frock.

of one room. He wasn't just gloomy, And then when night came-the evehe was gloom; as I took his dinner to him that night I felt a chill creep down my spine as I met the dull hopelessness life. I knew it wasn't my place to be | panion. of his eyes.

His big, easy chair was near the hanging that little stocking; I dldn't | dare let myself think what Velvet's window where he could command a mother must be feeling on the night view of the beautiful terraced lawns; that was just made for babies. But I but it wasn't there that he looked. meant that her Christmas should be Leaning wearily back among his cushbeautiful enough to make up, two Last night I had a dandy time. ions he kept his eyes fastened hungrily gifts such as I had for her ought to be enough to win forgiveness for even Jus' like they always do on a picture that hung on the wall facing him. When I could do so witha hardened sinner like Meg Mariner. I was staking all on that hope. Bob brought an armful of toys when 'At I was fast asleep. out attracting his notice I stole a look at it-and received the shock of my

It was a flat, dull-gold frame, encloslike 10-year-olds, after I had put Well, by an' by I heard a noise. he came, and the two of us acted ing a portrait of a girl, a fresh young Velvet to bed. Every other Christmas, Who says to ma. face, with an oreole of fluffy hair, a lineless brow, and eyes-wide brown eve that I could remember-but I'm not eyes that looked full of trust of every- going to call up the horrors; I've buried An' then they fetched thing and everybody. They were Vel-all those days and won't even erect an epitaph to their memory. Naggs wouldn't have known big of the formation of the same Naggs wouldn't have known big of the same Nagge wouldn't have known big of the sa

Naggs wouldn't have known his old and unhappier than any other day in An' ma she tucked me in ag'in, feet, I thought, but didn't say, though it trembled on my lips. Velvet showed no desire to get near her as we went To be in the midst of a bure Mysters no desire to get near her as we went To be in the midst of a huge Mystery- on the world again-though it was a

× .

. p-hammer. But we saw the whole proverbial heiress. There was the ene-the wondering group standing for a moment in the doorway, puzzled and amazed, old Denby clinging tremulously to his son-in-law's arm; the half-incredulous glearn that grew in the made all the cut glass ring. As the slight girlish figure ran like the wind

mother-eyes, and then the glad cry that down the length of the long table and gathered the little drummer to her breast-1 choked. And then because i couldn't see any longer I turned and hid my eyes on Rob's shoulder.

Quicker than thought he gripped and held me close-and in that minute I ceased forever to feel myself a poor, lost forlornity.

"Can't you see, Meg," he whispered with his lips close to my ear, "dont you know now that there's nothing half so big and beautiful in all the world-

as love?" And then at last, I knew. 

HIS CHRISTMAS SERMON.

An Aged Wayfarer Who Taught a Curate Contentment.

An English clergyman declares that the best Christmas sermon he ever heard was preached by a woman-and in three words!

"In my little parish, under the sweep of the Sussex downs," he says, "I wis walking swiftly home one night buffeted about by the gray clouds of driving rain that the flerce sou waster swept landward from the sea when a poor, helpless, aged woman asked me for a trille for a night's lodging. "Curates are supposed always to be

good as an antidote to the acid of her poor. It was Christmas time, and composition. She flew into a form of had just parted with my last sixpence composition. She flew into a fury of at a lonely hamiet where work preparation and made the cook brew scarce. Still I coul dnot leave naked her

stranger in the street, so to come with me to my lodgings, "She shambled along through the damp and loneliness out of the old house, and made the long corridors warm and full of Christmas odors. Velvet, from being sniffed at as the and my little A minte of hot child of a nobody, suddenly came kettle sang vociferously as if impa-into his own with her and was fed stood my slippers and an easy chair. "To my surprise, my poor, worn, har-gard companion burst into tears with

the words, 'Oh, what luxury inversions #0 "That was the best of the big day-I played at being mon I ever heard, and the only one I Santa Claus for the first time in my have never forgoiten."-Youth's Com

ON CHRISTMAS EVE.

When Pa and Ma Their Vigils Keen and Little Boys Should Be Asleep.

a, an' I 105

na belleve

An'then I seen my pa. "Uv course he is," says ma lot uv stuff. An' then both tiptoed r

right up in bed. -Four Track News

in Jersey that Bob took us, and a sour-