

the crowd on the car the conductor had passed her by, or thought she was too small to call for a fare, so the precious quarter was still in her hand.

She had never before been in a church nor had she the least idea what the old priest was talking about; but one thing seemed clear. To-morrow would be a special day for children, and somewhere there was a pearl of great price, a little baby called Jesus, who could give her anything she wanted. Perhaps if she found Him He would give her back her mother.

The wind whistled sharply around the corner cutting her little face like a knife. What had he said, that old man, with the gentle voice? Oh, yes, seek and find Him. She would never find this wonderful

closing, then turning, she trotted up Sixteenth Street in the direction of Fifth Avenue. A few steps further on she paused again. It was getting dark now, and for the first time the child was seized with fear—whither in that great city should she go? A laughing voice made itself heard.

'Run home now, Etta, child, and I will come in a few moments.'

She turned and saw a stout, motherly woman watching a little girl across the street until she entered a house opposite. Then the woman ascended some steps, opened a door and disappeared. After a moment's hesitation the child followed. The door opened on a wide vestibule paved with marble, and at the south



GIANT TOTARA TREE, PEEL FOREST.

pearl by standing still in the street, so she began moving northwards.

Then nature asserted itself in pangs of hunger. The child had eaten nothing since seven that morning, and now it was nearly four. Entering a bakery, she laid her precious quarter on the counter, and asked for several buns from a tempting pile spread out before her. In another moment she was on the street again, a paper bag in one hand and a bun in the other, her change for safe keeping in the bag with the buns. She proceeded on her way, munching a bun as she went along. Four buns had been disposed of when she reached Sixteenth Street. She stood for a moment on the corner, looking up at the bank that was just

end were a few more steps and three wide doors. Quickly the little girl ascended the steps, and pushing open one of the doors, entered

Within all was dim, mysterious beauty. There was no light anywhere save for a red lamp that burned before a white marble altar that gleamed in the dusk, and a soft white haze of light at a point at the extreme south-west end of the building. The child glanced around timidly. This was like the place where she had heard the old priest talk, only it was almost empty. A few shadowy forms seemed to be scattered here and there, but all was quiet, and it was warm, and sheltered from the bitter weather without. Since she did not know where else to go, she would stay here. She crept