

## TOMMY'S CHRISTMAS EVE.



CHRISTMAS Eve came at last, accompanied by lots of frost and snow. The snow was whirling down in heavy drifts, transforming, as it were, everything to white. But, in spite of the cold and the snow, everybody was out, from the rich banker, with his furs, to the poor little street arab, with his ragged clothes. Many were purchasing things for Christmas Day, while others, who were not so lucky in having money to spend, were looking about to see where they might be able to earn a few pennies for delicacies in behalf of the half-starved little ones at home.

Among the last named was a young boy of about twelve. He had a fine, open face, blue eyes, brown, curly hair, and everything about him proved him to be a perfect little gentleman. But he had not the appearance of such, because he was clad in a garment that was full of holes and rents. His feet were almost bare, and he kept his hands in two holes, which served as pockets, not being able to boast of mitts or gloves. In spite of all this, he seemed very cheerful in the hope of earning some money to buy his little invalid sister, a waif like himself, a modest Christmas present.

Now, these two children lived in a down-town tenement with a woman who was supposed to be their guardian. This woman had faithfully promised their dying mother to treat the children with kindness, but she had children of her own, and so did not like the intruders over much. However, she left them alone most of the time, much to the pleasure of the two orphans. Though the little girl was an invalid from her birth, the boy was a sturdy young Hercules.

These two had been building up fond hopes of having an enjoyable Christmas with the money the little lad would earn that day; but, when he came home empty-handed at supper, nothing but disappointment could be seen on their youthful and innocent faces. However, after supper, the young girl proposed a prayer to the Infant Jesus to send them something for Christmas. They prayed long and earnestly, and when they arose none of the former disappointment could be seen, but faith, that faith, which, even in innocence, was vastly greater than what most people possess.

The youth once more set out. The snow was still coming down