The man gave a short laugh. "That's the first time I've been taken for any one that's half decent," he said to himself; and then he answered, in a whisper loud enough for Bobbie to hear:

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"Well, not exactly, sonny, I'm only his assistant."

'His what ?'' said Bobble. "Sh! Not so loud, my boy-you'll wake the family; and if you did that I'd just vanish like the mist," said the man. "I said I was only Santa Claus' assistant. You see, my lad, there are - so many more children now-a-days than there used to be that the boss has to get outside help Christmas Eve, or he'd never be able to finish up his work in time. others like me-heaven help us! and we do his distributing for him. I'd just laid these things out here when you surprised me."

Bobbie approached the tree.

"Oh, isn't it beautiful!" he cried, "All these things for me! A watch too, just the very thing I wanted!"

The man drew back as the boy spoke, and with a queer light in his

"Are you tired?" asked . Bobbie, leaving the tree and crossing Santa Claus' assistant.

'Yes," said the man 'Very. "I'm sorry," said Bobbie, affectionately, as he took the other's

hand in his and kissed it.

Don't, don't do that." said the man, huskily. "It's not—not clean."

I shouldn't think it would be," laughed Bobbie; "climbing in by sooty chimneys can't be very clean work Do you know, I always wonder why there's never any soot left on the toys."

"Oh, we take care of that," said the assistant, "You see, this bag keeps the soot off. But I didn't come by the chimney this time," he added hastily, observing that there was no soot on the beg either. "I

said Bobbie, looking at the bag.

any one else for you to take a toy

face in his grimy hands, and a great lump rose up in his throat.
"There was one other," said the.

him-and-and it's all my fault. I neglected to look after him."

No," said the assistant, roughly, rising and taking a step toward the

"He can have one of infne," cried Bobble, "Here, take him this I've got plenty thanks to you." He

The unexpected guest looked at the boy for a minute, and then he slow-

"and God bless you for it! Good-bye little one. I must be off or he'll wake up and be disappointed."

He moved toward the door, when Bobbie ran after him, and holding up his little face said: "Won't you take a kiss for Santa Claus from me?"

'That I will," said the other, and he bent over, and, kissing the child, fled precipitately out through the window and disappeared in the darkness of the street.

Well," said the unexpected guest the following morning, as he watched his own pallid-faced little youngster playing with the first Christmas the rummiest thing. I went out to steal, and the only thing I bagged | The royal city lay asleep; that wasn't really given to me was a Riss. It was a rich haul, but I think I'll get a more decent job-at. The stars shone brightly overhead



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(Written for the True Witness.) Hold, busy world, for one brief moment stay

Thy restless energy, thy ceaseless

Ye men and women of the world to-Check for a while the throbbing

pulse of life.

And come with me to where the Infant King .

Lies silently in poverty enthroned; Whilst angels make the earth and

With canticles of praise sweetly in-

Draw near unto the manger where

His gaze upturned towards. His While she, the trace of sorrow in

Reflects upon the mains He must en-

The shepherds; they are there, yea,

Directed by that wondrows Eastern

Forgetting for a time all earthly Have come to pay Him homage from

But why does. His sweet counten-

What is it mans the gladness of this day,

Therefore, dear friends, on this glad

Draw close to Him, who said, My, f To Him Who on this day for you is

Makes Child's Play of Wash Day Read the Directions

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A NIGHT IN BETHLEHEM

sheep; New Year's."—Harper's Magazine. And silver touched a humble shed;

A holy hush held all the air, As if the angels were at prayer And there, twixt night and early

A winsome little Babe was born

Of winged ones warbled into song; Nearer and nearer the song-waves

nau who used Pastor Koerres me that she has resures me that she has resures me that she has resures me that she has resured by, but since using this attack since early spring, its dwith its usual terrible theses and clearness, of the third the transfer of the transfer o And peace on earth to men bel Who walk the way that He doth show!"

The morning broke in roses red, Through Bethlehem the news'

'A Child was born to us this night A King of everlasting might! But Mary folded to her breast Her little Dove, as in its nest; And Joseph in enraptured mood Saw visions of a Crown and Rood

-Raphael, in the Young Catholic

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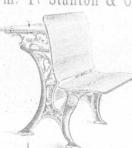
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