

## LITTLE WOLFF'S WOODEN SHOES.

*A Christmas Story for the children.*

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Once upon a time,—such a long time ago that everyone has forgotten the date,—in a village in the north of Europe—the name of which is so difficult to pronounce that nobody remembers it—there was a little boy, seven years of age, named Wolff.

He was an orphan, his father and mother both were dead, and he lived with an old aunt, a hard-natured, avaricious person, who never embraced her nephew, except on New Year's Day, and who sighed with regret each time that she gave him a bowl of soup.

But the good child was naturally so good hearted that he loved the old lady all the same, although he had a great fear of her and could not, without trembling, look at the big wart on the end of her nose, ornamented with four grey hairs.

Now, it was known to all the village that this old lady owned a fine house upon the street, and possessed an old woollen stocking full of gold. Therefore, she dared not send her nephew to the poor-school, but resorted to such meanness to obtain a reduction of the fees to the Country-School-Master, whose school little Wolff attended, that this unworthy pedagogue, ashamed of a pupil who paid so little and was so badly clothed, frequently punished the poor child, very unjustly made him wear the dunce's cap and placard upon his back, and even excited his school-fellows to torment him; for the other boys were all of them sons of well-off citizens, and took delight in making a laughing-stock of the poor little orphan. This poor unfortunate child was thoroughly unhappy and was wont to hide in the corners to weep over his lonely, sad lot. However the joyous Christmas time was near at hand.

On Christmas Eve, the Schoolmaster was to conduct all his pupils to Midnight Mass and then take them to their homes. Now, as the winter of that year was unusually severe, and, for several days previous to Christmas, a great quantity of snow had fallen, the scholars arrived well-wrapped up and muffled in fur-lined overcoats, their fur caps pulled down over their ears, warm gloves and