[The following is a copy of a little poem by the late Eugene Field. It makes a pretty recitative peace for children and should be committed to memory by each of the little ones, in the home or school.]

The little toy dog is covered with dust,
But sturdy and stanch he stands;
And the little toy soldier is red with rust,
And his musket molds in his hands.
Time was when the little toy dog was new,
And the soldier was passing fair.
And that was the time when our Little Boy
Blue
Kissed them and put them there.

"Now don't you go 'till I come," he said,
"And don't you make any noise."
So toddling off to his trundle bed,
He dreamt of the pretty toys,
And as he was dreaming, an angel song
Awakened our Little Boy Blue.
Oh! the years are many, the years are long,
But the little toy friends are true.

Aye! faithful to Little Boy Blue they stand Each in the same old place,
Awaiting the touch of a little hand,
The smile of a little face.
And they wonder, as waiting these long years through,
In the dust of that little chair,
What has become of our Little Boy Blue,
Since he kissed them and put them there.

### LEGENDS AND STORIES OF THE HOLY CHILD JESUS.

Ireland.

"THE POOREST OF THEM ALL." But they made answer to Him, "Nay"— They were lords' and ladies' sons; And He, the poorest of them all, Was born in an ox's stall.

-Old carol. What a grumpy old woman was Nanny Fox! How she used to storm at her little grandson Charlie; and when she was not crippled and helpless with rheumatism, how she used to beat him too! Even the rough crew of Tile Street, Dublin, where Nanny lived, cried shame on her for her ill

use of little Charlie. Not that Charlie ever complained, or made a fuss about any of his trials He was a plucky little chap, and his natural courage was strengthened by the grace of God given him in the sacraments and by prayer. "When Jesus is present, all is well, and noth ing seems difficult: most lich is he who is dear to Jesus"—that is what Charlie felt in his heart of hearts, though I don't think he could have told it in such a beautiful way.

Charlie's father, old Nanny's son, had married when he was quiet young. His wife had died when Charlie was born: she had been weak and ailing for some time, and her husband had not money enough to buy her food and nourishing things to For he had no trade keep her alive. the little money he carned was for selling white mice and rats, of which he had always a great number in cages at home-in the one room in which they lived. Perhaps living in the stifling atmosphere with so many an imals helped to kill the mother, as it certainly did Charlie's father, who, stricken with a fever, for want of pure air, good nursing, medicine, and nourishment, died when Charlie was only twelve years old.

He had been good to his boy while he lived, for he had never forsaken his religious duties ; and, when dying, he made Charlie promise faithfully to go regularly to confession and Commun ion, never to miss Mass on Sundays of days of obligation, and to be very de vout to our Blessed Lady. Charlie had promised, and in spite of temptations and difficulties had kept his promise manfully ; for our dear Mother up olds amid all trials and obstacles those who ask her for her help, and do not turn aside when it comes

Nanny was a wicked old woman. She had drowned all the whispers of her conscience in gio, long ago; and if at times loud warnings would make themselves heard, she hugged the devil closer to her heart, till at last she heard no voice, obeyed no dictates, but his. Charlie took care of the mice, and went about the streets with them trying to sell them. It was not such a poor busi ness, after all. Many children liked to watch the little pets running up lad ders, playing hide and seek, and doing the other pretty tricks that Charlie taught them; and they generally begged pennies from their nurses or parents to give to Charlie, who would have got on very well as far as money was concerned if it had not been for his grandmother. But old Nanny took all his money from him at the end of the day, and spent most of it for gin.

Charlie could have kept it from her had he chosen, for, of course he need not have told her how much money he had taken during the day; but he had promised his father to be good to herhis father had not foreseen the result and he could never tell a lie, or deceive the least little bit in the world, not even though his grandmother took the money for gin, and left him half starved and in rags. Drink is so sel fish, so unkind; it uproots the feelings that are deepest-rooted by God in our hearts-the longing for Him and the love of our own relations.

When Nanny was ill, Charlie was as gentle and forbearing with her as a Sister of Charity. Not that he was perfect. Now and then, when she sent nim to the public house at the end of the street to spend some of his hard. won coppers on gin, Charlie would stand in the street outside the door of stamp his foot, and say dreadful words, in his rage that such things should be.

Now and then, too, he would watch some well-dressed boy of his own age. There was one in particular he often or companions, chatting gayly, and going in and out of toy, sweet, or book of such parents. There was also a shops; and dark, rebellious thoughts little boy about thirteen years old, cert in the school. He enjoyed the would come into the poor boy's heart, though he looked much younger, first part very much. He always

for making him poor.

One winter in particular, old Nanny was very trying. She began by taking all the money she could get for gin, and often Charlie had not enough for good. It was no unusual thing for to have only a hunch of dry bread for his dinner, and neither breakfast nor supper. He was more than usually cheerful and patient, however, for he was preparing for confirmation: and Father Southwell, who was instructing him, guessing at many things in Charlie's life that the boy kept secret, took advantage of the time, not only to fit his instructions with the boy daily need, but also to keep him back sometimes when the rest of the class was dismissed, to give him a few kind, encouraging words, to help him on his

You who are surrounded by loving friends and relatives little know the worth of kind words of sympathy to a soul that is in its daily struggle alone

but for unseen help.
One day Charlie was coming home, after a long tramp; it was so cold and snowy that few people had ventured out, and Charlie had not liked to disturb the little mice, in their warm nest of hay, to make them perform. He met a funny little old gentleman in Tile street-a most unusual place to meet anyone in clean, respectable

clothes.
"Ah! you're the white-mice boy?"

he said, stopping Charlie.
"Yes, sir," answered Charlie, who
remembered to have seen the old gentle
man in church and in a house at the other end of the town, where the rich people lived.
"Well, and where do you live, and

where are your father and mother?" Charlie thought the old gentleman very inquisitive, but being a very modest, courteous boy, he answered quietly

"I live at No. 17, sir; and my father and mother are dead."
"Do you live alone?" asked the old

gentleman. "No, sir; I live with my grand mother.

"What's her name?" was the next question. "Nanny Fox," answered Charlie,

more and more astonished, and truth to tell, a little annoyed at being catechised so abruptly. "And how much do you make a

day?"
"Sometimes ninepence or a shilling:
"Sometimes I never more than that. Sometimes I don't sell anything or take any cop-

pers all day."
"You'll never make your fortune a that rate," said the old gentleman. 'And how much do you give to your grandmother?"

"All I get," Charlie answered sharp-

ly, for he was getting very angry a having his affairs pried into. Stuff and nonsense! Don't

tell lies, boy," said the old gentleman tartly. Very well, sir. Why did you ask me all those questions, which are no

business of yours, if you did not intend to believe me? The old gentleman was more pleased with Charlie's sudden blaze of than he cared to show. He chuckled away in his white silk handkerchief

hat was muffled all about his throat and ears, but he only said : "Here's sixpence for you, boy."

"I don't want your sixpence," answered Charlie. "Why won't you take it? You take money from other people."

That's for my white mice, or for making them act," said the boy. "If I let you pay me for answering your question, you might come and ask some more to morrow, and I won't answer them."

Charlie was very angry. He hated the old man and would have gone home penniless rather than take his

"Very well," said the old gentleman. and went on his way. If Charlie had looked round, he would have seen the old man standing still in the middle of the pavement to look after him; and if he had followed him, he would have heard him talking to himself in this

"Very fine lad; I quite believe all Father Southwell tells me about him; a great deal more there is, too, as have learned from the neighbors more, too, if one only knew it. Dreadful old woman!" he added, waving his stick fiercely in the air. The dreadful old woman was Charlie's grandmother. He had been asking questions of others n Tile Street that afternoon, and had earned a great deal about Charlie that had convinced him of the justice of the good opinion he had formed of the boy from seeing him in church.

We will leave Charlie, having seen him met at the door by Nanny and beaten with her crutch for having brought home so little money, shiver ing and sobbing in the miserable attic that he called home (for even he broke down sometimes), and follow the old gentleman home. He lived, as I have aid, in the better part of the town, in a large house standing back from the road, in a pretty garden. It was dark when he reached home, and the warm, well-lighted hall as he entered struck him in painful contrast to the houses in Tile street. For Sir Charles Felton was a good old man, with a large heart brimful of love for God and his neigh-"Red Lion" for a moment and bors, and his questions had not been purposeless or merely inquisitive; but

I must not tell his secret yet.

He went into the drawing-room as scon as he had taken off his things, where he found Lady Felton, a lady saw walking by the side of his mother as good and kind as you could wish, and Annie, their daughter, true child

and a half-quelled murmur against God for making him poor.

One winter in particular, old Nanny

"Late again, father," said Annie,

getting up and moving a chair near the fire for Sir Charles. "It's 6 the fire for Sir Charles. o'clock, but we waited afternoon tea for you, as it was such a wretched afternoon." Be it noted the little boy did not offer to move, not even to look up and smile a greeting to his grand-

"Where have you been?" asked Lady Felton, as she gave Sir Charles 'In Tile Street, making inquiries

about that little white-mice boy that we have all taken a fancy to.' "Oh! I am so glad, father," said nnie. "I hope he is the little saint Annie.

we think him."
"Very nearly, very nearly," answered Sir Charles. He told them all he had heard about Charlie.

"He's a namesake of yours, Charlie, he added, turning to his little grand son. But the boy gave no answering smile. He looked up for a moment from his book half-contemptuously and then went on reading.

He had only been with his grand-

father and grandmother for a month or two, since his father's regiment had been ordered out to India, and his mother had gone too. At home he had been left to himself a great deal: his mother spoiled him or took no notice of him. His father was never at home, and being supposed to be too delicate to go to school, he had had a private tutor, who came only three hours in the morning. Charlie had been left a great deal servants, who had filled his head with pride and nonsense. quence of all this was that he was a very disagreeable, overbearing little boy, and considered it an insult to his dignity to have a poor street boy spoken of as his namesake

His grandfather noticed his disdain ful manner, and, being very particular about respectful behavior in children, ordered him out of the room.

'That boy is perfectly unbearable, with his airs and graces," he said He is so rude and unmannerly, too. "Yes, it's a great pity," said Lady

"The only grandson, too, and alway the eldest. But I think we shall be able to do something with him, and he will get a lot of it knecked out of him "What have you been doing al

day?" asked Sir Charles of his daugh-

"I have been out with coal tickets this morning. We went for a drive in the afternoon, and since then I have been practising for the concert in the school-room to-morrow."

Soon it was time to dress for dinner,

so they had no further talk about either of the Charlies, though they were none the less the subject of much thought. Sir Charles could not help contrasting their behavior to their grandparents.
"And the difference between them

he said in a loud voice in the middle of dinner, to everybody's surprise. Difference between what?" asked

Annie, laughing.
"Your mother and that poor boy's grandmother," he answered warmly.
"And to think —" but suddenly remembering the servants, he relaped into silent thought.

The next day the ground was covered with snow. Charlie, our first friend, started out with his mice, for it was a bright, clear day, and he thought he would be sure to get some oppers, for many people would be about shopping now, it was so near

When he came to the upper part of the town, which was more like country than town, with its detached houses in their large gardens and wide roads with avenues of trees, he saw a lot of boys making a snow man. When they had finished it, they began to shy snowballs at the pipe they had stuck ir

Charlie, unthinking, and with boy's love of fun, made up a snowball and threw it. It just struck the barrel of the pipe and knocked it out of the snow man's mouth.

"Bravo!" cried most of the boys, in admiration of the good aim. But one of them came up to him and said haughtily, "Go away! What right have you to shy at our snow man, you lirty little cad?"

Not a blow with Nanny's crutch, or cold night on the bare floor, would have made the poor boy wince with pain, or the tears gather in his eyes. as did these cruel words uttered by Charlie Felton. Little did the latter know his grandfather was within sight and earshot.

"Shame!" cried the other boys, and one of them ran after Charlie Fox and asked him to come back and share in the game. But he was too deeply wounded, and he ran off. Just as h was turning a corner of the road he met the little old gentleman of the night before.

"Ah! my boy, we have met again I wanted to see you. The day after to morrow's Christmas Day, and you and I will forget that we misunderstood each other last night, and you will come to wish me 'a merry Christmas after High Mass. I live at Felton House, but in case I miss you after church or you forget, I have written it down on this piece of paper. Giving Charlie the piece of paper, he

Charlie Felton came in to luncheon glowing with health and fun ; he was rather surprised at his grandfather's dry, short answers to ' But he is such a queer old stick," he

said to himself.

imagined himself of much importance when he went out with his grand-father, as every one made so much of Sir Charles, for all loved and honored the good old man.

In the second part of the pragramme was a pretty old Christmas carol sung by four of the school children, each taking a different part. It is an old English one, not so well known as many others, though beautiful in the lesson it teaches.

Charlie could not make out why his grandfather fixed his eyes on him with such a meaning look. I will give some of the verses here, and you wil discover, as Charlie did, at the third verse what Sir Charles meant by it. As it fell out one May morning,

On one bright holiday,
Sweet Jesus asked of His dear Mother
If He might go and play,
To play, to play, sweet Jesus shall go,
And to play now get you gone;
And let me hear of no complaint
At night when you come home.

Sweet Jesus went down to yonder town, As far as the Holy Well, And there did see as fine children As any tongue can tell. He said: "God bless you every one, And Christ your portion be. Little children, shall I play with you? And you shall play with Me."

But they made answer to Him, "Nay."— They were lords' and ladies' sons; And He, the poorest of them all, Was born in an ox's stall. Sweet Jesus turned Him about, And He neither laughed nor smiled, But tears came trickling from His eyes Like water from the skies.

Charlie grew redder and more un comfortable every moment under his grandfather's gaze. He guessed now that Sir Charles had seen his unkindness to the little white-mice boy in the morning.

And poor Charlie, who was there owing to the kind forethought of Father Southwell, his only friend, who gave him any little treat he could, rejoiced in thinking that at least in one point he resembled our most sweet Lord, who, with His dear Mother, suffered such poverty and hardship and contempt for our sake.

Nothing more was said by Sir charles, but on Christmas morning Charles, but on Christmas morning after High Mass, when Charlie Fox came to Felton House, his little namesake received him with kind words and fraukly-spoken regret for his crue speech about the snow man, and offered to give all his Christmas presents to nake atonement.

He was as active as his grandfather ever after in trying to be kind to the poor, especially to Charlie Fox, who was given regular work in the garder by Sir Charles; and the boys became such friends that when they were grow up and Er Charles and his son dead and little harne succeeded to the title and estates, his namesake was made his agent-nay, more, his confidential and honored friend.

Dear children, the winter is as cold now as then; the poor suffer in as great reality; all around us are the poor, the sick and the sad. If we cannot give alms, if we cannot go on errands of mercy and charity, we can at least speak words of brotherly love and comfort. We can love all, as we would wish to be loved ourselves. Is it much to ask of us one little encour aging sentence to some one weary at heart, one little act of self-denial help the need; ? Much? No, nothing. Is anything too great a sacrifice for the love of our most sweet Lord? We can never, never love Him enough, never do anything to show the millionth part of our gratitude to Him. And let us not forget our dearest help us give ourselves and all we have in the best and wisest way to sweet Jesus for His Christmas gift. We will offer our gifts through her, for then we know they will be accepted; for her Son will welcome all that comes through her hands, and we shall be safe in His keeping now and ever

TO BE CONTINUED. The Children's Enemy.

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