

THE CHESTNUT.

HOW dear to the heart are the jokes of our childhood,
When sad recollection presents them to view!

The musty old jokes that we learned in the cradle,

And every grim joke, that our infancy knew;
The family jokes and the jokes in the paper,

The jokes, that the men at the shop used to tell,

The almanac jokes, and the jokes of the circus,
And all the jokes that we all knew so well.

Those hoary old chestnuts—those grizzly old chestnuts—

Those moss-covered chestnuts that people still tell

There's that joke on the feet of the girls of Glasgow;

And those multiform jokes on the mother-in-law.

There's the joke prehistoric and antediluvian.

On the spuds that delight the Hibernian maw,
There's the joke on the man that calls up for the keyhole;

The joke on the plumber's unlimited cash;

The annual joke on the coy Easter bonnet;

The joke pre-primeval on boarding house hash.

Those moldy old chestnuts—those worm-eaten chestnuts—

That best are described by a vigorous—

with the others as I always do."

She was wrapped up in her children, this pale faced delicate lady, and Charlie's looking ill was already beginning to trouble her.

"Well, perhaps, dear, if I tie a handkerchief round your throat and you walk quickly you will take no harm."

It was done, and the three boys clattered down the steps together bound for the church they always attended. Somehow Charlie felt as he walked along in the misty, oppressive morning, he could not run or talk like his two brothers.

His legs felt heavy, now he was out in the open, and his throat felt full and hot; his head, too, ached ever so little, but he pulled himself together. Mother looked so sad when he was ill, he would not tell her, and so he went on his way to church.

Mass began; he felt better now. The solo boy's voice was never so beautiful or so clear, as when he began the first notes of the "Kyrie Eleison." Charlie listened attentively, his dark eyes wide open and his little nervous face shone with delight, as the lovely music filled the church.

The other two boys read their prayer books, and Charlie fancied they paid far more attention to Mass than he did. But his head was so heavy and his throat so dry, reading made his eyes tired—he would just sit and look at the high altar. Jesus would know, he thought, how ill he felt and would help him.

A new statue of the Sacred Heart had just been placed near where he sat, a particularly

and the two boys were eager to go. Charlie, however, turned to the statue again and whispered to his brothers how beautiful he thought it was. "Such a kind face, Willie," he said.

There was an alms-box attached to the pedestal, with a little illuminated card over it, "Offerings for the Sacred Heart."

The church was not a rich one, and it had only been with great difficulty Father—had been able to pay a part of the money before bringing it into church. Charlie fumbled in his pocket for a second or two.

"I'll put my penny in the box," he said in a whisper to his brothers who were kneeling in front of the statue beside him.

"Oh, don't," said the younger of the two; "we can buy some sweets as we go home."

"No," said Charlie, "I think I would rather put it here," and so saying he dropped his penny into the oaken box.

He was very brave all day, but his mother felt uneasy; he ate little, but seemed thirsty and swallowed glass after glass of water.

Next morning he was worse, but got up and even went for a walk. By evening his cough was troublesome, and the following day the doctor was sent for.

There is no need to dwell upon the intervening days. Diphtheria had seized the poor little boy, and he rapidly sank under it. He was very weak, but patient and gentle. A priest came to see him—one known to the writer—the kindest and most affectionate man to children. And the dying boy's eyes lit up with joy whenever he came to see him.



A TRUSTED OLD MESSENGER.—Santa Claus—Wake up! THE SUNBEAMS are waiting for you.

And those other old jokes—all too many to mention,

That were heard on earth ere the coming of man;

Those toothless, decrepit and shrivelled old chestnuts—

All centuries old ere creation began.

Those jokes coetaneous with old man Methuselah,

Which Noah at night in the ark used to tell;
Those grimy old grinds that way back in Eden,

O'er Adam and Eve threw their magical spell,
Those grave scented chestnuts—those petrified chestnuts—

Those corpsy old chestnuts that people still tell.

HIS LAST PENNY.

HE was far from well, poor little boy; his cheek was flushed, his eyes bright with the glow of a coming fever and his cough was troublesome, though not as yet very bad.

It was Sunday morning, and he had never missed mass.

"Darling, you do not look well," his mother said, as when the bells began to ring Charlie came down stairs with his brothers and announced his intention of going to Mass.

"Oh, I'm all right, mother," was his cheery reply. "I don't like to miss Mass; let me go

beautiful one, and as Charlie sat quietly, while the "Gloria in Excelsis" was being sung, his eyes wandered round to the plaintive face of the statue.

Our Lord's pitying, tender eyes seemed fixed on him, as he pointed to his heart with one hand and the other seemed to bless him. The soprano boy's voice was flooding the church with his glorious notes, the other voices chiming in with his in the "Tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe," whereat Charlie bowed his pretty dark head reverently.

"Do the angels really sing as sweetly," he murmured to himself.

But the service was long, the sermon had yet to come. Charlie felt tired and drowsy and to the consternation and awe of his two brothers, for they sat very close to the pulpit, he dropped off asleep.

Then, if one had been by him, could the mischief that was at work in that frail little body have been seen.

The flushed cheeks, heavy eyelids, and parched lips told a tale of some danger, but he only looked prettier, his dark curly hair dropped on his forehead and encircled it like a dusky halo, and his dark eyelashes rested on his crimson cheeks like a soft fringe.

The "Credo," however, woke him; he straightened himself and stood up manfully, and never again during the rest of Mass had another distraction.

The congregation one by one left the church

His mother told me, with pale, calm face—she was dazed with grief, but appeared to be quiet and resigned—of her boy's last hours. The father was hourly expected from India, only to arrive to find his boy lying in his little coffin.

The "Kyrie Eleison" next Sunday morning was sung as beautifully as it was a week ago, but the tired little boy is not in his accustomed seat; he is listening to the same words perhaps, but sung by the white-robed choir of heaven, where little boys and other little ones are garnered and where "The little ones always behold the face of their Father in heaven.—Chimes.

Willie S., Port Henry, N.Y., has a mortgage on boy's first prize. He is a clever little canvasser. Let us hear from you soon again.

The disciples from the moment of their call to follow Jesus, learned to know, reverence and love His mother. She was the mother of their Master—of Him Who had spoken to them as never had any man spoken before. His words penetrated and fascinated their hearts with a thrill of awe and love such as no human voice had ever caused till then. He had manifested in their presence alone an honour to His mother such as He showed to no other.

Young Charley McK., Cole des Neiges, is working hard for the time piece. Line your pockets, Charley, the watch is a heavy one.