

found it true too."

Then Mrs. Villiers and Christie took their leave; but, as they were going down the steep staircase, Christie said, "Have you time to call on Mrs. White for a few minutes, ma'am? She would be so pleased to see you, and I don't think she will live very long."

TO BE CONTINUED.

JACK'S CHRISTMAS ANGEL.

BY ADA STEWART SHELTON.

Oh! 'twas a bitter Christmas Eve,
The snow piled everywhere,
But little Jack he trudges home
With bright and cheery air;
His boot-black box beneath his arm,
His clothes so worn and thin,
And such a ragged little coat
That buttons 'neat his chin.

While on each tired foot he wears
A heavy, clumsy shoe,
With here and there an open place
That lets the white snow through.
So much too big, and what is worse,
So very much too old,
Poor little Jack! he wonders why
His toes are always cold!

Homeward he goes; up, up, he climbs
The steep, steep stair that winds
Till in their one poor little room
His sweet sick mother finds.
Ah! how she smiles at sight of Jack,
Her eyes, they fill with tears,
So young to work, that little lad,
For Jack is but six years.

"Mother!" he cries, "Oh! did you know."

That this is Christmas Eve,
And do you think there's any chance
That Santa Claus would leave
Something for us?" the pitying tears
Ran down the mother's face,
"Only a Christmas angel, Jack,
Could ever find this place."

"I know it is the Christmas Eve,
My blessed little boy,
Oh! if I could but only bring
To you some Christmas joy.
We've only got each other, Jack,"—
She strains him to her heart,—
"So we must glad and thankful be
That we're not far apart."

The night came down and sweet and clear
Rang out the Christmas bells,
The story of The Holy Child
Once more again she tells,
And how the radiant angels sang,
And how they still are near
To comfort, bless, protect and guide
All those who need them here.

The chimes they ceased, the stars shone
out,
The weary mother slept,
Then close to where the fire burned low
Dear little Jackey crept.
And on a scrap of paper there
Some straggling words he wrote,
And up, upon the door, outside,
He pins his little note:

"Oh! Christmas Angels, if you should
Be passing by this way,
Oh! won't you help us, please, so we
Can keep the Christmas Day?
We're most too poor for Santa Claus
To stop here with his pack,
But almost anything will do,
It's me that writes this, Jack."

All night he dreams of angels fair
Floating on whitest wings,
Of stars, of shepherds, and of bells,
And, oh! such lovely things!
Until the Christmas sun above bright
Within that little place,
Its straggling beams they played awhile
Across Jack's sleepy face.

Then up he gets, brave little heart,
To work he must away,
For boot blacks must be up and off
Even on Christmas Day.
He opens wide the door, and there
Outside upon the floor
A Christmas basket filled so full!
So full 'twas running o'er,

With every sort and kind of thing
From greatest to the least,
All that a heart could ever wish
To make a Christmas feast;
Tied to the handle, yes, tied on,
A warm, warm suit of clothes,
And close beside them brand new shoes,
No holes there at those toes!

With lots of other things that help
To keep out winter's cold,
And tucked beneath the turkey's wing
A tiny piece of gold.
"Oh, Jack! oh, Jack!" the mother
cries,
"Where did they come from? Where?
This morning, once, I thought I heard
A step upon the stair."

The shining eyes of little Jack
Looked in the mother's face,
Such happy, beaming eyes that they
Made bright that dreary place.
His little heart was beating fast,
His voice could scarce be heard,
"Why mother, mother, don't you know?
I sent the angels word!"



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