

**ANGELS' WORK,
OR, THE CHORISTERS
OF ST. MARK'S**

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Angels' Work, Or, The Choristers of St. Mark's by Various

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Angels' Work;

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THE CHORISTERS OF ST. MARK'S.

IT was Holy Innocents' Day, in the year of grace 1846, when two boys from St. Mark's Choral School were playing on the high-road of one of the towns on the Oxford road. The day was clear and bright; the sun shone on the hoar-frost, and glistened in the drops of rain, which melted and hung on the trees, moistening the passer-by with a gentle shower; the robin, sweet bird, sang his plaintive note, a dirge over the fast-closing year, so full of melody, that we have half uttered a wish to hear him when our own life was closing. The loud

ringing laugh of the boys, as they ran and gambolled on the road, was quite a contrast to the unbroken quiet of the country:—they were bright as the day, for they knew little of the troubles of life; when men talked about them, they wondered if they were like school-troubles,—something like them, only harder to bear patiently; but the boys were happy because it was a holiday. All-Saints days are holidays at St. Mark's school; and happy days, because they begin them with prayer and praise to God.

While the lads were resting on a stile, after a long race, an old man passed them on his way to a neighboring village where he had work. He bent under the weight of a heavy basket of tools; and as he heard the merry voices of the boys, he envied them their happy enjoyment of the day. Poor man! he knew nothing of Saints' days. He had but one thought—how to make money; and he found many disappointments in his desire of gain. Money does take to itself wings and fly away, unless it is well gotten.

"A nice idle life, boys!" said the old man; "what do you do?"

"Angels' work, sir," said Charles Simmons,

the eldest of the two boys, "and George Slater helps me."

"Angels' work! angels' work!" said the old man; "I never heard of that work before. I hope you do it as angels do."

"I hope so," said Charles; and the old man went on his way. The boys looked along the road after him.

Charles said to George, "I'll offer to carry his tools; he is an old man. Master, master!" he cried out. The old man stopped. "Shall we carry your tools?" They ran up to him before he could answer them.

"Yes, and welcome," said he; "for I am very tired, and not so young as I once was." The old man lifted the basket from his shoulders. "There," said he, drawing a long breath, "there it is, and it is a heavy one, I tell you." He stood before them, a fine gray-headed old man. "Now, lads," he said, "let me share the work between you. One must take one handle of the basket, and one the other. It will ride light between two. Thank you, boys."

When they were started, the old man said, "It's harder work than angels do, boys, isn't it?"

"No, master," answered Charles; "nothing

is so hard in this world as angels' work; for they who do it must live holily, or perish everlastingly."

"You are a strange boy," said the old man.

"What do you know about angels' work?"

"What my Bible, read in the church, and taught in the school, teaches me," said Charles.

"What is that, lads?"

"Singing praises to God, that is angels' work," said Charles. "Have you never read the Revelation of St. John the Divine?"

"It may be that I have; but I do not remember much about angels' work."

"St. John heard the voice of many angels round about the throne of God, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, who said with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!' and every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, he heard, saying, 'Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.'"

"But that was in heaven. What have boys like you to do with heaven?"

"A great deal, I hope, master. We do heavenly work on earth: it is true that we do angels' work."

"And who pays you, then?" said the old man; "what wages do you get? I should very well like the work, if it is easy, and good pay."

"We have food and clothing, and therewith, our master says, we ought to be content. He reads to us of our duties from the Holy Book, and tells us that God feeds the young ravens which call upon him."

"There is no pay for angels' work—no money at all!—that will not suit me."

"Yes, we shall have treasures in heaven, if we do our work well; treasures, where neither rust nor moth doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal."

"Have you any of those treasures, or do you know where I can get them, for I very often lose my money? and are they real treasures that I can see, and clothes that I can wear, clothes that the moth will not eat? Look how the moth has eaten this jacket. I laid it up for many years, and I had saved a good bit of