

kard of ale, and a pipe lying before him, on it. The floor had an oil-cloth on it."

"On which we nearly tumbled down," put in Connie.

"And to add to the dreary look of everything there were some large, cold looking shells put in a stiff row along the mantel-piece. Well, we shook hands with Mr. Baldwin, and then Connie said, 'How cold it is to-day,' and he said gruffly, 'Come nearer the fire then.' And then she laughed and said, 'Oh, I'm not cold, but Ernest and I have been visiting some of the poor people who have got no fires,' and then the old man frowned, and I thought he'd like it better if we dashed into it right away, so I said, 'We've come to ask you for some money to make them warmer, Mr. Baldwin, because it's Christmas time,' and directly, I had said it, he buttoned his coat across, as much as to say, 'There now, my pockets are safe,' but all he really said was, 'Well, and what's Christmas to me?' And so I said,