THE CHARITY GIRL

BY EDDIE A. ROWLANDS

Chapter 1

Mrs. Thorpe's" hair was a striking feature. It was a deep brown color, almost black, with streaks of gray, and it reached down to her waist. She was a short, stout figure, with a round face and a pleasant smile. Her eyes were kind and gentle, and her manner was always courteous and considerate.

"You are a kind and good woman," said Jack, as he watched her. "I wish I could be like you." Mrs. Thorpe smiled, and said, "Well, Jack, you can be like me if you want to." Jack's face lighted up with a smile of delight, and he said, "I want to be like you, Mrs. Thorpe." She patted his head, and said, "Now, Jack, you must work hard and be good, and you will be like me." Jack nodded, and said, "Yes, Mrs. Thorpe, I will work hard and be good." Mrs. Thorpe's kind words and gentle manner were a comfort and a joy to Jack, and he went home feeling happy and contented.

Chapter 2

Jack opened the door of his little room, and entered. His face was pale, his eyes were red and sore, and his hands were trembly. He sat down on the edge of the bed, and said, "What have I done, Mrs. Thorpe?" Mrs. Thorpe came to him, and said, "What have you done, Jack? What is the matter?" Jack sobbed, and said, "I have been bad, Mrs. Thorpe." Mrs. Thorpe put her arm around him, and said, "Don't cry, Jack, don't cry. It's all right, Jack, it's all right." Jack went to sleep, and Mrs. Thorpe sat beside him, watching over him as he slept.

Chapter 3

Jack awakened the next morning, feeling better and stronger. He went down to breakfast, and Mrs. Thorpe said, "Jack, you must be good and work hard, and you will be like me." Jack nodded, and said, "Yes, Mrs. Thorpe, I will be good and work hard." Mrs. Thorpe's kind words and gentle manner were a comfort and a joy to Jack, and he went home feeling happy and contented.