

LITTLE FOLKS

A Pair of Doll's Shoes.

(By L. A. Scott, in 'Congregation-alist'.)

Charlie ran into the house, upstairs, and then down to the kitchen with his usual cry: 'Where is my ball? Anybody seen my ball?'

When he reached the kitchen he stopped in the middle of the floor, for there was Dorothy, crying as if her heart would break. One small foot was lifted to a chair, and her mother was bathing the ankle with hot water and something which smelled like a drug store.

'What's the trouble? Toe-ache?'

'No, dear,' his mother answered, 'Dorothy has sprained her ankle.'

'O!' Charlie came nearer and saw how it was swollen.

'It's too—too bad!' sobbed Dorothy. 'I don't mind the ache so

them out on the square to take a car.'

Charlie's face had flushed to the roots of his hair. 'Me? Take Dorry's doll? Why, Ma Allen, what do you think I'm made of?'

'Oh, sugar and spice and all that's nice.'

Dorothy glanced up hopefully.

'Don't you remember, Charlie Allen, how I stayed in and read to you when you had the measles?'

'Huh! that wasn't hard; but—a boy with a doll baby! None of the other fellers would. The Stars wouldn't have me for captain another minute.'

'I'm sorry if the Stars have given up doing kind things,' said Mrs. Allen.

'O mother!' you don't understand.'

Charlie picked up his ball from

a laughing, chattering crowd of little girls, each with a doll tenderly clasped in her arms.

'Where's Dorry?' they inquired, anxiously, as he swung himself to a seat.

'Spraint her ankle this morning.'

'Isn't that too bad!' exclaimed Mamie Brent, Dorry's best friend. 'Now she can't have any'—

Katie Wells nudged Mamie and looked significantly at Charlie's package. 'Oh?' Mamie understood. Then Katie whispered to the next little girl, and very soon a dozen pairs of bright eyes were looking his way and such a giggling and shrugging of small shoulders followed as is seldom seen in an electric car.

'Why don't you take her out of the paper?' Mamie whispered, kindly. 'You're holding her by the feet, and that isn't the right way.'

'Don't you think you know a lot?' Charlie returned, his face growing very red. Then he turned quite away and watched the landscape.

As they left the car, Charlie was dismayed by the crowd. There were nurse girls with babies and dolls, mothers leading tiny tots and carrying dolls, rich little mothers with dainty doll babies and poor little mothers with the merest wrecks, whose pudgy feet no shoes would ever fit—all eager to share in the free distribution. As the crowd approached the door they were obliged to form in line, but Charlie had no idea of being among the last. 'It'll be time for the game before I get 'round if I do,' he said to himself, working his way toward the door, holding his 'chicken' carefully out of harm's way. Without pushing or jostling he held every inch he gained.

'Oh, there's a boy!' he heard a tall girl exclaim, 'and boys aren't invited.'

'No, indeed!' her companion said.

'I guess Mr. Ball and Bailey will put him out in a hurry.'

Just in front of these girls was a little hunchback with a scrap of a rag baby, and they looked at her scornfully.

'You'll never get shoes to fit that thing, so you better go home,' said one. 'You're right in our way too,' added the other, and then



much, but—I can't—go—for my—doll's shoes,' and she covered her eyes again with her tear-soaked handkerchief.

'Doll's shoes? Who cares?' Charlie inquired.

'I do. They're given away for nothing at Ball and Bailey's—and all the girls'—

'Huh! Ball an' Bailey wouldn't do it, would they, Ma?'

'Yes, the "Times" said so yesterday. 'It's to advertise Glossman's shoe polish. Yes, all the little girls within the city limits are invited to bring their dolls and have them fitted. Dorry's Wilhelmina has never had a pair of nice shoes.'

'Never!' wailed the little mother.

'I think it would be very nice if you, Charlie, would take the doll up. Dorry's friends have their own dolls, and they expect her to join

behind the door and went out. He stood in the yard tossing it up and catching it in an aimless fashion. Two little girls with dolls hurried by. He looked after them, then turned and went in scowling and kicking the pebbles from the path.

'Look here,' he said, throwing down his ball with unnecessary force, 'I'll have to jump into my clothes if I go, an', Ma, you'll have to wrap up that doll baby so it'll look like a chicken 'r somethin'.'

When Charlie came down, the lovely Wilhelmina Holland was tied up like a mummy, and he caught it and dashed away, Dorry sending after him a tremulous, 'Be careful of her, won't you?'

Longwood was a suburb of S—, and two miles from Ball and Bailey's. When Charlie reached the square he found the 'half-past car' ready to start, and well filled with