

### A SHOCKING LITTLE BEGGAR.

Madge Howe was skipping gaily down the street, clad in her lovely new cardinal cloak and jaunty plumed hat (which were things to have made any little girl's heart glad), when suddenly, looking over her shoulder, she spied a weazen-faced lad standing upon the corner.

"O, what a shocking little beggar!" she exclaimed, under her breath, catching a glimpse of his thin and bepatched coat wildly waving in the piercing wind.

Madge herself did not notice the wind. Indeed, no one would have supposed that there was the least possibility of her feeling it. Her hands were snugly tucked into a cozy muff, and the "sweetest little boa, just to match," encircled her neck; and her feet were clad in a pair of such regularly splendid walking boots that they defied the fiercest blasts that old Boreas could send down. Her cheeks glowed like two great, rosy apples, and short brown curls added a genial warmth to her whole appearance.

The car which she had designed taking was just vanishing around the corner as she approached, and Madge was obliged to await the arrival of another. As she waited, she observed that the boy's hands were bare and blue, and one of his old shoes had a yawning aperture in the toe. The coat and the too brief trousers were covered with patches of every size and color. Indeed, it would have been difficult to ascertain what the original material really was.

"My gracious! I'm sure I should freeze to death tricked out like that!" ejaculated Madge to herself. "And I'm sure I wouldn't be seen on the street in such an outrageous rig. I wonder that boy's mother don't look after him!" Stepping about quite briskly--"just to keep up circulation"--she made two further observations, viz., that the lad's face was exceedingly thin and white; and that, during the six or eight minutes while she waited, no one had re-

sponded to his untiring invitation of "A shine, mister? Have a shine?"

"Goody! There's the car!" exclaimed the little lady, and away she flew.

"The shocking little beggar" had not been blind to the pretty picture just departed, and he, too, had been making mental comments. They were, however, quite the opposite from Madge's, being simply of admiration, mingled with a regret that the little sister at his meagre home might not be warmly and beautifully clad.

Poor little fellow! His own needs were quite out of the question. Perhaps it had not occurred to him that he really suffered, for Tommy McKee had "made his own living almost ever since he was a baby."

He blew on his fingers to keep them warm, and waited patiently for a customer. It grew late--the gas was being lighted--but as yet none had applied.

It was Saturday. Everybody seemed in unwonted haste, and it was beginning to sleet. Just a little, to be sure, but the tiny icy pebbles descended with such force that they pierced Tommy's thin face and hands.

"A shine, mister? A shine?" he kept calling out; but no one heeded.

At length another car stopped, and a host of people rushed out. The last passenger was a little girl in a cardinal cloak.

"Well, it means no supper for poor Bessie, that's all," soliloquised Tommy, with sinking heart. "Don't mind for myself, I'm getting used to it. But Bess"--he stopped short. The little girl in the cardinal cloak had slipped and fallen; at least Tommy thought so. But, in truth, as she stepped from the car and started to cross the track, one of the tiny boots had caught, somehow, in the rails, and, losing her equilibrium, Madge had fallen in an ignominious heap. In vain she tried to extricate the unfortunate boot. She was a brave little girl, and did not cry out; but no one seemed to notice her. The host of passengers had hurried on; and, O! another car was approaching? What should she do? She saw it be-