

# LITTLE FOLKS

## Billy, by Himself.

(By S. E. Winfield, in 'The Child's Hour'.)

I am a little cocker spaniel. Do you know what a cocker spaniel is? If you ever went to a dog show, perhaps you do. I'm small and black and curly—that is, sort of curly, not tight, screwed-up curls, like those hideous French poodles; and after my mistress brushes and combs me I shine like silk. I'm a perfect picture to look at, and smart—well, I don't know of a smarter dog than I am. That doesn't sound quite right, either; it almost sounds as if I were bragging, or conceited, or other unpleasant things. But, you see, my mistress is always saying, 'Billy, you are a beauty!' Then when the

Now, when we went up to New Hampshire it was different. I hated to go because I like my own home best. I like my own cushion and blanket to sleep on, and I like my own piazza to lie on, and I simply hate the choo-choo cars. You have to sit in one spot, and you can't get drinks when you want them, and strange people pat your head, just as you are dropping off to sleep, and twaddle out, 'Isn't he a darling?' while they don't know whether I am a darling or not, except for my looks, and looks are a poor thing to judge dogs or people by.

We had a long, tiresome ride, but it was lovely when we reached there, and when I saw the fields and the woods for me to run over

tucked up on the sofa for a snooze but what I heard her 'miawing' somewhere.

She might spit all she wanted to, and I didn't care for her, but one of the kittens was too cunning to let alone. She was all yellow, both fur and eyes, and my! what a temper she had! I took to following her just to get her mad, which wasn't a bit nice of me; but it was fun, and it made her furious. She had the funniest little spit to her, and she looked such an absurd ball of fuzz when she hoisted her tail and back that I kept it up. One day when I had bothered her for quite a while she just sat down and looked at me, and didn't spit a bit. She seemed to be sizing me up, to see what I meant to do, and I just looked as friendly as I could, and she made up her mind that she wasn't afraid any more. After that we became great friends. The old cat never approved; I think she didn't trust me, but the kitten did, and we had great romps together. I didn't worry about getting fat that vacation, for I worked too hard, to keep up the sport with her.

But vacation came to an end, as vacations always do, and how could I leave the kitten? And I didn't. The kitten's mistress said it was a shame to separate us, and that my mistress could have the kitten, if she would carry her home. Then they put her in a bag, and drew the string up so that she could not wiggle out, and she looked too cute for anything, with her yellow head sticking out of the bag. She mewed some, but it was because she was scared, and not because the string hurt her.

They put me in the baggage car, because my mistress said she couldn't travel with such a menagerie. I hate the baggage car, the men are so very familiar, and they patted and smoothed me until I wished the journey was over. Then I am always afraid of a box falling on me. I know a dog who had his tail awfully jammed by a box falling on it. Of course, I haven't enough tail for a box to fall onto, but I have a back to be broken.

But we arrived home all safely,



other girls come in to call on her she will say, 'Billy was awfully cute this morning,' and the others all chorus, 'Isn't he a little dear?' 'He is too sweet for anything,' until I feel exactly as I did when I ate too many chocolate creams once. Then I think too much flattery is bad for dogs as well as children; it makes us too proud of ourselves.

There is one thing I am afraid of, and that is of growing fat. I know a pug which is a sight because he is so fat, and how he eats! Sometimes I don't eat as much as I want to, because I won't grow fat, and I don't get exercise enough. I go out to walk with my mistress, but she only potters round the town; she never goes on long walks,

and through, it almost paid for the trouble of getting there.

Then, when we went up to the house, there on the step was a fine-looking old cat and three small kittens. I do just love cats, so I made a bolt for the whole crowd, and such a time! The kittens flew for the door, and that old cat flew out like a perfect cyclone of claws and spitting and glaring eyes. I just backed against my mistress and stared at the fury, and then she bolted in at the door. Perhaps she was frightened, but she needn't be, for I never hurt a cat in my life.

Somehow, wherever I went I was always meeting that old cat. She spit at me from under chairs and behind tables, and I never