

with great elegance. To be sure, the tea-pot had lost its spout, the cream-jug its handle, the sugar-bowl its cover, and the cups and plates were all more or less cracked or nicked; but polite persons would not take notice of these trifling deficiencies, and none but polite persons were invited to this party.

On either side of the porch was a seat, and here a somewhat remarkable sight would have been revealed to any inquisitive eye peering through the aforesaid key-hole. Upon the left-hand seat lay seven dolls, upon the right-hand seat lay six; and so varied were the expressions of their countenances, owing to fractures, dirt, age, and other afflictions, that one would very naturally have thought this a doll's hospital, and these the patients waiting for their tea. This, however, would have been a sad mistake; for if the wind had lifted the coverings laid over them, it would have disclosed the fact that all were in full dress, and merely reposing before the feast should begin.

There was another interesting feature of the scene which would have puzzled any but those well acquainted with the manners and customs of dolls. A fourteenth rag baby, with a china head, hung by her neck from the rusty knocker in the middle of the door. A sprig of white and one of purple lilac nodded over her, a dress of yellow calico, richly trimmed with red-flannel scallops, shrouded her slender form, a garland of small flowers crowned her glossy curls, and a pair of blue boots touched toes in the friendliest, if not the most graceful, manner. An emotion of grief, as well as of surprise, might well have thrilled any youthful breast at such a spectacle; for why, oh! why, was this resplendent dolly