L. L. WEEDON

AUNTIE'S TEA-TRAY

Auntie dear, will you buy Molly and me a toboggan? There's such a lovely slide on Heath Hill, and Toddy Graham and the Earles have toboggans, and we want one too."

Auntie looked up from her sewing and shook her head. "No, my dears, I can't. Run out and play with your hoops instead," she said, and then she went on with her work.

Charlie was angry. "I'm ever so much bigger than Toddy Graham," he said indignantly, "and his mother lets him have a toboggan. It's a shame! But never mind, Molly; we'll go all the same. I've got an idea. You go to the hill and I'll come presently."

Molly trotted away, and in a minute or two Charlie came running towards her, carrying his auntie's best tea-tray. "I had an awful bother to get it," he said. "Jane saw me with the old one and took it away; but I remembered this one was upstairs in auntie's room, so I fetched it without anyone seeing me."

"But what's the good of a tea-tray?" asked Molly.

"Toboggan, you silly; come along," Charlie answered shortly; and in another minute the two children were spinning away down the hill.

The first journey was most successful, but on the second. Charlie forgot that a tea-tray requires careful management and good steering, and half-way down the hill he came into collision with Toddy Graham.

Over went the tray, smash came Toddy's toboggan right on the top of it, and all three' children were shot out into the snow. Toddy and Charlie picked themselves up, but Molly lay without moving.

"She's dead, Toddy Graham. O, what shall I do?" wailed poor frightened Charlie.

"You'd better fetch your aunt," suggested practical Toddy; and Charlie rushed off as fast as his fat legs could carry him.

When auntie arrived upon the scene, she found her small niece sitting up, howling vigorously, and rubbing a very big bump on her forehead. There was no great harm done—at least, as far as the children were concerned, but the best tea-tray was battered and scratched beyond recognition.

"Really, auntie did behave like a brick," said Charlie, and when they opened their money-boxes and, putting all their pennies and sixpences together, bought her a new tea-tray, she declared it was ever so much better than the one they had spoilt.

And what do you think happened when Christmas Day came? Why, auntie gave them the jolliest toboggan you ever saw, and the children found out that she had meant to do so all along, and that was why she had refused to give them one when they first asked for it. Wasn't she a nice aunt?