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**Little Wooden Shoes
A CHRISTMAS TALE**

By R. MacFADYEN
(N. C. W. C. News Service)

A little, seven-year-old orphan boy named Wolf, dwelt a long time ago in a small town in the North of Europe. He lived with an old aunt who was cruel and avaricious. Moreover, she kissed her nephew only once a year, on New Year's Day.

The little fellow was so good-natured that he loved the old woman most sincerely, although he was always afraid of her. She had a fine house with its gable to the street and a small garden in front (and she kept an old woolen stocking filled with gold), she did not dare to send her nephew to the charity school; but she nagged so much for a reduction of fees that the teacher, to whose school little Wolf went, was annoyed at having a pupil so badly clad and paying so little. The teacher's austere nature prompted him to punish the little orphan often and without cause attaching a large card to his back and placing on his head a Dunce Cap. Some of his school-fellows made little Wolf their butt and drudge.

Pushed and knocked about by everyone, this orphan boy became unhappy and when the Christmas holidays came round he hid himself wherever he could and wept bitterly. Orphan Alone III-Clad schoolmaster had to take his pupils to Midnight Mass and, afterwards, bring them back to their homes. But as the winter was extremely cold and a great deal of snow had fallen for several days, all the scholars went warmly wrapped up with fur caps pulled down over their ears, heavy woolen gloves and good strong boots with heavy soles. Alas, little Wolf was clad in his ordinary everyday garb that was not warm enough for such severe weather. And he wore only cotton socks that failed to comfort his shivering feet in the heavy wooden shoes.

His comrades passed jokes and ridiculed the orphan's attire and appearance, but little Wolf was too busy blowing into his hands, on which he had painful chilblains, to heed them. On the way to Church conversation entered round the Christmas trees that were a looked forward to eagerly. The Burgomaster's son boasted of a goose that awaited his return home. At the Alderman's house there was a fir tree from the branches of which hung toys, fruits and sweetmeats. They vied with one another at boasting. Then they spoke of the stars and the presents they expected he would put into their shoes that were carefully left at the fireside before going to bed. (Even then, hours in advance, their eyes sparkled in anticipation of their joy at perceiving, at their waking, the gaudy colored paper of the chocolate boxes, the lead soldiers arrayed in richly colored uniforms in boxes, the menageries, smelling strongly of varnished wood, and the magnificent puppets dressed in gorgeous colors and tinsel.)

Hopes Santa Remembers
As for little Wolf, he knew that his greedy aunt would send him to bed without supper, but in his child-like innocence he hoped Santa Claus would not forget him. So thinking, he placed a pair of wooden shoes among the ashes in the fireplace.

Midnight Mass concluded, the congregation dispersed to their homes and the students, going two by two behind their master, also left the church. But in the vestibule, upon a stone bench surmounted by a vaulted arch, a child was sleeping, a child clothed in a white woolen dress and barefooted, in spite of the cold. As his dress was clean and new, this child was not a mendicant. Near him on the ground lay the top in a cloth a quare, an axe, a plane and the other tools of an apprentice carpenter. Illumined by the cold, clear light of the moon and stars, his face, with closed eyes, wore an expression of divine sweetness and his long curled reddish-brown hair seemed to kindle an aureole or halo round his head. But his feet, the feet of a child blue with the cold of that severe December night, caused pity to spring up in the heart of the on-looker. The students, so well clad and shod for winter, behaved like the Levite in the parable and passed on their way with unconcern in front of the unknown child. Some even, the sons of the richest men of the town, cast upon this stranger a look in which was read all the contempt of the rich for the poor, and of the well-to-do for the unfortunate.

But, little Wolf, going out of church last, stopped, being overcome with pity at the sight of the beautiful sleeping child.

"Alas," the orphan said to himself, "it is pitiful that this poor little one goes without shoes in such terrible weather. . . . But what is still worse, he has not even this night a shoe or a wooden shoe to leave in front of him so that Santa Claus might put something into it to solace his misery."

Then, in his goodness of heart, the little orphan pulled off the wooden shoe from his right foot, placed it in front of the sleeping child, and sometimes hopping, sometimes limping and wetting the sock on his shoeless foot in the snow, he returned to his aunt's house.

Scolded by His Aunt
"Look at you, little good-for-nothing," the old aunt cried in angry tones, infuriated at her nephew who returned wanting a shoe. "What hast thou done with thy

wooden shoe, little wretch?" Little Wolf could not tell a lie, and although he shook with fear, he tried stammering, to tell his adventure. But the miserly old woman burst out laughing:

"Ah, you, my young man, pull off your shoes for beggars. So, you have an odd pair of shoes for a bare-footed child, have you. . . . That is something new, certainly. . . . Ah, well, since that is so, I am going to leave the wooden shoe that remains to thee in the fire-place, and Santa Claus will, I warrant thee, this very night put something into it to whip thee when thou wilt awaken. . . . And thou wilt, moreover, fast to-morrow on water and dry bread for a month. And we shall certainly see it, another time, thou wilt dare to give away thy shoes to the first tramp who comes."

After giving the poor little orphan a couple of cuffs on the side of the head, she made him climb up into the loft where his attic was. Forlorn and sad, the orphan went to bed and very soon fell asleep on his tear-soaked pillow.

But next morning, when the old aunt, awakened by the cold, went into her parlor she saw the large fireplace filled with shining toys, with bags of splendid bon-bons with riches of all kinds, and in front of them gifts the right foot wooden shoe, that her nephew had given to the little stranger, lay beside the left foot, wooden shoe, into which she had intended to put a bunch of switches.

Rich Children Got Shock
Little Wolf, hearing the cries of his aunt, came rushing and was simply in ecstasy before the splendid presents of Santa Claus. Loud laughter was heard outside. The old woman and her nephew ran out to see what that meant, and saw all the gossips gathered round the public fountain. What was taking place there? Something extraordinary? The children of all the rich people, those whom their parents wished to surprise with the most beautiful presents, had only found switches in their shoes.

The orphan and his old aunt dreaded lest all the riches in their fireplace should be discovered. Alas! Immediately they observed the public priest coming along, looking very agitated.

Above the bench in the church porch, where the previous night a child clad in a white dress and bare-footed, despite the severe cold, had rested his head while asleep, the priest had seen a golden halo impressed on the old stone wall.

Christmas

Holly wreaths good cheer bestowing
White-robed boxes decked with reds;
Bearded Santan, child-eyes glowing,
Trees with starlets on their heads.

Glistening pavements wet with snow-fakes
Crisp air like sweet, red wine;
Chocolate sweets and scent of plumcakes,
Crimson cards with rare design.

Stars like purest diamonds gleaming
In the deep blue sky above;
Candle light from altars streaming,
Hymns of peace, good will and love.

O'er the manger, Mary yearning
Lays her Child in lowly straw;
Christ has come, the world is turning
Bethlehemward with love and awe.
—Marjorie Taggart '33.

**Christmas Party for
Good Shepherd Nuns**

Sisters of the Good Shepherd at Holy Angels' Home, Winton Road North, will be guests of honor at a Christmas party to be given today at the home by the Good Shepherd Guild.

The Christmas party program is being arranged by Miss Dorothy Drum. Others on the party committees are Mrs. William Fennessy, Mrs. Irving Smith, Miss Lucille Garvey, Miss Helen Enright, and Miss Josephine Piraske, Mrs. John Gould, Mrs. Edward Powers, Miss Helen White, Miss Ann Mack, Mrs. A. Plehler, Mrs. M. Drum, Mrs. A. Patterson and Mrs. A. Hehr.

**Alumni Planning
Party for Dec. 28**

Arrangements have been completed for a Yuletide dance to be held in Columbus Civic Center under the auspices of the Alumni Association of St. Peter and Paul's Church, Wednesday evening, December 28.

The committee in charge is composed of Bill Crowley, chairman, assisted by Dorothy Wells, Frank Hursh, Estelle Powers, Howard Baglin, Thelma Glancy, Robert Bittner, Betty Royce, Jack Hart, Alice Nolan, Fred Merkel and Rita Burke.

WILL USE LANTERN SLIDES
Nimwegen — President Michalsen of the Labor Council at Breda has completed his plan for a series of lantern slides illustrating the great social teachings of the Encyclical "Quadragesima Anno."



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