

MR. SMITH: A DOG.



"SMITH WAS DISCLOSED TO VIEW."

HE was called Smith after an old deceased favourite (who got his name no one knows how, and came at last to a tragic end), and the "Mr." was added by certain friends of ours, who observed traits of character in him that seemed to demand an additional respect.

By courtesy he is a *dachshund*; but I am bound to confess that there is a good deal of courtesy in the appellation, for although he has large spreading feet, bandy legs, and a long body, there is obviously a good deal of terrier in his composition; and most likely it is this cross in him that gives him his remarkable astuteness and sagacity. He is black and tan, with drooping, silky ears, expressive brown eyes, and an abnormally long tail, that gives him an expression all his own.

He arrived one night in the carrier's cart, having come from Winchester, which place is some seven or eight miles away. The hamper that contained him was brought into the dining-room, and as we cut the strings an ominous growling issued forth. When the lid was raised Smith was disclosed to view, curled tight up in the straw, his eyes gleaming significantly, and his white teeth very visible whenever a hand was approached near enough to look dangerous. He was nearly a year old, and his teeth were too strong to be trifled with, so the hamper was shut down again, and consigned to the stable for the night.

The next day, by means of chicken bones and the encouraging presence of the collie dog of the establishment, Smith made friends once and for all, with a fidelity that nothing has ever shaken for a moment; and he soon began to develop traits of character that stamped him as an original.

The household consisted of his two mistresses, two maids, and a man. To his mistresses he became at once warmly attached; the man he held in the most unmitigated contempt, which contempt never dimi-

nished, and was displayed in the most ostentatious way on every occasion. As regards the maids, he made great friends with the parlour-maid from the very first, whilst it was three months before the most assiduous courting on the part of the cook won his lordship's confidence.

As for visitors, they were a sad trial to poor Smith during the first year of his life here. He grew used to them in time, and although he never condescends to notice them, or make advances, he can just tolerate their presence in the rooms. But at first they were the very bane of his life; and when he had learned by experience that we declined to dismiss them at his urgently expressed wish, he used to take himself dolefully off, and lie *perdu* till they had departed. The sight of a carriage at the gate would make him shiver with apprehension and anger; and had he had his own way, he would have flown at the calves of the groom or footman he saw advancing to the door. He hated to be noticed by strangers; and as for submitting to their caresses, to this very day he despises such familiarities, and withdraws with dignity.

When Smith arrived we had not long been settled in our country home, and our only means of locomotion was a double tricycle, upon which we scoured the country, paid our calls, and took the main part of our exercise.

The collie had always run with us, and the moment Mr. Smith beheld us mount and set off, off he scampered in hot pursuit. We did not think he would run far, as he was but small; but we little knew his mettle, or the determination of his mind. No amount of exercise seemed to tire him, and he loved his runs above everything. On one occasion, when we thought the round we meant to take would be too long for him, he was shut up at home; and when we came back the maids told us he had "cried real tears" of sorrow at being left behind. We were rather sceptical about the tears at the time, but afterwards had reason to change our opinion.

In the autumn of that year we bought a stout pony and a dog-cart, and tricycling was somewhat superseded by driving. Smith was intensely interested in Tommy the pony, used to visit him in his stable, and stand on his hind legs to kiss him; and to run with him was the very joy of his life.

Tommy could take us farther than we had been able to go before, and he went a great pace too; but that was as nothing to Smith, who galloped along manfully, and always had breath left to bark. We used to take him up for a lift at first, but, thank you, he did not at all care for that; he would watch his opportunity, and jump out, often rolling over and over on reaching the ground; but in nowise daunted, he would pick himself up, rush barking at Tommy with a sort of pæan of triumphant joy, and scamper beside him without flagging the whole of the way.

We used sometimes to drive into Winchester for shopping purposes, and then Tommy was put up at

the hotel whilst we did our business. On the first of these expeditions Smith left the yard with us, but shortly afterwards we missed him, and calling did not bring him. As, however, he was a dog of sense, and quite able to take care of himself, we did not trouble ourselves about him ; and when at length we returned



"SMITH USED TO VISIT HIM IN HIS STABLE" (p. 479).

to the yard, there was Smith sitting right under the cart, with an alert air as of one doing his duty nobly. The ostler said he had quickly returned to the hotel, picked out his own cart from a whole row of them, established himself under it, and declined to allow anybody to touch it. The man had wished to move it to another part of the yard, but he very soon found he must abandon the idea, unless he wished to make himself acquainted with Mr. Smith's teeth. As soon as we appeared, however, he felt his responsibility at an end, and rushed off to the stable to see after Tommy—seeming to know by instinct where he was—watched him brought out and put to with the greatest satisfaction, evidently superintending the whole process, as if he thought the strange ostler was not quite to be trusted without some kind of supervision. To look after cart and horse in a strange place has now become quite a habit with Smith ; and if we put up in any unknown locality, he cannot be persuaded to leave the yard for a moment. He seems to have the cares of empires upon him until he sees us fairly start again.

But Smith's cup of happiness was absolutely full when Tommy was superseded by a pair of larger horses, and we began to ride instead of driving only. To go with the saddle-horses was just the acme of bliss, for he could hunt the hedgerows and fields whilst we quietly walked ; and the breathless spurts he had to put on to keep up when we galloped seemed to fill him with the deepest joy. He would never be out-

run. Now and then we passed him when at full stretch, but if he had a mind to keep ahead, he always did, and how he does it is a puzzle to this day. The way he lays himself along the ground and *tears* is so comic that we sometimes can hardly sit our horses for laughing at him.

At first he was almost awed when the two horses went out. He could not understand what we were doing sitting on the top of them, and walking instead of trotting out of the gate. He used to back before us, staring with all his eyes, trying to take it all in, and find out what was the matter with us. But he *loved* to go with us ; and it was on one occasion, when we were trying a new horse, and Smith was tied up, that I saw him shed tears. He had a way of rushing at the horses' feet and barking with joy, which was sometimes trying to unseasoned steeds ; so when this young thing came up to be tried, he was tied up in the yard from which we started, and not allowed to come. As I mounted I heard a sort of sob, and looking round, saw poor Smith sitting on his haunches, shivering like an aspen-leaf with excitement, and with large tears dropping slowly from his eyes and rolling down his cheeks. It was a melting spectacle, and he had to be released. He seemed to understand, however, that he was not to bark at the new horse, and behaved very well.

He soon learned to know that on the days we were going to ride our habits were laid out on the beds soon after luncheon, so as to be ready for us. He used, therefore, to make expeditions into the bed-rooms every day to see if they were out, and if he found them, he would come tearing down the stairs, as if he had at least a hundred legs, to try if he could not worry us into dressing at once, so that we might start off the sooner. He liked to accompany us up-stairs to watch the process, and would drum with his feet to hurry us on if he thought we were tedious. Then once let him see us ready, he would dash off to the stable to see if the horses were saddled, and come tearing round again to bring us out if he found all in readiness.

He very soon learned to connect habits with riding. Once, soon after we had begun to ride, he was not seeming well, and we thought he had better stay at home. So I tied him up under a tree on the lawn, right away from the stables, and he lay sleeping contentedly in the shade, quite happy to keep quiet, until he saw me come out in my habit, when he set up a doleful howl, realising in a moment that we were going to ride and that he was to be left behind.

Dearly as Smith loves running with the horses on every possible occasion, nothing will induce him to do so if the man takes them out either riding or driving. So sure as the groom drives alone, or rides out exercising, so surely does Mr. Smith turn tail in deep disgust, and decline to take the least notice of the proceeding, save by the inimitable contempt with which he sees the more amiable collie run gaily off with the inferior turn-out. I have seen him sometimes when he has almost had to *glue* himself to the ground, to conquer his mad impulse to make just one frantic rush at the horse's feet as he starts off ; but no—pride always triumphs, and in haughty, motionless silence

Mr. Smith watches the departure of the cart that does not contain his mistresses. Even if we are away from home it is just the same. He will not run with the man on any consideration whatever.

He can, however, pocket his pride when he considers that duty demands the sacrifice. Once his favourite parlour-maid had occasion to go up to town for the day, and quite early in the morning the baker's cart came to take her to the station. This unprecedented circumstance aroused Smith's suspicions, and he evidently felt that the matter required his personal supervision, and must be inquired into.

Even the good-natured collie would scorn to follow the baker's cart, and on other occasions Smith would simply decline to see it; but this particular morning a stronger feeling than pride took possession of him, and down he went to the station in hot pursuit. It was in vain that he was ordered home—home he declined to go until he had seen the end of this business. He went to the station and into the station, saw the maid to the carriage and watched the train move off, and then feeling more satisfied (for he often meets trains or comes down to see people off), he trotted home again with the air of a dog who has done his duty by the household. I need hardly say that no further notice was deemed to the baker or his cart.

This maid and Smith are great friends, and he well knows his ascendancy over her. If he smells an appetising savour arising from the kitchen, and the door of that domain is shut, and his scratching or grumbling not heeded, he starts off up-stairs to find his willing slave, and whatever she is doing is ruthlessly interrupted, and she is dragged down-stairs to open the door for my lord.

That Smith understands a great deal that is said



"I SPRANG UPON HIM UNAWARES" (p. 482).



"THE LITTLE ONE OFTEN SNATCHES THE PRIZE" (p. 482).

there can be no manner of doubt. Let me but say in his hearing that I am going to wash him at a specified hour, and at that time he is certain to be missing, and has to be dug out, limp and depressed, from some obscure corner. One lady who often comes to see us is so afraid of dogs that they are all tied up before she comes, and if I tell Smith that "Mrs. — is coming," he puts down his tail, and goes dejectedly to his kennel without further delay. We had a tradesman of the name of Smith, who gave us a great deal of trouble, and once at dinner-time I happened to observe that if Smith did not amend his ways, we should have to get rid of him altogether. Whereat poor Smith, who was sitting beside my chair, put down his ears and his tail, and slunk silently under the table, and could only be consoled and coaxed out of his depression by many assurances and protestations as to his own goodness.

He has the most tender conscience that ever dog possessed, and if it does not hinder him always from transgressing, it makes him betray himself afterwards in the most unequivocal fashion. He has a peculiar way of puckering up his nose when he is ashamed of himself, that I have never seen in any other dog, and which gives him a most ridiculous expression; and when he is summoned to receive chastisement or rebuke, or even when he is only conscious of deserving them, his action is inimitably comic. He lays himself flat along the ground, his nose pressed against his forepaws, and in some inexplicable way he wriggles himself along at a great rate, and with a snivelled-up nose, crouches at one's feet, almost disarming anger by his intense self-abasement. Many a sin that would never else have been discovered has he betrayed by his puckered nose and grovelling gait; many a hole in his puppy days has he dug and then discovered to us by his own self-consciousness. He was very troublesome when he first came by this

hole-digging, and being a dog of much persistence and determination, he was able in a large garden to gratify his *penchant* undiscovered in a way that was most tiresome. He was cured, however, once and for all in a very summary manner.

Five times in one day had he been whipped and shut up for digging again and again the same hole in the bank by the drive, and each time, on release, had he gone back and excavated it again. On releasing him after his fifth captivity, he went straight off to his hole, and re-commenced his labours with renewed zeal and activity. I let him dig in unconscious bliss for awhile, until he had made a nice roomy grave, and then, stealing up behind him whilst he was all claws and nose in the ground, I sprang upon him unawares, held him firmly in position, and buried him tight in his own hole. He was not long in backing and scrambling out, and emerged a meek and disreputable-looking object; but he never dug another hole. That trick was entirely cured from that day forward, partly, I think, because he got a good scare, and partly because he was quite conscious of the ridiculous appearance he presented, and of which our shouts of laughter made him all the more aware. For Smith, like most dogs, cannot bear being laughed at, and will deny himself a good deal of pleasure rather than submit to ridicule.

We noticed this particularly in reference to church-going. Of course the dogs always wished to accompany us to church on Sundays, and Smith was so depressed at being left at home, that he has never quite got over the feeling that Sunday is somehow his fault, and he is always rather inclined to snivel his nose and abase himself on that day, simply because it is the Sabbath. When, however, his education was complete, and he had learned to go home at a word of command, we let him walk with us a mile of the way, dismissing him at the foot of the church hill to run home with the collie. This delighted him greatly at first, and the church bells had no longer any terrors for him, until one unlucky Sunday, when we chanced to be earlier than usual, and Smith, on his return, met several groups of people, who all laughed heartily at him, for he has a consequential air and a look of self-importance that often give rise to mirth.

But the indignity of being laughed at was quite too much for Mr. Smith. I saw that he was terribly put out (for we could see a good piece of the road by looking back), and there was no mistaking the huge offence expressed by the set of his back and shoulders; and after that episode nothing would induce him to come to church, and even to this day it is often difficult to coax him on Sunday even to go for a walk, if we take the turn from the gate that is right for the church.

Smith's intense love for a stick is another of his most amusing traits. He will carry one for miles with the greatest joy, and the larger and heavier it is the more he seems to delight in it. But the greatest fun is to make the two dogs run races and dispute for the possession of the treasure. Until Smith came,

Col—the collie—could not be induced to pick up or carry a stick, but he soon caught the accomplishment from his little companion, and although he has no love for a stick *per se*, and never carries it far, he enjoys a game of play, and throws himself into it heartily.

When the stick is thrown, a rush is simultaneously made. Col can run faster, but Smith has twice his sharpness, and as Col's sight is somewhat defective, the little one often snatches the prize, in which case Col never disputes possession. But if Col gets the stick matters are vastly different. He generally makes off with his prize at a good run, Smith laying himself along the ground and rushing like a whirlwind in pursuit, barking at the utmost pitch of his voice in the wildest excitement. When he reaches his triumphant rival, he seizes a projecting end of the stick, and then follows a regular tug of war, in which the characters of the two dogs come out in strong relief.

Col holds tenaciously to his prize, not much excited by the contest, but simply wishful to hold his own, with a sort of good-natured doggedness of purpose; but Smith's whole soul is in the struggle, and he tears and tugs and pulls, throwing his weight really quite scientifically into the balance, and by his vigorous and determined growling, expressing the state of his feelings most eloquently. Sheer determination and force of will often win him the day, and more especially when he can conquer his temptation to bark as well as growl—which is not always the case, and barking often loses him the battle. His love for a stick is so great, that he will actually climb trees after one. I hardly expect to be believed in this, but it is an absolute fact. I do not mean that he can swarm up a bare trunk; but if a stick is placed high up in a deodaria, or larch-tree, or in any other where a succession of branching boughs gives him a foothold, Smith will climb after it to the height of ten or twelve feet, and with encouragement I have no doubt he could do even more. But we do not like to make him climb often, as he gets wildly excited over it; and when once he has got the stick, no power on earth will make him quit his hold, and as climbing down with it in his mouth is a difficult process, he often hurls himself headlong to the ground in the most reckless way, stick in mouth, and jars his neck in so doing till it is sometimes stiff for weeks. We have, therefore, been obliged to discourage this accomplishment as somewhat dangerous.

I should like to tell further of Smith and the cats of the establishment, and of his visits to the seaside, and the adventures he met with; but I am afraid those who do not know him personally will think they have had enough of his society—at any rate, for the present. Besides, he has just been in to tell me in his own eloquent way that my habit is out and my horse nearly saddled, and that he himself is aching to be off. It is therefore very plain that I must lay down my pen and do his bidding, for Mr. Smith in his own way is quite the master of the house, and knows it too.

EVELYN EVERETT-GREEN.