

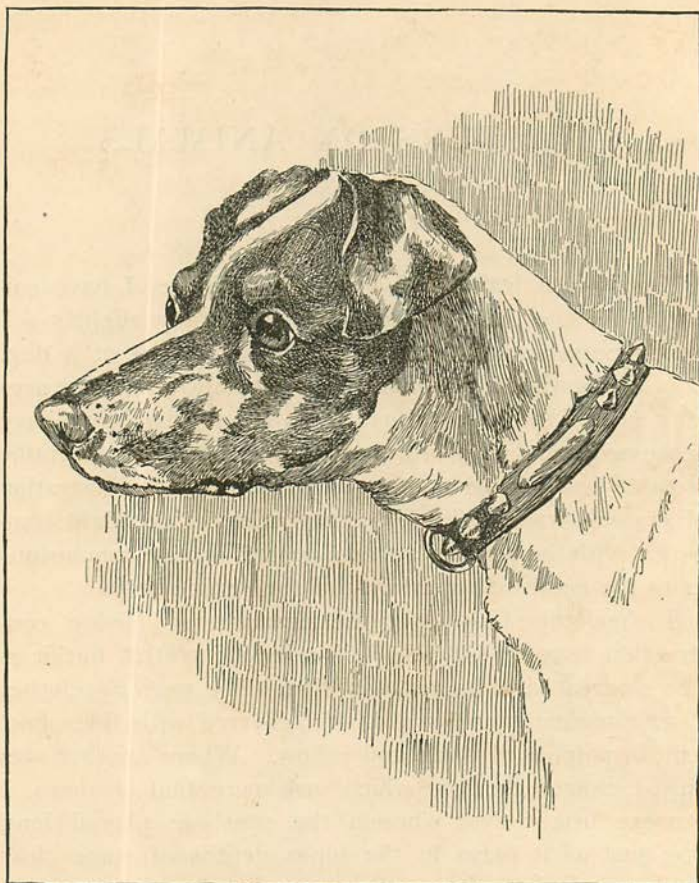
## CHAPTERS ON ANIMALS.

### I. DOGS.

THERE is a little skull amongst the bones I have collected for the study of anatomy, which any slightly scientific person would at once recognise as that of a dog. It is a beautiful little skull, finely developed, and one sees at a glance that the animal, when it was alive, must have possessed more than ordinary intelligence. The scientific lecturer would consider it rather valuable as an illustration of cranial structure in the higher animals; he might compare it with the skull of a crocodile, and deduce conclusions as to the manifest superiority of the canine brain.

To me this beautiful little example of Divine construction may be a teacher of scientific truths, but it is also a great deal more than that. My memory clothes it with mobile muscles and skin, covered with fine, short hair, in patches of white and yellow. Where another sees only hollow sockets in which lurk perpetual shadows, I can see bright eyes wherein the sunshine played long ago, just as it plays in the topaz depths of some clear northern rivulet. I see the ears too, though the skull has none; and the ears listen and the eyes gaze with an infinite love and longing.

She was the friend of my boyhood, reader, the companion of a thousand rambles, and when she died my boyhood was dead also and became part of the irrecoverable past. There is an indentation in the bone, due to an



HEAD OF A FOX-TERRIER.

Pen drawing by E. H. Saunders, after Helena Maguire.

accident. How well I remember all about that accident! How tenderly we nursed her, how glad we were when she got well again and followed me according to her wont! I wonder how many miles we have travelled together, she

and I, along the banks of our own stream and out on the purple moors!

Of course the reader cannot be expected to care very much about a poor little terrier that only loved its young master, as all dogs will, by reason of the instinct that is in them, and died more than eighteen years ago. I am willing to believe that millions of dogs have been as good as she was, and a great deal more valuable in the market, but no skull in the best natural history collection in Europe could tempt me to part with this. Every year makes the relic more precious, since every year certain recollections gradually fade, and this helps me to recover them. You may think that it is a questionable taste to keep so ghastly a reminder. It does not seem ghastly to me, but is only as the dried flower that we treasure in some sacred book. When I think by how much devoted affection this bony tenement was once inhabited, it seems to me still a most fair and beautiful dwelling. The prevailing idea that reigned there was the image of me, her master. Shall I scorn this ivory cell in which my own picture had ever the place of honour?

Many a man past the middle of life remembers with a quite peculiar and especial tenderness that one dog which was the dear companion of his boyhood. No other canine friend can ever be to us exactly what that one was. . . . I had a dog of great gifts, exceptionally intelligent, who would obey a look where another needed an order, and of rare beauty both of colour and form. One evening in the twilight we went out together, and, as cruel fate would have it, I crossed a valley where there was a deep and rapid stream. Rapid and deep it was, yet not much wider than the Strid at Bolton, and there was a mill and a narrow rustic bridge. My poor dog lingered behind a few



minutes in the deepening twilight and I called for him in vain. He had tried to leap across between the bridge and the mill, and was hurried to destruction along an irresistible current, between walls of pitiless stone on which he had no hold. I cannot think of that twilight even now without painful sorrow for my poor, imprudent companion. All dogs are worth keeping, but there are very great differences in their natural gifts, and that one had a rare intelligence. He would sit studying his master's face, and had become from careful observation so acute a physiognomist that he read whatever thoughts of mine had any concern for him. . . .

Man has succeeded in domesticating several other animals, but where else has he found this spirit of unconquerable fidelity? It has not been developed by kind treatment, it has not even been sought for in itself, or made an aim in breeding. Ladies make pets of their dogs, but all the shepherds I see around me pay them in kicks, and curses, and starvation. What does the obscure member of a pack of foxhounds know of his master's love? As much as a Prussian private in the rifle-pit knew of the tender heart of Moltke. I have seen a great deal of the life of the French peasantry, but never to this day have I seen a peasant caress his dog otherwise than with a stick or a wooden shoe. There is a well-known picture by Decamps, called "The Kennel," which represents a huntsman visiting his hounds, and he is lashing with a ponderous whip. Thousands of dogs, whole generations of them, have known man in no other character than that of a merciless commander, punishing the slightest error without pity, yet bestowing no reward.

A. G. Decamps, b. 1803, d. 1860. A famous French painter of animals and of the wilder and more picturesque aspects of nature.

There are countries where the dogs are never fed, where they are left to pick up a bare existence amongst the vilest refuse, and where they walk like gaunt images of famine, living skeletons, gnawing dry sticks in the wintry moonlight, doing Nature's scavenger-work like rats. Yet in every one of these miserable creatures beats the noble canine heart—that heart whose depths of devotion have never yet been sounded to the bottom; that heart which



THE KENNEL.

Pen drawing after a lithograph by A. G. Decamps, by E. H. Saunders.

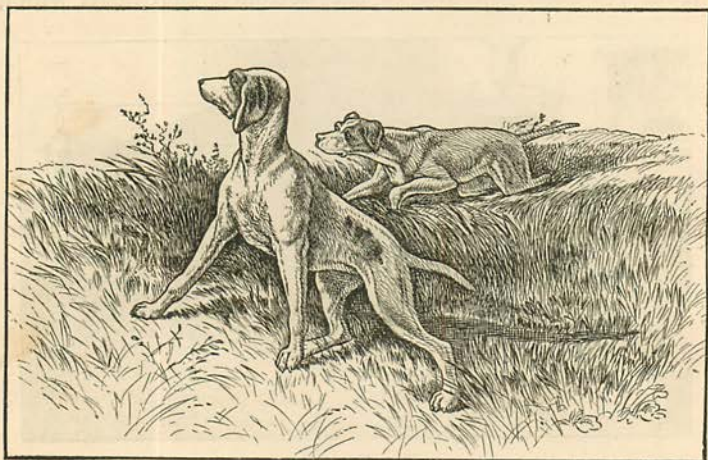
forgets all our cruelty, but not the smallest evidence of our kindness. If these poor animals had not been made to love us, what excellent reasons they would have had for hating us! Their love has not been developed by care and culture, like the nourishing ears of wheat; but it rises like warm, natural springs, where man has done nothing either to obtain them or to deserve them. . . .

Our dogs adore us without a suspicion of our shortcomings. There is only one exception, but this is a grave one, and must not on any account be forgotten. A good sport-



ing dog has always an intense contempt for a bad sportsman, so that a man who cannot shoot with a decent degree of skill does best, like a miserable amateur violinist, to abstain from practising altogether.

There are thousands of anecdotes illustrating the wonderful affection which dogs bear to their masters, and as the world goes on thousands of other examples will be



POINTERS.

Pen drawing after Karl Bodmer, by D. Munro.

recorded, but no one will ever know the full marvel of that immense love and devotion. It is inexhaustible, like the beauty of what is most beautiful in nature, like the glory of sunsets and the rich abundance of that natural loveliness which poets and artists can never quite reveal. We do not know the depth of it even in the dogs we have always with us. I have one who is neither so intelligent nor so affectionate as others I have known, and to my human ignorance it seemed that he did not love me very much.

But once, when I had been away for weeks, his melancholy longing, of which he had said nothing to anybody, burst out in a great passionate crisis. He howled and clamoured for admission into my dressing-room, pulled down my old things from their pegs, dragged them into a corner, and flung himself upon them, wailing long and wildly where he lay, till a superstitious fear came on all the house like the forerunner of evil tidings. Who can tell what long broodings, unexpressed, had preceded this passionate outburst? Many a dark hour had he passed in silent desolation, wondering at that inexplicable absence, till at length the need for me became so urgent that he must touch some cloth that I had worn.

We know not the heart-memory which these animals possess, the long-retaining, tender recollection, all bound up with their love. A dog was bereaved of his master and afterwards became old and blind, passing the dark evening of his existence sadly in the same corner, which he hardly ever quitted. One day came a step like that of his lost master, and he suddenly left his place. The man who had just entered wore ribbed stockings; the old dog had lost his scent and referred at once to the stockings that he remembered, rubbing his face against them. Believing that his master had returned after those weary years of absence, he gave way to the most extravagant delight. The man spoke, the momentary illusion was dispelled, the dog went sadly back to his place, lay wearily down, and died.

These little anecdotes, and there are many such, give us glimpses of what is permanent in the canine heart. We think that dogs are demonstrative, but they have regrets of which they tell us nothing. It is likely that the old blind dog, coiled up in his corner day and night, mourn-



fully cherished the recollection of his lost master, thinking of him when the people in the house little suspected those yearnings of melancholy retrospect. There is nothing in nature so sad as that obscure despair. The dog is high enough in the scale of being to feel the regrets of absence in all their bitterness, yet not high enough to have his anxieties relieved by any word of explanation. Whether his master has gone to the next country, or across the sea, or to Heaven, he has no possible means of ascertaining—he only feels the long sorrow of separation, the aching of the solitary heart, the weariness of hope deferred, the anxiety that is never set at rest.

So great is their power of loving that we cannot help assigning to dogs—not formally, but in our inward estimates—a place distinct from the brute creation generally. . . . To kill a dog is always felt to be a sort of murder; it is the destruction of a beautiful spirit, and the destruction is the more lamentable for its very completeness.

When I was a boy I remember crossing a stream in Lancashire just as a workman came to the same place followed by a sharp-looking little brown terrier dog. It went snuffing about under the roots as such little dogs will, and then the man whistled and it came to him at full speed. He caressed it, spoke to it very kindly but very sadly, and then began to tie a great stone to its neck.

“What are you doing that for?” I asked.

“Because I cannot afford to pay the dog-tax, and nobody else shall have my little Jip.”

Then he threw it into the stream. . . . The man turned away with a pale, hard face, suffering, in that moment, more than he cared to show, and I went my way carrying with me an impression which is even now as strong as ever it was. I felt that what I had witnessed was a

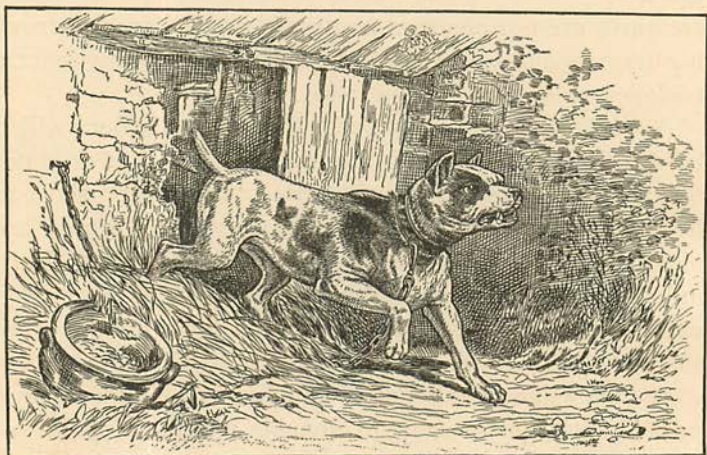


murder. Many years after, I shot a dog of my own (a magnificent blood-hound mastiff) because he was an irreclaimable sheep-killer; but the revolver I did it with instantly became so hateful that I could not bear the sight of it, and never fired it afterwards. Even now, if he could but be raised from the dead, how gladly would I welcome him, how securely would I rely for perfect forgiveness on his noble canine magnanimity! No, these creatures are not common brutes, they are our most trusting friends, and we cannot take away their lives without a treacherous betrayal of that trust.

A word came under my pen just now by accident which belongs quite peculiarly to the canine nature. It does not belong to all dogs; there are little breeds which seem to be almost destitute of it, but all the nobler breeds are magnanimous. As we are told to go to the ant to learn industry, so we may go to the dog for an example of magnanimity. The finest touches of it in his nature are not so much in the absolute insensibility to offence as in his courteous willingness to attribute offences which he cannot possibly overlook to some pardonable mistake of yours, or blameable error of his own. Even when most severely punished he never seems to doubt the justice of the punishment, but takes it in the finest possible temper. . . .

And pray observe that with all this submissiveness, with all this readiness to forget your severity and to bask in the first gleam of the sunshine of your clemency, there is not the faintest trace of snobbishness in his nature. The dog is faithful to his master even when he gets hardly anything out of him. It is said that every dog is an aristocrat, because rich men's dogs cannot endure beggars and their rags, and are civil only to well-dressed visitors. But the truth is that, from sympathy for his master, the dog

always sees humanity very much from his master's point of view. The poor man's dog does not dislike the poor. I may go much farther than this, and venture to assert that a dog who has lived with you for years will make the same distinction between your visitors that you make yourself, inwardly, notwithstanding the apparent uniformity of your outward politeness. My dog is very civil to people I



THE FAITHFUL WATCH-DOG.

Pen drawing after Karl Bodmer, by D. Munro.

like, but he is savage to those I dislike, whatever the tailor may have done to lend them external charms. I know not how he discovers these differences in my feelings, except it be by overhearing remarks when the guests are gone.

How much do dogs really understand of our language? Perhaps a good deal more than we generally imagine. Please observe that in learning a foreign tongue you arrive at a certain stage where most of what the foreign

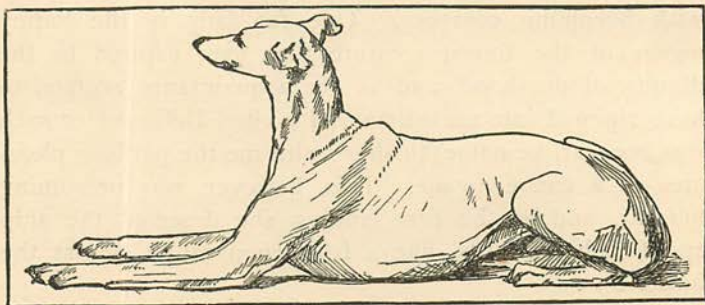


people say is broadly intelligible to you, and yet you cannot express yourself at all. Very young children understand a great deal before they are able to express themselves in words. Even horses—and horses are incomparably less intelligent than dogs—understand a complete vocabulary of orders. May not a dog of ability enter, to some extent, into the meaning of spoken language even though he may never be able to use it? Without giving the reins to imagination, it may be presumed that some dogs know at least the names of different people, and may take note of the manner, cordial or otherwise, in which we pronounce them. Whatever they may know of spoken language, it is quite clear that they understand the language of manner, and have a very delicate appreciation of human behaviour.

Besides the love which the dog has for his master, and for him alone, he has his friendships and acquaintances with humanity. And as a married man may quite innocently establish friendships with ladies whom he likes and respects, so the most faithful of dogs may have kindly feelings for men who stand in no nearer relation to him than that of acquaintance. All my friends' dogs are polite acquaintances of mine, and conduct themselves with becoming courtesy. One fat lady is the happy owner of the tiniest creature that ever aspired to the dignity of dog-hood, and as our acquaintance seemed to have ripened into an intimacy, I invited Bellona (for such was her warlike name) to share with me the perilous pleasures of a canoe-voyage. This, however, was presuming too far, and at the first landing she deserted the ship and fled homewards, like a frightened rabbit, across the fields. . . .

Bellona—the Roman goddess of war.

Sometimes a dog will forget a mere friend, though he never forgets his master. I remember crossing a public square in winter, at midnight, and seeing a poor lost dog that I recognised as an old acquaintance. There could be no mistake about it, she had every physical mark and sign of the gentle little creature that I knew, the only cause of doubt was that she could not be induced to give the slightest, — no, not the very slightest, sign of recognition. I caught her and carried her in my arms to the hotel, held her up to the light, examined every mark — the body was all there, but where was the friendly heart that used to beat with gladness when we met, far in the quiet country, in the lanes and fields about her home? I put her down, and she immediately escaped and was lost again in the windings of the streets. The next morning I went early to the farm she lived at and inquired if she were lost. Yes, it was true, she had been lost in the confusion of the fair. Later, she found her own way back again and behaved to me as amiably as ever. Probably, in the town, the sight of so many people had bewildered her till she could not recognise a friend, but a dog knows his master everywhere. . . .



GREYHOUND.

Pen drawing from a sketch by J. L. Gérôme, by E. H. Saunders.





ENGLISH SETTERS.

By D. Munro.

## II. DOGS (*continued*).

WOULD that dogs could communicate their health and energy to us, as they can their fearful malady! They possess, in a much higher degree than man, the power of storing up energy in times of repose, and keeping it for future use. A dog spends his spare time in absolute rest, and is able to endure great drains of energy on due occasion. He lies idly by the fire, and looks so lazy that it seems as if nothing could make him stir, yet at a sign from his master he will get up and go anywhere, without hesitation about the distance. In old age dogs know that they have not any longer these great reserves of force, and decline to follow their masters who go out on horseback, but will still gladly follow them on any merely pedestrian excursion, well knowing the narrow limits of human strength and endurance. Dogs in the prime of life accomplish immense distances, not without fatigue, for these efforts exhaust them for the moment, but they have such great recuperative power that they entirely recover by rest.

I know a very small dog that was given by his master to a friend who lived sixty miles off. His new proprietor carried him in the inside of a coach ; but the next morning the little animal was in his old home again, having found his way across country, and a most fatiguing and bewildering country too, covered with dense forests and steep hills. Has the reader ever observed how much swifter dogs are than their behaviour would lead one to imagine? Here is an illustration of what I mean. I know a very rapid coach which is always preceded by a middling-sized dog of no particular breed. Well, this dog amuses itself within a yard of the horses' hoofs, turning round, leaping, looking at other vehicles, snapping at other dogs, barking at its own and other horses, and leading, in a word, exactly the same kind of life as if it were amusing itself in the inn-yard before starting. Now, consider a little the amazing perfection of organization, the readiness and firmness of nerve, required for motions so complicated as these, and the bodily energy, too, necessary to keep them up, not for a few yards, but mile after mile as the coach rattles along the road! One false step, one second of delay, and the dog would be under the hoofs of the horses, yet he plays as children play on the sea-shore before the slowly advancing tide. With the dog's energy, and a wiser economy of it, a man could run a hundred miles without an interval of rest.

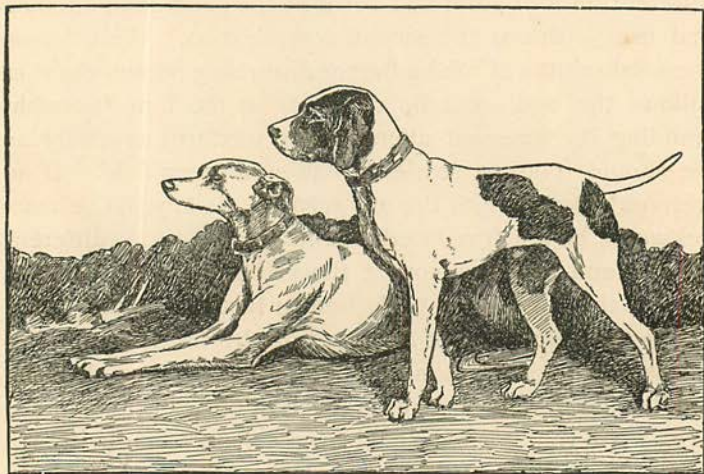
We make use of the delicate faculty of scent possessed by these animals to aid us in the chase, and are so accustomed to rely upon it that its marvellousness escapes attention. But we have no physical faculty so exquisite as this. It is clear that the dog's opinions about odours must be widely different from ours, for he endures very strong smells which to us are simply intolerable, and posi-



tively enjoys what we abominate; but as for true delicacy of nerve, which I take to be the power of detecting what is most faint, we cannot presume to the least comparison with him. Every one who has gathered wild plants knows what an immense variety of odours arise from the plants upon the ground—this is the first complication; next upon that (though we cannot detect it) are traced in all directions different lines of scent laid down by the passage of animals and men—this is the second complication. Well, across these labyrinths of misleading or disturbing odours the dog follows the one scent he cares for at the time (notwithstanding its incessant alteration by mixture) as easily as we should follow a scarlet thread on a green field. If he were only sensitive to the one scent he followed, the marvel would be much reduced, but he knows many different odours, and selects amongst them the one that interests him at the time. The only human faculty comparable to this is the perception of delicate tints by the most accomplished and gifted painters, but here I believe that the intellectual powers of man do much in the education of the eye. No young child could ever colour, though its eye were physically perfect, and colouring power comes only through study, which is always more or less a definitely mental operation. The dog can hardly be said to study scents, though long practice through unnumbered generations may have given refinement and precision to his faculty.

In speaking of a power of this kind, possessed by another animal, we are liable to mistakes which proceed from our constant reference to our own human imperceptions. We think, for instance, that the odour of thyme is strong, whilst for us the scent left by an animal in its passage may be so faint as to be imperceptible; but

scents that are strong for us may be faint for dogs, and *vice-versa*. Odours are not positive but relative, they are sensations simply, and the same cause does not produce the same sensation in different organisms. A dog rolls himself on carrion, and unreflecting people think this a proof of a disgustingly bad taste on his part; but it is evident that the carrion gives him a sensation entirely diff-



POINTER AND GREYHOUND.

erent from that which it produces in ourselves. I know a man who says that to him the odour of any cheese whatever, even the freshest and soundest, is disgusting beyond the power of language to express; is it not evident that cheese produces in him a sensation altogether different from what it causes in most of us? The smell and taste of dogs may be not the less refined and delicate that they differ widely from our own. The *cause* of the most horrible of all smells in my own experience is a mouse, but the same cause produces, it is probable, an effect



altogether different upon the olfactory nerves of cats. These mysteries of sensation, in other beings, are quite unfathomable, and our human theories about delicacy of taste are not worth a moment's attention. The dog is quite as good an authority on these questions as the best of us.

I cannot think it is very surprising that dogs should *remember* odours well, since odours so long retain the power of awakening old associations in ourselves. I distinctly remember the odour of every house that was familiar to me in boyhood, and should recognise it at once. In the same way dogs know the scent of a well-known footstep, even after long separation. An officer returned home after the Franco-German war and did not meet his dog. After his arrival he watched for the dog through the window. He saw it at last in a state of intense excitement, following his track at full speed, never raising its nostrils from the ground, and then came the joyful meeting — the scent had been recognised from the beginning, even in a much-frequented street.

Innumerable anecdotes might be collected to illustrate the reasoning power of dogs. A certain lawyer, a neighbour of mine, has a dog that guards his money when clients come into the office. There are two or three pieces of furniture, and sometimes it happens that the lawyer puts money into one or another of these, temporarily, the dog always watching him, and guarding that particular piece of furniture where the money lies. In this instance the dog had gradually become aware, from his master's manner, that money was an object of more than ordinary solicitude; in fact, he had been set to guard coin left upon the table. I refrain from repeating current stories about the sagacity of dogs, because, although many

of them are perfectly credible, they are naturally exaggerated in transmission. I happened to be in a railway carriage where several sportsmen were telling marvellous stories about their dogs, whilst an elderly man sat in his corner and said nothing.

At last he spoke: "Gentlemen," he said, "all this is very remarkable, but I have a dog who is still more wonderful than the most wonderful of yours. For example, you see that river; well, if I were to throw a sovereign into that river, my dog would immediately plunge in *and bring me the change in silver.*"

"Really, sir, you surprise me!" said one of the sportsmen, not quick enough to see the intended sarcasm. Auguste Villemott used to tell a story with a like intention about a blind man's dog in Paris, which, after receiving money for its master, continued the business after his death, and accumulated a considerable fortune.

Let me add a few words about the treatment of these faithful friends of ours. I need scarcely protest against the ignorant and stupid mutilation of dogs by cutting their ears and tail. From the artistic point of view this is barbarous in the last degree, because it spoils their instruments of expression. It is like cutting out the tongue of a human being. There is a poor dog near me whose tail has been amputated at the very root, and the consequence is he cannot tell me the half of what he thinks. Sir Edwin Landseer was greatly pleased to meet with a dog-seller who would not mutilate his animals, for the reason that "Sir Edwin Landseer did not approve of it." In a smaller way every one of us may exercise the same merciful influence, and I earnestly request every reader of these lines to discourage openly the mutilation of dogs and other animals. It is an evil very generally prevalent and of



very long standing, and it is due to the desire for improving nature, for turning natural things as far as possible into artificial things, which is instinctive in mankind and leads to the most useful results ; but this is one of its false directions. People who are only partially civilised do not see where they ought to respect nature, and where to make alterations ; so they cannot leave anything alone. The highest civilisation does little more than remove impediments to perfect natural growth, and accepts the divine ideals as the ideals towards which it strives. The best practical way to prevent people from mutilating dogs is, not to reason on the subject (for reason is far too weak to contend against custom), but to employ ridicule. I make it a rule to tell everybody who keeps a mutilated dog, that his dog is both ugly and absurd ; and if a good many people hear me, so much the better. There is another very common sort of cruelty to dogs, which might easily be prevented by the exercise of a little common sense. Many dog-owners, especially kind-hearted but weak-minded ladies, are accustomed to injure their pets by giving them too much food and too little exercise. Pampered dogs are certainly not the happiest dogs. Only look at them ! Can a creature which was intended by nature for the most exuberant activity be said to enjoy life when it can hardly waddle across a carpet ? There is not an honest doctor who, after examining the teeth and breath, and observing the digestion of these wretched martyrs to mistaken kindness, will not tell you that they have no genuine health, and without that neither dog nor man can be happy. If you really care about making your dog happy, the way to do so is both extremely simple and perfectly well known. Feed him regularly and moderately, see that his bodily functions go as they ought to do, and

vary his diet when necessary. Above all, give him plenty of exercise, take him out with you into the fields and woods — that is what he most enjoys. Keep him under a strict and wholesome discipline, for dogs are happiest, as men are, when wisely and steadily governed. Our caresses ought to be reserved as a reward, or a recognition, not given continually till the dog is weary of them. In the same way, besides the regular food, we may give occasionally little morsels out of kindness, because he values the kindness, just as we like a cigar that a friend gives us out of his own case. His happiness, like our own, is best promoted by activity, by temperance, by obedience to duty, and by the sort of affection that is not incompatible with perfect dignity, of which every noble dog has his full share.

But however healthy and happy a dog may be, there comes a time at last when the gladness fades out of his life. I see with sorrow that my poor old Tom feels obliged to decline to follow me now when I go out on horseback. This is one of the first symptoms of old age, and he does not hear so well or see so well as formerly. Still, on a bright morning, when we go out in the woods together, he is quite himself again, apparently, and the old activity revives. It is that last renewal of summer which precedes the frosts of autumn, that after-glow in the western sky which is so swiftly followed by the leaden greys of night. One of my neighbours has an old dog that can neither hear nor see, and passes the dark, silent days in an arm-chair which has been given to him for the comfort of his age. One sound is audible by him still, and one only — a little shrill silver whistle that he has obeyed from puppyhood till now. It is one of the most pathetic sights I ever witnessed, when the master comes and sounds



the piercing call. The inert thing in the arm-chair becomes galvanised with sudden life, tumbles down upon the floor, crawls towards the sound, finds the beloved hand, and licks it. They pass whole evenings together still, that gentle master and his poor old friend. And still in that dark decrepitude beats the heart of inextinguishable love. . . .

Although dogs have been more or less painted and carved since men used brush and chisel, they have never held so important a position in art as they do now. The modern love of incident in pictures, the modern delight in what has been aptly called "literary interest" as distinguished from the pure pleasure of the eyes, naturally induce us to give a very high place to dogs, which more than all other animals are capable of awakening an interest of this kind. The dog is so close to man, so intimately associated with his life, both in the field and in the house, that he becomes a sharer in many of its incidents, and the painter scarcely needs a pretext for introducing him. In such a picture, for example, as the "Order of Release" (by Millais), the dog has his due importance as a member of the family, and the painter does not ignore the canine gladness and affection. And so in the illustration by the same artist, of that charming old Scottish song, "There is nae luck about the house," the dog is first out of doors to go and meet the gudeman. In Landseer's "Shepherd's Chief Mourner," the dog is alone in his lamentation, and yet we feel that the bereaved creature is in the place that is his by a natural right, by right of long service, of constant companionship, of humble faithful friendship and deep love. You paint a portrait of Sir Walter Scott, why not introduce Maida?—of young Lord Byron, why not put brave Boatswain by his side? These creatures rejoice with us in our sports

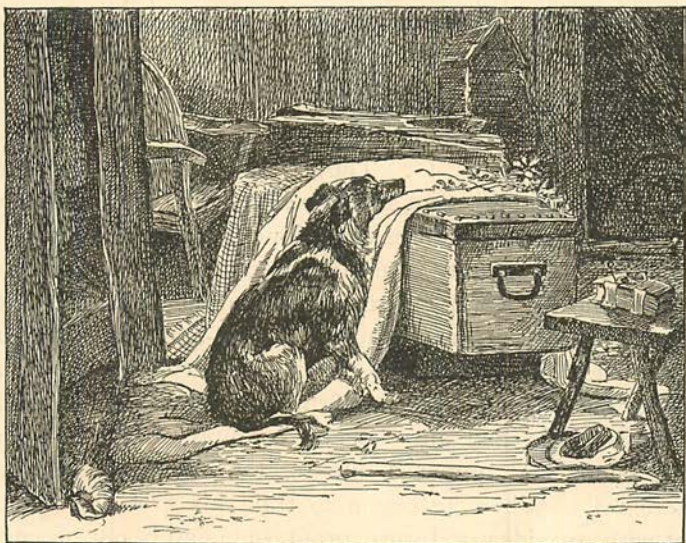


THE ORDER OF RELEASE.

Pen drawing by E. H. Saunders, after the painting by Sir John Millais.



and at our festivals, and they mourn for us in the hour of that separation which religion and science agree to consider eternal. We, too, mourn for them, when they leave us, and pass from the fulness of life into the abyss of nothingness. There may be human relatives for whom you will wear funeral hatbands, for whom you will blacken the



THE SHEPHERD'S CHIEF MOURNER.

Pen drawing by E. H. Saunders, after Sir Edward Landseer.

borders of envelopes and cards, and who, nevertheless, will not be regretted with that genuine sorrow that the death of a dog will bring. Many a tear is shed every year in England for the loss of these humble friends, and many a heart has been relieved by the welcome tidings, "There's life in the old dog yet."