



OUR PETS.

I.—HOW TO MANAGE PET DOGS.



"**T**IS true 'tis pity, and pity 'tis 'tis true" that many thousands of good honest, kind-hearted little folks—aye, and big folks too, for the matter of that—own dogs, and yet do not know the proper way to manage them. By management please to understand me to mean, the doing of our duty towards them, in a manner conducive alike to their health and happiness, leaving for the moment the pleasure they afford us out of account entirely.

Now I could very easily adduce a hundred reasons why we ought to cherish and be kind to the animals who are given to us for our comfort or protection. Instead of doing so, however, I will appeal to your own heart and your sympathies. You love that beautiful dog of yours, whose sweet brown eyes dwell upon you so fondly, who thinks there is no one on earth so good and noble and

lovable as you, and the dearest desire of whose heart is to be always near you. You love your dog? Nay, I will *not* have you use the verb "like;" apply that term to a pine-apple, if you please, but not to your favourite. You love him? You do; thank you, I thought I would manage to coax a confession out of you. I now have to tell you that there is not the slightest reason why you should be ashamed of the honest affection you bestow on your faithful friend; it shows the good that lies at your heart, and besides, next to man himself, the dog is the noblest animal that our Father has created, and one can honour the Creator in admiring and being kind to the created.

On the other hand, the life of a dog is, at the best, but a short one. You yourself are young and strong, and just as buoyant and full of life and frolic as the pet that trots at your heels or scampers on before you, and in ten years time *you* may still be young, but poor Fido, where will he be? If his eyes have not been already closed in death, they are

dimmed with age, his poor joints are stiff, and although he loves now as ever, he can no longer follow you a-field as of yore ; you must take your walks without him, leaving him to his sorrow, for do not imagine he does not feel the change that is stealing over him. Aye, he does, and the very sight of your going away without him is a grief to the old dog, that helps to break the heart that soon will cease to beat.

Yet, short as is the life of a dog, I am happy to tell you it is in our power by kindness to him, and attention to his daily wants, to add many days, aye, and years, thereto. And I will now, in as few words as possible, endeavour to tell you how this is to be accomplished.

Everything, then, depends upon the way you treat him, both morally and physically. I'll take the morally first. In your treatment of your favourite dog you must never forget that he is an animal of the greatest intelligence, that the amount of wisdom he possesses is really very extraordinary, that he knows a great deal of what you say to him, and that from his habit of watching your every action he can read your intentions, and even your thoughts, from your face far better than any human friend could. To make him obey you, therefore, you must first get him to love you. If you succeed in this, and there is no reason why you should not, he will be willing to do anything in reason that he can, in order to please you. He is, too, an animal of an extremely sensitive and nervous nature. He is pained by ingratitude, delighted when notice is taken of him, sensible to ridicule, and rendered, for the time being, quite wretched when his well-meant advances are repulsed by scolding or unkindness. You will do well to remember these things in your intercourse with him.

But I must give you the shady side of a dog's character as well as the sunny, or my picture would be far from complete. Well, then, there are times when a dog, either from a little fit of naughtiness coming over him, or from sheer love of fun and mischief, and a dog's fun occasionally is mischievous, is guilty of faults. In this case how are we to act? To pass a fault over is folly ; to beat him for it were bad policy, not to say crime. No, the best plan is to reason with him, show him where

he has done wrong, scold him if need be, but do not lose your temper ; your anger he *can* bear, but, presuming that he loves you, he cannot endure to see you vexed, and after you have lectured him, his ludicrous capers and romps and his kisses are all meant to woo back to your face the smiles that his thoughtless conduct was the means of banishing.

You see, I want your mind to be completely *en rapport*, as it were, with the instinct of your pet, so that you may be able to look behind the commission of a fault, and study the *causes* that led up to it.

Your dog, too, will love you all the more, if you are not too straightlaced with him when out for a ramble. Do not, therefore, be always calling him in to heel. The animal, although he has given up the companionship of even his own species for your sake, likes a little liberty now and then, and one of his chief delights when out for a run is to trot up to some other dog that he may chance to meet, just as it would seem for the sake of saying "How do you do?" or making a remark or two about the weather. This habit of his should not be rudely checked. Perhaps he is telling his canine friends all about his dear young master or mistress and extolling you to the skies, if not

considerably higher, for your kindness to him.

Now, one of the most important things to learn about dogs is how to feed them, for, depend upon it, that injudicious treatment in this respect never fails to result in serious illness at some time of the dog's life. If you want your favourite to live long, then, and to be always healthy, happy, and frisky, you must feed him in a rational, common-sense kind of way. And upon what? is your natural query. Well, there is generally plenty of spare scraps from the table for little dogs, and this does very well for them, provided these scraps are collected after dinner, and contain a due proportion of bread, vegetables, and any kind of meat, except salt provisions. These should be carefully mixed together and put down to the dog, after, not during, your own meal.

The great mistake that people usually make in the feeding of pet dogs is this, they give their favourites too much ; they thus soon get fat and gross, and become a burden to themselves and



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a bother, not to say nuisance, to their human friends. House-dogs should never have all they can eat.

You must also feed them at exactly the same time every day, and two meals are abundant, namely, a light breakfast and a generous dinner. Tit-bits and morsels between meals are the ruin of many a good dog.

Let the dog's dish be as clean as your own, and never place before him the remains of a previous meal. Much greasy food is unwholesome for dogs. Pastry, cheese, and sugar and other sweets, are also apt to induce disease of the liver, obesity, and skin ailments. Too many bones should not be allowed, although a large one to gnaw is good for them.

Larger dogs require the same attention as regards regularity of feeding as small ones, but they need specially prepared diets, such as oatmeal porridge and milk, rice with sheep's-head broth and meat, boiled or soaked biscuits, &c. All dogs, too, need change of diet occasionally, as much as we ourselves do; and a portion of well-boiled cabbage or greens, nicely mashed, should be mixed with the food once a week at least, to keep the blood cool and pure.

A nice clean dish of water should always stand in an out-of-the-way corner, where your pet is sure to find it. Let the basin be washed out every morning, and the water be the purest of the pure.

Next to food and drink, the *most* essential thing is exercise. A dog can hardly have too much romping in the open air. Pet dogs should always have playthings, and probably there is nothing better than a moderately sized indiarubber ball, a hard solid one.

As to the animal's bed at night, it should always be placed in one corner of the room; and do not forget this—if he is a smooth short-haired dog, his bed may be moderately soft; but if his coat is long, the bed ought to be hard—basket-work, covered with strong cotton, for example—else he will never have nice long hair. And this leads me to say a word about the grooming of your little favourite. If you

wish your Fido, then, to live a long time you must buy him a comb and brush for himself, both moderately strong ones, and you must consider it your duty *every* morning first to comb and then to brush him well.

If you do this, the dog will seldom require washing, but when you do wash him attend to one or two things. I will number them for you. (1.) Let the soap be the mildest you can get. (2.) Never use soda. (3.) Do not let the water be very hot, and rinse the soap well out of his jacket. (4.) Give him a cold shower from a jug at the finish to prevent his catching cold. (5.) Never wash the dog except on a fine day, and as soon as he is well rubbed down take him out at once for a run.

You see, then, that I have been trying in this short paper to tell my young readers the way in which they can keep their dogs in health, for the oft-quoted reason, that prevention is better than cure; but at some future time I hope to be able to give you a description of the few simple ailments to which pet dogs are liable, and the best method of curing them. But here I think it my duty to tell you one thing, and I put it in italics, to make you aware of its importance:—*Most of the severer forms of illness in dogs are caught from exposure to wet and cold when the stomach is empty and the animal in a state of inactivity.* Never, therefore, allow your favourite to shiver on the doorstep, and if he is a short-coated dog, he ought not to be allowed to go abroad when it is raining or when cold winds are blowing without his little jacket on.

It is a good plan to occasionally give a dog a tiny dose of castor oil when you think he is out of sorts. The dose for a lap-dog is a dessert-spoonful, and if you make it warm you will find it more easy to administer. After this, if he still seems to be dull give him one of the following boluses twice a day. It is the neatest little doggie's dinner-pill that I can think of:—Of powdered rhubarb one grain, powdered ginger one grain, sulphate of quinine half a grain, and extract of dandelion three grains. Let any respectable chemist compound this for you, and send you two dozen.

