

THE PRINCE'S ANIMAL FRIENDS

BY GAMBIER BOLTON, F.Z.S.

Illustrated from Photographs by the Author.

ONE of the first things to impress itself on the visitor to Sandringham is the universal love of animals which is so deeply implanted in every member of the Prince of Wales's family.

This, doubtless, has been inherited from the Queen and Prince Consort, who were always most devoted to animals. The moment that the visitor has passed the

this is a home of lovers of animals, for dogs are waiting to welcome one in that cheerful way of theirs which shows immediately that they are accustomed to be made much of, and that they are in the habit of being regarded as friends, and not merely as adjuncts to a palatial house; whilst the entrance-hall itself is hung with many a superb animal trophy from different parts of



Copyright photo by

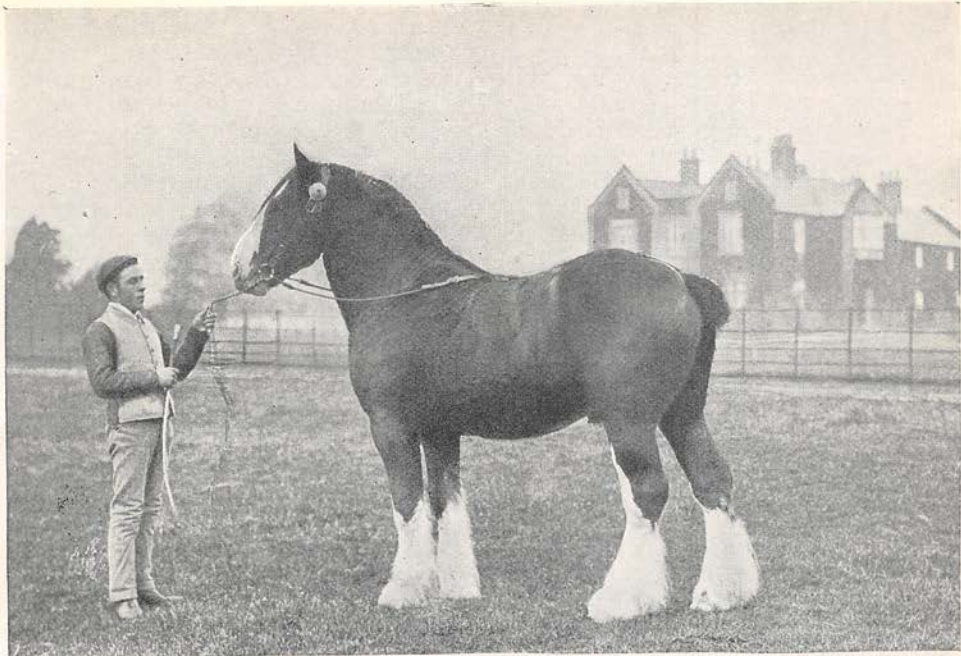
THE PRINCE'S DERBY WINNER, "PERSIMMON."

[Gambier Bolton.]

vigilant constable at the Norfolk gates—those exquisite specimens of wrought-iron work by Messrs. Barnard and Bishop, of Norwich, which caused a sensation at the Paris Exhibition in 1862, and, after purchase by the County of Norfolk and City of Norwich, were presented to the Prince and Princess of Wales in 1863—and has driven through the long avenue up to the entrance-hall, the fact is self-evident that

the world, collected by the Prince during his travels.

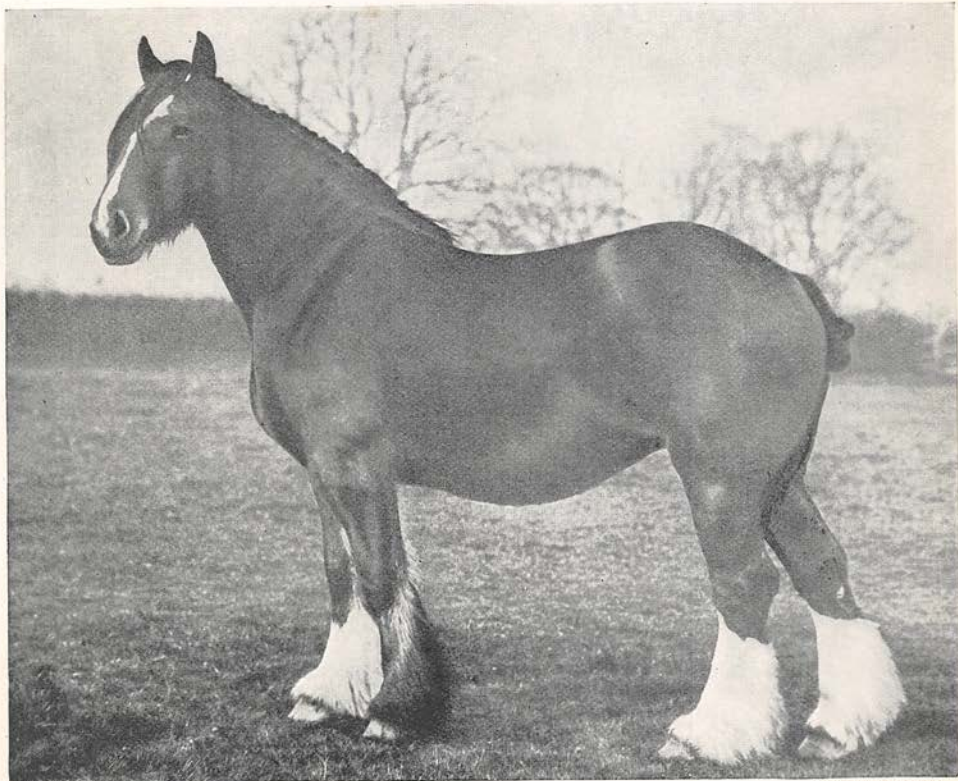
But even more forcibly does one realise the Prince's interest in animals when, on leaving the house, one walks or drives round the picturesque estate and inspects his large collection; when one regards the stables near the house for the carriage and riding horses, the kennels for the many dogs of various breeds, the shire horse, thoroughbred, and



Copyright photo by

PRIZE SHIRE COLT, "SELF HELP."

[Gambier Bolton.]



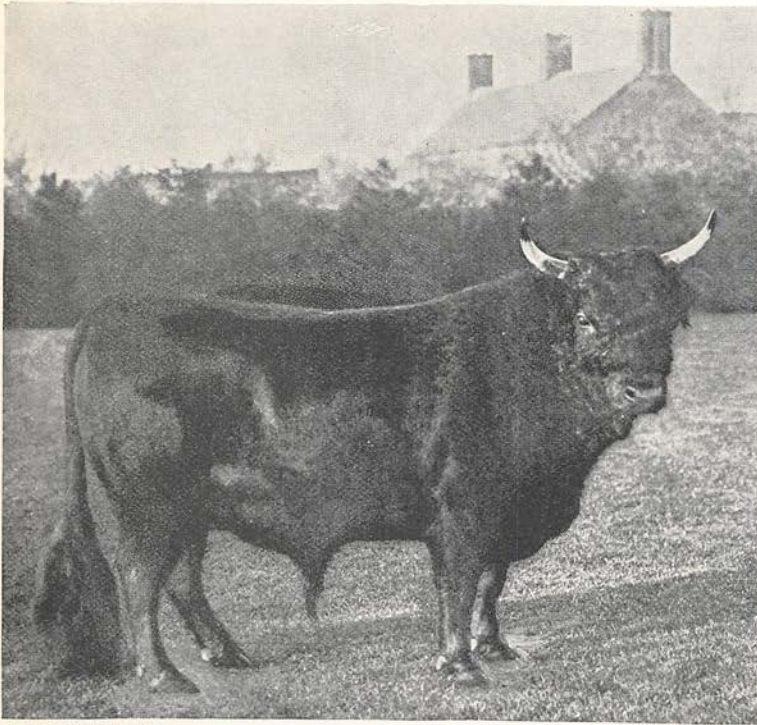
Copyright photo by

BAY MARE, "ELEANOR."

[Gambier Bolton.]

hackney stud farms, the beautifully fitted dairy, and the cattle and sheep farms at Wolferton and Appleton—each one under the special charge of a skilled attendant, and all under the watchful eye of Sir Dighton Probyn, Treasurer and Comptroller of the Household, and Mr. Frank Beck, the agent to the estate—it is then that one realises to the full how true a lover of animals is the owner of Sandringham, and that he has spared no expense in making every provision for their comfort in health and in sickness.

And right well is he repaid, for such



(copyright photo by)

DENTER BULL, "TOMMY DODD."

[Gambier Bolton.]

pictures of health and condition it would be difficult indeed to match anywhere in the wide world; whilst the innumerable prizes won by the Sandringham animals at all the leading horse, cattle, and dog shows of the Kingdom testify to the care that is bestowed on their breeding, housing, and general welfare, and speak well for those persons who, in a subordinate position, devote their time and energies to the successful carrying out of their Royal master's plans and wishes.

To attempt to enumerate or illustrate all the animals here would be impossible in an article of this description; one can only

make a selection of a few that are of special interest. At the head of the list one naturally places "Persimmon," that wonderful Sandringham-born and bred racehorse, the acknowledged king of the collection. He is credited with having won no less than £35,000 in stakes for the Prince, including the all-important Derby, St. Leger, Ascot Gold Cup, and the Eclipse Stakes. The handsome brick building recently erected specially for "Persimmon's" use bears a large brass plate, on which is recorded an account of his extraordinary career in the

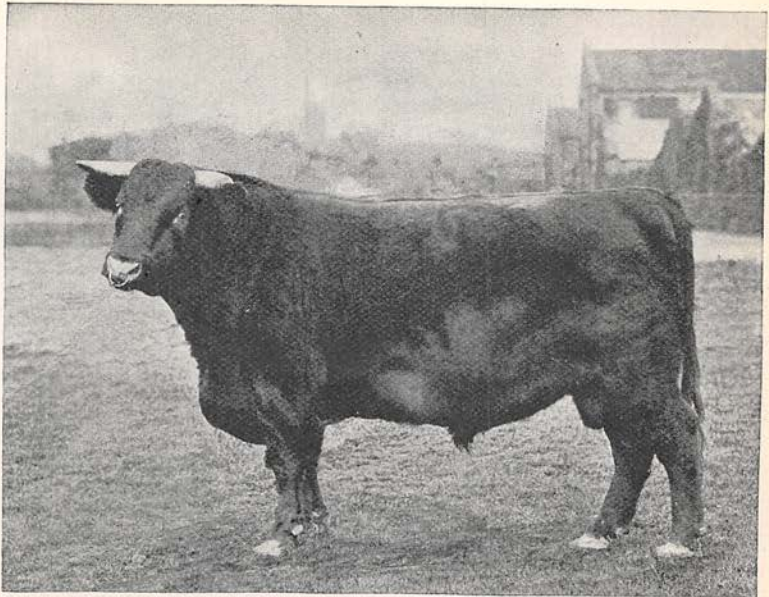
past, a career which we hope to see emulated, at least, by his sons and daughters in the near future. So far as he himself is concerned, his training and racing days are over, but he will live to a ripe old age, let us hope, amidst the most charming surroundings that any horse could possibly wish for, the pride of his owner and the special charge of Mr. Walker, the stud-groom to the thoroughbreds.

The carriage and riding horses are simply innumerable, and, needless to say, are kept in that superb condition which we are accustomed to see in all the Royal stables; whilst at the hack-

ney stud-farm are dozens of these handsome all-round useful horses. The prices which they fetch at the annual sale, and the prizes which they win at all the principal shows in the Kingdom, prove that they are "bad to beat, and good to go," for their action and paces are remarkably fine in every respect, and point to the most careful and skilled training on the part of Mr. Dickie, their stud-groom.

The shire horses are one of the sights of Sandringham, and are so numerous and so excellent that it is difficult to know which to select for special mention and illustration.

That huge bay mare, "Eleanor," a very giantess amongst horses, at once attracts the eye, as she is not only full of quality herself, but her sons and daughters are expected to be heard of in the near future as prizewinners at our biggest shows. She is one of the Prince's favourites, another being the picturesquely marked bay colt, "Self Help," who is now growing into a splendid stallion, and winning prize after prize at many a British show. "Self Help" has probably a distinguished career before him, which will in some measure help to repay the large sums expended on the "shires" at Sandringham, and the care bestowed on them by their devoted attendants.



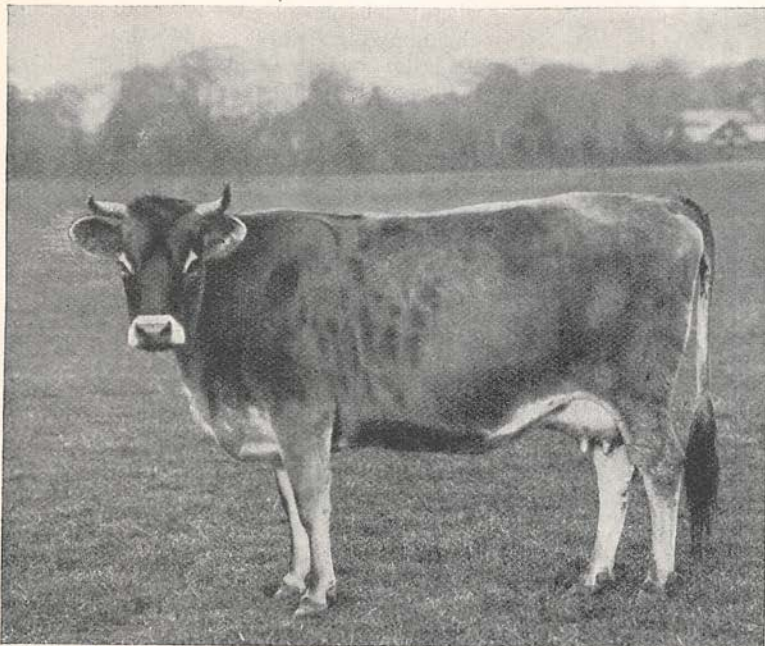
Copyright photo by]

PRIZE SHORTHORN BULL, "VOLUNTEER."

[Gambier Bolton.

Only four of the innumerable cattle can be even mentioned, the magnificent snow-white shorthorn bull, "Crystal Prince," who has won many a prize of recent years in all parts of the country; the red and white shorthorn

bull, "Volunteer," another prizewinner and most excellent sire of young stock now at Appleton; whilst that special favourite of the Prince's, the little dexter bull, "Tommy Dodd," must not be passed over, for he is a curiosity indeed, with his tail touching the ground, and his small stature, which is measured by inches only, reducing him to a veritable dwarf amidst the giant shorthorn, polled, and other breeds at the Wolferton farm. The Channel Island cattle, too, are all carefully selected,



Copyright photo by]

PRINCE EDWARD OF YORK'S JERSEY COW.

[Gambier Bolton.

the one illustrated having a particular interest, as being Prince Edward of York's special cow. Her milk was supplied for his use alone during the early days of his infancy; she may therefore be regarded as an almost historical personage in connection with the development of our future King.

The thoroughbreds, hackneys, shire horses, and cattle are housed in comfortable buildings of the well-to-do farm class, some of which are shown behind the short-horn bull, whilst the house behind "Self Help" is the English home of Prince and Princess Charles of Denmark, the latter still known to us more familiarly as Princess Maud of Wales. It is not until we reach the kennels that we come across specially designed and carefully thought-out model buildings of an extremely handsome type. Their most fortunate inmates are under the care of the head keeper, Mr. Jackson, with C. Brunsdon as kennel-man, and nothing can speak more plainly as to the excellent condition of the Sandringham animals than that of the fifty or more dogs, of all ages and breeds, which receive us with howls of



Copyright photo by]

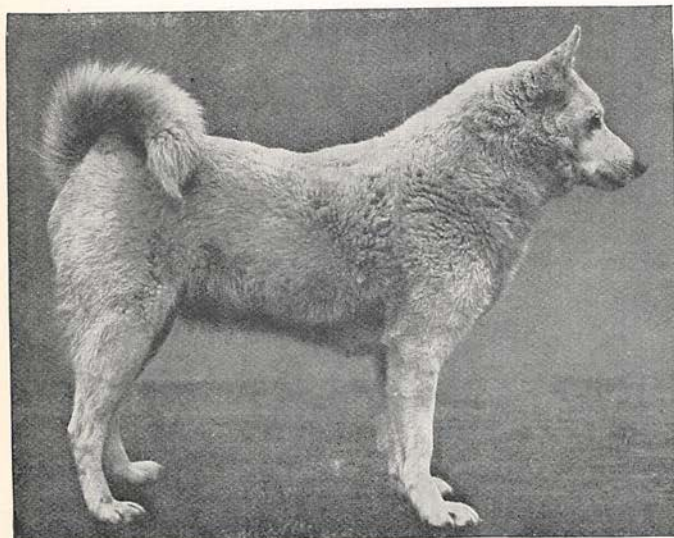
[Gambier Bolton.

THE PRINCE'S FAVOURITE DANDIE DINMONT, "VENUS."

welcome as we pass through the private gateway used by the Prince on his frequent visits to his canine friends.

Here another difficulty awaits us, for which of all these picked and beautiful specimens are we to select for illustration, where each one deserves a paragraph and photograph to itself? We leave it to Brunsdon, and he selects for us the most noted prizewinners or the special favourites of the Prince. We commence with the Lapland sledge-dog, "Perla," who is not only one of the best of her breed, but a prizewinner whenever shown. She is a dull white colour, with the wolf-like pricked ears, tightly curled tail, and dense coat so typical of all the northern races of dogs, and is as good-tempered as she is good-looking.

What a difference between her lot, spent in the happy enjoyment of this comfortable home, and the miseries endured by her relatives and friends, who, north of Sweden and Russia, in a temperature of fifty degrees below zero, are harnessed to sledges, heavily loaded, each



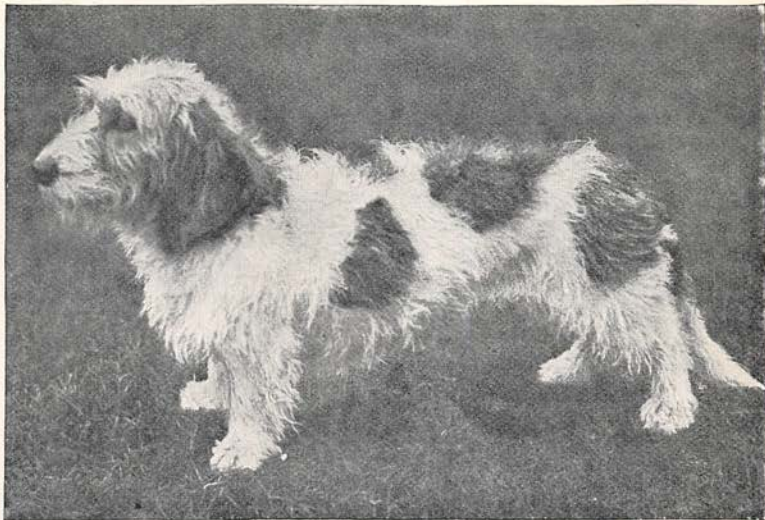
Copyright photo by]

[Gambier Bolton.

LAPLAND SLEDGE-DOG, "PERLA."

dog being expected to drag 150 lbs. weight for thirty miles a day, and day after day, over the rough snows and ice! They are driven by a native armed with a whip, whose lash, cut from the hide of a seal, is 18 to 20 feet long. With this the driver inflicts the most cruel wounds on any dog which he may fancy is shirking its work. These animals must sleep out on the snow, living on any trifle which they can pick up, and when worn out from overwork are eaten by their half-famished comrades, if their owner does not happen to require their bodies for his own use. "Perla" may well be looked upon as a "lucky dog" when one considers what her lot might have been.

The Sandringham kennels possess a breed almost unique for Great Britain in the rough-haired Basset hounds, quaint-looking dogs of the dachshund type, but much more heavily and sturdily built, excellent as hounds and most devoted as companions. One of the best of these is "Beauty," who has taken many prizes recently. Her shaggy coat, long ears, short, stout legs, and sagacious face, give her quite



Copyright photo by]

[Gambier Bolton.

ROUGH BASSET HOUND, "BEAUTY."

"an old man learned" appearance, which was utterly belied by her antics when she was turned into the paddock at the side of the kennels, for she galloped round and round in ever-widening circles, and "carried on" in the most comical fashion imaginable, which appeared all the more ludicrous when one looked at her solemn countenance.

One passes on from yard to yard, noticing Clumber spaniels, retrievers, Great Danes, Borzoi, Scotch deer-hounds, collies, pugs, dachshunds, and other breeds of dogs far too numerous to mention. There are two dogs, however, which must be specially mentioned, the shooting dog—which always walks close to the Prince and Mr. Jackson during the *battues* in November and December, a gentle and well-trained animal, whose many virtues and praises have often been spoken by her Royal master—and last, but by no means least, the now historical "Venus," who had been sent from Sandringham for us to photograph, at the Prince's desire. She is a prizebred and prizewinning Dandie Dinmont, and was originally the pet dog of the late Duke of Clarence and Avondale. After his death, in 1892, the Prince of Wales took possession of her, and, possibly from



Copyright photo by]

[Gambier Bolton.

IN MEMORIAM.

the sad circumstances connected with her history, has always made her his particular pet, for she never leaves him, and on his many journeys she travels in the train or on board the steamer, in charge of his own valet. On one occasion it was our privilege to travel in her company, when it was amusing to notice the way in which she adapted herself to her surroundings; directly her special rug was laid on the seat she jumped up, curled herself round, and passed the four hours' journey in sound sleep.

It is interesting to know that there is a certain rule in connection with "Venus's" daily life that is not allowed to be broken by anyone, either at her home or when on her travels; the Prince allows no one to feed her but himself, and he does this with his own hands every day of his life, no matter where master and dog may be. This is but one of the many instances which might be mentioned of his unvarying thoughtfulness and kindness for his numerous animal friends.



Photo by]

[T. Fall, Baker Street, W.

THE PRINCESS OF WALES AND HER FAVOURITE DOGS.