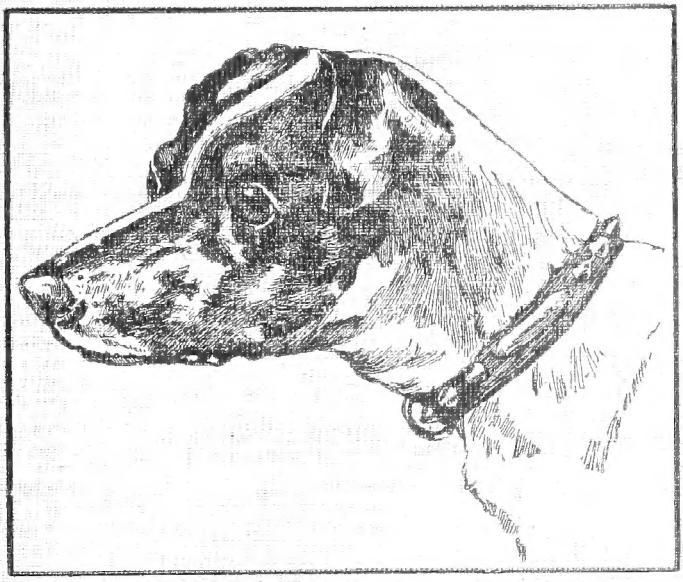
CHAPTERS ON ANIMALS

BY

PHILIP GILBERT HAMERTON

EDITED BY PROF. W. P. TRENT



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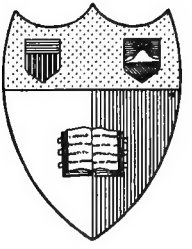

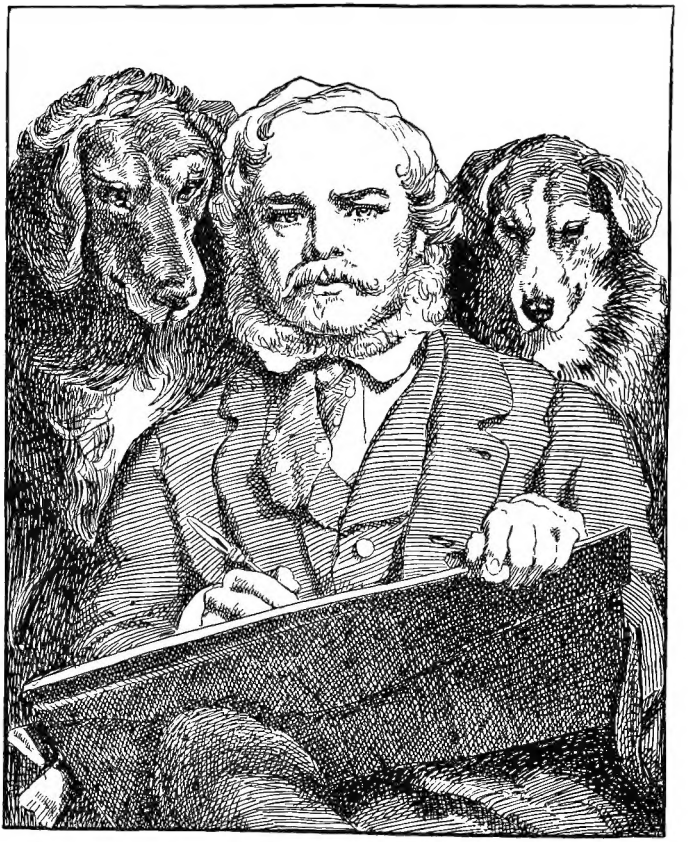

THE CONNOISSEURS.

Pen Drawing by E. H. Saunders, after Sir Edwin Landseer.

CHAPTERS ON ANIMALS

DOGS CATS AND HORSES

BY

PHILIP G. HAMERTON

INTRODUCTION BY

W. P. TRENT

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

ILLUSTRATED WITH PEN DRAWINGS BY E. H. SAUNDERS AND D. L. MUNRO, AFTER SIR E. LANDSEER, SIR JOHN MILLAIS, ROSA BONHEUR, E. VAN MUYDEN, VEYRASSAT, J. L. GÉRÔME, K. BODMER, ETC.

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PREFACE.

PHILIP GILBERT HAMERTON, an art critic of keen insight and wide reputation, whose writings are remarkable for their attractive style, was born in 1834 and died in 1894. The greater portion of his life was spent in France; the rest of it chiefly in one of the wildest and most beautiful parts of Scotland, where he lived as much as possible among his friends, the animals. His wife says that "he never could be without a dog," and the following words, in which he prefaces the book ("Chapters on Animals," London, 1874) from which these pages are taken, together with the chapters themselves, will show what a warm lover and kind-hearted master animals had in him.

"Having been in the habit of loving and observing animals, as people do who live much in the country, I thought that possibly some of my observations, however trifling in themselves, might interest others whose tastes are similar to my own. In this spirit I wrote these chapters, describing what I had seen rather than what other writers had recorded."

The pages here given cannot fail to interest readers of every age. They should, moreover, be in a high degree educative to children, and it is with this object in view that the selection has been made.

Such annotations have been provided under my supervision as are necessary to explain the foreign phrases and some of the allusions, unfamiliarity with which might prove detrimental to the young reader's enjoyment and appreciation of these charming studies.

W. P. TRENT.

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH,
May, 1900.

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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?

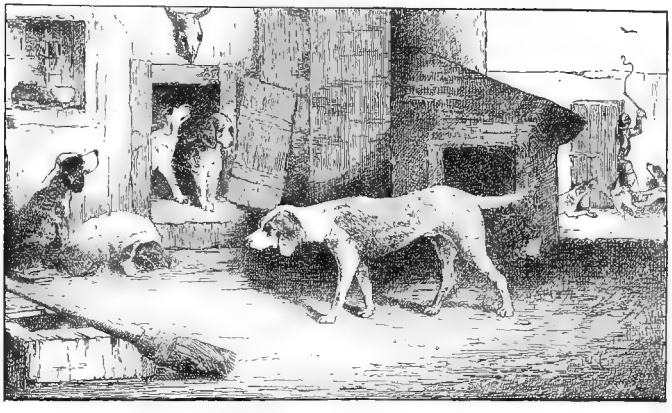
Many a man past the middle of life remembers with a quite peculiar and especial tenderness that one dog which was the dear companion of his boyhood. No other canine friend can ever be to us exactly what that one was. . . . I had a dog of great gifts, exceptionally intelligent, who would obey a look where 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.

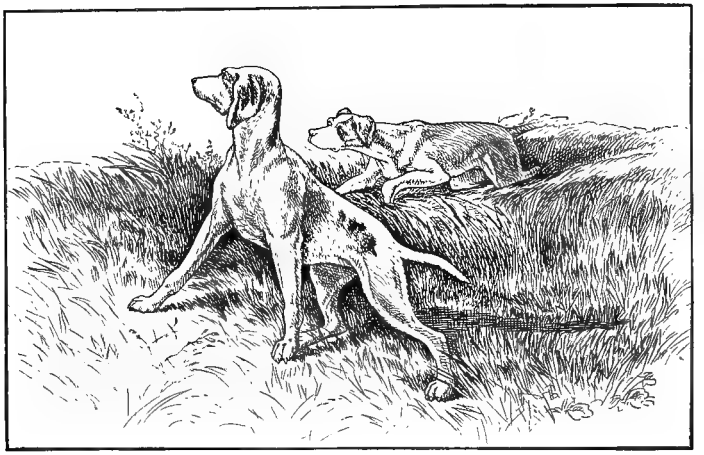
Pen drawing after a lithograph by A. G. Decamps, by E. H. Saunders.

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."

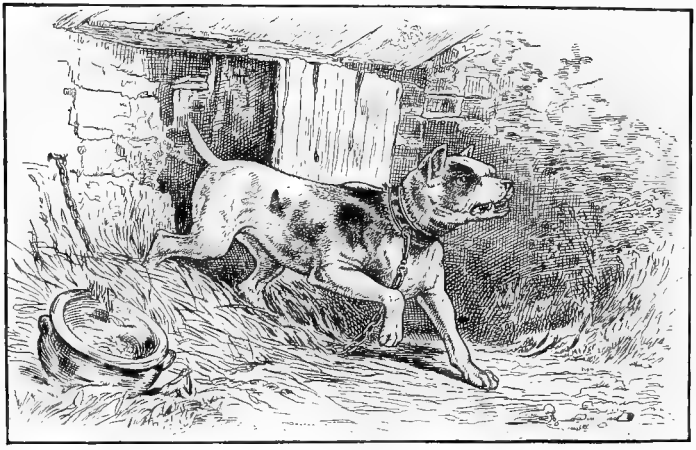
Then he threw it into the stream. . . . The man turned away with a pale, hard face, suffering, in that moment, more than he cared to show, and I went my way carrying with me an impression which is even now as strong as ever it was. I felt that what I had witnessed was a

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.

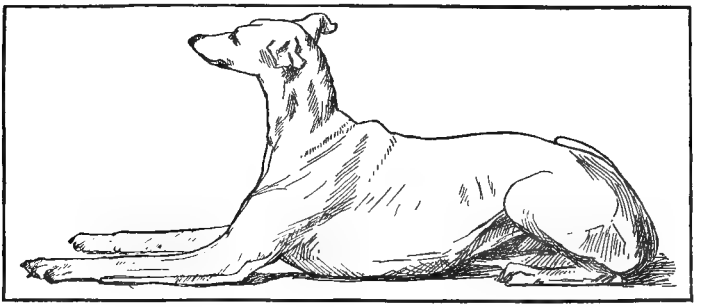
How much do dogs really understand of our language? Perhaps a good deal more than we generally imagine. Please observe that in learning a foreign tongue you arrive at a certain stage where most of what the foreign

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. . . .

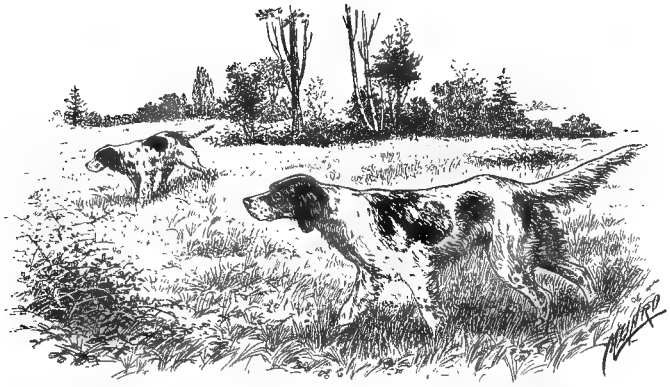
Bellona — the Roman goddess of war.

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.

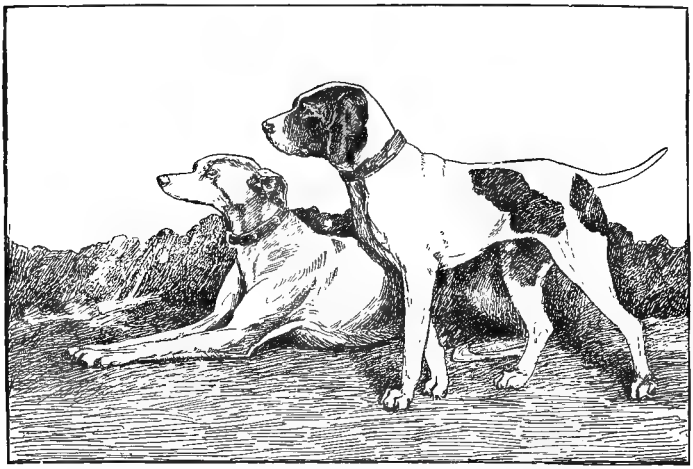
I know a very small dog that was given by his master to a friend who lived sixty miles off. His new proprietor carried him in the inside of a coach; but the next morning the little animal was in his old home again, having found his way across country, and a most fatiguing and bewildering country too, 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 it 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 marvèl 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

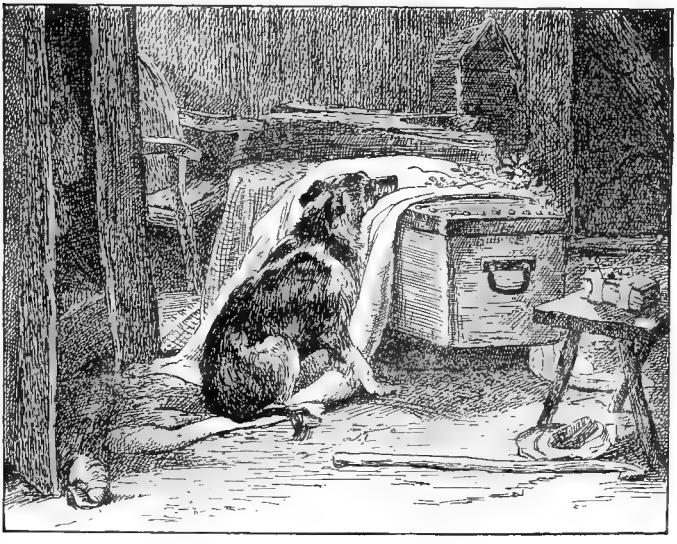
the piercing call. The inert thing in the arm-chair becomes galvanised with sudden life, tumbles down upon the floor, crawls towards the sound, finds the beloved hand, and licks it. They pass whole evenings together still, that gentle master and his poor old friend. And still in that dark decrepitude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

III. CANINE GUESTS.

There is so much in this paper which must naturally seem incredible that I think it necessary to assure the reader how scrupulously I have endeavoured to narrate the facts simply as I saw them. On my honour, the narrative is, if not absolutely true, at least as true as I can make it by a comparison of what I observed myself, with the observation of a dozen other witnesses.

HAVING heard that two very wonderful dogs were performing within fifty miles of my house, I invited them to come and visit me. . . . They were invited to dine and spend the evening; and as the weather was very wet they stayed all night and breakfasted next morning, so that I had every opportunity of making their acquaintance.

Madame du Rouil informed me that her husband had been for ten years a teacher in a deaf-and-dumb institution, which had given him the idea of trying how far a similar method of education might develope the intelligence of dogs. He had also been a conjurer, and these two professions had prepared him for the one he at present exercised. When he began to train his first dog it was not with any idea of future profit, but simply out of curiosity to see the effects of the sort of education which seemed to him best adapted for establishing a close understanding between the human and canine minds. Seeing that the plan succeeded he began to take the dog with him to the entertainments he gave in Paris, and as the public were interested he went on educating his pupil. Since then he has educated two other dogs on the same principles, one of whom has completed her training, whilst the other is an advanced, but not yet a finished, student.

I had a good opportunity, at dinner, of observing the master himself. There was not the faintest trace of anything like charlatanism in his manner. A very quiet, grave, serious, even sad-looking old gentleman, dressed soberly in black, he talked about places he had visited and about the political news of the day. The impression he made upon us was altogether favourable. He reminded me most of some respectable old school-master or librarian, who had seen a good deal of the world and reflected on what he had seen, but whose thoughts were tinged with a deepening gravity, the result of narrowed fortune and weakened health. I learned afterwards that there were ample reasons for this sadness. M. du Rouil had had two sons killed in the Franco-Prussian war and another severely wounded, whilst his daughter, a pretty girl of eighteen, had been killed by a shell at Neuilly in the sanguinary days of the Commune. His house, too, had been sacked by the Communards, and a small business which his wife managed had been put an end to. The capital invested in that little business had been earned by the dog Bianca, of whom, and her daughter Lyda, it is time to give a description.

Bianca, or Blanche, as her master familiarly calls her, is a bitch of the pure *caniche* breed. I use the French word because although we have an English one, "poodle," I rather think that the word poodle does not distinguish between the real *caniche* and the *chien-mouton*, another very intelligent breed from which performing dogs are frequently taken. Of M. du Rouil's three pupils one is a pure *caniche*, the other (Lyda) is a cross between the *caniche* and the spaniel, whilst the third is a *chien-mouton*,

Commune refers to a rising of the people in Paris against the government after the Germans had besieged the city in 1871.

thoroughbred. The *caniche* is silky-haired and has often patches of brown about the face, but the white hair is like snow, whereas the *chien-mouton* approaches both in colour and texture much more nearly to the sheep, and never has any patches of brown. Only Blanche and Lyda came to my house; the other dog has begun to perform in public, but is not yet so accomplished as these two.

CHIEN-MOUTON.

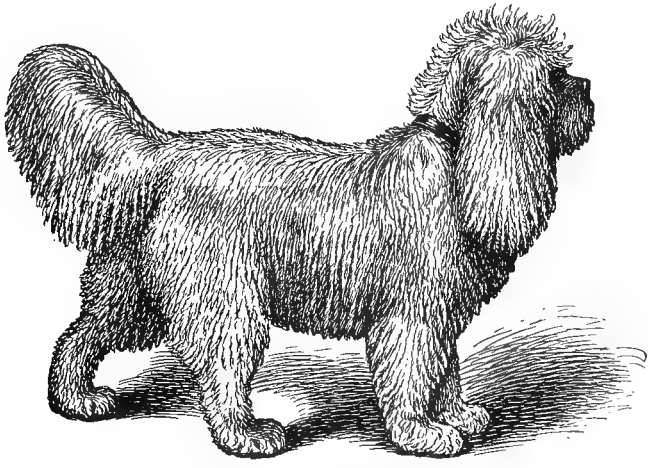
They behaved at dinner exactly like common dogs, but when I offered Blanche a piece of cheese and asked if she knew the word for that substance, her master answered that she could spell it very correctly. I had invited a few friends to meet these learned animals, and when they were assembled in the drawing-room we made the little preparations which M. du Rouil said would be most convenient. A large octagonal library-table was put in the middle of the room with a cloth of one colour and a lamp in the centre. Round this table Madame du Rouil laid cards with all the letters of the alphabet, printed in large capitals. There was also a little hand-bell. At a sign from her master Blanche jumped upon the table and sat in an attitude of expectation.

Then M. du Rouil turned to me and said, "I promised you that the dog should spell *fromage* (cheese). Blanche, spell *fromage*."

Blanche immediately set about her work and brought an F, an R, and an O, then she hesitated.

"You have only given us three letters, and there are seven in the word."

On this, she soon found M, A, G, E, and the word was complete. The next task was a translation. We were invited to write upon a slate any Latin, German, or English



CHIEN-CANICHE.

word in which the same letter did not occur twice. Some one present wrote, in German hand-writing, the word Pferd (horse), and M. du Rouil showed the slate to Blanche. She either read it or pretended to read it, and made a sign that she understood by putting the slate down with her paw.

"Now give us the French for that word;" she immediately brought C, and then H, E, V, A, L.

"As you are spending the evening at an Englishman's house, Blanche, would you oblige him by translating that word into English?"

Without hesitation the dog gave me an H, and with very little hesitation the remaining letters, O, R, S, E.

Notwithstanding her success, the dog seemed to set about her work very unwillingly and it was evidently a great effort to her. The authority of the master, though very gently exercised, appeared to be irresistible, exactly like that of a mesmerist over his patient. Blanche complained audibly the whole time with a sound between growling and whining, and occasionally a short bark of uneasiness. Observing this, I said that for the present that part of the performance might be considered satisfactory, and we would pass on to something else. M. du Rouil then told us that Blanche could correct bad spelling, and invited me to write a word on the slate with an intentional fault in it.

He showed the slate to the dog, and said, "There's a fault here, Blanche; find it out, and show us first what letter ought to be effaced."

The word I had written was *maison* (house), but I had spelt it *mêson*. The dog immediately brought the letter E. Then M. du Rouil requested Blanche to show us what letters ought to be substituted, and she fetched an A and an I.

As Blanche seemed tired and worried with this kind of work I intervened on her behalf, and she was allowed to go and curl herself up in a corner, and eat cakes. Lyda took her place on the table, and a set of figures were substituted for the alphabet. Some arithmetical problems were written on the slate and she resolved them (or appeared to resolve them) without a single misake. A very pretty incident occurred at this period of the performance, for the master proposed a little mental arithmetic.

"Now, Lyda," he said, "I want to see whether you understand division. Suppose you had ten lumps of sugar, and you met ten Prussian dogs, how many lumps would

you, *une Française* (a French lady), give to each of the Prussians?"

Lyda very decidedly replied to this with a cipher.

"But now suppose that you divided your lumps of sugar with me, how many would you give me?" Lyda took up the figure 5, and presented it to her master.

This was pretty enough, but for reasons of my own I was much more interested in something that happened immediately afterwards.

M. du Rouil *quitted the room*, the door was closed after him, and he called out, "Which is the least valuable figure?"

Lyda brought me the cipher.

Then her master said, "Which is the most valuable figure?" the dog brought me the 9.

After this I asked for different figures, which the dog gave me without a single mistake.

It was Blanche's turn next, but this time instead of being surrounded with the letters of the alphabet she was surrounded with playing-cards. M. du Rouil had another pack in his hand, and told us to choose a card. "Blanche, what card has been chosen?" The dog always took up the right card in her teeth. Then she played a game with a young lady, and lost it, after which she rushed from her seat into the corner with an air of the deepest humiliation.

A very surprising thing followed the game of cards. M. du Rouil begged me to go into another room and leave a light on the floor with a pack of cards arranged all round it and close the doors as nearly as possible without shutting them. This being done, he begged any one present to whisper in the dog's ear the name of a card to be fetched by her from the other room. A lady whispered the "knave of hearts," if I remember rightly, but in so low a voice as to be inaudible even by the dog, which made a mistake,

and brought something else. She was then requested to bring the ace of spades, and she soon came back from the dining-room with the ace of spades in her teeth.

Both the dogs played a game of dominoes. This was managed as follows: the dogs sat on chairs opposite each other, and took up the domino that was wanted; but the master or mistress placed it, and kept announcing the state of the game. Their distress when they could not go on without drawing upon the bank was expressed in piteous whines, and amused us all immensely. Lyda was the loser, and she precipitately retreated to hide herself, with an evident consciousness of defeat.

I had not quite done with my literary examination of Bianca, so I had the alphabet replaced and began again. I asked her what was the English for *chien*, and she put the letters D, O, G, into my own hand. Then I asked her to spell *feu* (fire), for me, and she gave me the three letters F, E, U. Here an incident occurred which, notwithstanding the marvels we have witnessed, thrilled us all with new amazement. M. du Rouil interposed, and said, "Blanche, you have spelled the word correctly in the singular, but cannot you give the plural?" My readers may believe me or not, as they like, but the truth is, that she took up the letter X between her teeth and came to me and placed it in my hand. I asked her to give me the English for *feu*, and wrote it down and handed it to M. du Rouil, but he said she had not yet learned that word, and this deficit in her education could not be remedied at once.

During the whole of this entertainment my mind was intently occupied with a single problem, *What did the dogs really know?* I had been told a few days previously, by a gentleman who had very keen powers of observation, that a system of signals existed between M. du Rouil and his

dogs, by which he made them understand which card they ought to take, and this gentleman believed that he had detected the most important signal of all. "When M. du Rouil means *no* he advances towards the table, and when he means *yes* he retires from it." Another observer, younger and much less intelligent, had told me that M. du Rouil, having been a teacher of the deaf and dumb, simply used signs with his fingers, which the dogs had learned to read. These two theories may be disposed of very summarily. When the entertainment began with the literary examination of Bianca, M. du Rouil stood on the hearth-rug, with his back to the fire, and did not advance or retreat one inch; whilst at the conclusion, when she gave the plural to the word *feu*, I myself occupied M. du Rouil's place, and he was seated in an arm-chair, like the other spectators, and with his back to the table. It is clear, therefore, that the theory about advancing and retreating is not an explanation. Now, as for the other theory, that he communicates with the dogs by means of manual signs, like those used with the deaf and dumb, I need only observe that M. du Rouil's hands were as motionless as his feet. When we began with *fromage*, *pferd*, etc., he held a tray in his right hand, the arm being pendent by his side, whilst the left hand was behind his back, the fingers closed, and as motionless as those of a bronze Napoleon on a chimney-piece. He did not even reserve to himself such liberty of motion as might have been secured by taking the letters from the dog, for when I proposed to take the letters myself he made no objection whatever, but sat down quietly and let me do the showman's work. It is certain that the communication was not made by any motion of the body; this, at least, I can affirm quite positively. Was it done by the expression of the eyes? At first we thought that this might be just

possible; but the table was octagonal, and the dog found the letters when her back was turned to her master as easily as when she could look him in the face; besides, when M. du Rouil was seated, and I was the showman, he did not look towards the dogs at all, but at the fire. Whatever communication did take place must have been entirely by intonations of the voice, but we could hear these as well as the dogs could, and with all our listening we could detect nothing like a regularly recurring and easily recognisable signal. When he asked Blanche to turn *feu* into the plural, he did it exactly with the words and in the manner that you would use to a child at school. He often encouraged the dogs with such words as *Allons, allons! Cherchez, cherchez bien! Vite, vite, vite!* but he went on with these encouragements exactly in the same words and in the same tone after the word was completed to put the dog's knowledge to the test, and she went on seeking, and then whined and rang a bell to say that there were no more letters needed. I had been told that Blanche could, of course, spell any word that her master could spell, because she only took the letters he fixed upon, yet he said she could not spell *fire* for me. This, however, may have been a ruse on his part, and I do not insist upon it.

If the dogs had appeared to know rather less we should have believed that the knowledge was really theirs, but then they seemed to know too much. Lyda showed us some tricks with numbers, that are familiar to arithmeticians, but clearly beyond the canine comprehension. This satisfied me that some communication existed, and yet I was utterly unable to detect it. It is clear, therefore, that the dogs understood and acted upon a system of signalling which the intelligence of the human spectators was not

Allons . . . Vite. Go on, go on! fetch, fetch it! quick, quick, quick!

keen enough to discover. I had invited several intelligent friends, and told them previously that my object was to discover the secret of the confederacy between M. du Rouil and his dogs, begging their best assistance. They watched him as closely as I did, but could detect nothing.

Remembering an odd notion of Sydney Smith's, that people might be taught to read by odours, the idea occurred to me that M. du Rouil might contrive to touch the cards that the dogs selected, and curiously enough they certainly smelt them rather than looked at them. But how could such a supposition be reconcilable with the fact that M. du Rouil kept at a distance from the table, and could not possibly foresee the words that we asked for? I only mention this hypothesis of reading by odour to show to what straits we were reduced in our guessing.

As the dogs and their owner were to stay all night at my house, I determined to have a quiet talk with him when everybody else was gone, and get at the secret if I could. So when we were quite alone together I plied him with indiscreet questions, and he was frank enough up to a certain point, but beyond that point absolutely impenetrable.

He confessed at once that there was a secret, but he said, "*La ficelle est bien cachée*," as indeed it was. According to his account, which was probably quite true as far as it went, the dogs were like actors, who had not quite thoroughly mastered their parts, and he himself was like the prompter near the footlights. To begin with, Blanche really knew the letters of the alphabet and the playing-cards by their names, and Lyda really knew all the figures. In addition to this, he said that Blanche had studied about a hundred and fifty words in different languages, something like twenty in each language, words

La ficelle . . cachée. The secret is well kept.

most likely to be called for, such as *chien*, dog, horse, cat, *pferd*, *canis*, etc., etc. The restriction to one set of letters simplified the business considerably. But M. du Rouil confessed quite frankly that she could not get through a word unless he were present. On the other hand he could not make her spell a word in public that she had not before practised with him in private. So it was with Lyda and the figures. She really knew the figures when isolated, and this had been satisfactorily demonstrated when he left the room, and she gave me the number asked for, up to 9. But he would not tell me the secret of the confederacy. I told him what guesses had been made on the subject, but he simply answered that I must have observed how impossible it was for him to make signs with hands or feet when he moved neither hand nor foot.

Would he give me some account of the earlier stages of training through which these dogs had passed? Yes, very willingly. The first thing was to teach a dog to fetch an object, the next to make him discriminate between one of two very different objects placed together, and bring one or the other as it was mentioned by its name. In beginning the alphabet he put two most dissimilar letters side by side to begin with, such as an O and an I, avoiding the confusion of similar ones, such as O and Q, or B and R. Gradually, the dog became observant enough to discriminate between letters in which the difference was not so marked. M. du Rouil told me that he had found the greatest difficulty in teaching Blanche to distinguish between the knaves and kings in playing-cards, but that she learned the aces very promptly. With regard to the time required for educating a dog sufficiently to perform in public, he said that an hour a day for eighteen months was the time required, and he preferred a single hour to a

longer lesson, because the dog's powers of attention were soon fatigued. He added, that it was impossible to educate a dog at any other time than the middle of the night, because the slightest sound disturbed it, and made it forget the work that had to be done. I inquired what, after his ten years' experience, was his opinion of the intelligence of dogs, and he answered, with great emphasis, "that it is infinite."

Beyond this he would tell nothing. The only supposition not immediately annihilated by the facts, is that the *tone of voice* used in uttering the words "*Allons, allons; Cherchez, cherchez bien; Cherchez encore; Vite, vite, vite,*" conveyed to the animal, "You are far from the card," "You are nearer the card," "That is the card you must take up;" but even here there were great difficulties, for M. du Rouil continued, as far as we could detect, in the same tone after the completion of the word, and yet the dog never brought a superfluous letter. The marvellousness of so perfect a confederacy may be better understood by supposing a human confederate in the dog's place. Such a human confederate, not knowing the words to be composed, would be very liable to make mistakes, and bring a wrong letter from time to time; but Blanche never made one mistake — never brought one wrong letter.

I certainly observed that when she got near the letter she always hesitated between it and its neighbours on each side, but she always finally took the letter that was wanted.

She got on much faster with one or two words than she did with the others, and seemed to need less encouragement. My conclusion was, that from long practice with certain familiar words (she had worked at the business daily for several years) she could compose those words

Cherchez encore. Seek it again.

with very little help. The last word, *feu*, and the X to make a plural of it, were given quickly, others not so quickly. The use of the X was clever, but not so surprising as it seemed to us at the moment, for with a dog so well trained as Blanche it would be easy, I should imagine, to associate the word "plural" with the image of the letter X. Very probably Blanche had been taught, in her private lessons, to fetch that letter whenever "*pluriel*" (plural) was asked for. As for the translation, without going so far in credulity as to fancy that the dog really translated, I may suggest that from long practice there would certainly arise in her mind an association of ideas between *cheval* and *horse*, *chien* and *dog*, since the words must have been asked for hundreds or thousands of times in that close connection, so that she would at least be better prepared to spell *dog*, after having just spelt *chien*.

An incident occurred in the course of the evening which showed some understanding of language. A little girl wanted Blanche to come to her, but the dog kept away, on which Madame du Rouil said, "Blanche, allez saluer la petite demoiselle." She immediately went up to the little girl and made a formal obeisance. A lady present, the daughter of a landowner in the Sologne, told us that on her father's estate the shepherd's dogs were taught to go in four directions at the word of command — *à droite*, *à gauche*, *en avant*, and *en arrière*.

The conclusion we arrived at was, that the performance resulted from an extremely clever combination of previous training with scarcely perceptible prompting, that the dogs were really wonderfully educated and knew a great deal, though not so much as they appeared to know. The game

à droite . . arrière. Right, left, forward, backward.
Allez . . . demoiselle. Go and greet the little lady.

at dominoes was decidedly the prettiest instance of their real knowledge, for they took up the numbers just as they were asked for. It seems evident that an intelligent dog might be taught to know a considerable variety of objects by their names.

M. du Rouil told us an anecdote of Blanche which may be easily believed by any one who has made her acquaintance. He was going home one night from Paris to Neuilly, after a performance, and saw a man who was seeking for some object that he had lost. "What are you seeking?" he asked. The man answered that he had lost 280 francs. "Possibly my dog may be able to find them for you; have you any money left? If you have, show her a piece of gold. *Allez, cherchez, Blanche!*" The dog set out and fetched first one piece of gold and then another and then a banknote till the 280 francs were completed. Then followed many other anecdotes about dogs of which I select these. A lady said that she had known a dog that belonged to a celebrated publisher in Paris who had a country-house at Auteuil. Every Friday his family went to Auteuil, and always regularly found the dog there on their arrival. He went alone, through Paris, from the *Rue de l'Ancienne Comédie*, and he never made a mistake about the day. The family frequently went out on other days, but on these occasions the dog stayed contentedly at home. Another dog that she had also known had been bred in a strictly Catholic family, and would never touch meat on a Friday. Bets were made, and the greatest temptations used to overcome his conscientious scruples, but always in vain. He was shut up in a room during a whole Friday with meat in his reach, but preferred to suffer hunger rather than touch it. One of my friends

Allez, cherchez, Blanche! Go seek it, Blanche.

mentioned a dog that he knew quite well which lost its master three years ago from small-pox, and ever since then, in all weathers, has paid a daily visit to the cemetery, where it mourns upon his grave. The widow goes to the grave on Sundays after mass, the dog knows this, waits for her at the church-door, and accompanies her.

Lyda has one quality which would make her invaluable to an artist. Every painter who has attempted to draw dogs knows how provokingly restless they always are, and how impossible it is to study them as we do the human model. But Lyda *poses* as perfectly as any human model at the Royal Academy. I made a drawing of her the morning after the performance and was delighted. *Literally not a hair stirred during the whole time.* She had the stillness of a stuffed animal in a museum, with that perfection of living form which no taxidermist was ever yet able to imitate or preserve. A dog so perfectly trained as Lyda would be a priceless treasure for an animal-painter. Blanche *poses* fairly well, but she is not to be compared with Lyda. I wish I could give some notion of Lyda's eyes; they have the strangest half-human expression, as if there were half a soul behind them. Her master says that she looks at him with an intensity that is quite painful when she is trying with all her might to understand what he wishes her to learn. I declare that this creature's looks are enough to frighten you if you dwell upon them, it seems as if some unhappy child-soul had been imprisoned in that canine shape. Are these poor dogs happy in their strange, unnatural life? They are tenderly cared for, and their master says that whoever beats a dog gives evidence of his own personal stupidity, for a dog always tries his best to understand, and you can make things clearest to him by gentle teaching if you know how to teach at all.

IV. CATS.

One evening before dinner-time the present writer had occasion to go into a dining-room where the cloth was already laid, the glasses all in their places on the sideboard and table, and the lamp and candles lighted. A cat, which was a favourite in the house, finding the door ajar, entered softly after me, and began to make a little exploration after his manner. I have a fancy for watching animals when they think they are not observed, so I affected to be entirely absorbed in the occupation which detained me there, but took note of the cat's proceedings without in any way interrupting them. The first thing he did was to jump upon a chair, and thence upon the sideboard. There was a good deal of glass and plate upon that piece of furniture, but nothing as yet which, in the cat's opinion, was worth purloining: so he brought all his paws together on the very edge of the board, the two forepaws in the middle, the others on both sides, and sat balancing himself in that attitude for a minute or two, whilst he contemplated the long glittering vista of the table. As yet there was not an atom of anything eatable upon it, but the cat probably thought he might as well ascertain whether this were so or not by a closer inspection, for with a single spring he cleared the abyss and alighted noiselessly on the table-cloth. He walked all over it and left no trace; he passed amongst the slender glasses, fragile-stemmed, like air-bubbles cut in half and balanced on spears of ice; yet he disturbed nothing, broke nothing,

A FASCINATING TALE.

Pen drawing by E. H. Saunders, after Madame Ronner.

anywhere. When his inspection was over he slipped out of sight, having been perfectly inaudible from the beginning, so that a blind person could only have suspected his visit by that mysterious sense which makes the blind aware of the presence of another creature.

This little scene reveals one remarkable characteristic of the feline nature, the innate and exquisite refinement of its behaviour. It would be infinitely difficult, probably even impossible, to communicate a delicacy of this kind to any animal by teaching. The cat is a creature of most refined and subtle perceptions naturally. Why should she tread so carefully? It is not from fear of offending her master and incurring punishment, but because to do so is in conformity with her own ideal of behaviour; exactly as a lady would feel vexed with herself if she broke anything in her own drawing-room, though no one would blame her *maladresse* (awkwardness), and she would never feel the loss.

The contrast in this respect between cats and other animals is very striking. I will not wrong the noble canine nature so far as to say that it has no delicacy, but its delicacy is not of this kind, not in actual touch, as the cat's is. The motions of the cat, being always governed by the most refined sense of touch in the animal world, are typical in quite a perfect way of what we call tact in the human world. And as a man who has tact exercises it on all occasions for his own satisfaction, even when there is no positive need for it, so a cat will walk daintily and observantly everywhere, whether amongst the glasses on a dinner-table or the rubbish in a farm-yard.

It is easy to detract from the admirableness of this delicate quality in the cat by a reference to the necessities of her life in a wild state. Any one not much disposed to enter into imaginative sentimentalities about

animals might say to us, "What you admire so much as a proof of ladylike civilisation in the cat, is rather an evidence that she has retained her savage habits. When she so carefully avoids the glasses on the dinner-table she is not thinking of her behaviour as a dependent on civilised man, but acting in obedience to hereditary habits of caution in the stealthy chase, which is the natural accomplishment of her species. She will stir no branch of a shrub lest her fated bird escape her, and her feet are noiseless that the mouse may not know of her coming." This, no doubt, would be a probable account of the origin of that fineness of touch and movement which belongs to cats, but the fact of that fineness remains. In all the domestic animals, and in man himself, there are instincts and qualities still more or less distinctly traceable to a savage state, and these qualities are often the very basis of civilisation itself. That which in the wild cat is but the stealthy cunning of the hunter, is refined in the tame one into a habitual gentleness, often very agreeable to ladies, who dislike the boisterous demonstrations of the dog and his incorrigible carelessness.

This quality of extreme caution, which makes the cat avoid obstacles that a dog would dash through without a thought, makes her at the same time somewhat reserved and suspicious in all the relations of her life. If a cat has been allowed to run half wild this suspicion can never be overcome. There was a numerous population of cats in this half-wild state for some years in the garrets of my house. Some of these were exceedingly fine, handsome animals, and I very much wished to get them into the rooms we inhabited, and so domesticate them; but all my blandishments were useless. The nearest approach to success was in the case of a superb white-and-black ani-

mal, who, at last, would come to me occasionally, and permit me to caress his head, because I scratched him behind the ears. Encouraged by this measure of confidence, I went so far on one occasion as to lift him a few inches from the ground; on which he behaved himself very much like a wild cat just trapped in the woods, and

WILD CAT.

Pen drawing by D. Munro, after the etching by Karl Bodmer.

for some days after it was impossible even to get near him. He never came down-stairs in a regular way, but communicated with the outer world by means of roofs and trees, like the other untameable creatures in the garrets. On returning home after an absence I sought him vainly, and have never encountered him since.

This individual lived on the confines of civilisation, and it is possible that his tendency to friendliness might have

been developed into a feeling more completely trustful by greater delicacy and care. I happened to mention him to an hotel-keeper who was unusually fond of animals, and unusually successful in winning their affections. He told me that his own cats were remarkable for their uncommon tameness, being very much petted and caressed, and constantly in the habit of seeing numbers of people who came to the hotel, and he advised me to try a kitten of his breed. This kitten, from hereditary civilisation, behaved with the utmost confidence from the beginning, and, with the exception of occasional absences for his own purposes, has lived with me regularly enough. In winter he generally sleeps upon my dog, who submits in patience; and I have often found him on horseback in the stable, not from any taste for equestrianism, but simply because a horse-cloth is a perpetual warmer when there is a living horse beneath it.

All who have written upon cats are unanimous in the opinion that their caressing ways bear reference simply to themselves. My cat loves the dog and horse exactly with the tender sentiment we have for foot-warmers and railway rugs during a journey in the depth of winter, nor have I ever been able to detect any worthier feeling towards his master. Ladies are often fond of cats, and pleasantly encourage the illusion that they are affectionate; it is said too that very intellectual men have often a liking for the same animal. In both these cases the attachment seems to be due more to certain other qualities of the cat than to any strength of sentiment on his part. Of all animals that we can have in a room with us, the cat is the least disturbing. Dogs bring so much dirt into houses that many ladies have a positive horror of them; squirrels leap about in a manner highly dangerous to the ornaments of a

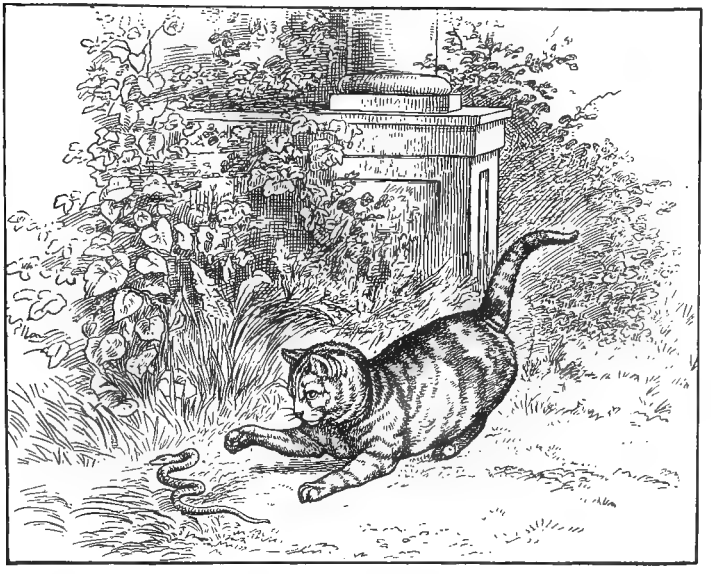
drawing-room; whilst monkeys are so incorrigibly mischievous that it is impossible to tolerate them, notwithstanding the nearness of the relationship. But you may have a cat in the room with you without anxiety about anything except eatables. He will rob a dish if he can get at it, but he will not, except by the rarest of accidents, displace a sheet of paper or upset an inkstand. The presence of a cat is positively soothing to a student, as the presence of a quiet nurse is soothing to the irritability of an invalid. It is agreeable to feel that you are not absolutely alone, and it seems to you, as you work, as if the cat took care that all her movements should be noiseless, purely out of consideration for your comfort. Then, if you have time to caress her, you know that there will be purring responses, and why inquire too closely into the sincerity of her gratitude? There have been instances of people who surrounded themselves with cats; old maids have this fancy sometimes, which is intelligible, because old maids delight in having objects on which to lavish their inexhaustible kindness, and their love of neatness and comfort is in harmony with the neat habits of these comfort-appreciating creatures. A dog on velvet is evidently out of place, he would be as happy on clean straw, but a cat on velvet does not awaken any sense of the incongruous. It is more difficult to understand how men of business ever take to cats. A well-known French politician, who certainly betrayed nothing feminine in his speeches, was so fond of cats that it was impossible to dine peaceably at his house on account of four licensed feline marauders which promenaded upon the dinner-table, helping themselves to everything, and jumping about the shoulders of the guests. It may be observed that in Paris cats frequently appear upon the table in another shape. I once stayed in a house not very far from the great tri-

umphal arch; and from my window, at certain hours of the day, might be observed a purveyor of dead cats who supplied a small cheap restaurant in a back street. I never went to eat at the restaurant, but ascertained that it had a certain reputation for a dish supposed to be made of rabbits. During the great siege, many Parisians who may frequently have eaten cat without knowing it (as you also may perchance have done, respected reader) came to eat cat with clear knowledge of the true nature of the feast, and they all seemed to agree that it was very good. Our prejudices about the flesh we use for food are often inconsistent, the most reasonable one seems to be a preference for vegetable feeders, yet we eat lobsters and pike. The truth is that nobody who eats even duck can consistently have a horror of cat's flesh on the ground of the animal's habits. And although the cat is a carnivorous animal, it has a passionate fondness for certain vegetable substances, delighting in the odour of valerian, and in the taste of asparagus, the former to ecstasy, the latter to downright gluttony.

Since artists cannot conveniently have lions and tigers in their studios, they sometimes like to have cats merely that they may watch the ineffable grace of their motions. Stealthy and treacherous as they are, they have yet a quite peculiar finish of style in action, far surpassing in certain qualities of manner the most perfectly-trained action of horses, or even the grace of the roe-deer or the gazelle. All other animals are stiff in comparison with the felines, all other animals have distinctly bodies supported by legs, reminding one of the primitive toy-maker's conception of a quadruped, a cylinder on four sticks, with a neck and head at one end and a tail at the other. But the cat no

The triumphal arch in Paris, is at the end of the Champs Élysées.

more recalls this rude anatomy than does a serpent. From the tips of his whiskers to the extremities of tail and claws he is so much living india-rubber. One never thinks of muscles and bones whilst looking at him (*has* he any muscles and bones?), but only of the reserved electric life that lies wait-



CAT AND SERPENT.

Pen drawing by D. Munro, after Karl Bodmer.

ing under the softness of the fur. What bursts of energy the creature is capable of! I once shut up a half-wild cat in a room and he flew about like a frightened bird, or like leaves caught in a whirlwind. He dashed against the window-panes like sudden hail, ran up the walls like arrested water, and flung himself everywhere with such rapidity, that he filled as much space, and filled it almost as dangerously, as twenty flashing swords. And yet this

incredibly wild energy is in the creature's quiet habits subdued with an exquisite moderation. The cat always uses precisely the necessary force, other animals roughly employ what strength they happen to possess without reference to the small occasion. One day I watched a young cat playing with a daffodil. She sat on her hind-legs and patted the flower with her paws, first with one paw and then with the other, making the light yellow bell sway from side to side, yet not injuring a petal or a stamen. She took a delight, evidently, in the very delicacy of the exercise, whereas a dog or a horse has no enjoyment of delicacy in his own movements, but acts strongly when he is strong, without calculating whether the force used may not be in great part superfluous. This proportioning of the force to the need is well known to be one of the evidences of refined culture, both in manners and in the fine arts. If animals could speak as fabulists have feigned, the dog would be a blunt, blundering, out-spoken, honest fellow, but the cat would have the rare talent of never saying a word too much. A hint of the same character is conveyed by the sheathing of the claws, and also by the contractability of the pupil of the eye. The hostile claws are invisible, and are not shown when they are wanted, yet are ever sharp and ready. The eye has a narrow pupil in broad daylight, receiving no more sunshine than is agreeable, but it will gradually expand as twilight falls, and clear vision needs a larger and larger surface. Some of these cat-qualities are very desirable in criticism. The claws of a critic ought to be very sharp, but not perpetually prominent, and his eye ought to see far into rather obscure subjects without being dazzled by plain daylight.

It is odd that, notwithstanding the extreme beauty of cats, their elegance of motion, the variety and intensity of

their colour, they should be so little painted by considerable artists. Almost all the pictures of cats which I remember were done by inferior men, often by artists of a very low grade indeed. The reason for this is probably, that although the cat is a refined and very voluptuous animal, it is so wanting in the nobler qualities as to fail in winning the serious sympathies of noble and generous-hearted men.

Mr. Manet once very appropriately introduced a black cat on the bed of a Parisian lorette, and this cat became quite famous for a week or two in all the Parisian newspapers, being also cleverly copied by the caricaturists. No other painted cat ever attracted so much attention, indeed "Le chat de M. Manet" amused Paris as Athens amused itself with the dog of *Alcibiades*.

M. Manet's cat had an awful look, and depths of meaning were discoverable in its eyes of yellow flame set in the blackness of the night. There has always been a feeling that a black cat was not altogether "canny." Many of us, if we were quite sincere, would confess to a superstition about black cats. They seem to know too much, and is it not written that their ancestors were the companions and accomplices of witches in the times of old? Who can tell what baleful secrets may not have been transmitted through their generations? There can be no doubt that cats know a great deal more than they choose to tell us, though occasionally they may let a secret out in some unguarded moment. Shelley the poet, who had an intense sense of the supernatural, narrates the following history, as he heard it from Mr. G. Lewis: —

M. Manet, a famous French painter.
The Black Cat; see the tale by Edgar Allan Poe.
The dog of Alcibiades; see Plutarch's Life.

"A gentleman on a visit to a friend who lived on the skirts of an extensive forest on the east of Germany lost his way. He wandered for some hours among the trees, when he saw a light at a distance. On approaching it, he was surprised to observe that it proceeded from the interior of a ruined monastery. Before he knocked, he thought it prudent to look through the window. He saw a multitude of cats assembled round a small grave, four of whom were letting down a coffin with a crown upon it. The gentleman, startled at this unusual sight, and imagining that he had arrived among the retreats of fiends or witches, mounted his horse and rode away with the utmost precipitation. He arrived at his friend's house at a late hour, who had sat up for him. On his arrival, his friend questioned as to the cause of the traces of trouble visible on his face. He began to recount his adventure after much difficulty, knowing that it was scarcely possible that his friends should give faith to his relation. No sooner had he mentioned the coffin with the crown upon it, than his friend's cat, who seemed to have been lying asleep before the fire, leaped up, saying, 'Then I am the King of the Cats!' and scrambled up the chimney and was seen no more."

Now, is not that a remarkable story, proving, at the same time, the attention cats pay to human conversation even when they outwardly seem perfectly indifferent to it, and the monarchical character of their political organization, which without this incident might have remained forever unknown to us? This happened, we are told, in eastern Germany; but in our own island, less than a hundred years ago, there remained at least one cat fit to be the ministrant of a sorceress. When Sir Walter Scott visited the Black Dwarf, "Bowed Davie Ritchie," the Dwarf said, "Man *hae ye ony poo'r?*" meaning power of a supernatural kind, and he added solemnly, pointing to a large black cat whose fiery eyes shone in a dark corner of the cottage, "He *has poo'r!*" In Scott's place any imaginative person would have more than half believed Davie, as indeed did his illustrious visitor. The ancient

Egyptians, who knew as much about magic as the wisest of the moderns, certainly believed that the cat had *poo'r*, or they would not have mummified him with such painstaking conscientiousness. It may easily be imagined, that in times when science did not exist, a creature whose fur emitted lightnings when anybody rubbed it in the dark, must have inspired great awe, and there is really an air of mystery about cats which considerably exercises the imagination. This impression would be intensified in the case of people born with a physical antipathy to cats, and there are such persons. A Captain Logan, of Knockshinnock in Ayrshire, is mentioned in one of the early numbers of *Chambers' Journal* as having this antipathy in the strongest form. He simply could not endure the sight of cat or kitten, and though a tall, strong man, would do anything to escape from the objects of his instinctive and uncontrollable horror, climbing upon chairs if a cat entered the room, and not daring to come down till the creature was removed from his presence. These mysterious repugnances are outside the domain of reason. Many people, not without courage, are seized with involuntary shudderings when they see a snake or a toad; others could not bring themselves to touch a rat, though the rat is one of the cleanliest of animals — not, certainly, as to his food, but his person. It may be presumed that one Mrs. Griggs, who lived, I believe, in Edinburgh, did not share Captain Logan's antipathy, for she kept in her house no less than eighty-six living cats, and had, besides, twenty-eight dead ones in glass cases, immortalized by the art of the taxidermist. If it is true, and it certainly is so in a great measure, that those who love most know most, then Mrs. Griggs would have been a much more competent person to write on cats than the cold-minded author

of these chapters. It is wonderful to think how much that good lady must have known of the *loveableness* of cats, of those recondite qualities which may endear them to the human heart!

What a difference in knowledge and feeling concerning cats between Mrs. Griggs and a gamekeeper! The gamekeeper knows a good deal about them too, but it is not exactly affection which has given keenness to *his* observation. He does not see a "dear sweet pet" in every cat that crosses his woodland path, but the most destructive of poachers, the worst of "vermin." And there can be no doubt that from his point of view the gamekeeper is quite right, even as good Mrs. Griggs may have been from hers. If cats killed game from hunger only, there would be a limit to their depredations, but unfortunately they have the instinct of sport, which sportsmen consider a very admirable quality in themselves, but regard with the strongest disapprobation in other animals. Mr. Frank Buckland says, that when once a cat has acquired the passion for hunting it becomes so strong that it is impossible to break him of it. He knew a cat which had been condemned to death, but the owner begged its life on condition that it should be shut up every night and well fed. The very first night of its incarceration it escaped up the chimney, and was found the next morning, black with soot, in one of the gamekeeper's traps. The keeper easily determines what kind of animal has been committing depredations in his absence. "Every animal has his own way of killing and eating his prey. The cat always turns the skin *inside out*, leaving the same reversed like a glove. The weasel and stoat will eat the brain and nibble about the head, and suck the blood. The fox will always leave the legs and hinder parts of a hare or a rabbit; the dog

tears his prey to pieces, and eats it 'anyhow — all over the place'; the crows and magpies always peck at the eyes before they touch any part of the body."

"Again," continues Mr. Frank Buckland, "let the believer in the innocence of Mrs. Puss listen to the crow of the startled pheasant; he will hear him 'tree,' as the keeper calls it, and from his safe perch up in a branch again crow as if to summon his protector to his aid. No second summons does the keeper want; he at once runs to the spot, and there, stealing with erect ears, glaring eyes, and limbs collected together, and at a high state of tension, ready for the fatal spring, he sees — what? — the cat, of course, caught in the very attitude of premeditated poaching." . . .

Of the cat in a state of nature few of us have seen very much. The wild cat has become rare in the British islands, but the specimens shot occasionally by gamekeepers are very superior in size and strength to the familiar occupant of the hearth-rug. I remember that when I lived at Loch Awe, my next neighbour, a keeper on the Cladich estate, shot one that quite astonished me — a formidable beast indeed, to which the largest domestic cat was as an ordinary human being to Chang the giant — indeed this comparison is insufficient. Wild cats are not usually dangerous to man, for they prudently avoid him, but if such a creature as that killed on Lochaweside were to show fight, an unarmed man would find the situation very perilous. I would much rather have to fight a wolf. There is a tradition at the village of Barnborough, in Yorkshire, that a man and a wild cat fought together in a wood near there, and that the combat went on till they got to the church-porch, when

Chang was a famous Chinese giant who travelled all over the world exhibiting himself.

THE KING OF THE BEASTS.

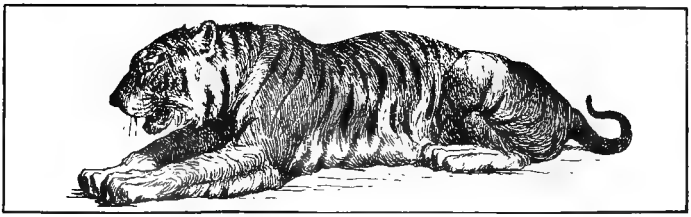
Pen drawing by E. H. Saunders, after Ernest van Muyden.

both died from their wounds. It is the marvellous agility of the cat which makes him such a terrible enemy; to say that he "flies" at you is scarcely a figure of speech. However, the wild cat, when he knows that he is observed, generally seeks refuge, as King Charles did at Boscobel, in the leafy shelter of some shadowy tree, and there the deadly leaden hail too surely follows him, and brings him to earth again.

Cats have the advantage of being very highly connected, since the king of beasts is their blood-relation, and it is certain that a good deal of the interest we take in them is due to this august relationship. What the merlin or the sparrow-hawk is to the golden eagle, the cat is to the great felines of the tropics. The difference between a domestic cat and a tiger is scarcely wider than that which separates a miniature pet dog from a bloodhound. It is becoming to the dignity of an African prince, like Theodore of Abyssinia, to have lions for his household pets. The true grandeur and majesty of a brave man are rarely seen in such visible supremacy as when he sits surrounded by these terrible creatures, he in his fearlessness, they in their awe; he in his defenceless weakness, they with that mighty strength which they dare not use against him. One of my friends, distinguished alike in literature and science, but not at all the sort of person, apparently, to command respect from brutes who cannot estimate intellectual greatness, had one day an interesting conversation with a lion-tamer, which ended in a still more interesting experiment. The lion-tamer affirmed that there was no secret in his profession, that *real* courage alone was neces-

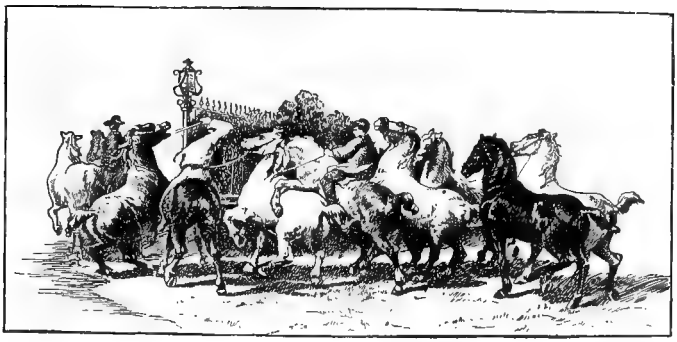
The story of the escape of King Charles II. of England is told in Sir W. Scott's "Woodstock"; and in Harrison Ainsworth's "Boscobel or the Royal Oak."

sary, and that any one who had the genuine gift of courage could safely enter the cage along with him. "For example, you yourself, sir," added the lion-tamer, "if you have the sort of courage I mean, may go into the cage with me whenever you like." On this my friend, who has a fine intellectual coolness and unbounded scientific curiosity, willingly accepted the offer, and paid a visit to their majesties the lions in the privacy of their own apartment. They received him with the politeness due to a brave man, and after an agreeable interview of several minutes he backed out of the royal presence with the gratified feelings of a gentleman who has just been presented at court.



BENGAL TIGER.

Pen drawing by E. H. Saunders, after Ernest van Muyden.



COMING FROM THE FAIR.

Pen drawing by E. H. Saunders, after the painting by Rosa Bonheur.

V. HORSES.

IT happened to me one night during the Franco-Prussian war to ride into the court-yard of an inn which was full of French artillerymen. In the bustle and hurry of the time it was useless to call for the services of an ostler, so I set about seeking for stable-room myself. In the French country inns there are no stalls, and the only division between the horses, when there is any separation at all, is a board suspended at one end by an iron hook to the manger, and at the other hanging from the roof by a knotted cord. In this inn, however, even the hanging-board was wanting, and about fifty artillery horses were huddled together so closely as almost to touch each other, so that it was difficult to find an open space for my mare. At last I found an opening near a magnificent black animal, which I supposed to be an officer's saddle-horse.

A fine horse is always an attraction for me, so as soon as I had finished such arrangements as were possible for the comfort of my own beast, I began to examine her neighbour rather minutely. He seemed in perfect health,

but at last I discovered a fresh wound on the near foreleg, evidently caused by a fragment of a shell. (There had been a battle at the place the day before.) Turning to an artilleryman who was standing by, I asked if the veterinary surgeon thought he could save the horse. "No, sir, he is to be shot to-morrow morning." This decision seemed hard, for the horse stood well, and was eating his hay tranquilly. I felt strongly tempted to beg him, and see what rest and care could accomplish.

At midnight I came back for my own mare. There was a great and terrible change in her neighbour's condition. He lay in the straw, half under her, the place was so crowded. I shall never forget his piteous cries and moans. He could not rise, and the shattered limb was causing him cruel pain. His noble head lay at my feet, and I stooped to caress it.

"So this is the reward," I thought, "that man gives to the best and bravest servant that he has! A long night of intolerable anguish, unrelieved by any attempt whatever to soothe or ease his pain; in the morning, the delayed charity of a rifle-bullet!" This single instance, which moved me because I had seen it, perhaps a little also because the animal was beautiful and gentle, what was it, after all, in comparison with the incalculable quantity of animal suffering which the war was causing in half the provinces of France? These reflections filled me with pain and sadness as I rode over the battle-ground in the frosty moonlight. The *dead* horses lay there still, just as they fell, and for them I felt no pity. Swift death, sudden oblivion, rest absolute, unconscious, eternal, these are not evils; but the pain of the torn flesh and the shattered bone, the long agony in hunger and cold, the anguish of the poor maimed brutes, who struggle through the last

dark passages of existence, without either the pride of the soldier, the reason of the philosopher, or the hope of the Christian — that is Evil, pure and unmixed!

Like all who love animals much, I know and remember them as I know and remember men. During the war I had acquaintances amongst the officers and soldiers, and acquaintances amongst their horses likewise; and when they rode forth to battle I was pretty nearly as anxious about the animals as about the brave men who mounted them. I remember a Garibaldian sergeant, whose red shirt was frequently visible in my court-yard, a youth overflowing with life, to whom the excitement of a battle from time to time was as necessary as that of a ball is to a lively young lady. His way of riding was the nearest approach to that of an enraptured bard on Pegasus that I ever witnessed amongst the realities of the earth. My house is situated something like a tower, with views in every direction, and I used to amuse myself with watching him from the upper windows when the fit of equestrian inspiration was upon him. The red shirt flew first along the high-road, then dashed suddenly down a lane; a little later you could see it flashing scarlet along the outskirts of a distant wood; then, after a brief eclipse, it reappeared in the most unexpected places. The lad careered in this way simply for his amusement, — for the pulsation of that wild delight that his fiery nature needed. It is a fact that he did not even hold the reins. When these mad fits of equestrianism seized him, he flung the bridle on his charger's neck, threw his arms high in the air, and then made them revolve like the paddle-wheels of a steamer. He accompanied these gestures with wild Italian cries, and a double stroke of the spurs. No wonder if his horse galloped! And he *did* gallop. When the rider wanted to

turn a lane he simply gave his steed a hearty slap on the off-side of the neck, — a hint which never seemed to be be misunderstood. I have witnessed a good deal of remarkable equestrianism, but never anything like that. His horse was one of the ugliest, and one of the best, that soldier ever bestrode. I have a faint recollection of seeing a child's wooden horse which so closely resembled it, that the artist must have had some such model in his mind. A great round barrel, that seemed as if it had been turned in a lathe, a broad chest, straight strong legs very short proportionally, shoulders far forward relatively to the neck, high withers, large ugly head, with a good-tempered expression, a stump for a tail, and a rough coat of a bay quite closely resembling red hair in the human species: such were the various beauties of this war-horse. His ugliness and his honest looks gave me a sort of attachment to him; and his rider loved him dearly, and was loud in his praise. At length the regiment was ordered to Dijon, and severely engaged there in the Battle of Pâques. Afterwards I saw the sergeant's red shirt, but he rode no longer that good animal. The poor thing had had three of its four legs carried away by a cannon-ball; and its master, though in the heat of the battle, humanely ended its misery with his revolver.

These things, of course, are the every-day accidents of war, in which horses are killed by thousands; but when particular instances come under your observation, they pain you, if you really love animals. I heartily wish that horses could be dispensed with in war, and some sort of steam-engine used instead, if it were possible. In the orders given by Louis-Napoleon at the opening of the campaign of 1870, one detail seemed to me unnecessarily cruel. Orderlies were told not to hesitate to ride their

horses to death (*de crever leurs montures*). It is certainly necessary on occasion, when the fate of thousands depends upon the speed of an animal, to avail ourselves of that noble quality by which it will give its last breath in devoted obedience; but soldiers are not generally so tender that they need to be encouraged in indiscriminate mercilessness. That glorious poem of Browning's would be intolerable to our humanity, were it not for the sweet touches of mercy at the end:—

> "By Hasselt, Dirck groaned; and cried Joris, 'Stay spur!
> Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her,
> We'll remember at Aix'—*for one heard the quick wheeze*
> *Of her chest, saw the stretched neck, and staggering knees,*
> *And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,*
> *As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.*
>
> So we were left galloping, Joris and I,
> Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky;
> The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
> 'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble, like chaff;
> Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,
> And 'Gallop,' said Joris, 'for Aix is in sight!'
>
> 'How they'll greet us!'—*and all in a moment his roan*
> *Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as a stone;*
> And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight
> Of the news which alone could save Aix from her fate,
> *With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,*
> *And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.*"

All this is very terrible, and would be almost in the spirit of the Imperial command to the orderlies to *crever leurs montures;* were it not that the very strength of the

For intense power of literary workmanship I know nothing in any language, that goes beyond those four lines. The poem is entitled, "How They brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix."

crever leurs montures. "Ride their horses to death."

description shows how much the poet felt for the suffering animals, though he expresses no sympathy directly. But the tenderness of the man capable of loving a good horse is reserved entirely for the last two stanzas, where it is expressed in the manliest way, yet in a way so affecting that no noble-minded person who read the poem aloud could get through those last stanzas, when he came to them, without some huskiness of emotion in the voice, and, perhaps, just a little mistiness in the eyes.

"*Then I cast loose my buff coat, each holster let fall,*
Shook off my jack-boots, let go belt and all,
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,
Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse without a peer;
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise, bad or good,
Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.

And all I remember is, friends flocking round,
And I sat with his head 'twixt my knees, on the ground;
And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,
As I poured down his throat our last measure of wine,
Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
Was no more than his due who brought good news from Ghent."

This is the ideal of the relation between man and horse, — the horse serving man to his utmost, lending him his swiftness with a perfect good will, — the man accepting the service for a noble purpose, doing all he can to make the work lighter for his servant, and at last, when the great effort is over, caring for him as tenderly and anxiously as if he were a brother or a son. This is the ideal, but the reality too often falls short of it on both sides. There does not exist in the minds of owners of horses generally that touch of romantic sentiment which translates itself in affectionate companionship and tender care. The horse is a valuable animal, and is, on the whole, looked

after fairly well, his health is cared for, he is usually well fed, and horses used for private purposes are seldom overworked. But there is a remarkable absence of sentiment in all this, which is proved by the facility with which, in most European countries, men sell their horses, often for bodily infirmities or imperfections, in which there is no question of temper, and especially by the custom of selling a horse which has done faithful service, merely because he is getting old and weaker than when in his prime. This last custom proves the absence of sentiment, the more completely that every one knows when selling an old horse that he is dooming him to harder work and worse keep, and that the certain fate of a horse which we part with because he is old, is a descent to harder and harder conditions, till finally he is worked to death in a cab, or in a cart belonging to some master little less miserable than himself.

The whole subject of the relation between the horse and his master depends upon the customs which regulate our life, and which have regulated the lives of our forefathers, in all sorts of other ways. We are not enough with our horses to educate either their intelligence or their affections; and as there has been the same separation in preceding centuries, the horse has inherited a way of regarding men which scarcely tends to make their relation more intimate. There are a few exceptional cases in which traces of affection are distinctly perceptible in horses, but by far the greater number of them are either indifferent, or decidedly hostile to humanity. Man loves the horse, at least some men love him, from feelings of gratitude and pride. When your horse has carried you well in battle, or on the hunting-field, you are grateful to him for the exercise of his strength and courage in your

service; when he has borne you majestically on some occasion of state, or enabled you to display the grace, and skill, and the manly beauty of your person, before the admiring eyes of ladies, you are proud of him as a statue, if it could feel, would be proud of the magnificence of its pedestal. The saddle is a sort of throne for man: when seated there, he has under him the noblest of all the brutes, so that he may be said to sit enthroned above the whole animal creation. It is from a feeling of the royalty of that position, that kings, if they are good riders, always prefer to enter a city on horseback, when a great effect is to be produced upon the minds of the people, well knowing that a leathern saddle, simple and hard as it is, has more of royal dignity than the silken cushions of the gilded coach of state. An incident occurred lately on the entry of King Amadeus into Lerida, which showed him, as by an acted simile, in the character of a sovereign whose throne is not stable, yet whose hand is firm. A shower of flowers rained from a triumphal arch as the Savoyard king rode under it, and his charger plunged so violently that no one but a thorough horseman could have kept his place. All the peoples of the earth like their kings to be fine horsemen, and the crowd thought that in his tossing saddle Amadeus came royally into Lerida!

Our pride in horses, our admiration of their beauty and their strength, produce in us a certain feeling of attachment to them, but rarely a deep affection. The trouble of attending to the wants of horses, of grooming and feeding them at stated times, can rarely be undertaken by the owner himself, and would be a perpetual annoyance to him unless he had a most exceptional liking for the animal, so as to be always happy when about the stable. . . . It is a trouble to most men to be even obliged to exercise

a horse quite regularly, a rich man likes to have horses at his door when he wants them, but to have no trouble about them at other times, using them as living velocipedes, and thinking no more about them in the intervals than if they were made of well-painted iron. Hence, there comes a personage between the horse and his master, who feeds, cleans, gently exercises the animal, and is seen and heard more frequently by him in the course of one week than his owner is in a month. There are the long absences of the owner also, when he is staying in other people's houses, or travelling, or at another residence of his where he has other horses, or in his yacht where all horses whatever would be much out of place. The owner, then, from the horse's point of view, is a man who makes his appearance from time to time armed with a whip and a pair of spurs, gets upon the horse's back, compels him to trot, and gallop, and jump hedges, and then suddenly disappears, it may be for several weeks. The two lives are so widely separated that there hardly can be any warm affection. If the horse loves any one it is more likely to be the groom than the master, but the groom has often disagreeable manners (to which horses are extremely sensitive), and in some houses he is changed as frequently as a French minister. On the whole, the horse very seldom enjoys fair opportunities for attaching himself to any human being. . . .

It would be highly interesting to watch the effect of a continual association between the horse and his master, and still more interesting if it could be kept up during several generations. The powers of affection in the horse are for the most part latent. We see faint signs of them, and there is a general belief that the horse has such powers, which is founded partly on some exceptional examples,

and partly on a subtle satisfaction in believing that we are beloved by our slaves. But the plain truth is, that horses, as they live usually in our service, have little to love us for, and most commonly regard us either with indifference or dislike. The slightest demonstration of attachment wins us in a moment, and we exaggerate it because it flatters our *amour propre.* When a horse neighs at our coming, it is most commonly a request for corn, and some of his other demonstrations are very equivocal. Some men tell you when horses set their ears back, and show the white of their eye, and try to bite, and kick at them in the stable, that all these are merely signs of playful affection. In short, there is a distinct passion in man's heart for which the Greeks had a name, but which in England we call the love of horses, and this has its illusions like every other passion.

When we come to the active vices, the hatred and rebellion of the horse against his master express themselves very plainly, much more plainly than equine affection expresses itself ever. Many of these vices are hereditary in the equine blood, are a tradition of ill-usage. The way in which they burst forth in horses, apparently of the most tranquil character, is one of the mysteries of nature. Three instances have occurred in my own stable, of animals becoming suddenly and irremediably vicious, passing in the course of three or four days from a state like that of Paris under the Empire to the rage and rebellion of Paris under the Commune, and neither in these cases, nor in any other that has come under my observation, has a *real vice* ever been permanently eradicated. Horses become vicious from many causes; the most frequent, I think, is idleness in combination with confinement and good

Amour propre, self esteem.

keep. Out at grass a horse becomes wild rather than vicious, and mere wildness is easily curable by gentleness and patience. Tied up in a stable, with plenty of hay and corn, his system accumulates the electricity of irritability which ought to have been regularly expended in work, and it explodes in dangerous violence. Four days' idleness in

HORSES IN FREEDOM.
Pen drawing by D. Munro, after the etching by J. Veyrassat.

an inn-stable, during wet weather, cost me the most valuable horse I ever possessed. On the fifth day no man could ride him, and no man was ever able to ride him afterwards. A black Irish horse, who served me well during a year, and was an excellent leaper, was suddenly lost to me in the same way, and the same thing occurred with a powerful Scotch Galloway. Most men who have

I begged the late Lord Hawke, who was the best rider, or one of the three best, I ever knew, to make a trial of him, but the results were the same as with myself and the rough-riders, and the verdict, "Nothing to be made of him."

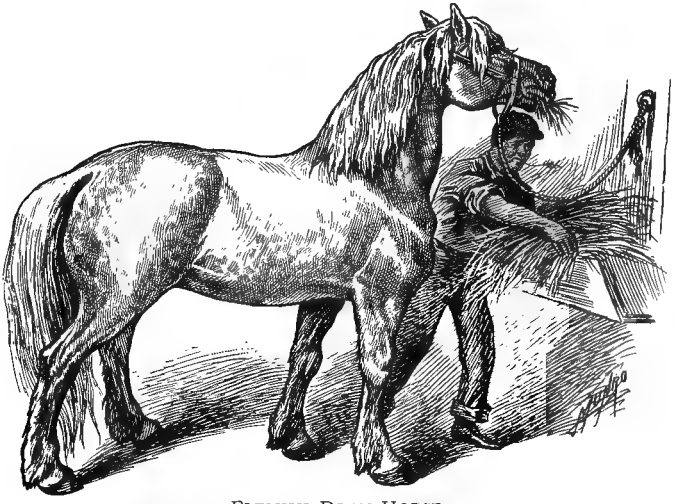
had some experience of horses will have known such cases. No form of disappointment is more provoking. The animal, after vice has declared itself, seems exactly the same creature that he did before. Has he not the same limbs, shape, colour? Is not the spot of white upon his forehead precisely in the same place? Is not his tail of the same length? Nothing is altered that the eye may detect, but there is the same change that there is in a wine-bottle, when somebody has poured the wine out and replaced it with deadly poison. In the animal's brain there dwelt a spirit that was your most faithful servant — your most humble and dutiful friend; that spirit is gone, and instead of it there is a demon who is determined to kill you whenever an opportunity offers. The Teutonic legends of black steeds with fiery eyes that were possessed by evil spirits, are no more than the poetical form that clothes an indubitable truth. The nature of the horse is such that he is capable of endless irreconcilable rage, against his master, and against humanity, — a temper of chronic hate and rebellion like that of Milton's fallen angels, keeping the fierce resolve —

> "To wage by force or guile eternal war
> Irreconcilable."

. . . . .

When you see, however, the thousands upon thousands of horses which do their duty, on the whole safely and well, in the large cities, in the country, in the army, about railway stations, breweries, and business places of all kinds, you will conclude that the horse-demons are rare in proportion; and, indeed, happily they are so. Most horses are fairly good, and in some races almost all of them are docile. In other races vices of different kinds are very

common. Take the Corsican ponies, for instance, a hardy little race of much speed and endurance, very useful to drive in pairs in small phaetons; they are nearly always vicious, though seldom vicious enough to interfere materially with their usefulness. A tiny pair were offered me with a pretty carriage, the whole equipage suspiciously cheap, but I discovered that one of the charming little



FLEMISH DRAY HORSE.
Drawn by D. Munro.

creatures would kick like the youthful Tommy Newcome in Doyle's sketch, and the other bit like a wolf. Afterwards I found that these accomplishments were common to the Corsican breed; in fact, that they were generally as energetic, but as wilful and difficult to deal with, as their little human compatriot, Napoleon. On the other hand, there are breeds where gentle tempers and amiable manners are hereditary. . . .

The peaceful inhabitants of London have ideas about cavalry horses which would be greatly modified by a week's experience of Continental warfare. The British army requires few horses in comparison with the vast numbers which are absorbed by the forces of Germany or France, so that there is wider latitude for selection, and no horse which has the honour of carrying a British soldier is ever publicly seen in his native land without having everything that can affect his appearance entirely in his favour. The man who rides him, though apparently his master, is in reality his servant, as every youth who enters the ranks of a cavalry regiment discovers when his young illusions fade. All the things which the animal has to carry are, by the craft and taste of the equipment-makers, turned into so many ornaments; and even when not positively beautiful in themselves, are so devised as to enhance the martial effect, and make you feel that you are in the presence of a war-horse. Bright steel and brass, in forms unused about the saddlery of civilians; furs and saddle-cloths, the latter decorated with lace round the edges, and perhaps even embroidery in the corners; a luxury of straps and chains, a massiveness peculiarly military; all this strikes the civilian imagination, and the battle-steed, even when not in himself a particularly perfect animal, has generally a noble and imposing air. All his belongings are kept so clean and bright that we respect him as a member of the aristocracy of horses. He is brushed and groomed as if he came from the stables of a prince. To these advantages may be added that of his superior education, which tells in every movement, and his pride, for he is proud of all his superiorities, and the consciousness of them gives grace to the curve of his neck, and fire to his eye, and dignity to his disdainful stepping.

These glories of the war-horse are to be seen in their highest perfection in that prosperous and peaceful capi-

QUEEN'S LIFE GUARDSMAN.

tal of England where the thunder of an enemy's cannon has never yet been heard. The English household troops are the ideal cavalry, good in service on the field of serious conflict, but especially and peculiarly admirable

as a spectacle. I had almost written that the poetry of warfare was to be best seen in a charge of the Life-guards at a review, but there is a yet deeper poetry in some of war's realities where the element of beauty is not so conspicuously present. The boy's ideal of the war-horse is that coal-black, silken coated charger that bears the helmeted cuirassier, and all those glittering arms and ornaments dazzle the imagination and fill the martial dreams of youth. Well, it is very fine, very beautiful, and we like to see the Royal Guards flashing past after the Court carriages; but during the war between France and Germany I saw another sight, and renounced the boy's ideal.

The armies of Chanzy had been defeated on the Loire, and their broken remnants passed as they could to join the desperate enterprise of Bourbaki for the relief of Belfort. In the depth of that terrible winter, the roads covered with snow, with a bitter wind sweeping across the country from the east, and every water-fall a pillar of massy ice, there came two or three thousand horsemen from those disastrous battle-fields. Slowly they passed over the hills that divide the eastern from the western rivers, an irregular procession broken by great intervals, so that we always thought no more were coming, yet others followed, straggling in melancholy groups. What a contrast to the brilliance of a review! How different from the marching-past when the Emperor sat in his embroidery on the Champ-de-Mars and the glittering hosts swept before him, saluting with polished swords! Ah, these horsemen came from another and a bloodier field of Mars; they had been doing the rough work of the war-god and bore the signs of it! The brass of their helmets shone no more than the dull leopard-skin beneath it, the lancers had poles without pennons, the bits and stirrups were rusty, and the horses were

encumbered with tins and pans for rude cookery, and bundles of hay, and coarse coverings for the bitter bivouac. Here and there a wearied brute was led slowly by a merciful master; a few were still suffering from wounds, all were meagre and overworked, not one had been groomed for weeks. Yet here, I said, as the weary troops passed by, and others like them loomed in gray masses as they approached through the falling snow, — here, and not on the brilliant parade-ground, now in this busy harvest-time of death, not then in the lightness of their leisure, are the battle-steeds most sublime! All the fopperies of soldiering had been rubbed away by the rough hand of implacable Necessity, but instead of them what a moving pathos! what grandeur of patient endurance! Grotesque they all were certainly, but it was a grotesqueness of that highest kind which is infinitely and irresistibly affecting. The women laughed at those sorry brutes, those meagre Rosinantes, and at the wonderful odd figures that sat upon them, like Quixotes in quilts, riding on the wildest of expeditions to meet starvation under the dark Jura pine-trees, — but whilst the women laughed the tears ran down their cheeks. . . .

The conspicuous merit of the horse, which has given him the dearly-paid honour of sharing in our wars, is his capacity for being disciplined, — and a very great capacity it is, a very noble gift indeed; nobler than much cleverness. Several animals are cleverer than the horse in the way of intelligence; not one is so amenable to discipline. He is not observant, except of places; not nearly so observant as half-a-dozen other animals we know. His eye never fixes itself long in a penetrating gaze, like the mild, wistful

Rosinante, Don Quixote's horse, "so lean, lank, meagre, drooping, sharp-backed, and raw-boned as to excite much curiosity and mirth."

watchfulness of the dog, or the steady flame of the lion's luminous orbs, but he can listen and obey, and his acts of obedience pass easily by repetition into fixed habits, so that you never have to teach him more than one thing at a time. The way to educate a horse is to do as Franklin did in the formation of his moral habits — that is, to aim at one perfection at once, and afterwards, when that has become easy from practice, and formed itself into a habit, to try for some other perfection. A good horse never forgets your lessons. There are unteachable brutes which ought to be handed over to rude masters and rough work, but every horse of average intelligence and gentle temper may be very highly educated indeed. Beyond this average degree of teachableness there are exceptional cases — the horses of genius; for genius (an exceptional vigour and intensity of the mental faculties with correspondingly large powers of acquisition) exists amongst the lower animals in due degree as it does in the human species. A few animals of this remarkable degree of endowment are picked up by the proprietors of circuses, and so become known to the public, but the probability is that a much larger proportion remain in the obscurity of ordinary equine life, and that their gifts escape attention.

Most of us have seen remarkable performances of trained horses. The most remarkable that I ever saw were those of that wonderful black gelding that Pablo Fanque used to ride. There can be no doubt that he had pride and delight in his own extraordinary intelligence and perfect education, just as some great poet or painter may delight in the richness of his gifts and the perfection of his work. But the circus performance is not the ideal aim of equine accomplishment. One would not care much to have a horse

Franklin's moral habits, see his autobiography, Chapter V.

that would dance or fire a pistol, or pick up a pocket-handkerchief, yet it would be pleasant to have in our horses the degree of docility and intelligence which circus-trainers direct to these vain objects. Many accomplishments might be attained that would be valuable everywhere. It would be extremely convenient if a horse would follow you without being pulled by halter or bridle, and wait for you in one place without being fastened. A man who had travelled amongst the Arabs told me that he had seen many horses that would stand where they were left, without any fastening, and some will follow you like a dog.

A great deal of accomplishment may go into the ordinary work of saddle and carriage-horses, and almost escape notice because we think it only natural. But how wide is the difference between a trained horse and a raw one! How slight are the indications by which the master conveys the expression of his will, how rapid and exact the apprehension! With horses of the finest organisation this apprehension rises into a sympathy above the necessity for any definite command; they know the master's will by a sense of faint pressures, of limb on saddle, of hand on rein. I used to ride a horse which would go on trotting so long as I was not tired, but when I began to feel fatigued he walked, knowing by my altered manner of rising in the saddle that rest would be a relief to me. By this accurate interpretation of our muscular action, even when it is so slight as to be imperceptible to the eye of a by-stander, the horse measures the skill, the strength, the resolution of his rider. He knows at once whether you are at home in the saddle or not, and if your movements do not correspond accurately to his own, he is aware that he can take liberties. A bad rider may sometimes deceive the people in the street, but it may be doubted whether he ever deceived the animal

under him. It is evident that a bad rider must be extremely disagreeable to a horse of refined feeling, disagreeable as an awkward partner in dancing is disagreeable.

The intelligence of horses is shown in nothing so much as in their different behaviour under different men. When a thorough horseman gets into the saddle the creature he mounts is aware that there are the strongest reasons for behaving himself properly, and it is only the mad rebels that resist. Not only can a good horseman overcome opposition better than a bad one, but he has much less opposition to overcome. The very best horsemen, amongst gentlemen, are often scarcely even aware of the real difficulties of riding, their horses obey them so well, and are so perfectly suited to their work. An English lady who rides admirably, told me that she did not deserve so much credit as she got, because the excellence of her horses made riding quite easy for her, and she declared that even in her boldest leaps the *secousse* was not very violent. There is a good deal of truth in this, which is often overlooked. The relation between horse and rider is mutual, and each shows the other to advantage.

Whilst on this subject of riding, let me express a regret that good horsemanship is becoming rarer and rarer in proportion to the numbers of the population. The excellence of modern roads, which has led to the universal employment of wheeled carriages, and the introduction of railways, which are now used by all classes for long or rapid journeys, have together reduced horsemanship, in the case of civilians, to the rank of a mere amusement, or an exercise for the benefit of health. In fact, it is coming to this, that nobody but rich men and their grooms will know how to ride on horseback; whereas in former generations,

secousse, shock.

when the bad roads reduced all travelling to an alternative between riding and pedestrianism, men of all degrees and conditions went on horseback for considerable distances, and became skilful, no doubt, in proportion to the frequency of their practice. What a great deal of riding there is in the Waverley novels! Not only the baron and the knight, but also the tradesman, the commercial traveller, the citizen of every rank, go on horseback from place to place. How much healthy and invigorating exercise the men of our generation miss which their forefathers frequently enjoyed!

Imagine the benefit to a manly youth of the last century, fastened in London behind a counter or a desk, when he was ordered to ride on business to Lincoln, or York, or Edinburgh! He had before him weeks of the manliest life a human being can lead, and plenty of leisure, as he sat in the saddle, for the observation of men and nature. There was danger enough to give exercise to his courage; and as the pistols in his holsters were loaded with powder and ball, so the heart in his breast had to be charged with the spirit of the brave. All men in those days lived from time to time a life giving them some brotherhood with the knights of the days of chivalry. A London tradesman riding over the dark heath, robber-haunted, thinking about the flints of his big pistols, had need of a portion of that manliness which in other times had clothed itself in knightly harness of complete steel. Consider the difference between passing a fortnight on horseback and a night in a railway train — the long breathing of fresh air, the healthy exercise, the delightful variety of scenery, the entertaining change and adventure; and then the seat in the railway carriage, with its poisonously impure atmosphere. . . .

Railway travelling is fatiguing, yet it is not exercise. It wears the nervous system, but does not help the circulation of the blood. Horse exercise produces effects of an exactly opposite nature, it stimulates and improves the circulation, and reposes the nervous system better than anything except swimming. Our forefathers found in travel a double corrective for the evils of a sedentary life, and they had the additional advantage of not being able to go far without spending a good deal of time upon the road — days and weeks — during which the system had full leisure to recruit itself. Too many of them were senselessly careless about health; they ate and drank a great deal more than can have been good for them, and the more robust had little notion of moderation in anything: yet they certainly knew less of nervous ailments than does our own more thoughtful and scientific generation. Their bad roads gave them exercise, as their badly-fitted doors and windows ensured them an efficient ventilation. We may still imitate them in equestrian tours; but it is not quite the same thing, because we only travel in this way for pleasure, that is, when we take a holiday, whereas they did it from necessity, at all seasons and in all weathers.

I read the other day, in a book written for students, that walking, and not riding, is the best exercise; and I knew a physician who said he only recommended horse exercise because his patients preferred it. On this point it may be observed, that no one is likely to get much good in the saddle unless he has the true equestrian instinct, which is as much a gift of nature as the love of aquatics. Without the natural instinct you cannot feel the peculiar exhilaration which gladdens the born horseman and relieves him from that burden of his cares.

There is an exulting sense of augmented power in the

breast of such a man when he feels that all the strength and swiftness of the noble animal that bears him have become his own swiftness and his own strength; that he, who but a moment before was the slowest of creatures, may now follow the wild fox and the antelope; that, if need were, he could traverse three horizons in a day. It is this pride and delight of horsemanship, and not the mere physical exertion, which gladden the heart of man and add to his health and courage. Can any sensation be finer than that of a good rider, well mounted, going across the country at full speed? Only one other sensation is comparable to it, that of steering a lively vessel when the mainsail is wet with spray, and the sheet is straining tight, and the topmast bends like whalebone, and the wind blows fair and free!

An American newspaper lamented not long ago that rich men in the United States had such a mania for driving that they had thrown the saddle aside. The same evil may be observed in France, and is even perceptible in England, the last stronghold of noble equestrianism. The excellence of modern roads, and the perfection of modern carriage-building, have brought about this result. Thousands of men own horses in these days who never bought such a thing as a saddle, and would not know what to do if hoisted into one; and their carriages are so very luxurious as to be beneficial to nobody but invalids. There are three classes of horse-owners — the men who can ride, the men who can drive, and lastly the men who can sit still and be driven about by a coachman. To the last the horse is purely and simply a locomotive, into which his owner puts fuel and water at stated times that it may make his wheels go round. The drivers take a real interest in horses, and often show great courage and attain quite a

surprising skill. Much may be said in favour of their amusement, which has a fine excitement of its own. A rider commands only one horse, a driver may hold four in his hand at once; a rider hears no sound but that of hoofs, the driver hears also the lively rumble of the wheels, and feels the pleasant springing and swinging of the well-built vehicle under him. The rider serves no one but himself, the driver has an agreeable sense of importance when the drag is crowded with fair passengers for whose safety he feels himself responsible. Our modern usages, which prohibit splendid saddlery to civilians and have made all ornamentation of it inconsistent with good taste, still allow some splendour in carriage-harness, silver crests and buckles, and other things not absolutely necessary, and in the carriages themselves there are displays of wealth and luxury which could never be concentrated in a saddle. When a rich man has a taste for ostentation, he gratifies it more easily in carriages than in saddle-horses. When a poor man has five children and one horse, the beast cannot carry the whole family on his back, but he can easily drag it behind him in a four-wheeled conveyance. Even a bachelor who keeps only one horse has cogent reasons for preferring harness. A saddle-horse can carry his own person, but his owner cannot take a servant with him nor offer a place to a friend. All the reasons of convenience (the most powerful of all reasons in the long run) are on the side of harness in every country where the roads are good. There are parts of France where it is already thought an eccentricity to ride on horseback, and where equestrians are so rare that if ever one makes his appearance the children stare and laugh, and the grown-up people smile, as they would at a man on stilts. In neigh-

drag, coach.

bourhoods of that kind it is dangerous to a man's reputation for gravity to be seen on horseback, and men of serious pretensions have the same objections to the saddle that a bishop has to a bicycle. Hunting and war keep up the art of riding; without them it would be in great danger of going out altogether, as falconry has gone out, to be revived, like falconry, at some future period by a few persons of wealth and leisure, as a curiosity of ancestral custom.

The influence of the turf on horses and on horsemanship deserves more thorough investigation than these brief chapters would permit. It does little or no good to riding, except by creating a special professional class with quite peculiar professional aims; and it does no good whatever to the breeding of horses, except by transmitting the capacity for great speed at a sudden "spurt," which is usually purchased at the cost of substantial qualities more valuable for common use. Practically, I believe, the most public benefit that the turf has given to England has been her rapid Hansom cabs. They are very commonly horsed, directly or indirectly, from the turf, and the swiftness which whirls you through the interminable streets of London has been first developed, either in the horse that drags you or in some ancestor of his, for the chance of a triumph at Epsom, or Newmarket, or Doncaster.

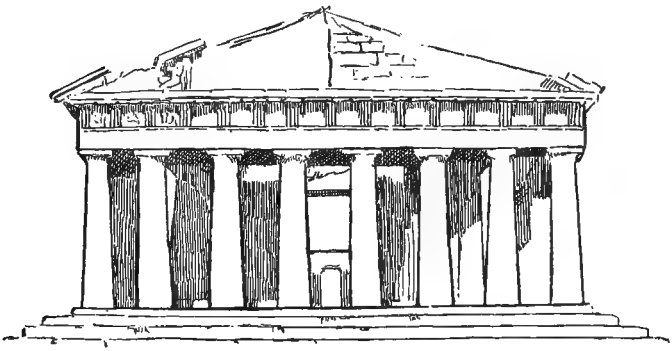
The turf, as it is followed, is not really an equestrian recreation, any more than the watching of hired gladiators was warfare. The swiftness of horses, being always various and always having elements of chance, was found to be a convenient subject for betting, and the excitement of being in a great crowd on a race course was found to be agreeable to everybody in search of a

Epsom, Newmarket, Doncaster, three famous English race courses.

stimulus. Races are a popular institution; vacant minds like them; and they are liked also as an amusement by some minds too distinguished in serious pursuits to be liable to any accusation of vacancy. Yet it seems probable that the truest lover of horses would be of all men the least likely to devote himself passionately to the turf. What, to him, could be the pleasure of keeping animals to be trained and ridden by paid agents, and never to know their master?

The influence of the turf upon the physical perfection of the horse has not been favourable to his beauty. The race-horse has lost the beauty of nature in one direction, as the prize-pig has departed from it in another. That which his forms express is not beauty, but culture. You see at once that he is a highly artificial product, the creature of wealth and civilisation. Many people admire him for that, because there is an inextricable confusion in the popular mind between ideas of beauty and ideas of careful cultivation. The race-horse has the charms of a tail-coat, of a trained pear-tree, of all such superfine results of human ingenuity, but he has lost the glory of nature. Look at his straight neck, at the way he holds his head, at his eager, anxious eye, often irritable and vicious! Breeders for the turf have succeeded in substituting the straight line for the curve, as the dominant expressional line, a sure and scientific manner of eradicating the elements of beauty. No real artist would ever paint race-horses from choice. Good artists have occasionally painted them for money. The meagre limbs, straight lines, and shiny coat, have slight charms for an artist, who generally chooses either what is beautiful or what is picturesque, and the race-horse is neither picturesque nor beautiful. Imagine what would become of the frieze of the

Parthenon if you substituted modern race-horses for those admirable little chargers the Athenians loved so well! They have the true hippic beauty; fine curves everywhere; if they are not servile copies of pure nature, it is only because they reach a still higher fidelity to the Divine idea. Yet there exists a type superior even to the noble horse of Phidias. In the heart of Nejed, where



FRONT OF THE PARTHENON.

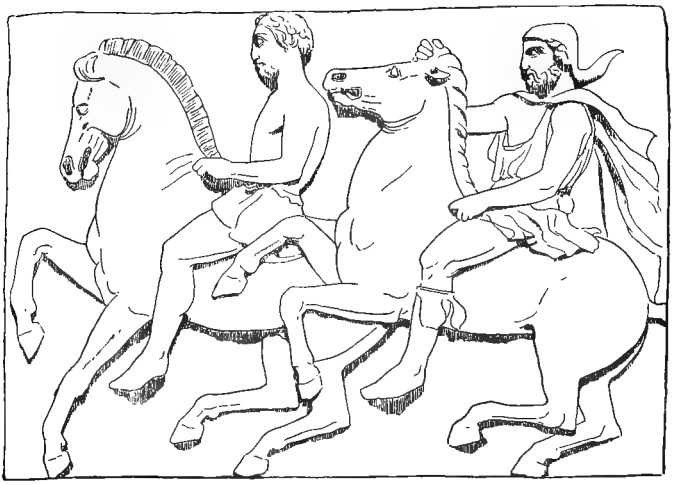
the long-pursed unbeliever comes not, blooms the flower of equine loveliness. Who that delights in horses would not envy Mr. Palgrave his sight of the stables of Feysul, the royal stables of Nejed? *Ut rosa flos florum*, so are those the stables of stables! The bold traveller, at his life's hazard, saw with his bodily eyes what our painters see only in their dreams!

Parthenon Frieze. The Parthenon a temple at Athens, the most perfect specimen of Greek Architecture. The frieze or flat space above the columns is covered with sculptures by Phidias the famous Greek Sculptor.

Nejed or Nejd. A province in Arabia where the famous breed of Arabian horses is reared. Mr. W. Gifford Palgrave an Englishman travelled much in the far East and especially in Arabia.

Ut rosa flos florum, as the rose is the flower of flowers.

"Never," he wrote afterwards, "never had I seen or imagined so lovely a collection. Their stature was indeed somewhat low: I do not think that any came fully up to fifteen hands; fourteen appeared to me about their average; but they were so exquisitely well shaped, that want of greater size seemed hardly, if at all, a defect. Remarkably full in the haunches, with a shoulder of a slope so elegant



HORSES FROM THE PARTHENON FRIEZE.

as to make one, in the words of an Arab poet, go 'raving mad about it;' a little, a very little saddle-backed, just the curve which indicates springiness without any weakness; a head, broad above, and tapering down to a nose fine enough to verify the phrase of 'drinking from a pint-pot' —did pint-pots exist in Nejed; a most intelligent and yet a singularly gentle look, full eye, sharp, thorn-like little ear; legs, fore and hind, that seemed as if made of hammered iron, so clean and yet so well twisted with sinew; a neat

round hoof, just the requisite for hard ground; the tail set on or rather thrown out at a perfect arch; coat smooth, shining, and light; the mane long, but not over-grown nor heavy; and an air and step that seemed to say, 'Look at

AN ARAB HORSE.

me, am I not pretty?' — their appearance justified all reputation, all value, all poetry. The prevailing colour was chestnut or gray, a light bay, an iron colour; white or black were less common; full bay, flea-bitten, or pie-bald, none. But if asked what are, after all, the specially distinctive points of the Nejdee horse, I should reply — the

slope of the shoulder, the extreme cleanness of the shank, and the full-rounded haunch, though every other part, too, has a perfection and a harmony unwitnessed (at least by my eyes) anywhere else."

Even the Arabs we see in Europe, however inferior to that purest breed of Nejed, are enough to make clear to us what the Arabian ideal is. That it is the central Divine conception of horse-beauty, I think no artist doubts, though artists often prefer other races from affection, or because their own art is more picturesque than beautiful. Veyrassat, for instance, who can etch cart-horses as nobody else can etch them, has never, I believe, cared to illustrate the more graceful breeds that excite the enthusiasm of poets. So it has been with Rosa Bonheur, and the whole picturesque school generally; they take naturally to the cart-horse, whose massive grandeur satisfies them. Preferences of this kind, in the practice of artists, do not, however, prove anything against the supreme beauty of the Arab. The best painters always work more from sympathy and affection than from admiration, and they take as models, not what even they themselves consider most beautiful, but what will take its place best in the class of pictures that they paint. The truth is, that the Arab is much *too* beautiful to be admissible in the pictures of the rustic schools; he would spoil everything around him, he would be as much out of place as a Greek statue in a cottage interior. Even the Greek horses of Phidias are too noble to be ridden by cavaliers not endowed with the full beauty of the human body, beautiful strong arms to hold the restraining bridle, beautiful strong legs to press the charger's sides! And how then shall you paint the daintily-exquisite Arab along with wooden-shod Normandy peasants, and fustian-breeched

Rosa Bonheur. The famous French animal painter, born, 1822.

ROSA BONHEUR.

Yorkshire grooms? Where shall we find a rider worthy of him? Not the mean-looking modern Sultan, going cloaked to the Mosque on a Friday; not even the white-robed Emir, ringed by a host of spears! Far in the dis-

tance of the past rises the one romantic figure worthy to mount the perfect Arab. Rich in jewelled caparison, the faultless horse awaits him! The saddle is empty as yet, and its diamonds flash in the torchlight, but the little sharp ears are listening, they have detected the step of the master! There is a movement in far corridors, the golden gates are open. Like a stream that glitters in the moonlight, the court descends the stair! The master sits in the saddle, the proud steed steps along the street; all men are prostrate before the Caliph.

"Sole star of all that place and time
I see him — in his golden prime,
The good Haroun Alraschid!"

From Tennyson's "Recollections of the Arabian Nights."