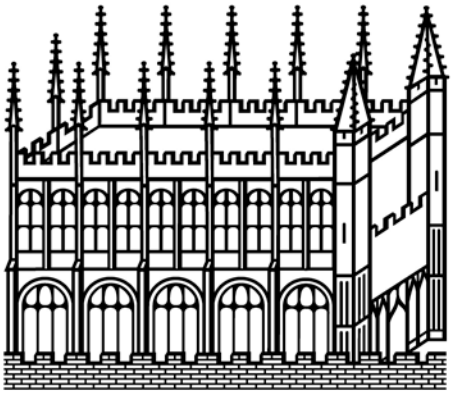

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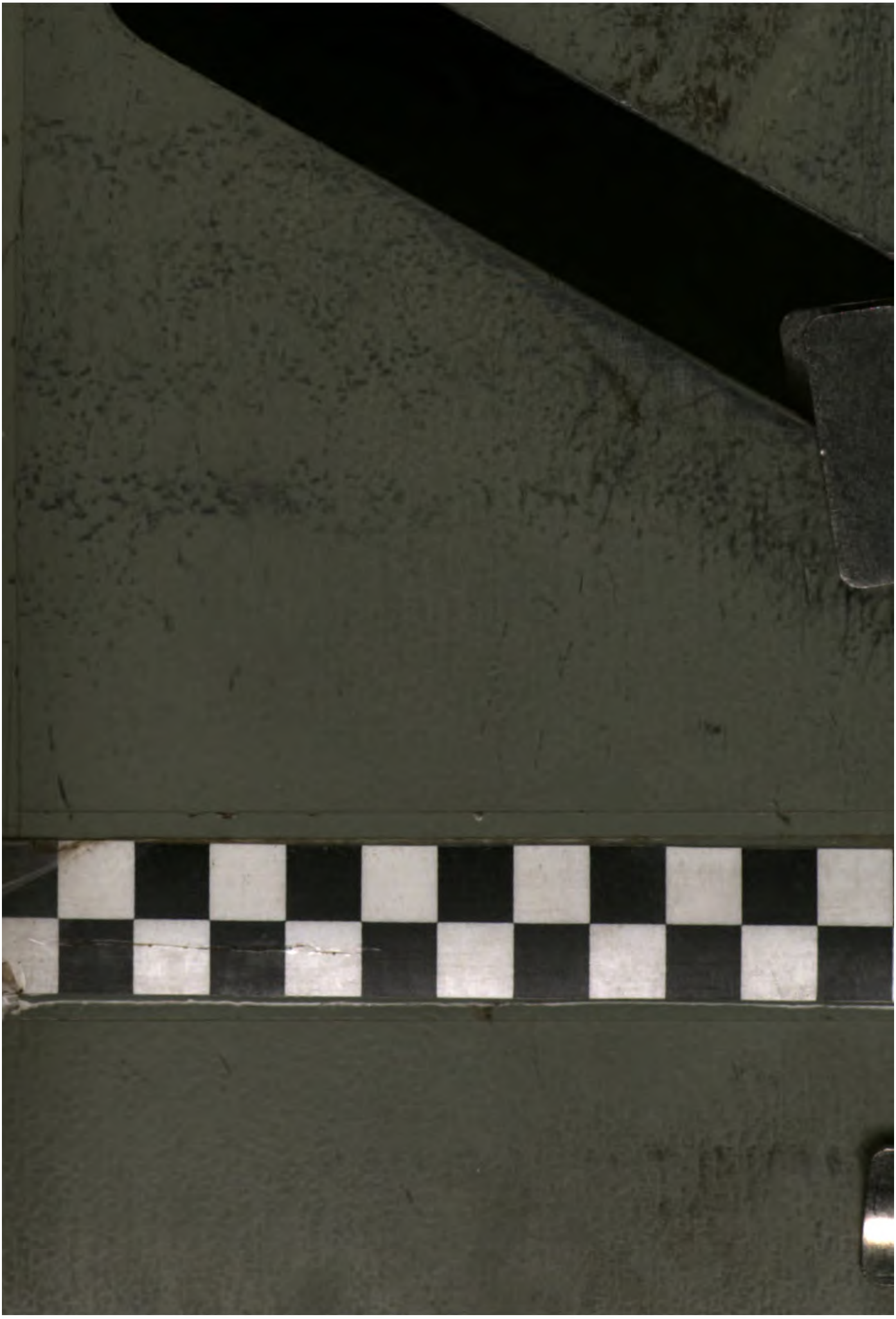

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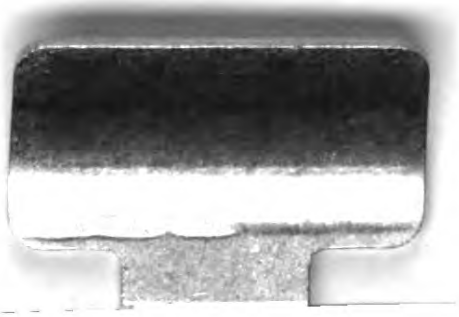

II

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SIGURD OUR GOLDEN COLLIE
AND
OTHER COMRADES OF THE ROAD

I

SIGURD OUR GOLDEN COLLIE

VIGI

Wisest of dogs was Vigi, a tawny-coated hound
That King Olaf, warring over green hills of Ireland, found;
His merry Norse were driving away a mighty herd
For feasts upon the dragonships, when an isleman dared a word:

"From all those stolen hundreds, well might ye spare my score."
"Ay, take them," quoth the gamesome king, "but not a heifer more.
Choose out thine own, nor hinder us; yet choose without a slip."
The isleman laughed and whistled, his finger at his lip.

Oh, swift the bright-eyed Vigi went darting through the herd
And singled out his master's neat with a nose that never erred,
And drave the star-marked twenty forth, to the wonder of the king,
Who bought the hound right honestly, at the price of a broad gold ring.

If the herddog dreamed of an Irish voice and of cattle on the hill,
He told it not to Olaf the King, whose will was Vigi's will,
But followed him far in faithful love and bravely helped him win
His famous fight with Thorir Hart and Raud, the wizard Finn.

Above the clamor and the clang shrill sounded Vigi's bark,
And when the groaning ship of Raud drew seaward to the dark,
And Thorir Hart leapt to the land, bidding his rowers live
Who could, Olaf and Vigi strained hard on the fugitive.

'Twas Vigi caught the runner's heel and stayed the windswift flight
Till Olaf's well-hurled spear had changed the day to endless night
For Thorir Hart, but not before his sword had stung the hound,
Whom the heroes bore on shield to ship, all grieving for his wound.

Now proud of heart was Vigi to be borne to ship on shield,
And many a day thereafter, when the bitter thrust was healed,
Would the dog leap up on the Vikings and coax with his Irish wit
Till 'mid laughter a shield was leveled, and Vigi rode on it.

PUPPYHOOD

"Only the envy was, that it lasted not still, or, now it is past, cannot by imagination, much less description, be recovered to a part of that spirit it had in the gliding by."
—Jonson's *Masque of Hymen.*

SIGURD was related to Vigi only by the line of Scandinavian literature. The Lady of Cedar Hill was enjoying the long summer daylights and marvelous rainbows of Norway, when word reached her that her livestock had been increased by the advent of ten puppies, and back there came for them all, by return mail, heroic names straight out of that splendid old saga of *Burnt Njal.*

But this is not the beginning of the story. Indeed, Sigurd's story probably emerges from a deeper distance than the story of mankind. Millions of glad creatures, his tawny ancestors, ranged the Highlands, slowly giving their wild hearts to the worship of man, and left no pedigree. The utmost of our knowledge only tells us that Sigurd's sire, the rough-coated collie Barwell Ralph (pronounced Rāfe), born September 3,

1894, was the son of Heather Ralph, a purple name with wind and ripples in it, himself the son of the sonorous Stracathro Ralph, whose parents were Christopher, a champion of far renown, and Stracathro Fancy; and of lovely Apple Blossom, offspring of Metchley Wonder and Grove Daisy. Ralph's mother of blessed memory was Aughton Bessie; her parents were Edgbarton Marvel, son of that same champion Christopher and Sweet Marie, and Wellesbourne Ada, in proudest Scotch descent from Douglas and Lady.

Sigurd's mother, Trapelo Dora, born May 16, 1900, was also a sable and white rough collie. Her sire, Barwell Masterpiece, son of Rightaway and Caermarther Lass, had for dashing grandsires Finsbury Pilot and Ringleader, and for gentle grandams, Miss Purdue and Jane. Her mother, Barwell Queenie, came of the great lineage of Southport Perfection and numbered among her ancestors a Beauty, a Princess and a Barwell Bess.

Those ten puppies, poor innocents, had something to live up to.

But their sire, Ralph, cared nothing for his distinguished progenitors, not even for that prize grandmother who had sold for eight hundred

pounds, in comparison with the Lady of Cedar Hill, whom he frankly adored. His most blissful moments were those in which he was allowed to sit up on the lounge beside her, his paw in her palm, his head on her shoulder, his brown eyes rolling up to her face with a look of liquid ecstasy. He had been the guardian of Cedar Hill several years when Dora arrived. Shipped from those same Surrey kennels in which Ralph uttered his first squeal, her long journey over sea and land had been a fearsome experience. When the expressman dumped a travelworn box, labeled *Live Dog,* in the generous country house hall, and proceeded with some nervousness to knock off the slats, the assembled household grouped themselves behind the most reassuring pieces of furniture for protection against the outrush of a ferocious beast. But the delicate little collie that shot forth was herself in such terror that even the waiting dish of warm milk and bread, into which she splashed at once, could not allay her panic. From room to room she raced, hiding under sofas and behind screens, finding nothing that gave her peace, not even when she came up against a long mirror and fronted her own reflection, another

scared little collie, which she tried to kiss with a puzzled tongue against the glass. Then in sauntered the lordly Ralph, whose indignant growl at the intruder died in his astonished throat as Dora confidingly flung herself upon him, leaping up and clinging to his well-groomed neck with grimy forelegs quivering for joy. Ralph was a dog who prided himself on his respectability. Affronted, shocked, he shook off this impudent young hussy, but homesick little Dora would not be repelled. Here, at last, was something she recognized, something that belonged to her lost world of the kennels. Let Ralph be as surly as he might, he had her perfect confidence from the outset, while the winsome Lady of Cedar Hill had to coax for days before Dora would make the first timid response to these strange overtures of human friendship.

As for Ralph, he decided to tolerate the nuisance and in course of time found her gypsy pranks amusing, even although she treated him with increasing levity. As he took his prolonged siesta, she would frisk about him, biting first one ear and then the other, till at last he would rise in magnificent menace and go chasing after her, his

middle-aged dignity melting from him in the fun of the frolic, till his antics outcapered her own.

Dora's wits were brighter than his. If the Lady of Cedar Hill, after tossing a ball several times to the further end of the hall, for them to dash after in frantic emulation and bring back to her, only made a feint of throwing it, Ralph would hunt and hunt through the far corners of the room, while Dora, soon satisfying herself that the ball was not there, would dance back again and nose about the hands and pockets of her mistress, evidently concluding that the ball had not been thrown. Or if a door were closed upon them, Ralph would scratch long and furiously at its lower edge, while Dora, finding such efforts futile, would spring up and strike with her paw at the knob.

The date made momentous by the arrival of the ten puppies was August 20, 1902. The Lady of Cedar Hill, home from the Norland, found Dora full of the prettiest pride in her fuzzy babies, while Ralph, stalking about in jealous disgust, did his best to convey the impression that those troublesome absurdities were in no way related to him. This was not so easy, for they, one and all,

were smitten with admiration of their august father and determination to follow in his steps. No sooner did Ralph, after casting one glare of contempt upon his family, stroll off nonchalantly toward the famous Maze, the Mecca of all the children in the neighboring factory town, than a line of eager puppies went waddling after. Glancing uneasily back, Ralph would give vent to a fierce paternal snarl, whereat squat on their stomachs would grovel the train, every puppy wriggling all over with delicious fright. But no sooner did Ralph proceed, with an attempt to resume his careless bachelor poise, than again he found those ten preposterous puppies panting along in a wavy procession at his very heels.

Only one of the puppies failed to thrive. Fragile little Kari, inappropriately named for one of the most terrible of the Vikings, died at the end of three months. But Helgi and Helga, Hauskuld and Hildigunna, Hrut, Unna and Flosi, Gunnar and Njal, waxed in size, activity and naughtiness until, in self-defense, the Lady of Cedar Hill began to give them away to her fortunate friends. Joy-of-Life was invited over to make an early choice. As Wellesley is not far

from Cedar Hill, whose mistress she dearly loved, she went again and again, studying the youngsters with characteristic earnestness. They were nearly full-grown before she drove me over to confirm her election. The dogs were called up to meet us, and the lawn before the house looked to my bewildered gaze one white and golden blur of cavorting collies.

"Are they all here?" I asked, after vain efforts to count the heads in that whirl of perpetual motion.

"All but the barn dog," replied the Lady of Cedar Hill. "He is kept chained for the present, until he gets wonted to his humble sphere, but we will go down and call on him."

He saw us first. An excited bark made me aware of a young collie, almost erect in the barn door, tugging madly against his chain. The Lady of Cedar Hill, with a loving laugh, ran forward to release him. His gambol of gratitude nearly knocked her down, but before she had recovered her balance he was too far away for rebuke, romping, bounding, wheeling about the meadow, such a glorious image of wild grace and rapturous freedom that our hearts gladdened as we looked.

"But he is the most beautiful of all," I exclaimed.

"Oh, no," said the instructed Lady of Cedar Hill, "not from the blue-ribbon point of view." And she went on to explain that Njal, the biggest of the nine, was quite too big for a collie of such distinguished pedigree. His happy body, gleaming pure gold in the sun, with its snowy, tossing ruff, was both too tall and too long. His white-tipped tail was too luxuriantly splendid. The cock of his shining ears was not in the latest kennel style. His honest muzzle was a trifle blunt. He was, in short, lacking in various fine points of collie elegance, and so, while his dainty, aristocratic brothers and sisters were destined to be the ornaments of gentle homes, Njal was relegated to a life of service, in care of the cattle, and to that end had been for the month past kept in banishment at the barn.

But Njal had persistently rebelled against his destiny. He declined to explore the barn, always straining at the end of his chain in the doorway, watching with wistful eyes the frolics of his mother, hardly more than a puppy herself, with her overwhelming children. She seemed to have

forgotten that Njal was one of her own. He would not make friends with the dairymen nor with the coachman, and though he showed an occasional interest in the horses, he utterly ignored the cows and calves whose guardian he was intended to be. Even now, in defiance of social distinctions, he dashed into the house, which, as we came hurrying up behind him, resounded with the reproachful voices of the maids.

"Njal, get out! You know you're not allowed in here."

"Njal, jump down off that bed this minute. The impudence of him!"

"Njal, drop that ball. It doesn't belong to you. Be off to the barn."

The maids, aided by Njal's brothers and sisters, who struck me as officious, had just succeeded in chasing him out as we came to the door, but he flashed past us, tail erect, enthusiastically bent on greeting his glorious sire, who was majestically pacing up to investigate this unseemly commotion.

"Poor Njal! Even more than the rest, he idolizes his father," said the Lady of Cedar Hill, as Ralph met his son with a growl and a cuff.

Crestfallen at last, Njal trotted back to his

mistress and stood gazing up at her with great, amber eyes, that held, if ever eyes did, wounded love and a beseeching for comfort. She stroked his head, but bade one of the maids fetch a leash and take him back where he belonged.

I glanced at Joy-of-Life. That glance was all she had been waiting for.

"Njal is my dog," she said.

"What! Not Njal!" protested the Lady of Cedar Hill. "Why, in the count of collie points——"

"But I'm not looking for a dog to keep me supplied with blue ribbons. I want a friend. Njal has a soul."

The Lady of Cedar Hill bent a doubtful glance on me.

"Oh, we've just settled that," smiled Joy-of-Life. "She would rather have him than all the other eight."

So it was that on the last day of June, 1903, we drove again to Cedar Hill to bring our collie home.

"It's a queer choice," laughed our hostess, as she poured tea, "but at least you need not put yourselves out for him. He is used to the barn,

and a box of straw in your cellar will be quite good enough for Njal."

She rang for more cream. No maid appeared. Surprised, she rang again, sharply. Still no response. One of the ever numerous guests rose and went out to the kitchen. She came back laughing.

"All the maids are kneeling around Njal, disputing as to whose ribbon becomes him best and worshiping him as if he were the golden calf. And really William has given an amazing shine to that yellow coat of his. It is astonishing what a splendid fellow the barn-puppy has grown to be."

In came Jane with the cream, blushing for her delay, but lingering to see what reception would be given the collie who walked politely a step or two behind.

Groomed till he shone, his new leather collar adorned with a flaring orange-satin bow, Njal entered with the quiet stateliness of one to drawing-rooms born, widely waving his tail in salutation to the entire company. But it was to the Lady of Cedar Hill that he went and against her side that he pressed close, while his questioning

eyes passed from face to face, for he seemed already aware of an impending change in his fortunes.

The phaeton was brought to the door. Joy-of-Life and I took our places, and the Lady of Cedar Hill, who gave her puppies away right royally, passed in a new leash and complete box of brushes. Then the coachman lifted Njal, an armful of sprawling legs, and deposited him at our feet. The collie sat upright, making no effort to escape. But as his mistress perched on the carriage step to give him a good-bye hug, his eyes looked back into hers so wistfully, and yet so trustfully, that one of the maids in the background was heard to sniff.

"Be a good doggie," the beloved voice adjured him, "and don't give your new ladies any trouble on the long drive."

If he promised, he certainly kept his word. All the way he sat quietly where he had been put, erect and alert, watching the road and bestowing a very special regard on every dog and cat we passed. When we reached our modest home, he jumped out at our bidding, entered the open door and proceeded steadily from room to room, look-

ing long out of each window as if hoping to find a familiar view. We had been warned that strange surroundings would probably affect his appetite, but Njal was far too sensible a collie to disdain a good dinner. He took to his puppy-biscuit and gravy with such a relish that, in an incredibly short period, the empty dish was dancing on the gravel under the hopeful insistence of his tongue. Homesickness, however, came on with the dusk. He gazed longingly from the piazza down the road, and when we attempted to introduce him to the cellar and his waiting box of plentiful clean straw, he resisted in a sudden agony of fright.

Njal had known nothing of cellars, and the terror with which that unnatural, lonesome hollow under ground affected him lasted for two full years. Then a visiting nephew, boy-wise in the ways of animals, romping with him, purposely scampered back and forth through the cellar, running in at one door and out at the other, so that the dog, in the ardor of the chase, had traversed that realm of awful chill and gloom before he realized where he was. Later on, one torrid afternoon, I carried a bone down cellar and, sit-

ting on a log beside it, chanted its praises until, tempted beyond endurance, Njal came tumbling headlong downstairs and fell upon it. For a little while longer, he would not stay in the cellar without companionship, but at last his dread was so entirely overcome that, in the midsummer heats, the cellar, and especially, to our regret, the coal bin, was his favorite resort.

But on this first night he would have none of it. We were reluctant to use force and compromised on the bathroom. Here he obediently lay down and bore his lot in silence till dead of night, when at last the rising tide of desolation so overswelled his puppy heart that a sudden wail, which would have done credit to a banshee, woke everybody in the house.

The second evening he made his own arrangements. Our academic home was simple in its appointments,—so simple that Joy-of-Life and I often merrily quoted to each other the comment of a calling freshman:

"When *I'm* old, I mean to have a dear little house just like this one, all furnished with nothing but books."

The barn-dog inspected our chambers and

promptly decided that only the best was good enough for him. This approved bower was then occupied by the Dryad, over whose couch was appropriately spread a velvety green cover, a foreign treasure of her own, marvelous for many-hued embroidery. As bedtime came on, Njal disappeared and was nowhere to be found, until the Dryad's pealing laugh brought us to her room, where a ball of golden collie, even the tail demurely tucked in, was sleeping desperately hard in the middle of the choice coverlet. One anxious eye blinked at us and then shut up tighter than ever. Njal was so determined not to be budged that the tender-hearted Dryad took his part and pleaded against our amateur efforts at discipline.

"Poor puppy! Let him be my room-mate to-night. He's so new and scared. He can sleep over there on the lounge under that farthest window and he will not bother me one bit."

Njal consented to this transfer, but in the small hours homesickness again swept his soul and he jumped up beside the Dryad, to whom he nestled close. The night was excessively hot, and the morning found a pallid lady snatching a belated

nap on the lounge under the far window, while Njal remained in proud possession of the bed.

Joy-of-Life thereafter insisted on leashing him at night in the lower hall, where we would spread out for him the Thunder-and-Lightning Rug, an embarrassing gift for which we had never before been able to find a use. There he would contentedly take his post, the conscious guardian of the house, his white and yellow in vivid contrast to the black and scarlet of the rug, and his blue-figured Japanese bowl of water within easy reach. This disposition of our problem worked both well and ill, since Njal found distraction from his diminishing attacks of nostalgia in trying with his sharp white teeth the toughness of the leashes which succeeded one another in costly succession. But as a watch dog he took himself most seriously, though not greatly to the furtherance of our repose. From the depths of slumber he would leap up with a dynamic bark, accompanied by a bass growl, as if there were two of him, spinning around and around upon his leash, until we all rose from our beds, grasping electric torches, and sped downstairs to behold a fat beetle scuttling off across the floor or to hear the receding scam-

per of a mouse behind the wainscot. On the night before the Fourth, outraged by such a racket as he had never heard before, our ten-months-old protector succeeded in making more noise than all the horns, torpedoes and firecrackers in our patriotic neighborhood.

We celebrated the national holiday by changing his name, which sounded in the mouth of the mocker too much like *miaul,* to that of the shining hero of the *Volsunga Saga.* Joy-of-Life hesitated a little lest the Lady of Cedar Hill should deem her own Norse hero, Burnt Njal, "gentle and generous," treated with discourtesy, but I pleaded that in all likelihood our home would never again be blessed with anything so young and so yellow, so altogether fit to bear the honors of the Golden Sigurd. The collie readily accepted his new name, but never forgot the old, and even to the last year of his sunny life, if the word Njal were spoken, however softly, would glance up with bright recognition.

Sigurd bore himself through that first July with such civility and dignity that we did not dream how homesick he really was,—that towering puppy, who looked absurdly tall as we took him

out to walk on his latest leash. He submitted to this needless indignity as he submitted to the long chain that bound him to the piazza railing, with magnanimous forbearance. We had used a rope at first, but he felt it a point of honor to gnaw this apart, coming cheerfully to meet us with a section of our clothesline trailing from his collar. Through these first weeks he had much to occupy his mind and tax his fortitude in the engine whistles and rumble of trains, the whirr of electric cars, Cecilia's energetic broom that threatened to brush him off the piazza, the manners of the market-man, who, unlearned in Norse mythology, injuriously called him Jigger, and divers other perils and excitements. His ears were forever on the cock and his tail busy with the agitated utterance of his changing emotions. When we ventured, after a little, to let him run loose, he investigated the immediate territory but kept within call, bounding to meet us as we came out to look for him. The first time that he actually ventured off on an independent quest, he came tearing back after forty minutes' absence as if he had been putting a girdle round the earth, insisting on a complete and repeated family welcome as well as

a second breakfast. My first vivid sense of the comfort of having a dog smote me on the edge of a tired evening, when, trudging home from a long day in one of the Boston libraries, a sudden nose was thrust into my hand and a gleaming shape leapt up out of the roadside shadows in jubilant welcome. So we supposed our collie was light-hearted.

But one after-sunset hour, when we had feloniously sallied out to strip the flower-beds of an absent neighbor, Sigurd, in amiable attendance, suddenly started, wheeled and was off down the hill like a shimmering arrow of Apollo. How was he aware of her at that distance, in that dusk, the Lady of Cedar Hill? He flung himself like a happy avalanche upon her and poured out all the bewilderment and yearning, the lonesomeness and love of his loyal soul, in a shrill, ecstatic tremolo that we came to designate as "Sigurd's lyric cry." It was reserved for a favored few, objects of romantic devotion; it was rarely vouchsafed to the commonplace members of his own household; but it never failed the Lady of Cedar Hill, though months might elapse between her visits.

On this her first coming, his joy was touching

to see. He pressed close to her side as she walked up the hill and after she had seated herself in a piazza chair he tried to climb into her lap as in his fuzzy puppyhood, and succeeded, too, though he hung over her knees like a yellow festoon, his feet touching the floor on either side and his plumy tail fanning her face. Yet when she went away, he made no effort to follow. He watched her intently from the piazza steps as she passed down the hill and turned the corner. When she was out of sight, tail and ears drooped and he came in of his own accord, soberly lying down on the Thunder-and-Lightning Rug, beside his leash. Feelings were all very well in their way, but duty was supreme. He had a house to guard from beetles and other bugbears of the night.

Sigurd was so big and strong that he needed plenty of exercise. Before he came, a spacious "run" had been provided for him on the wild bank, hardly yet redeemed from the forest, back of the house, but this he promptly repudiated for all purposes of frolic. He seemed to regard it as a singing-school, for, dragged out there "to play," he would sit on his haunches and practice dirge-music in howls of intolerable crescendo

until a decent respect for the opinions of the neighbors obliged us to bring him in. We called him our gymnasium, walking and romping with him all we could, but our utmost was not enough. So we would drive out, once or twice a week, along the less frequented roads, though automobiles were not so many then, to give the boy a "scimper-scamper." He delighted to accompany the carriage, running alongside with brief dashes down the bank for water or into the woods after a squirrel. When he was tired, he would run close and look up, asking for a lift, but after a few minutes of panting repose, lying across the phaeton in front of our feet, nose and tail in alarming proximity to the wheels, he would want to scramble out and race again.

The first time that we took him back to Cedar Hill was a thrilling event for Sigurd. He had been running most of the way and jumped in just before we reached familiar landmarks. As soon as these appeared, all his weariness vanished. Standing erect, eyes shining, ears pricked up, nose quivering, his tail thumping the dashboard with louder and louder blows, he sent his lyric cry like a bugle through the air, heralding our approach

so well that all his kindred yet remaining on the estate, as well as his original mistress, her guests and her maids, were drawn up on the lawn and steps to receive us. Sigurd sprang out before the horse had stopped and tore up with a special squeal of filial devotion to greet his sire, Ralph the Magnificent, who was barely restrained by a circle of strenuous hands on his collar from hurling himself in fury on this most obnoxious of his sons. Dora trotted up and sniffed at him with coquettish curiosity, as if wondering who this golden young gallant might be, but her bearing could by no stretch of language by styled maternal. Gunnar, a puppy with every mark of high descent, now installed on the estate as crown prince, was so infected by his father's rage that they both had to be shut up during our stay. Sigurd pranced rapturously all over the place, visiting every scene of his childhood with the conspicuous exception of the barn. He disdained to recognize the cows and gave but a supercilious curl of his tail even to the most affable of the dairymen. A cattle-dog, indeed! He invited himself to tea in the drawing-room and had the further impertinence to take a snooze on Dora's own cushion, close to

the skirts of the Lady of Cedar Hill. She doubted whether he would be willing to go back with us, but when the phaeton was driven to the door, Sigurd rushed out to meet it and leapt into his place before we had finished our more ceremonious farewells. We knew then that he was really ours.

THE DOGS OF BETHLEHEM

Many a starry night had they known,
Melampo, Lupina and Cubilōn,
    Shepherd-dogs, keeping
    The flocks, unsleeping,
Serving their masters for crust and bone.

Many a starlight but never like this,
For star on star was a chrysalis
    Whence there went soaring
    A winged, adoring
Splendor out-pouring a carol of bliss.

Sniffing and bristling the gaunt dogs stood,
Till the seraphs, who smiled at their hardihood,
    Calmed their panic
    With talismanic
Touches like wind in the underwood.

In the dust of the road like gold-dust blown,
Melampo, Lupina and Cubilōn
    Saw strange kings, faring
    On camels, bearing
Treasures too bright for a mortal throne.

Shepherds three on their crooks a-leap
Sped after the kings up the rugged steep
    To Bethlehem; only
    The dogs, left lonely,
Stayed by the fold and guarded the sheep.

Faithful, grim hearts! The marvelous glow
Flooded e'en these with its overflow,
    Wolfishness turning
    Into a yearning
To worship the highest a dog may know.

When dawn brought the shepherds, each to his own,
Melampo, Lupina and Cubilōn
    Bounded to meet them,
    Frolicked to greet them,
Eager to serve them for love alone.

GROWING UP

"His years were full; his years were joyous; why
Must love be sorrow, when his gracious name
Recalls his lovely life of limb and eye?"
—Swinburne's *At a Dog's Grave.*

Now that we realized not only that we had adopted Sigurd but that Sigurd had adopted us, we entered into an ever deepening enjoyment of our dog. Be it understood that we were teachers, writers, servants of causes, boards, committees, mere professional women, with too little leisure for the home we loved. Had our hurried days given opportunity for the fine art of mothering we would have cherished a child instead of a collie, but Sigurd throve on neglect and saved us from turning into plaster images by making light of all our serious concerns. No academic dignities impressed his happy irreverence.

"What is Sigurd slinging about there on the lawn?" I asked on his first Commencement morning. "It looks as if he had a muskrat by the tail."

Joy-of-Life glanced apprehensively from the

window to the bed, on which she had carefully laid out a dean's glistening regalia.

"My cap!" she ejaculated and dashed downstairs and out of the door and away over the grass after a frolicsome bandit who knew of no better use for a mortar-board—perhaps there is none—than to spin it around by its gilt tassel.

He had no regard for manuscript, after a thorough investigation had convinced him that it was not good to eat, and made no scruple of breaking in on our most absorbed moments with an insistent demand for play. Whatever the game might be, he infused it with dramatic quality, turning every romp into a thrilling adventure. He liked to pretend that he was Jack the Giant-Killer and would crouch and growl and bristle and finally hurl himself upon some ogre of a wastepaper basket, overthrowing it in the first onslaught and then worrying its scattered contents with mimic fury. For punishment, we would clap the basket tight over his head, and he would back into a corner, indulging in all sorts of profane remarks while he pawed and shook that insulting helmet off, but carefully, for he clearly understood that, though what it held was sub-

ject to his teeth, the basket itself must not be harmed. He pretended to be bitterly outraged by this treatment, but no sooner was the basket in position beside the desk again than he would caper up and gleefully knock it over, promptly presenting his ruffled head to have his punishment repeated.

Apart from our enjoyment of his crimes, it was difficult to punish him, because his sunny spirit turned every fresh experience into fun. He reminded me of a family tradition of an incorrigible baby uncle, whose clerical father, in despair at the child's ability to find amusement under all penal circumstances, stripped him naked and shut him into an empty room to repent of his sins. But when the parental eye condescended to the keyhole, it beheld a rosy cherub with puffed-out cheeks dancing merrily about and blowing a bewildered fly from one end of the chamber to the other.

Sigurd loved nothing better than make-believe discipline,—to be whacked with the feather-duster, "blown away" with the bellows, rolled up in the Sunday newspaper, anything that gave him an excuse for frisking, barking, dodging, scamper-

ing, kicking, rolling, tumbling, and rushing in at the last for a hug of assured understanding. We could keep him quiet for hours at a time by putting a cooky or any bit of sweet into a small pasteboard box, tying it up and fitting it into as many more, of increasing sizes, as time and material allowed. Sigurd would watch the process with sparkling eyes and then, taking the packet between his forepaws, settle down to the long task of getting at that cooky. Sometimes he would sigh with weariness or sink his yellow head to the floor in momentary despair. But he never gave up, though he often paused long enough to restore his energies by a nap. Taking the ragged bundle to another part of the room, as if his labors might be assisted by some special quality in a different rug, he would fall upon his puzzle again and not desist until the goal of all that patient endeavor, one morsel of sweetness, gave its brief delight to his triumphant tongue. This device of the boxes was a great resource when rough weather kept us in, for the youngster, who did not yet venture far without us, was incessant in his search for occupation. When this led him into genuine mischief and brought upon him ac-

tual rebuke, he took it so to heart that no member of the household, in kitchen or study, could get on with her work for the next half-day, for Sigurd would trot from one to another, with imploring eyes, insisting on shaking paws and being forgiven over and over again.

A most affectionate little fellow he was, and would sit still at my knee by the hour so long as he was occasionally patted and addressed by what he instantly recognized as a pet name,—Opals, or Blessed Buttercup, or Honey of Hybla, or Sulphur of my Soul. Epithets failing, he would touch my foot at intervals with a reminding paw. Then, absorbed in my work, I would absent-mindedly, on the edges of my consciousness, conjure up more titles for him,—Yellowboy, Crocus, Sunflower, Topaz, Mustard, Nugget, Starshine, his appreciative tail thumping the floor at every one. He wanted to be good and was aided by a happy disposition that, when one line of activity was cut off, found prompt solace in another. After a few trials had convinced him that bones, though polished in his most masterly manner and disposed behind doors and under sofa pillows with engaging modesty, were not acceptable orna-

ments of the house, he so rejoiced in the new-found art of burying them in the earth that, for a time, all his dainties went the same way, and the gardener's hoe would turn up petrified pieces of sponge cake and gingerbread at which Sigurd would sniff in embarrassed reminiscence.

Day by day the puppy was learning not only the ways of the house, but what he considered a proper demeanor toward our variety of callers. He took up the domestic routine almost at once and developed such an exact sense of time that we used to call him our four-o'clock. At this merry hour we would drop pens, shut books and take Sigurd to walk,—a duty that he by no means allowed us to forget. At the exact moment his *Woof, Woof* rang out like a bell into "the still air of delightful studies" and upon his protesting playmates Sigurd would burst like a thunderbolt, catching at our dresses and literally dragging us away from our desks. At mealtimes, too, with inexorable punctuality he herded the family to the dining room. But most of the day he was doing sentry duty on the doorsteps, incidentally offering his comment on every happening of the road and neighborhood. Tramps he abominated and, not

content with driving them from our own premises, roared them away from every back door on the hill. His prejudice had to do, apparently, less with their looks and even their smell than with something stealthy and furtive in their approach. Skulking he abhorred. On one occasion he brought pink confusion to the cheeks of a little seamstress who was passing in a bundle at the door while her sheepish young escort hid in the shrubbery. It did not take Sigurd thirty seconds to drive that gawk from cover. To a recognized friend our collie would act as master of ceremonies, bounding down the walk to give him welcome, barking sharply to save him the trouble of ringing the bell, dashing in ahead with the glorious news of the arrival and then scampering back to thrust into the visitor's palm a cordial, clumsy paw, wagging that plumy tail meanwhile with an impetuous swing that sometimes swept before it small articles from cabinet or tea-table. Sometimes he would take a fancy to an utter stranger and greet him as an angel from the blue, singing love-at-first-sight to him at the top of his funny squeal, a four-legged troubadour. College girls he regarded as his natural chums and would frisk

about them or leap upon them as the mood took him; middle-aged folk, like his mistresses, were all very well in their serviceable way; but the romance of life centered for Sigurd in old ladies. The whiter the hair, the more beautiful. For them he would spring up on his hind feet and rest his forepaws on their shoulders, pressing his face against their cheeks with such ardor that once, when such an encounter occurred on the street, a gentleman rushed from across the road, with upraised cane, to the rescue.

"Kindly let us alone, sir," crisply rebuked the Lovely Object, her bonnet askew but her face beaming. "This dog and I understand each other and we want no interference."

When a company of callers were seated, Sigurd, in a rapture of hospitality, would hurry again and again around the circle, shaking paws with each in turn and uttering a continuous, soft quaver of welcome, pleasure and pride. Then he would lie down contentedly in the very center of the group, now and then rolling over on his back in the hope that it would occur to somebody to slap his fluffy breast.

At first he often made mistakes in his office of

sentinel. It was funny to see him rush madly to the door at a suspicious step and then, abashed by the jocular greeting of some household familiar, drop the rôle of heroic defender and, waving his tail affably but with a certain reserve, push by on the pretense that he was just coming out to take a squint at the weather.

Of sensitive and generous nature, our golden collie was quick to feel the difference between an intentional hurt and an accident. He had been with us only a few weeks when a college colleague, then brightening our table with her presence, started to play stick with him before dinner. Sigurd's way of playing stick was to bring you anything from a clothespin to a beanpole and coax you to throw it for him, holding it up lightly between his teeth for you to take. This time he had a piece of board with jagged ends, and our friend, whose own dog, a monstrously ugly and therefore supremely choice Boston Bull, would hang on to a stick with iron jaws while she tried in vain to wrench it from him, mistook the game. Sigurd held up his stick by one end, deftly balancing it in the air, and she, supposing that he would maintain his grip, rammed it suddenly

down his throat. But Sigurd, eager for his run, at once let go, with the result that his throat was rather badly cut. He was surprised into one scream of pain and then silently tore about in circles, his tail low and rigid. His would-be playmate, grieved to the heart, had hurried for his Japanese water-bowl, but Sigurd would touch nothing that she brought. He went, instead, to a natural basin in the rock, always his favorite drinking-cup, where he lapped away at a prodigious rate, leaving a red stain on the water. After this he hid in the bushes, and it was not until dinner was nearly over that Sigurd came trotting in, ears and tail still depressed. Joy-of-Life, with the voice that was healing in itself, called him to her, but he passed us both by, going straight to the comparative stranger who had innocently hurt him. Settling on his haunches beside her chair, Sigurd gazed up mournfully but understandingly into her eyes and offered his magnanimous paw.

"You know I didn't mean to, and you came in to say so and to forgive me, you perfect little gentleman," she exclaimed, shaking the proffered paw as deferentially as if it had been the hand of Socrates. And that was the end of it. Sigurd

coughed up a little blood and a few splinters that night, but he always met this lady, on her frequent comings, with a special, quiet courtesy, though he never invited her to a game of stick again.

Sigurd had one playmate who shamefully imposed upon his noble disposition. Nellie was an ancient spaniel, whose black curls were turning a dingy gray. She was our next neighbor and Sigurd's first love. Nellie was too fat and wheezy to romp, but she would sit, blinking approval, the center of a circle whose circumference was made by the golden gambols of our infatuated puppy. Around and around her he would caper, while she yawned and scratched—she was always a vulgar old thing—and took her exercise by proxy. We did not allow Nellie inside the house, to Sigurd's grieved surprise, but his dinner-dish was regularly set out of doors, by the back steps, and Nellie, every now and then, when her own rations had not been satisfactory or when Sigurd had peculiarly toothsome viands on his plate, would take advantage of his chivalry to play on him a low-down trick. Out of sight on the other side of the house, she would raise a wail of feigned distress,

whereupon our gallant Volsung, just in the first enjoyment of his food, would lift his head, listen, even drop the piece of meat in his mouth and speed away to her rescue, running down one hill and up another in a vain endeavor to discover the villain of whom she had complained. Meanwhile Nellie, puffing with detestable delight, would waddle around to the doorsteps and gobble up the best of Sigurd's dinner. When she heard him bounding back, she discreetly shuffled off, so that Sigurd's ideal remained unspotted. Dear, faithful lad! To the last of her disgraceful days, he was old Nellie's champion and dupe.

All the while his development was going on apace. When he came to us he was already, like his brothers and sisters, proficient in giving the right paw, and could also, under protest, stand on his hind legs in a corner and "go roly-poly," a senseless performance, that he detested, on floors, but a natural and joyful gymnastic on the grass. He soon added to these accomplishments the agile arts of jumping over a stick and leaping through a hoop, though his tribulations with the hoop were many. He would brandish it over his head, run with it and trip in it, get his legs and body all

wound up in it, and finally throw himself upon it and bite it into docility. He readily learned to catch, but his tastes were not extravagant and he would disdainfully drop in the thickets the rubber balls that were bought for him and grub up for himself some crooked branch or tough old chip that suited his purpose better.

Being educators ourselves, we did not think much of education as such and gave little attention to teaching him artificial tricks. Joy-of-Life was in favor of vocational training and decided that he must learn to guard. Her efforts nearly achieved success. For one proud fortnight Sigurd would, at the word of command, lie down and, resisting every temptation to leave his post, watch over a handkerchief or glove or parasol until he was called off by the same voice that had imposed the duty on him. It was I who ruined this excellent attainment by setting him, beside a pansy-bed agleam with sympathetic twinkles, to guard a hoptoad. To Sigurd's dismay and annoyance that brownie of the garden refused to play the game. How could a puppy remain at his post if his post would not remain at the puppy? Sigurd tried to paw the toad back into place, he

remonstrated with it in a series of shrill barks and at last, when he heard us laughing at him, he indignantly repudiated, and forever, the whole business of guarding. It was then that Joy-of-Life accused me of being a demoralizing influence and for Sigurd's good reminded me of what I had quite forgotten and he had never known,—that he was not "our puppy" but hers.

"I want," said Joy-of-Life, bending her earnest look upon us both, "that Sigurd should grow up into a good dog, and how can he be a good dog if you turn duty into a joke?"

I felt so guilty that Sigurd hurried over to lick my hand.

"Whose dog are you, Gold of Ophir?" I asked, and Sigurd, with an impartial flourish of his tail, lay down exactly between us.

This delicate question was ultimately decided by no less an arbiter than Mother Goose. In pursuance of the theory that her immortal nonsense songs were written by Oliver Goldsmith—this is what is known as Literary Research—I had obtained leave from a Boston librarian, an indulgent spirit now gone to his reward, to take home for comparison with an accumulation of

other texts a unique copy, exquisitely printed on creamy pages with wide margins and choicely bound in white and gold. It was an extraordinary grace of permission and, even in the act of passing that gem of a volume over, the librarian hesitated.

"It must not come to harm," he said, "for it is irreplaceable; but I know how you value books and I believe there are no children, to whom this might be a temptation, under your roof."

"Unfortunately, no; only a puppy."

"We will risk the puppy," he smiled,—but he did not know Sigurd.

I carried that book home as carefully as if it had been a nest of humming-bird's eggs. As I used it that evening at my desk, I propped it up at a far distance from any possible spatter of ink. Then I slipped it into a vacant space on the shelf of the revolving bookcase close at hand and, resolving to return it the next morning, turned to a good-night romp with the Volsung. We tried several new games without winning much popular applause. He was a failure as Wolf at the Door, because he barked so gleefully for admittance to the room where Joy-of-Life was brushing her

mother's beautiful white hair and was so welcome when he came bursting in; nor did he shine as Mother Hubbard's dog, for his friend in the kitchen, Cecilia, who never let her cupboard go bare, had just filled the doughnut jar. So we practiced in secret for a few minutes on "a poetic recital" of Hickory Dickory Dock and then came forth to electrify the household. Taking a central seat, I repeated those talismanic syllables, at whose sound Sigurd jumped upon me, climbed up till his forepaws rested on the high top of the chair, in graphic illustration of the way the mouse ran up the clock, emitted an explosive bark when, shifting parts at a sudden pinch, he became for an instant the clock striking one, and then scrambled down with alacrity, a motion picture of the retreating mouse. This was no small intellectual exercise for a collie, and at the end of our one and only public performance he broke away and squeezed himself under the sofa, where he lay rubbing his poor, overwrought noddle against the coolest spot on the wall.

His mental energies had revived by morning and apparently he wanted to review his *Hickory Dickory Dock,* for he was in my study earlier

than I and there, from all the rows of books on all the open shelves, he must needs pick out *Mother Goose,* even that unique copy *de luxe.* When I came in, there was Sigurd outstretched on his favorite rug, beside my desk, with the book between his forepaws, ecstatically engaged in chewing off one corner.

My gasp of horror brought Joy-of-Life speedily to the scene, and Sigurd, instantly aware that he had committed a transgression beyond precedent, slid unobtrusively away, his penitent tail tucked between his legs. We were too keenly concerned over the injury done to remember to punish him, but no further punishment than our obvious distress was needed. Never again would Sigurd touch a book or anything resembling a book. He had discovered, once for all, that he had no taste for literature.

"What can you do?" asked Joy-of-Life, distractedly trying to wipe that pulpy corner dry with her napkin. "This rich binding is ruined, but the margins are so broad that Sigurd—O *Sigurd!*—has not quite chewed through to the print."

"Nothing but make confession in sackcloth and ashes and pay what I have to pay," I answered

gloomily. Then a wicked impulse prompted me to add:

"Of course, since it's *your* dog that has done the damage——"

"Sigurd is *our* dog," hastily interposed Joy-of-Life. "I give you half of him here and now, and we'll divide the damage."

So as I went in to inflict this shock upon the kind librarian I was not without a certain selfish consolation, for if I should have to pay over all my bank account, I would be getting my money's worth. The librarian bent his brows over that mangled volume, listened severely to my abject narration and not until his eye-glasses hopped off his nose did I realize that he was convulsed with laughter.

"What can I do?" I asked, too deeply contrite to resent his mirth.

He wiped his eyes, replaced his glasses, examined the book once more.

"Well!" he replied in a choking voice. "If it were possible to replace this volume, I should have to require you to do so at whatever cost. But there is no other copy to be had. Its æsthetic value is gone beyond repair. The text, fortu-

nately, is intact. We shall have to cut the pages down to the print and bind them into plain covers. A pity, but it can't be helped. The circumstances do not seem to call for a fine, but the rebinding will cost you, I regret to say, twenty-five cents."

Choosing to deal generously with Joy-of-Life, I paid it all.

Although Sigurd's golden coat seemed but the outer shining of the gladness that possessed him, he had his share of the ills that flesh is heir to, the most serious being a well-nigh fatal attack of distemper. With human obtuseness, we did not realize at first that our collie was sick. We heard him making strangling sounds and thought he had swallowed too big a piece of bone. We started out, that Sunday afternoon, on a seven-mile walk, partly for the purpose of exercising Sigurd, and were a bit hurt by his most unwonted lack of enthusiasm. Instead of multiplying the miles by his usual process of racing in erratic circles around and around us and dashing off on far excursions over the fields on either side, he trotted soberly at heel, like the well-trained dog he never was. He moped, tail hanging, ears depressed, and soon began to fall behind. At the halfway turn he lay

down and, for a time, flatly refused to budge. We laughed at his new game of Lazy Dog and relentlessly whistled him along. We were almost home, having passed through the village square, Sigurd lagging far in the rear, when a notorious bloodhound, out for his weekly constitutional, broke away from the steel chain by which his master was holding him and charged on our big puppy. Sigurd ran for his life, but the fleeter hound was close upon him. There were knots of men loafing about the square and, waiting for the next trolley car, there stood among them an old dame gayly attired in the colors of her native Erin. Sigurd's limited range of experience had led him to regard men either as secondary creatures who did what they were bid by the all-potent Lady of Cedar Hill or as parlor and piazza ornaments enveloped in an unpleasant odor of tobacco. His peril called for strong protection, so, as we were still too distant, he took refuge behind the voluminous sea-green skirts of that decent Irish body and, dodging skillfully as she twirled and whirled, kept her as a buffer between himself and his enemy. Screeching to all the saints for deliverance, she was still striving in vain to escape

from her awful position, when the owners of the dogs came panting up. The bloodhound's master collared him, none too soon, and beat him so savagely with the chain that we turned away from the sight to sympathize with Sigurd's involuntary defender and help her adjust her grass-green bonnet and veil. As for Sigurd, he had flashed out of the picture, but we found him at home, lying inert, exhausted, refusing water and biscuit, indifferent to bones. He sniffed regretfully at his Sunday dinner, but left it untasted.

An hour or two before dawn, simultaneously awakened by the sound of desperate coughing, Joy-of-Life and I met on the stairs and hurried down to find a croupy puppy, who, in his emergency, had again bitten his leash in two and climbed into his favorite—because forbidden—easy chair. As we leaned over him, Sigurd put up a paw to each of us, his suffering eyes expectant of relief. But we could devise no effectual help, and the veterinary, called in as early as we dared, regarded the invalid as a dangerous animal and handled him so roughly that, the moment Sigurd found himself released, he slipped out of the house and across the road to Nellie. Sorely dis-

appointed in us, he tried to hide his yellow towering bulk on the other side of that grizzled little spaniel and waited, an exile from home, until the doctor had driven away.

For weeks we had a sick collie on our hands. He dreaded food and would squeeze himself into all impossible places when he saw either one of us coming with the prescribed "nourishment." As for medicine, he contracted that autumn an aversion to bottles which he never overcame. Years afterward, if Sigurd, about to enter a room, stopped short on the threshold and turned abruptly away, we looked around for the bottle.

One morning the gasps were very feeble. The veterinary told us the end was at hand. We took our earth-loving collie out from his dark hospital-nook in the house and laid him down among the asters and goldenrods on the wild land at the rear. The Lady of Cedar Hill had come over to see him once more. He was lying so still that we thought he would not move again, but at the sound of that beloved voice Sigurd stirred a feeble tail and breathed a ghostly echo of his lyric cry. Faint and hoarse though it was, there was the old glad recognition in it, and his first mistress, for-

getting her intended precautions for the dogs at home, knelt down beside her Njal, comforting him with tender strokes and soft, caressing words. From that hour he began to mend, but so slowly that we were anxious about him all winter. Cruel pains would suddenly dart through him and he could never understand where they came from nor who did it. We would hear the sharp, distinctive cry that meant one of those pangs and then see Sigurd stagger up from his rug or cushion, look at it with deep reproach and cross to the furthest corner of the room. Once such a shoot of pain took him as he was standing by Joy-of-Life's gentle mother, his head propped on her knee, and the air of incredulous grief with which he drew back and gazed at her smote her to the soul. It was a matter of days before he could be coaxed to come to her again.

One of the discoveries of Sigurd's illness was the heart of our Swedish maid, Cecilia. Fresh from Ellis Island, buxom, comely, neat as a scoured rolling-pin, she regarded us with no more feeling than did her molding-board. We introduced her to the ways of an American household; we helped her with the speaking of English; we

paid her wages; we were, in short, her Plymouth Rock, on which she stepped to her career in the New World. Best of all, we were palates and stomachs on which to try her sugary experiments, for it was her steadfast ambition to become an artist in dough with the view of securing a lucrative position as a pastry cook. However much we might further her own interests, her imperturbable coolness made it clear that as fellow-creatures we were nothing, but she humored every whim of that sick puppy, even letting him lie in her immaculate pantry when the restless fancy took him. Her love was lasting, too, for although, as soon as we had suffered her apprenticeship and begun to enjoy her perfected craft, she ruthlessly left us for "a hotel yob," she persisted for several years in sending Sigurd a dog-picture postcard every Christmas. We always gave him the cards, telling him they came from his friend Cecilia, and he pawed them politely, but inwardly deemed them a poor substitute for the cakes, tarts, puffs and crinkle-pastes of many curious flavors that had, for one brief season, made our At Homes famous in our "little academe," dropping

delicious flakes for a thrifty tongue to garner under the table.

The distemper finally passed off in a trailing effect of St. Vitus' dance, which, again, our afflicted collie could not understand. On our springtide walks, his head, as he trotted in front, would suddenly be twitched to one side, as if we had jerked it by a rein. Apparently he thought we had, for invariably he came running back to see what we wanted of Sigurd.

The final, enduring result of this hard experience was an assured devotion. Sigurd had genially accepted us from the first as his people, but now, through the suffering and weakness, he had come to know us as his very own. The lyric cry still belonged to high romance, but after all those piteous weeks when he found his only comfort in lying close beside our feet—even, in extremity, upon them—he reserved certain welcomes and caresses for us alone. Ours was the long, silent pressure of the golden head against the knee and, in time of trouble, the swift touch of the tongue upon clouded faces, and ours the long, shining, intimate gaze that poured forth imperishable loyalty and love.

LADDIE

Lowly the soul that waits
At the white, celestial gates,
A threshold soul to greet
Belovèd feet.

Down the streets that are beams of sun
Cherubim children run;
They welcome it from the wall;
Their voices call.

But the Warder saith: "Nay, this
Is the City of Holy Bliss.
What claim canst thou make good
To angelhood?"

"Joy," answereth it from eyes
That are amber ecstasies,
Listening, alert, elate,
Before the gate.

Oh, how the frolic feet
On lonely memory beat!
What rapture in a run
'Twixt snow and sun!

"Nay, brother of the sod,
What part hast thou in God?
What spirit art thou of?"
It answers: "Love,"

Lifting its head, no less
Cajoling a caress,
Our winsome collie wraith,
Than in glad faith

The door will open wide,
Or kind voice bid: "Abide,
A threshold soul to greet
The longed-for feet."

Ah, Keeper of the Portal,
If Love be not immortal,
If Joy be not divine,
What prayer is mine?

THE CALL OF THE BLOOD

"Come, brother; away!"
Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing.*

Sigurd was not the only representative of his family in our favored town. His sister Hildigunna, who might well be described in the words applied to Hildigunna of the saga as "one of the fairest," was given to a comparatively remote household in Wellesley Hills from which—alas! —she soon was stolen and spirited away to fates unknown. But his brother Hrut, a name speedily changed by his new owners to Laddie, took up his happy abode at The Orchard, not half a mile from us. These owners, returning from one of their many holidays abroad, had found on shipboard the Lady of Cedar Hill, on her way back from Norway. Of course she told them about the ten puppies and of course she promised them one.

Reared in the best traditions of New England, these travelers had already achieved an ideal suc-

cess as founders and directors of a famous school for girls and had retired from active labors to a tranquil home whose broad Colonial porches were screened with "white foam flowers" of the clematis. They were Neighbors *par excellence,* so beloved, so leaned upon, so beset with callers and "old girls," with church committees and town committees, with causes and confidences, that they literally had to go to Europe to secure an occasional rest. And it was charming to see how their modest dignity and winsome graciousness received due meed of honor the Old World over, from titled personages of London to the very cab-drivers of Florence, whom they believed to be "honorable men" and were undoubtedly cheated less for so believing. Hard, shrewd faces of Paris pensions and Swiss hotels softened in their presence, and even the severe old Scotch dame who rated them roundly for gadding about the globe instead of having married and reared a freckled family, like hers, was moved to add: "But I mak nae doobt ye are mooch respectet where ye cam fram." She would have been confirmed in this amiable concession if she could have seen how their return was a village jubilee and

how all our accumulated joys and sorrows trooped in at once through their open doors. They were Ladies of rare and precious quality, with a touch of precise, old-fashioned elegance, which made one frank admirer exclaim: "But they are like finest china, like porcelain, like *Sèvres*. There is nothing so exquisite left on earth. They are classics." Most eminently of all, they were Sisters. A childhood of strange peril and suffering, in which their hearts clung so close together that they grew into one, had fitted naturally dissimilar natures into an utter harmony of desire and deed. Nobody ever thought of one without the other. Not Castor and Pollux shine with a more closely related and serener light.

The Sisters hardly waited for our first tumult of greetings to subside before, on a September afternoon as quietly radiant as their own faces, they drove over to Cedar Hill to see what they described as "ten little fluffy balls, only just large enough to wriggle." The choice of their collie they left to the giver. It was not determined then, but early in April they had a message setting the day on which they were to "come for Hrut." I presume they kissed the telephone. At all

events, they went with glad alacrity. As the door opened to admit them, a beautiful little collie, pure white save for touches of a rich golden brown on the ears, on the fall of the tail and on the top of his nobly carried head, ran to meet them and sprang into the outstretched arms of the foremost, cuddling there as if he knew that he had found his Earthly Paradise.

His mistress had followed directly after him, aglow with pride in the grace of his welcome.

"But this one cannot be ours,—he is *too* lovely," exclaimed the Sister who was already clasping him tight.

"Yes," smiled the Lady of Cedar Hill, "this one is yours," and the puppy acquiesced with wagging tail and lapping tongue and every collie courtesy.

From the first a delicate little fellow, the long drive back made him ill, but he never gave, then or later, the least sign of homesickness, settling at once with aristocratic ease into the comforts and privileges of his new environment and lavishly returning love for love.

The Sisters, as well as the elder Cousin who dwelt with them, were "lovers of all things alive,"

from bishops and other dignitaries, who paid them appreciative homage, to the South Sea Islanders, of whose costumes they disapproved but to whom, from babyhood up, they had helped send missionaries. The grimiest urchin in town would grin confidentially as he touched his cap to them, and their sympathy overflowed all local limits to childhood everywhere. Little cripples were the special objects of their care and tenderness. Of birds and beasts they were spirited champions. No man dared whip his horse if they were in sight. One of the Sisters had a magic pen, and many of her stories, whimsical and wise, carried an appeal for human gratitude toward the domestic animals who spend their patient strength in human service, and for friendliness toward all these sensitive fellow-creatures, our brief companions on a whirling star. The quadrupeds must have passed on from one to another the glad tidings of these Ladies of Lovingkindness, for many a hungry and thirsty cur sought the hospitalities of their kitchen, and stray cats, forsaken by selfish owners on vacation, used their piazza and even their parlor as a summer hotel. Early one July morning I was starting out for the col-

lege grounds on the search for a wretched mongrel that, having appeared from nowhere in the spring term, as dogs will, had become a cheerful hobo of the campus, living sumptuously through unlimited attendance on the out-of-door luncheon parties of the village students. A Commencement auto had broken one of his legs and frightened him into hiding, and now the ebb of all that girl life which had fed and petted him and the disappearance of chance bones from the closed back doors of the dormitories had brought upon the college, I was informed by special delivery letter from an indignant alumna, "the disgrace of leaving one of God's creatures to suffer slow starvation." Old experience led me, before setting forth to the rescue, to telephone the Sisters and ask if they had any news of this divine vagabond.

"Yes, indeed," rang back a cheery voice. "He is breakfasting with us now on the porch. He came limping up the walk just as the bell rang, exactly as if he had been invited. Such a pleasant dog in his manners, though dreadfully thin and—it's not his fault, poor dear—*so* dirty! I have just been calling Dr. Vet. to come and see what can be done for that poor leg."

Of course Laddie was not their first dog. The checks of the school are still stamped with the head of Don, their black Newfoundland, who had a passion for attending the morning service in the school hall and nipping the heels of the kneeling girls. In the repeating of the Lord's Prayer he would join with a subdued rumble, doubtless acceptable to his Creator, but when shut out from the sacred exercises, he would howl under the windows an anthem of his own that offended both Heaven and earth.

In the inexorable process of the years, Don grew old, becoming a very Uncle Roly-Poly, but he was only loved the more. A cherished legend of the school relates how he was sleeping on his rug by the bed of one of his mistresses on a winter night, dreaming a saintly dream of chasing cats out of Paradise, when some real or fancied noise awoke him and, the faithful gardian of the school, he rushed through the low, open window and out upon the piazza roof, barking his thunderous warning to all trespassers. But he was still so bewildered with sleep that his legs ran faster than his mind and, before he knew it, he had pitched off the edge of that icy roof and was floundering

in the snow beneath, the most astonished dog that ever bayed the moon. What happened to him then is supposed to have been related by Don himself:

"My howls dismayed the starry skies,
The Great and Little Dippers, *O!*
Till came an angel in disguise,
In dressing gown and slippers, *O!*
I staggered up the steepy stair;
She pushed me from behind, *Bow wow!*
She tended me with mickle care,
O winsome womankind! *Bow wow!*
She bathed my brow and bruisèd knee.
I only whined the louder, *O!*
She murmured: 'Homeopathy!
I'll give dear Don a powder,' *O!*
And may I be a pink-eyed rabbit
If she chose not from her stock, *Bow wow!*
FOR PERSONS OF A GOUTY HABIT
WHO'VE HAD A NERVOUS SHOCK. *Bow wow!*"

Other dogs had come after, notably Cardigan, a stately St. Bernard, who made the fatal mistake of biting a pacifist, but Laddie, the only real rival of Don in the Sisters' affections, was the crown of their delight in doghood.

Sigurd had been with us only a few days when we took him over to see his brother, already for nearly three months a resident at The Orchard. We found Laddie, slender, white and dainty,

quite at home on the luxurious drawing-room sofa.

"I'm stronger than you," growled Sigurd, but Laddie, always the gentlest and sweetest tempered of collies, acquiesced so pleasantly that it was an amicable meeting. At the first hint of a second growl, Laddie gave up the place of honor to his guest.

Of course we remonstrated, admonished Sigurd and urged the accommodating host, whose good manners delighted the Sisters, to jump back, which he did, tucking himself unobtrusively into the further corner of the sofa. Sigurd immediately claimed that corner, which Laddie yielded to him with unruffled magnanimity, crossing over to the other. Sigurd promptly changed his mind again, pushing Laddie, this time a little inclined to demur, down to the floor. Unable to devise a plan by which he could curl into both corners at once, Sigurd stretched himself out at full length, doing his best to reach from end to end of the sofa, while Laddie, closely copying the attitude of this arrogant big brother, lay along the rug below. Scandalized by Sigurd's conduct, we would have removed him from his usurped throne in short

order, but the Sisters, rejoicing in the perfection of Laddie's social graces and secretly convinced of their collie's moral superiority to ours, would not allow any interference with the visiting puppy's comfort.

That freedom of the sofa was precious to Sigurd's pride and by repeated efforts he tried to convince his obtuse mistresses that he was entitled to the same privilege at home. But Joy-of-Life, who did not believe in "pampering pets," stood firm. There was one evening, in particular, when Sigurd jumped up on our living-room lounge some score of times, keeping all the while a challenging eye on her, and just as many times was ignominiously tumbled off. When she finally took possession herself, laughing at his discomfiture, he banged his way out into the kitchen and went down with a thump on the bare floor, hoping that we would hear how hard it was and realize how sorely poor Sigurd was abused. Finding that no apologies were forthcoming, he bounded to the front door, barked his orders to have it opened and shot out into the dark. Within five minutes the familiar tinkle called us to the telephone and

over the wire flowed the blithe voice of one of the Sisters.

"I *must* tell you what a lovely call we are having from dear Sigurd. He barked to come in only a minute ago and went right up to the sofa and took it all for himself—oh, yes, our Cousin had been sitting there with Laddie, but they didn't mind at all—and there he is now, making himself so charmingly at home, the beautiful boy. I *do* wish you could see him."

"We will," responded Joy-of-Life, and off we started to chastise Young Impudence, whom we had begun to suspect of being a trifle self-willed; but when we arrived the Sisters would by no means consent to his overthrow. So there, while the chat went on, Sigurd lolled and sprawled, yawning, stretching himself to an incredible length, rolling over on his back with paws held high as if to applaud his victory and continually turning up to Joy-of-Life eyes of such sparkling glee that her purposes of discipline melted in mirth.

None the less, she was a match for him, resorting to strategy when she was forbidden the exercise of force. Calling Laddie to her, she began to stroke his nestling head. Instantly Sigurd,

with a multitudinous flourish of legs that might have moved a centipede to envy, flung himself off the sofa and roared imperiously at the front door:

"Open this, Somebody, and be quick about it, too. Time to be off. Oh, come along, Folks. You've no need to pat any dog but me. Good-night, Lovely Ladies. S'long, Lad. See you to-morrow in the gloaming."

And unless we kept a strict watch, so he would. How often, while surveying from our west porch, with Sigurd demurely sitting up between us, the last faint flushes of the sunset sky, from across the road there would be suddenly visible against the dusk a presence like a celestial apparition, so white and hushed it was, the shining figure, the lifted, listening head! And in the fraction of a second, even while we were catching at his collar, off would go Sigurd with a great leap, and away the brother collies would tear on a mighty run that kept two households anxious far into the night. There was nothing celestial about their behavior.

These lawless excursions often culminated in garbage-pail raids, debauches from which the young prodigals would sneak home, abashed with

nausea. Once in a Commencement season we returned late in the evening, with a guest, from the high solemnity of the President's Reception, to find our hall strewn with Jonah strips of hamrind and junks of pumpkin. Our guest was a brilliant, worldly being, a very dragon-fly of swiftness and gleam, and there she stood, exquisitely gowned in rose-red under lace whose color was that of moonlight seen through thin clouds, beholding our culprit, who an hour before had been exultantly ranging a world of mysterious and infinite adventure, flattened contritely in the midst of his enormities.

"How human!" was her only comment.

Often they came back injured, with bitten ears, scratched faces, bleeding feet, and pretended to be worse off than they were, so as to divert our reproaches into pity. Sigurd limped home one dawn with a cruelly torn claw and lay all day in a round clothes-basket, to which he had taken a fancy, curled up like a yellow caterpillar and sleeping like a dormouse. But when I was sitting on the piazza steps that evening, putting a fresh bandage on the claw, while Sigurd, almost too feeble to stir, watched the process with

pathetic eyes, a blanched sprite glistened by, only a white motion through the dark, and in an instant the invalid had sped away, bandage trailing, to be wicked all over again.

No matter how often the four mistresses agreed that discipline required doors to be shut against the truants till daybreak, on these nights of their escapes ours were light slumbers that a pleading whine too easily broke and many were the tiptoe journeys down derisively creaking stairs to let the wanderers in. The next day such lame, dirty, subdued, meek-minded stay-at-homes as our collies were! It was hard to scold them properly when they rolled over on their backs and presented aching stomachs to be comforted. But sometimes these stampedes took place by day, for whenever they met out-of-doors these brothers, otherwise fairly obedient, would disregard all human commands for the authoritative call of the blood and dart away side by side like arrows shot from a single bow. The sins that neither would commit alone they reveled in without scruple when they were together. From all over town we heard of our paragons as chasing cats, jumping at horses' heads, over-running gardens and upsetting chil-

dren. One sedate young woman on whom they leaped, entreating her to play with them, sent in a substantial bill to "the owner of the dog that tore my dress." When we inquired whether it was the golden collie or the white that did the damage she coldly replied that "the animals were so mixed up" she couldn't tell whether it was "the brown one or the drab,"—to such a condition had a bath of mud brought our dandies. One mother sternly confronted us with a weepy little boy who complained that "zem two dogs made me frow sticks for 'em all the way home from school an' my arm's most bwoke with tiredness."

I remember clearly one typical escapade. It had snowed for three successive days and nights. Joy-of-Life was away in Washington, reading a learned paper before some convention of economists. Her mother passed the shut-in hours patiently by the fireside, meditating with disapproval on Dante's *Inferno* which I was reading to her, at intervals, for cheer during her daughter's absence. Sigurd was spoiling for a romp. At last, in desperation, he amused himself by eating everything he came across,—a tube of paste, a roll of tissue paper, one of his own ribbons. I saw the

latter end of the ribbon disappearing into his mouth and sprang to seize it, meaning to drag the rest out of his inner recesses, but Sigurd secured it by a furious gulp and capered away in triumph. At last the flakes had ceased falling, the snow plow had struggled through and, yielding to the big puppy's desperate urgency, I took him out to walk, following after the plow between glittering walls as high as my shoulder. At a turn in the road, I caught sight, across the level expanse, of the Younger Sister exercising an invisible Laddie. Suddenly there appeared above the parapet the tips of two golden-brown ears, pricked up in eager inquiry. Sigurd, overtopped by our own wall, could not have seen them, but with one tremendous lurch he was up and out, wallowing madly through the drifts to meet Laddie, who, like a miniature snow plow, was already breaking a way toward him. The collies touched noses and, ranging themselves side by side, plunged off into that blank of white, utterly deaf to the human calls that would check the onward impulse of their sacred brotherhood.

They had another glorious run two days later, when the snow was frosted and could bear their

weight. Mad with mischief, they raced miles on miles,—to Oldtown and beyond, barking at every man they met and leaping at every horse; they dashed into Waban Way and out over the spacious Honeymoon estates; they scampered hither and thither across the three hundred acres of the campus; they careered back and forth over the frozen lake and challenged the college girls to a rough-and-tumble in the snow. Meanwhile the Younger Sister and I, seriously alarmed lest some nervous horse, startled by their antics, should bring about disaster, had taken a sleigh and gone forth in pursuit. Disquieting news of them kept coming to us as we drove.

"Two young collies? I should say so. I met them an hour ago, way over in Dover. They both jumped at my old Dobbin's head, barking all Hallelujah."

"O yes, I've seen two runaway dogs. Shepherds, white and fawn. They were chasing an express team down by Eliot Oak. The driver was standing up and whipping out at them for all he was worth."

Presently we came on their fresh tracks in the snow, tracks of running feet always side by side,

until at last we overtook the truants. There they were, barking in duet, hoarse but happy, trying to scramble up an icy telephone pole after a spitting cat. They bounded to greet us and followed the sleigh home like lambs. The Sister, secretly condemning Sigurd as the dangerous misleader of her angel Laddie, assured them firmly that they were *never* to play together again.

Sigurd still had so much frolic in him that, when we had arrived at our own door, he coaxed me to stay outside and throw sticks for him from the piazza into the drifts. But soon I noticed red touches on the snow and, bringing him in, found that his feet were ice-cut and bleeding. I told him sternly that such were his just deserts and he rolled over on his back, holding up his paws to be healed. While I was anointing them with vaseline, a vain remedy because of the avidity with which Sigurd licked it off, I discovered that he had lost, in his wild whirl, the ornamental blue-bead collar, wrought for him by a student devotee at the cost of many patient hours. When I had done what he would let me for his feet and he had curled up cosily in his basket, I solemnly set about my duty of rebuking him, but the youngster

was too tired for rhetoric. With an apologetic grunt, he instantly fell fast asleep. Being inwardly persuaded that Laddie was chiefly to blame, I left my misguided innocent to his repose.

The next afternoon he limped demurely down the hill and, in about two minutes, was on The Orchard porch, exchanging vociferous greetings with Laddie, but for once his effrontery failed of its effect. Steeling their hearts, the Sisters refused to let the outside collie in or the inside collie out. Sigurd, always most dignified when his feelings were hurt, rose against one of the drawing-room windows, took a long look at the sofa and vanished into the early winter twilight, not to be seen again by our anxious eyes for thirty-six hours. It was just on the silver edge of the third day that a wistful *woof* on our porch sent four hastily slippered feet skurrying to the door. Such a famished, unkempt, exhausted collie as stood wagging there! His coat was grimy, his ruff gray and tangled, and from his collar, drawn cruelly tight, dragged a cumbrous length of iron chain. The Sisters, who, suffering all the pangs of contrition, had been no less eager than we in prosecuting the search, hurried over (without Laddie) straight

from their breakfast table, and one of them, flinging her arms about Sigurd as he nestled in the forbidden easy-chair—for he never missed the opportunity to wrest some special privilege out of any emotional crisis—sobbed with relief. Spent as he was, the collie licked her cheek, forgiving and consoling, even while his happy, love-beaming eyes could hardly hold themselves open. If an attempt had been made to kidnap him, Sigurd's strength and often proved cleverness in extricating himself from bonds had stood him in good stead. More fortunate than his sister Hildigunna and than another high-spirited sister, Unna, likewise supposed to have been been stolen—though in the saga Unna ran away from her home (and husband),—Sigurd, if he could not break the chain of captivity, had managed to pull it out of its staple and lug it along with him back to freedom.

By an assiduous use of the telephone to the effect, "We are taking Laddie for a walk. Will you please keep Sigurd in?" or "Sigurd has just started off in your direction. Where's Laddie?" we kept a certain check on their escapades for the rest of that winter, but they contrived to meet at

some secret rendezvous in apple-blossom time and came home panting and jubilant, with pink and white blossoms all over their coats. Sigurd apparently liked the effect, considering himself a King of the May, for no sooner were those petals brushed off than he frisked out and rolled over in the tulip-bed to accumulate some more. On the few occasions when our runaways, oozing through the merest cracks of doors, gave us the slip, we dropped all minor occupations and hunted them down, calling in the aid of an amused liveryman, an Irish neighbor whose white hairs thatched a pate where wit and kindliness kept house together.

"It's the goolden dog y'are to me," he would say to Sigurd. "Many's the good dollar I've made out o' yez thraipsin's and throublin's."

The Lady of Cedar Hill had given away to appreciative friends all the puppies save Gunnar, but several of them had homes nearby and she thought it would be pleasant to have a family reunion once a year, on their common birthday. One such gathering proved enough for all time.

On a delectable autumn afternoon we set forth, just after luncheon, in a roomy surrey, The Sisters, Joy-of-Life, my nephew—then a wide-eyed

small boy, now a surgeon working for the wounded in France,—and I, with Sigurd and Laddie racing alongside, to attend Gunnar's birthday party. Six or seven of his brothers and sisters were assembled, but at this distance of time I cannot call the roll. Among them were probably Helga, who, becoming Lady Gwendolyn, lived to a reverend age; certainly Flosi, who returned from the new owner to Cedar Hill, where his frolicsome years were nine; perhaps Hauskuld, dearly beloved, who, like Sigurd, was tormented in hot weather by the aristocratic ailment of eczema, and perhaps Helgi, who, as far as the family record is known, outlived all his generation, dying at the ripe age, for a high-bred collie, of thirteen. There was no receiving line and never a moment that afternoon when it was easy to distinguish them, for it was all one glorious scrimmage from arrival to departure.

Ralph, growing more and more inhospitable with the years, had been locked up as a precaution against tragedy, and resplendent young Gunnar, the host of the day, assailed his guests so violently that he, too, had to be put on his chain, where he alternately strained and sulked all the

afternoon. No wonder he never gave another party. But Dora, always bewitching in her ways, found the occasion entertaining and tolerated her children, if she could not be said to welcome them. Meanwhile, by unremitting vigilance on the part of masters and mistresses, the guests were restrained from too furious attacks on one another, until the banquet, consisting of a row of extraordinarily big and marrowy bones, was served. Each dog was instantly prompted by the Evil One to covet his neighbor's bone, but after a really magnificent display of authority on the part of their respective guardians, the raging bunch of white and sable was disentangled. Separated by wide distances, the collies, graceful figures lying on green lawn and bank, fell to their crunching in comparative peace, while Gunnar, spurning his own birthday dinner, roared grace from the end of his chain, with Ralph's gruff *amen* coming down from the open windows of his prison chamber. I blush to record that Sigurd, having polished off his bone at top speed, proceeded without ceremony to appropriate Laddie's. This was rescued and returned to its gentle owner, already so bewildered by these social excitements that, when a

game of toss-and-catch followed the feast, Laddie bit the leg of the short-trousered small boy, my nephew, not unnaturally mistaking that long, thin, flourishing object for a stick. This regrettable incident, as the Dog Gazette would put it, broke up the party, but the distressed Sisters made such ample amends to the victim that he came to consider, as birthdays and Christmases rolled around, that scar on his calf one of his best assets.

During the period of Sigurd's distemper and convalescence we took the utmost care, of course, to shut him away from Laddie, whose bonny brown head often appeared on the outside of one window or another, the shining eyes wistful for his playmate.

On one occasion the contagious element in the disease stood us in good stead. Sigurd was better, but still so weak that the least of walks tired him out. We kept him off the highways, lest any germs yet lingering about him might bring disaster on other puppies, but thought we were safe in the woods behind the house. On a certain Sunday afternoon I had coaxed Sigurd, by short stages, further than before. He had spent his little stock of strength and, with his usual eye

for becoming effects, had disposed himself to sleep under a white-blossoming wild cherry,—that exquisite springtide delight which the campaign against browntail and gypsy moth is fast banishing from eastern Massachusetts. Suddenly a group of young roughs from a neighboring factory town burst through the brush, attended by a gaunt mastiff, and for the fun of the thing, jovially deaf to my remonstrances, proceeded to get up a dog fight, though the betting was monotonously one-sided. "Buster," obedient to command, approached growling and bristling, and Sigurd, who was never one to turn the other ear, trotted out with gallant readiness to meet an opponent who would have made an end of him with the first clinch.

"Very well!" I said, blazing at those boyish rowdies, who may, by this time, have bloomed out into heroes and won the *croix de guerre*. "If you want your dog to sicken and probably die of distemper, set him on. This collie is full of it and will infect him at the first touch."

Without staying to question my scientific accuracy, the hoodlums hastily called off their champion, threatened me in uncivil terms with the

police and the jail for bringing a distempered dog abroad and took themselves off to look for safer holiday sport. Sigurd thought he had frightened them away and swaggered home with a marked revival of spirits.

When Dr. Vet at last pronounced all danger of contagion over, the Sisters, leaving Laddie behind, made a congratulatory call on our invalid, whose lyric cry, albeit hoarse and squeaky, shrilled to the Dogstar as he welcomed them, now climbing up to their shoulders in fervent embrace, now modulating his roundelay to the plaintive note as he tried his best to tell them what "Poor Sigurd" had suffered. *They* were sympathetic; *they* were intelligent; and tumbling into the forbidden easy chair, Sigurd made it clear to them, and they in turn made it clear to his dull mistresses, that his swollen throat could nowhere be so comfortable as here, where the chair-arm supported the chin. It was then that our last shred of arbitrary discipline gave way. Sigurd had won the throne of his ambition. In course of time, this became Sigurd's Chair, given over to his exclusive occupancy, scratched and rubbed and shabby, the most

disreputable and, to his mind, the most enjoyable of our furnishings.

Laddie escaped the distemper, but of other mischances he had more than his share. He was scalded by his own dear Annie, against whom he had unluckily run when she was carrying a pitcher of boiling water; he was shot through the leg, as he was assisting in a midnight serenade given by the dogs of the neighborhood to a belle shut up in the house of her bad-tempered master; but the sorest pang of all was the departure of his mistresses for another year abroad. The Elder Cousin had gone on a longer journey; the corner by the hearth was lonely for the lack of that small gray figure, the hands so busy with their knitting, the face so shrewd and kindly; and all we village-folk called to express our sympathy and remained to burden theirs with long recitals of our various tribulations until the Sisters, utterly worn out, had again to seek solitude overseas.

What to do with Laddie? Gunnar, disgusted enough at having Flosi back again, flatly avowed that he would not put up with another brother on the premises. Ralph, in the fullness of years, and little Dora, prematurely, had slipped away to

Shadowland, bequeathing the care of Cedar Hill to Gunnar, who was keenly alive to his responsibilities. From one of our recent visits Sigurd had come back with a bleeding ear and a red blotch on the top of his head. So the farmhouse of the estate opened its doors to Laddie, but he had other views and, running away the first afternoon, made a valiant effort to get back to the Sisters. He took one wrong turn and was lost for a night and a day, but his rare beauty and appealing charm won him a friend who allowed him to follow her home, fed him, read his collar and soon made telephone connection with his distressed mistresses, already resolved to let their steamer go without them rather than sail in ignorance of Laddie's fate. They were stout-hearted enough, however, when they knew that he was found, to ask the Cedar Hill farmer to go and reclaim the stray, denying themselves and Laddie another farewell.

We hoped that in the year's separation the two brothers would forget each other or, at least, outgrow their propensity to revert to the wild together. It seemed the more likely because Laddie, always fragile, had suffered a severe attack of

pneumonia at the farmhouse, and came back to the Sisters looking more like a white spirit than ever. But he took time, on arrival, only to greet his household saints and indulge in a brief nap on the sofa before dashing off to find Sigurd. Away they went on an impassioned run, from which, seven hours later, Laddie came drooping home, and even Sigurd spent the next day curled up in his green easy chair, subdued and quiescent, looking like an illustration for "After the Ball."

Although we kept what guard we could upon them, they managed to elude us several times that autumn, but after the first wild spurt they would run more slowly, Sigurd slackening his natural speed in order to keep side by side with Laddie, whose hard panting could be heard above the rustling of the autumn leaves through which they raced. The worry cow hooked us badly on Christmas day. Laddie, who had coughed all night, had to be coaxed to come out for a little walk after breakfast and was dragging behind the Younger Sister when, turning the corner of a bright barberry hedge, they came upon Sigurd, gorgeous in his new, upstanding bow of holly ribbon. Hey, presto! Off they shot like young

wolves on the trail. Under the starlight our truant returned, a damp wisp hanging from his collar. That white, wavy front of his, so carefully groomed for the festal day, was all red and green from the holly ribbon that he had been chewing up for his Christmas dinner. As for poor Laddie, he was ill for a week, but rallied again, and, despite our doubled and redoubled vigilance, the brothers had still two or three runs together before the end of February brought with it the end of Laddie's life.

Beautiful being that he was, he had gladdened earth for five and a half years. If it is hard to believe in immortality, it is harder to understand how his Maker could cast away a spirit of such pure sweetness as Laddie's. Perhaps he ranges the celestial meadows now and has found out what King Lear wanted to know,—"the cause of thunder." For thunder was Laddie's terror. He could be quieted only by the Younger Sister, who, going to the piano, would play her loudest, while the trembling collie crouched against her feet.

This second attack of pneumonia was relentless. Laddie was not allowed to suffer it to the

end, but was tenderly put to sleep. Shortly after, Sigurd trotted over to The Orchard of his own impulse and, without any of the customary lurking and looking for Laddie, went straight in to the Sisters, licking their hands and pressing close against their knees.

That afternoon a few of Laddie's closest friends—though all the town loved Laddie—gathered about a little grave on The Orchard lawn, while the delicate Elder Sister, wrapped in a white shawl, with Sigurd, wearing a white ribbon, close beside her for comfort, looked down on the scene from an open chamber window. In the group below, one of us after another quietly spoke of Laddie's gentleness and gladness and affection, of the happiness he had given and received. The Younger Sister read a lyric goodbye that the Elder Sister had written and thanked God, as simply as if He were standing in our midst, for all the joy of Laddie. Then we lowered the box, dropping upon it the white rosebuds that the Dryad had sent and the white carnations that Jack's mistress had brought. When the earth went in, one voice said softly, "Dust to

dust," but another responded clearly, "Love to love." All the while Sigurd's intent eyes and golden head peered from the window above and once he gave a short, troubled bark.

SIGURD'S MEDITATIONS IN THE CHURCH-PORCH

The gaze of a dog is blind
To splendors of summit and sky,
    Ocean and isle,
But never a painter shall find
The beautiful more than I
    In my lady's smile.

The thought of a dog is dim.
Not even a wag he deigns
    To the wisest book.
Philosophy dwells for him
In loving the law that reigns
    In voice, in look.

The heart of a dog is meek.
He places his utter trust
    In a mortal grace,
Contented his God to seek
In a creature framed of dust
    With a dreaming face.

The human is our divine.
In the porch of the church, I pray
    For a rustling dress,
For those dear, swift steps of thine,
Whose path is my perfect way
    Of holiness.

ADVENTURES

"*Puntarvolo.* Is he religious?

Gentleman. I know not what you call religious, but he goes to church, I am sure."

Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour.*

The zest, the fun, the excitement Sigurd infused into our human humdrum outwent all expectation. I think it added a relish even to Joy-of-Life's devotions at the early service of St. Andrew's that a suppressed yelp and a vehement scamper might at any second denote Laddie's appearance and Sigurd's instant reversion from her pious attendant in the vestibule to a wild creature of enraptured speed. He opened our eyes to a new vision of the most familiar things. What we had considered merely gray squirrels were revealed, through his glorious campaign against them, as goblin banditti bent on insult and robbery. For on those enchanted autumn days, when we would be wandering through the rich-colored, spicy woods, where winds laughed among the

branches and chased leaves bright as jewels down the air, these impertinent squirrels were always scolding overhead and dropping acorns on us. I remember one such stroll, when a falling chestnut smacked Sigurd soundly on the nose. He at once attributed the indignity to the squirrels—quite unjustly this time—and made off in pursuit of a wily old fellow that whisked in and out among the slender birch boles and led him, as if for the mere sport of it, on a far chase. I was absorbed meanwhile in altruistic combat with a troop of ants, a foraging party returning to their hill-castle with a company of belated beetles as booty. As often as I brushed the ranks into confusion with a spray of goldenrod, it was astonishing to see how quickly the discomfited ants would rally and how immediately every one of the madly skurrying beetles—for their pitiless captors had deprived them of their wings—would be again a prisoner, surrounded in close formation by a marching escort. Looking up from this insect tragedy, I saw Sigurd tearing back with something in his mouth that, for one horrified instant, I thought was the slaughtered squirrel. It turned out to be my hat, which, blowing merrily away

from the bramble whereon it was hung, had been captured by my friend in need, who proudly restored it, somewhat the worse for the manner of its rescue. Later on, in the hushed Indian summer noons, Joy-of-Life and I would take our luncheon out into the woods, where our golden collie would roll over and over in a rustling bed of leaves much of his own color or of brown, fragrant pine-needles, his bright eyes always on the watch for any aggression from the peering citizens of the trees.

The winter, however, was Sigurd's heroic season. He had the soul of a helper, not of a pet, and longed for occupation, responsibility, service. His sentry duty at night, his guardianship in our walks, his herding of the family into the dining-room three times a day with punctual solicitude, these were not enough. It was amusing and yet, in a way, touching to see with what strenuous earnestness he took upon himself the task of driving the squirrels away from the bird boxes. For our neighbors, the "shadowtails," as the Greeks called them, were so obtuse as to appropriate to their own comfort and convenience every provision we made for the flying folk. We had put

up in the trees near the house a few bird palaces, variously named, according to the dominant interest of those whose respective windows overlooked them, Toynbee Hall, the Tabard Inn, the Waldorf-Astoria, the Mermaid Tavern; but their bluebird tenants were soon ejected, and families of baby squirrels, for whose repose their parents busily chewed up mattresses of leaf and bark, were reared in those proud abodes. To this Sigurd had to submit, though he would lie for hours on the piazza, his chin on his paws, wondering why the Collie Creator, whom he probably took to be much like his adorable father Ralph, only a thousand times as big—for had not Sigurd heard in the skies the thunder of his bark?—denied to dogs the gift of climbing trees. But their attack on the food-boxes brought these pirates almost within Sigurd's reach.

From several of the upper windows had been built out simple and practical feeding-shelves,—shallow wooden boxes partitioned off by cross-pieces into some six or eight compartments. Here we would put out marrowbones, suet, shreds and scraps from the dinner-plates, nuts, acorns, pine-cones, grains, crumbs, fragments of cheese, and

here, all the long winter through, our welcome guests were chickadees, nut-hatches, tree sparrows, downy woodpeckers, juncos, with an occasional fox sparrow or purple finch or flock of Canadian crossbills. Our unwelcome guests were English sparrows, of whom, however, we had but few and those of rather subdued deportment; blue jays, who would fly away with big pieces of meat or cocoanut, and the gray squirrels, who would come stealing softly down the edge of the casement and suddenly leap into the box. Here they would sit up on their haunches, defying us through the pane with hard, black eyes, and gobble till they could gobble no more. Then they would stuff their elastic cheeks almost to bursting and make off with their plunder only to be back again before the little birds, so long and so patiently waiting on the snowy branches of the nearest tree, had really settled down to enjoy the leavings.

Sigurd instinctively understood that the little birds were guests—to the English sparrows he gave the benefit of the doubt—and that the blue jays and squirrels were intruders. On a keen winter day, when the boxes had been freshly filled, he was indeed an overworked collie, scam-

pering from room to room and window to window, barking furiously at the raiders. This vociferous warning that no trespassers were allowed sufficed for the blue jays, who would flap sullenly away, but the squirrels were quick to learn that a bark was not a bite. Shadowtail would only drop his nut and sit up erect and alert, his little fists pressed to his heart, his beady eyes staring straight against the dog's honest, indignant gaze. Seeing that his loudest roar had lost its terrors, Sigurd would leap up toward the window and give it a resounding thump with his paw. At first this new menace put the squirrels to precipitate retreat. Off they went, nor stood upon the order of their going. A few minutes later, one shrewd little gray face after another would peer around the casement edge, but at the first view of that upright, shining figure, with the flowing snow-white ruff, mounting guard on chair or hassock, the goblin faces vanished. Sigurd was immensely proud of himself during this epoch of the warfare. A very Casabianca in his firm conception of duty, only the most imperative summons could call him from his post. But when the squirrels had learned that the barrier between the collie and

themselves was, though transparent, an effective screen, and would, as before, saucily plant themselves in the middle of the box and resume the stuffing and pillaging process more diligently than ever, under his very eyes, Sigurd, frantic with fury, would beat an utterly tremendous tattoo upon the pane. Three times one January he crashed through the glass in one of my chamber windows, cutting his face and paws and subjecting the room to a more Arctic ventilation than I cared for. On these occasions the squirrels saved themselves by prodigious leaps into the nearest tree and did not venture back while that jagged gap remained,—so satisfactory a result, from Sigurd's point of view, that he marveled at my folly in calling in a glazier to repair the damage. As the man was working at the window, Sigurd would look from him to me with a puzzled and reproachful expression accentuated by the long strips of court plaster across his nose.

He had a vigorous ally in my mother, who brought her own bright wits to bear on the circumvention of the enemy. She knitted a little bag, filled it with nutmeats and hung it from the middle sash outside the window, so that it dangled

halfway down in the open space which gave the squirrels no footing but delighted our winged pensioners. It was fun to see two spirited fluffs squaring at each other atop a lump of suet for the best chance to rise at the bag, till another plumy midget came fiercely down upon them and drove them, chirping remonstrance, off to the outer edges of the box. Then the newcomer, bristling with victory, flew up and secured the most desirable position on that swinging dinner-pail, while the others, nudging and scrambling, sought for a footing on the further side. But the squirrels studied the situation from above and from below and presently learned to run up the blind, make a sidelong leap to the bag and cling to it with all four legs and feet, while they gnawed through the threads until the goodies literally poured into their mouths. There they would cling and feast, while on the other side of the glass my mother and Sigurd, both of them sharply protesting and angrily rapping the pane, held a Council of War. As a result, my mother bought two iron sink-mops, wired them together and triumphantly fashioned a bag which even the strong teeth of the furry burglars, for all their persevering and ingenious

efforts, could not bite open. But the happy chickadees and nut-hatches would perch there, by relays, all day long, thrusting their bills through the iron interstices and drawing out, bit by bit, the finely broken nutmeats.

The blue jays were routed quite by accident. The support of my box, a strip of wood running from the underside of that little feeding table to the house wall, had loosened its lower nail, and one day, when some passing touch of grippe kept me in bed, with Sigurd sitting upright on a chair beside me, playing nurse, a plump jay lit heavily upon the edge of the shelf and screeched with fright as it shook and slid beneath him. He took to his glossy wings and, within five minutes, the oak hard by was alive with our whole colony of blue jays, all eying that box and deep in agitated discussion. At last one venturesome fellow struck boldly out and lit on it, only to feel it sway and sag and, with a shriek rivaling that of his predecessor, flapped up just in time to save himself, as he believed, from a terrific disaster. This performance was repeated twice more and then the whole blue jay crew abandoned, for the rest of the winter, not only their attacks on my particular

bird box, though its support was promptly made secure, but on all the bird boxes of the house. Sigurd and I were well content as we heard them croaking to one another, "A trap! Jam my feathers, a hateful, human trap! But they couldn't hoodwink *us*. Yah, yah, yah!"

The squirrels, however, continued to be Sigurd's chief household care. Out of doors, too, he was forever chasing them, but never, to my knowledge, so much as brushed the tail of one. In his sleep, he often seemed to be dreaming of a squirrel hunt, his feet running eagerly even while his body lay at full stretch upon the rug, and his breath coming in short pants. Sometimes he would howl in nightmare slumbers, but generally he appeared elate, climbing, perhaps, the trees of Dreamland, less slippery than our icy oaks, and driving out his enemies from their loftiest fastness.

Sigurd bore no grudges and when, as the pussy-willows, anemones and violets, the robins and the orioles were bringing in the spring, he was called upon to adorn a blue jay funeral procession, he wore his black ribbon with decorum. The chief mourner, a little lad by name of Wallace, was

one of our nearest neighbors and most honored friends. He had been much perturbed in spirit over the perils of the blue jay brood whose nursery, so reckless were their parents, tilted precariously on a pine branch that overhung a ledge just beyond one end of Wallace's porch. He feared every wind would overthrow that nest, but when the shocking old mother, apparently in a fit of temper, deliberately pushed her children out herself, and they fell, one by one, to instant death on the rock below, Wallace's grief and horror were too great for a child's good. His resourceful father therefore proposed a grand funeral, as the only testimony of regard and regret that we could offer to the unlucky fledgelings, and Wallace, who was much preoccupied with his future career, having at one time planned to be a dentist in the forenoon, a musician in the afternoon, and an editor at night, entered with enthusiasm upon the duties of undertaker, sexton, and clergyman. Called upon for an anthem, I responded with a lament which Wallace found "too sad" to hear more than twice. On the second occasion it was intoned at the tiny grave, above which Sigurd drooped a puzzled head, not understanding a

game that had in it neither romp nor laughter.

Though fond of Wallace, our collie's bearing toward small boys in general was not conspicuous for cordiality. Women he accepted as essential to the running of the universe; men—except for those vindictive monsters perched on express teams with long whips in hand—he regarded with amiable indifference; but about small boys he was dubious. Some of our rougher little neighbors had stoned and snowballed the new puppy. At Christmas we met that situation by converting Sigurd into Santa Claus,—dressing him up in holly ribbon and sleighbells and hanging on him the little gifts which we were in the way of taking about to the children on our hill. The immediate effect was excellent. Sigurd was thanked and patted and, in his pleasure at such appreciation, he would magnanimously lick the boyish hands that had been so often raised against him. One urchin was so impressed by a toy fire-engine that, at least through January, he touched his cap to "Mr. Sigurd" whenever they met; but with Fourth of July and Hallowe'en our troubles were all renewed. Firecrackers and torpedoes are so disconcerting to collie nerves that no normally bad boy

could resist setting them off under Sigurd's very nose, somersaulting with ecstasy to see his instantaneous bolt for home; while on Hallowe'en all the youngsters on the hill would call in a troop, weirdly disguised, swinging Jack-o'-Lanterns and banging, scraping, whistling, piping, on strange instruments not of music. On these distracting occasions Sigurd was ready to tear those giggling spooks to bits, and either Joy-of-Life or I had to hold him tight, while the other passed the cookies and candies for which our supernatural visitants had come.

May Day was better fun for Sigurd. He quickly understood that the Maybasket chase was only a game and played it with a vim. But in general he did not care for festivals nor for any variation of the usual round. Just everyday living was joy enough for him. If Sigurd had made the calendar, the week would have been all Mondays. Even Christmas puzzled more than it pleased him. Such a confusion of brown paper and tissue paper, such a flourishing of queer, lumpy stockings, such tangles of string, such excitement over objects that had no thrill for his inquiring nose! And for himself, the rubber cats

with gruesome squeaks inside them, the mechanical beetles that shook his courage as they charged at him across the floor! He could not make it out. Once when all the people present were shouting with mirth over a new, preposterous game of cards, Sigurd quietly picked up from under the table a pack not yet called into service and carried it out into the kitchen, where he was presently discovered with one forefoot set on the cards tumbled about before him, while he gazed dejectedly down at them in a defeated effort to find out why they were amusing. And the Christmas parties, for which he had to be scrubbed until he shone like an image of white and gold! And if it happened that, between his toilet and the party, he whizzed off with Laddie, what unpleasantness on his return!

"Sigurd was especially invited for to-night and I promised Wallace to bring him. But he's too dirty now and he hasn't had his dinner."

"All his own doing. He shall come dirty and dinnerless and learn to be ashamed of himself."

Not that he felt ashamed at all, but very tired and lame, hobbling behind his family into a bright, chattering room, where everybody wanted to pet

him and where all he wanted was to be let alone to sleep his frolic off. Why must he be waked up with foolish laughter because that glittering tree, which he had not been allowed to investigate for squirrels, had given, in his name, a toy ship to Wallace, whose father, Professor Wit, must needs observe: "How like dear Sigurd, to present his neighbors with his *barque!*" And though for him the Christmas tree bore a chocolate caramel in the inmost box of a nest of boxes, he would, to the disappointment of the company who had heard of his skill in opening parcels, yawn and fall asleep over each box in turn. At his best, he bit drowsily into the pasteboard and pushed at the string more clumsily than usual with a pair of grimy paws from which the circle of silken skirts would draw away. Christmas, indeed, and an inaccessible chocolate caramel for dinner!

Sigurd's most thrilling adventures, naturally, had to do with dogs, but cats were an interesting side issue. The self-protective qualities of the feline race I realized on our first Sunday walk with the puppy, when a gray kitten bobbed up in our path. Sigurd romped forward, Joy-of-Life caught him by the collar, and I, for my sins, picked

up the kitten. It looked so tiny, helpless and soft; it felt like a frame of steel and wire, every little muscle tense, while its claws flashed out like daggers and ripped up the back of my hand. In due time Sigurd learned how formidable a cat may be. If she ran, he pelted after until she took refuge up a tree, but if she proved to be some shrewd old grimalkin who held her ground he suddenly slackened his pace and sauntered casually by, trying to look as if he did not see her.

His one constant dog friend was Laddie. Their escapades were the top of all adventure,—such orgies of wild joy that I would gladly lie awake again listening for the hoarse bark of our returning prodigal. But with other dogs of his own sex, acquaintance, however affably begun, would soon ripen into a fight, unless the new comrade were too small and weak or had reasons of his own for declining the test of battle. With Gyp, across the way, a sly little black and tan, well-named, for his ancestors must have run with the Romany folk and bequeathed to him a genius for thievery, Sigurd did not take the trouble to quarrel. Gyp, always skulking about our prem-ises, would make off with any of our lighter pos-

sessions carelessly left on porch or lawn. We had suffered these losses without redress—for to the dog's master, only too ready to beat poor Gyp cruelly on the least provocation, we would not make complaint—till Sigurd came. He had been with us barely a week when, one afternoon, as we were reading under the trees, Joy-of-Life reached a hand behind her for her parasol. It was not there. As we both exclaimed, questioned and looked about under the shrubbery where the wind, had there been a wind, could not possibly have blown it, our new guardian stood watching our

"unsuccessful pains
With fixed considerate face,
And puzzling set his puppy brains
To comprehend the case."

Suddenly he caught sight of Gyp trying with guilty haste to get a long object, balanced in his jaws, through a favorite hole in his backyard fence. It was never done, for Sigurd was upon him in a twinkling, had shaken him thoroughly and brought back the parasol essentially unharmed. Several times again he recovered our goods and chattels, invariably giving the culprit a vigorous shaking, but otherwise keeping on neigh-

borly terms with the little scamp, till life ended for Gyp in a kick from his drunken master's boot.

With another neighbor, black Rod, a noble St. Bernard, the initial friendship was soon broken. The two dogs were of about the same age and had many a frisk together that first summer, but when Rod tried to join us on our walks, Joy-of-Life, who thought one big puppy enough for amateurs to handle, would sternly bid Rod, "Go home." Sigurd would promptly spring to enforce the command, and Rod would slowly and sulkily retreat. After a few of these experiences, Rod ceased to follow us, but he never forgave any one of the three. Thenceforth for the rest of their lives the two dogs, who knew themselves almost equally matched in size and strength, passed each other, often a dozen times a day, with bristling backs and low, cautious growls, while never could my friendliest greetings, even when I was alone, win the least wiggle of a wag from Rod's rigid, remembering tail. He was so fortunate as to live in a household of children, for whom he made the most faithful of protectors, and often, on a sparkling winter day, I have met him coasting with them, racing down the hill

abreast of the sled, tail waving, eyes gleaming, but the instant he became aware of my obnoxious presence and observation, the tail would stiffen and the eyes would cloud. His hostility was a genuine hurt to me, so much did I like and respect the dog, but even in his old age, when pain and weakness lay heavy on him, and the children—did he understand?—were teasing their mother to have him chloroformed so that they might have in his place a stylish young Boston bull, he would accept from me no comfort of touch or tone. Another unhappy result of these early rebuffs was that Sigurd got it firmly fixed in his yellow noddle that the words *Go home* were the profanest of curses, and whenever he was so addressed, especially by one of us, his aspect of grief and horror was ludicrous to behold. Besides, he did not go.

Through Sigurd our circle of fellowship was widened for all time. Here we had been living on, half stifled in biped society, well-nigh unaware of the jubilant dog world bounding about our feet, but in a few months our own collie had made us acquainted with a democratic variety of canine types. And still I would almost rather meet a new dog than a new poet. A certain Norwegian

lake is twice as dear to memory for the courteous Great Dane that did the honors of the bank and shared our tea cakes there; the only duchess to whose boudoir, at the heart of a frowning Border castle, we were ever invited, impressed us less than the three pompous poodles, their snowy curls so absurdly like her own, that squatted on the edges of her flowing heliotrope morning-gown and were simultaneously upset whenever one of her Ladyship's energetic impulses brought her to her feet.

Sigurd's acquaintances were legion. To only a few may space be given here. There was Teddy, a black spaniel who aspired to the high standard of manners held by his master, a retired army officer, and, following example, would punctiliously rise as ladies entered or left the room. There were twin dachshunds, who daily drove abroad in a limousine and enraged Sigurd by looking down on him, short-legged that they were, from the window opened hardly wide enough to let them thrust their black noses through the crack. There was the lean, forlorn old hound whom all the dog-clubs blackballed and who, in consequence, had to satiate his yearning for fel-

lowship by keeping company with the minister's cow. Every summer morning a silver-headed saint whose pulpit labors were done escorted his Mulley down our hill and tethered her in the broad green pasture below. At a respectful distance would follow the homeless hound, who had picked up during the night what sustenance he could from the neighborhood garbage pails. And hard of heart we deemed that neatest of our housewives who, to keep his meddling muzzle away, used to scatter a profusion of red pepper over her garbage. All day long the hound would stay in the meadow close to the cow, who, uneasy at first under his attentions, came to accept them with bovine placidity. Indeed, there was, we thought, a certain coquetry in her carriage as, a person of importance, she came sedately stepping up the hill at sunset, the old clergyman on one side and the old dog on the other. Her friendship with the happy hound grew to be as famous in our local annals as, in the realm of books, is that of the horse and hen related by White (in his *Natural History of Selbourne*), or that of the swan and trout so poignantly told by Hudson (in his *Adventures Among Birds*).

Certain dogs Sigurd would bully shamelessly, like amiable old Bounce, on whom he would hurl himself in Bounce's own yard and sit on top of him, growling most offensively, until we pulled him off. To the subsequent scolding Sigurd would listen as long as it interested him and then press up against us and offer his paw, as if to say, "All right; enough of that; let's be friends again."

On the other hand, he had such a liking for our Professor Far-Away that he stretched his regard to cover her successive dogs, Chum and Jack, though he was born too late to know her beautiful black collie, Wallace. He would even allow Chum, an adopted stray, a nondescript animal of preposterous awkwardness, to drink from his own Japanese bowl, spattering the water, in Chum's uncouth fashion, half across the hall, while Jack, an Irish terrier,

"With the soul in the shining eyes of him,"

ranked in Sigurd's esteem next after Laddie. Professor Far-Away, whose perilous joy it was to traverse, with Jack, unexplored tracts of China and Thibet, attended by a train of coolies, would, when dull destiny called her back to the class room, effect brief escapes by way of bicycle runs

through the wood roads, attended by a train of dogs. When her cavalcade swept by our hill, Sigurd would leap up as if at the call of the Wild Huntsman and rush forth to fall in. Through her long absences in foreign lands he never ceased to listen for her gypsy whistle, and once, at least, he was literally her first caller on her return. He came tearing back to his own family, in high excitement, with a traveler's tag waving from his collar. The tag was penciled over with the Wanderer's greeting, adding "how dear it was of Sigurd" to be barking at her door within ten minutes after she and Jack had crossed their threshold. When Professor Far-Away writes *The Junketings of Jack,* there will be a book worth reading.

Although our puppy had several times returned with a scratched face, after encounters with veteran cats, his first fight was with Major, a rugged brindle bull, who lorded it over all the dogs in town. We had been warned of Major and when, one September morning, I went to the door in answer to the now familiar *woof,* I knew, even without the uplift of Sigurd's eloquent look, what had happened. He was dripping with blood, his

own and Major's, and dragged one hind leg painfully, yet he had an air of expecting congratulations. We bathed and disinfected his wounds as well as our inexperience could—in the course of the next few years we became experts at canine first aid—but the injury to the leg looked so serious that we called in Dr. Vet, who found that one of Major's tusks had penetrated the joint. The leg was packed in an antiphlogistic clay until it looked more like an elephant's leg than Sigurd's and was secured from the investigation of his own inquisitive teeth by broad bands of plaster and innumerable yards of bandages. The proud sufferer, who, claiming that he was now entitled to all sick privileges, had insisted on taking to my bed, lay there on a fresh rug, anxiously watching every movement of the doctor's hands but enduring even the probing without protest.

After Æsculapius had gone and the rest of the family were gathered about the invalid, who, despite all smarts and aches, keenly relished being the center of attention, Joy-of-Life and I sallied forth to inquire for Major. That redoubtable little ruffian, cuddled into his basket, rolled up doleful eyes from a gory lump that bore but small

resemblance to his massive, wrinkled, pugnacious head. A beholder of the battle reported that as Sigurd was trotting innocently across a vacant lot, a brighter spot of yellow weaving its path through the goldenrod, Major, after his wonted manner of attack, came sneaking up behind and gripped him by the joint of a hind leg. Sigurd wheeled, catching and crushing Major's head between his own powerful jaws, and then the two dogs, locked in furious combat, spun round and round, a snarling whirligig, gathering a vociferous group of ineffective dissuaders, until a grocer's boy, jumping down from his delivery wagon, came rushing up with a packet of pepper, hurling its contents into Sigurd's nostrils and, through his literally open countenance, into Major's. In a spasm of sneezing, the circle of dog broke apart, and each dilapidated fragment made for home. Sigurd was a week or more in getting well and he limped for a month after, but the scars on Major's head were in evidence longer yet. They never matched prowess again, though the language that they would use to each other, especially with a wide road between them, is not fit for print.

Every evening of that first week our hero was

carried or helped downstairs and put to bed on the piazza, but every morning he crawled and scrambled up again, crying out like a child as his injured leg, trailing behind him, suffered jar or bump. Nobody could resist his pleading to be lifted back to the bed and allowed to play hospital a little longer, and Cecilia, more than ever his devoted slave, delighted in bringing him, to his enormous pride, his dinner on a tray. He always barked for the family to come in and behold that glorious spectacle, and he barked, too, whenever the door bell rang, requesting the caller to come up at once and pay respects to the Happy Warrior. Apart from these red-letter events, his great diversion was trying to rid his muffled leg of the bandages and plaster,—an exercise in which he soon became only too proficient.

In Sigurd's last fight—with a gallant old mastiff, Rex—one of his forelegs, bitten in three places, was put out of action for two months, but no fuss was made about it. We had grown hardened to Sigurd's battle-wounds. Sulpho-naphthol and his own tongue worked the cure, though it took no little ingenuity to extract from between Sigurd's teeth the stray tufts of grizzled hair that

he wanted to keep as souvenirs of Rex, who, still feebly growling, had to be fetched off the field in a wheelbarrow.

From first to last, Sigurd's adventures were too often misadventures. As a youngster, he was continually getting into trouble. It seemed unfortunate that he should have so many feet, for what with thorns, tacks, broken glass, jagged ice and the like, one or another of them was usually in piteous condition.

His name brought more than one fight upon him, as our call of *Sigurd! Sigurd!* when he started out to investigate a dog-stranger, was often mistaken for *Sick 'em! Sick 'em!* and the dog's owner would reciprocate in kind. Once an indignant father, a summer visitor in the town, passionately charged us with setting our dog on his two "motherless boys," whereas we had been doing our best to call Sigurd off from a chase after those provoking little rascals, who had attacked him with a shower of pebbles.

Restless with his waxing strength he took to roving in the woods, where once he was caught in a trap and painfully dragged himself home with a lacerated leg that he had torn free from the

cruel grip of the steel. In the West Woods he once had a narrow escape. He was seen by a wandering botanist to plunge into a swampy hole for water, a beverage that, in spite of our hygienic warnings, Sigurd seemed to prefer with a flavor of dirt. The mire there has a quicksand quality, and Sigurd sank, splashing in frantic struggle, until only his nose was barely visible above the black ooze, but in that extremity he seemed to get a momentary hold for his hind feet, perhaps on root or snag, and by a desperate effort lurched himself up and out. He lay on the bank, panting and trembling, a sorely spent collie, for thirty-five minutes by the botanist's watch, before he revived sufficiently to roll over and over in the ferns and rub off some of the mud. Even so, when he reached home he was so smeared and malodorous with mire that, all unwitting of the mortal peril from which he had emerged, we met him with a scolding, scoured him off with newspapers and shut him out of doors for the rest of the day.

We grew to dislike the progress of civilization, so much did trains, trolleys, golf-balls and motors add to our anxiety, but his own supreme aversion

was, in his early years, the bicycle. On a certain summer day, when a deeper trouble than Sigurd could understand brooded over the house, he trotted down to the forbidden center of the town, The Square, in quest of entertainment. As he was crossing, there came upon him from one side a carriage and from the other a bicycle, whose rider, a Canadian, turned in his flurry the wrong way. Out of the resultant crash Sigurd sprang to the sidewalk, but the bicycle reeled after him and, in falling, struck him so sharply as to leave a long black bruise under one eye. An observer of the collision told us that Sigurd "flashed off toward home like a streak of sulphur." As soon as the door was opened in response to his frantic barking, he bolted upstairs and took refuge under my bed. The household in its grieved pre-occupation forgot all about him, and it was not until evening that he stole down into the family circle. With a careless glance at the black mark, we rebuked him for having a smutty face. The wistful look of the misunderstood came into those amber eyes, but he comforted himself with a belated dinner and waited for Time to tell his story. The bruise lasted long and the fright still longer.

More than a year later Joy-of-Life and I were driving through the tranquillities of an Indian summer afternoon, with Sigurd, by this time a strong and rapid runner, far ahead. Suddenly we saw him tearing back in terror. Without waiting for us to pull up, he bounded over the wheel into the phaeton and pressed his shaking body close against our knees. As we drove on, we looked to right and left for the hippogrif that had so appalled him, and presently beheld it,—a riderless bicycle leaning against a garden wall.

THE HEART OF A DOG

Where did they learn
The miracle of love,
These dogs that turn
From food and sleep at our light-whistled call,
Eager to fling
Their all
Of speed and grace into glad following?

Not the wolf pack
Taught savage instinct love,
For there to lack
The power to slay was to be hunger-slain;
Once down, a prey,
A stain
Of crimson on the snow, a tuft of gray.

Was it from us
They learned such loyal love
Magnanimous,
Meeting our injuries with trustful eyes?
Are we so true,
So wise,
So broken-hearted when love's day is through?

Where did they learn
The miracle of love?
Though beauty burn
In rainbow, foam and flame, these have not heard,
Nor trees and flowers,
That word.
Only our dogs would give their lives for ours.

HOME STUDIES

"Thou know'st whate'er I see, read, learn,
Related to thy species, friend,
I tell thee, hoping it may turn
To thine advantage—so attend."
—Caroline Bowles Southey's *Conte à Mon Chien.*

In pursuance of this curriculum, while Joy-of-Life sat on the floor beside Sigurd for a good-night brush of his gleaming coat, I would read to them from any canine classic that chanced to be at hand,—*Rab and His Friends, Bobby of Grey-friars, My Dogs of the Northland, The Call of the Wild, Bob, Son of Battle,* John Muir's vivid story of his Stickeen, Maeterlinck's brooding biography of his Pelleas with the bulging fore-head of Socrates, or De Amicis' touching account of his blessed mongrel, Dick. When Sigurd grew restless under his toilet and wanted to jump up and play, we would tell him how the great dog Kitmer, the only animal besides Balaam's ass and the camel that carried Mahomet on his flight from Mecca to be admitted into the Moslem paradise,

had "stretched forth his forelegs" for three hundred years in the mouth of a cave, mounting guard over the Seven Sleepers.

Joy-of-Life, who was an historian as well as an economist and had written, despite the annoyance of being confined to the same set of dates and dynasties, three histories of England, would reach down from her book shelves some high authority and read us, perhaps, Plutarch's report of the watchdog, Cipparus, who guarded the temple of Æsculapius at Athens so well that when a thief slipped off with some of the precious offerings, he went after in unrelenting pursuit. "First, the man pelted him with stones, but Cipparus would not give up. When day came, he kept at a little distance, but followed with his eye on the man and, when the fellow threw him food, would not touch it. When the man lay down, he spent the night by him; when he walked again, the dog got up and kept following. Cipparus fawned on any wayfarers he met, but kept barking at the thief. When the authorities, who were in chase, heard of this from people who had met the pair and who described the color and size of the dog, they pursued with yet more zeal, seized the man and

brought him back from Crommyon. The dog turned round and led the way, proud and delighted, evidently claiming that *he* had caught the temple thief."

Another evening it would be Motley's account of the escape of the Prince of Orange from a night raid sent out by the Duke of Alva, when the Prince was encamped near Mons. "The sentinels were cut down, the whole army surprised, and for a moment powerless, while, for two hours long, from one o'clock in the morning until three, the Spaniards butchered their foes, hardly aroused from their sleep, ignorant by how small a force they had been thus suddenly surprised, and unable in the confusion to distinguish between friend and foe. The boldest, led by Julian in person, made at once for the Prince's tent. His guards and himself were in profound sleep, but a small spaniel, who always passed the night upon his bed, was a more faithful sentinel. The creature sprang forward, barking furiously at the sound of hostile footsteps, and scratching his master's face with his paws. There was but just time for the Prince to mount a horse which was ready saddled, and to effect his escape through the darkness, be-

fore his enemies sprang into the tent. His servants were cut down, his master of the horse and two of his secretaries, who gained their saddles a moment later, all lost their lives, and but for the little dog's watchfulness, William of Orange, upon whose shoulders the whole weight of his country's fortunes depended, would have been led within a week to an ignominious death. To his dying day, the Prince ever afterwards kept a spaniel of the same race in his bed-chamber."

And well he might, and well, too, did the sculptors place a little dog of marble or bronze at the feet of his royal statues hardly more silent than himself, but what Sigurd and I clamored to know was whether, on that wild night of September eleventh, 1572, the spaniel escaped with his master or died with the servants and secretaries on Spanish steel, and no historian, not even our own, could tell us. With the ancient guile of teachers she would divert our attention from the question she could not answer by relating something else,—how Denmark commemorates a dog true to a deposed king in a high order of nobility whose motto runs, *Wild-brat was faithful.* Or she would take down the first volume of her well-

worn *Heimskringla* and excite Sigurd's young ambition by the record of King Saur. For when Eyestein, King of the Uplands, had harried Thrandheim and set his son over them, and they had slain the son, then "King Eyestein fared a-warring the second time into Thrandheim, and harried wide there, and laid folk under him. Then he bade the Thrandheimers choose whether they would have for king his thrall, who was called Thorir Faxi, or his hound, who was called Saur; and they chose the second, deeming they would then the rather do their own will. Then let they bewitch into the hound the wisdom of three men, and he barked two words and spake the third. A collar was wrought for him, and chains of gold and silver; and whenso the ways were miry, his courtmen bare him on their shoulders. A high-seat was dight for him, and he sat on howe as kings do; he dwelt at the Inner Isle, and had his abode at the stead called Saur's Howe. And so say folk that he came to his death in this wise, that the wolves fell on his flocks and herds, and his courtmen egged him on to defend his sheep; so he leaped down from his howe, and

went to meet the wolves, but they straightway tore him asunder."

On the whole, Sigurd preferred poetry, whose rhythm promptly put him to sleep. It was all one to him whether Homer sang the joy-broken heart of old Argus, over whom

> "the black night of death
> Came suddenly, as soon as he had seen
> Ulysses, absent now for twenty years,"

or Virgil chanted the device whereby Æneas and the Sibyl baffled the giant watch-dog of Hades.

> "The three-mouthed bark of Cerberus here filleth all the place,
> As huge he lieth in a den that hath them full in face;
> But when the adders she beheld upon his crest up-borne,
> A sleepy morsel honey-steeped and blent of wizard's corn,
> She cast him: then his three-fold throat, all wild with hunger's lack,
> He opened wide, and caught at it, and sank his monstrous back,
> And there he lay upon the earth enormous through the cave."

Sigurd would softly thump his tail in cadence with the melancholy beat of a dog elegy, whether Prior's tribute to the virtues of Queen Mary's True, or Gay's ironic consolation to Celia on the death of her lap-dog Shock, Cowper's impartial epitaphs for My Lord's pointer Neptune and My

Lady's spaniel Fop, Lehmann's memorial of his retriever, who

> "Chose, since official dogs at times unbend,
> The household cat for confidante and friend,"

Louise Imogen Guiney's lament for

> "All the sweet wavy
> Beauty of Davy,"

or Winifred Letts' apostrophe to the debonair collie Scott, or Hilton Brown's tenderest of farewells to his Scotch terrier, Hamish.

> "In the nether spaces
> Will the soul of a Little Black Dog despair?
> Will the Quiet Folk scare him with shadow-faces?
> And how will he tackle the Strange Beasts there?
> Tail held high, I'll warrant, and bristling,
> Marching stoutly if sore afraid,
> Padding it steadily, softly whistling;—
> That's how the Little Black Devil was made."

Sigurd lived too early to take part in the Free Verse controversy, but he evinced an open mind on matters metrical in that he liked Lord Byron's inscription for his Newfoundland Boatswain no better than Lord Eldon's for his Newfoundland Cæsar. It was Sir William Watson's famous quatrain, *An Epitaph,* that affected him most keenly, because it invited emphasis on the one

word that always brought him springing to his feet.

"His friends he loved. His fellest earthly foes
—Cats—I believe he did but feign to hate.
My hand will miss the insinuated nose,
Mine eyes the tail that wagged contempt at Fate."

As Sigurd was duly shown *Canis Major* in the ethereal heavens, so was he introduced to certain starry dogs that shine in the skies of English poetry,—the pampered "smale houndes" of Chaucer's Prioress, King Lear's elegant little "Tray, Blanche, and Sweetheart," dear, clownish Crab, and all that pack of rich-voiced hunting hounds whose "gallant chiding" rings through Elizabethan literature. The boy Will Shakespeare must often have hearkened to the hounds, "match'd in mouth like bells," coursing the Cotswolds, Silver and Belman and Sweetlips and Echo, their heads hung "with ears that sweep away the morning dew," the "speed of the cry" outrunning his "sense of hearing."

Sigurd was but mildly interested when we told him that in George Eliot's novels there were over fifty dogs, ranging all the way from pug to mas-

tiff, nor did he care greatly for Dickens' dogs, not even blundering, ill-favored, clumsy, "bullet-headed" Diogenes, Florence Dombey's comforter, nor the bandy leader of Jerry's dancing troupe, who, because of a lost half-penny, had to grind out Old Hundred on the barrel-organ while his companions devoured their supper—and his; but Scott's dogs, from fleet Lufra of *The Lady of the Lake* to the Dandy Dinmonts of *Guy Mannering*,—"There's auld Pepper and auld Mustard, and young Pepper and young Mustard, and little Pepper and little Mustard"—made him blink and prick up his ears. Thus encouraged, I would tell him of Sir Walter's love for all his home dogs and most of all for the tall stag-hound Maida; how Herrick wept for his spaniel Tracy; how Southey grieved when his "poor old friend" Phillis, another spaniel, was drowned; how Landor delighted in dogs from the boyhood when he boxed with Captain behind the coach house door to the extreme old age whose loneliness was solaced by two silky-coated Pomeranians, first, in Bath, by the golden Pomero, who would bark an ecstatic accompaniment to his master's tremendous explosions of laughter, and then, in Florence, by

Giallo, whose opinions on politics and letters the snowy-bearded poet would quote with humorous respect; how Nero, a Maltese fringy-paws, brightened the somber home of the Carlyles; and how Pope's favorite dog was, as he bitterly suggests, not unlike himself in being "a little one, a lean one, and none of the finest shaped." If Sigurd seemed responsive, I might go on with accounts of Mrs. Browning's Flush; of Hogg's Hector, "auld, towzy, trusty friend"; of Arnold's dachshunds, Geist, Max and Kaiser; of Gilder's Leo,

"Leo the shaggy, the lustrous, the giant, the gentle Newfoundland,"

of Lehman's "flop-eared" Rufus, and of Miss Letts' terrier Tim in his "wheaten-colored coat."

Lest Sigurd should get the impression that the globe was populated chiefly by poets, Joy-of-Life would strike in with anecdotes of the little dogs that frisked about Frederick the Great, and Charles II, the Merry Monarch, and tell how Edward VII's last pet, Cæsar, a fox terrier, trotted mournfully in the funeral procession behind Kildare, the royal charger; or she would "unmuzzle her wisdom" to the point of declaring that the kings of Babylon and Nineveh had their

favorite hunting hounds with tails curled up over the back and collars wrought in the form of leafy wreaths. She would inform Sigurd, who took it flippantly, that solemn burial honors had been paid to dogs in ancient times, that the Egyptians held them sacred and religiously embalmed their bodies, and that many a Celtic chief and Norland viking lies more quiet beneath his cairn because his noblest deerhound slumbers at his feet. Or perhaps she would relate, for our collie's ethical guidance, celebrated deeds of hero dogs. Sigurd would grunt and grumble in sympathy with her deep tones as she chanted the famous ballad of Beth Gêlert, that "peerless hound" whose fidelity cost him his life, or of the twice-sung terrier, haunter of Helvellyn, who for three months kept watch beside her master's body at the foot of the fatal precipice. Sigurd did not care for Wordsworth as much as Wordsworth would have cared for him, but he loved Little Music, striving in vain to save her fellow Dart under whose speed the river-ice had broken.

On one of those fortunate evenings when we had the Dryad with us, Sigurd would listen with waxing incredulity to legends of King Arthur's

hound Cavall, whose paw left its print on British rock; of Merlin's demon dog, black with red ears, akin to the little black dog that danced about Faustus, sending out flying flames from its feet; of Fingal's Bran and his last chase after the enchanted snow-white hart; and of Tristram's faithful Hodain, who licked the dregs from the cup of love which the knight and Queen Iseult had quaffed together. Sigurd was frankly skeptical about those

"Half a hundred good ban-dogs"

of Fountains Abbey, who, whistled to his help by the fighting friar, gave Robin Hood and his archers not a little trouble.

"Two dogs at once to Robin Hood did go,
T'one behind, the other before;
Robin Hood's mantle of Lincoln green
Off from his back they tore.

"And whether his men shot east or west,
Or they shot north or south,
The curtal dogs, so taught they were,
They caught the arrows in their mouth."

But Petit-Crin, the fairy dog from Avalon that Tristram gave to Iseult, was more than any honest collie could endure.

"No tongue could tell the marvel of it; 'twas of such wondrous fashion that no man might say of what color it was. If one looked on the breast, and saw naught else, one had said 'twas white as snow, yet its thighs were greener than clover, and its sides, one red as scarlet, the other more yellow than saffron. Its under parts were even as azure, while above 'twas mingled, so that no one color might be distinguished; 'twas neither green nor red, white nor black, yellow nor blue, and yet there was somewhat of all these therein; 'twas a fair purple brown. And if one saw this strange creation of Avalon against the lie of the hair there would be no man wise enough to tell its color, so manifold and changing were its hues.

"Around its neck was a golden chain, and therefrom hung a bell, which rang so sweet and clear when it began to chime Tristram forgot his sadness and his sorrow, and the longing for Iseult that lay heavy at his heart. So sweet was the tone of the bell that no man heard it but he straightway forgat all that aforetime had troubled him.

"Tristram hearkened, and gazed on this wondrous marvel; he took note of the dog and the

bell, the changing colors of the hair, and the sweet sound of the chimes; and it seemed to him that the marvel of the dog was greater than that of the music which rang in his ears, and banished all thought of sorrow.

"He stretched forth his hand and stroked the dog, and it seemed to him that he handled the softest silk, so fine and so smooth was the hair to his touch. And the dog neither growled, nor barked, nor showed any sign of ill temper, however one might play with it; nor, as the tale goes, was it ever seen to eat or to drink."

At this point, Sigurd rose, shook himself and stalked out to the kitchen. He could bear a great deal from his pedantic mistresses, but there were limits. Satiated with history and literature, he proposed to relax his mind by a turn at psychology.

From Cecilia's successor, Ellen, Sigurd was taking a brief but vivid course in psychics. To be sure, a *bona fide* professor in that field dwelt near us, her high-picketed fence enclosing a baker's dozen of spaniels. It was understood, to the awe of the community, that by their aid she investigated certain dark corners of her shadowy sub-

ject; but Sigurd, embarrassed by the attentions thrust upon him by the grandmother of the spaniel family, rested content with his unacademic tutor.

"Poor Ellen," as she invariably called herself, was a small, wiry, nut-brown Irish woman, whose gray hair rose erect, as if just affrighted by pouke or pixy, from above a constantly wrinkling forehead and a pair of snapping jet eyes. She must have been on the borders of insanity, if not across, when she came to us. She was a furious worker, cycloning about the house with mop and broom at all hours and not hesitating to upbraid the college president herself, most benign and punctilious of ladies, if her boots brought one speck of mud into "Poor Ellen's clane hall." Her chief pride, however, was in her frugality, as we discovered to our dismay on her second afternoon, when, as it often happily chanced, the Dryad, then living on the campus, dropped in for a call and consented to remain for dinner.

It was a simple matter, in our informal way of life, to call back from the piazza through the hall to the figure setting the table in the dining room:

"Lay another plate, please, Ellen. Our friend stays to dine with us."

But the wail that succeeded nearly slew our friend by throwing her into an agony of suppressed laughter.

"Mother of God! Isn't that the burning shame! And me maning the three chops should do us all!"

Ellen had been with us but a few days, though the house was already so scoured and polished that we scarcely dared set foot on our own floors, when a prolonged season of sultry weather broke in a tremendous thunderstorm. These thunderstorms were always a challenge to Sigurd's valor. At the first crash he would pluckily make for the porch, where, flinging up his head, he would cast back one defiant bark to that Superdog in the skies; then, scared by his own audacity, he would usually bolt upstairs and take refuge under a bed. But this time he fled, with the second shattering peal, to Ellen, who was rocking herself, a crouching, huddled figure, to and fro on the cellar stairs, screaming in a weird, blood-curdling chant:

"Mercy of God! Poor Ellen belaves in God the Father and in the Holy Mother of God and in all the blissid saints of heaven. Oh, grace of Mary! Poor Ellen belaves in thim all. Good

Lord, you never kilt Poor Ellen yet and you wouldn't be after doing it now whin her bones be old and her heart a nest of sorrows. The Lord look down in pity on the poor."

With Sigurd hugged tight, Ellen's shrieks gradually sank into sob and moan, and from that hour he was her one confidante and comrade. Not even in him would she allow the least untidiness, but would fly to meet him at the threshold, picking up each paw in turn and manicuring it in her apron, and would insist, despite our remonstrances, in squatting down outside the back door and feeding his dinner to him, bit by bit, lest "Gobble-mouth" drop crumbs and gravy on "Poor Ellen's clane gravel."

Sigurd found this fellowship at his meals so entrancing that he would eat even baked beans from Ellen's lean brown fingers and would take advantage of her society to get twice as much dinner as was good for him. When his dish was empty and polished bright, under Ellen's approving eye, by his circling tongue, he would promenade dolefully about the kitchen, peering with an air of deep dejection into coal hod and wood basket, as if he were starved to a diet of cinders

and kindlings, well aware that behind his back Ellen was heaping his dish anew. Her excess of thrift, from which our own table suffered, was never brought to bear on Sigurd.

As he ate, she would tell him long stories of her childhood in hungry Ireland and of her hard, bewildered, wandering life in the Land of Promise. Only once was I guilty of pausing by the kitchen door to listen.

"It was the place afore this, Darlint, or maybe the place afore that, or maybe another, that Old Goldtooth wedded my widow woman and took her to New York for the shows. He'd been drinking more than a drop the day and he says, 'Let's bring Poor Ellen along, for the fun of it. You can lend her your second-best bonnet, for there's money to buy more in New York.' But it wasn't her second-best, nor yet her third, the comical thing she set on me. To a hotel in New York he took us and a grand feed he gave us. Thin off to the show they wint, and he put a newspaper in my hand, and opened up at a page with niver a picture on it, and he told me to sit there like a lady and read about Boarding Houses. So there was Poor Ellen all that avening, and long

it was as a rosary of nights, holding up that paper, with the quare letters, all sizes, dancing over it, and reading about Boarding Houses. But whin they came back—O Darlint, the saints defind us! —he told me it was about the Borden Murder I'd been reading, not Boarding Houses at all, and Poor Ellen not sensing a scratch of it, or sure she'd been scared into a fit. Don't let thim tache you to read their books, Darlint, for sure there's no knowing what the black words might be saying."

But although this is the only outpouring of Ellen's confidence to Sigurd at which I played eavesdropper, too often her mad screeches would bring us pell-mell into the kitchen where we would find the two of them wrought to a state of highest excitement. Once Sigurd, lying at full length, was squeezing a hollow rubber ball between his lips, making it emit harrowing squeaks that Ellen, hopping grotesquely up and down, identified as the cries of an imprisoned banshee. Another time she had one arm clasped about Sigurd's neck and with the other hand was pounding her little alarm clock on the floor, entreating him, "Bite the feaver whin it jumps out, Darlint. A year

ago by this clock it was that Poor Ellen had the feaver and died and she has been in the Fire ever since."

Again we heard sounds of scuffling and struggle, punctuated by desperate screams from Ellen and furious barks from Sigurd. The kitchen was in a whirlwind, but Ellen was presently calmed enough to explain to us in terrified gasps that the demons were trying to drag her away from the throne of God and that she had set Sigurd on her tormentors. Our gallant collie evidently drove off the fiends, for Ellen's passion of resistance suddenly ceased and, sinking to the floor, she hid her convulsed face in Sigurd's ruff, wailing, "But next time they'll get me. Poor Ellen! Poor Ellen! It's a sore and sorry life she's had, and to come to the Pain in the end!"

On the last night of Ellen's stay with us,—for we had arranged, without telling her, to have the crazy old creature transferred to the office of a friendly physician, where her prowess with the scrubbing-brush would be appreciated and her mental peculiarities be under wise and humane observation—an ear-splitting yell once more summoned us post-haste to the kitchen. Sigurd, erect

on rigid legs, was staring with an uncanny fixity of gaze on vacancy, while Ellen, on her knees, wringing her hands above her head, was alternately abjuring him and Heaven.

"O Darlint, is it my death ye're after seeing now? Is it Poor Ellen with the candles at head and feet? Och, let me go! I lave this house to-night. It's not Poor Ellen will bide with a dog does be looking at her own ghost."

"Nonsense, Ellen!" protested Joy-of-Life, interposing her strong, wholesome presence between the distracted old woman and the outside door. "There are no ghosts here. Sigurd is only looking at the wall. Perhaps he heard a rat or a mouse in there."

"Ouch!" shrilled Ellen, dodging out of the door in a fresh paroxysm of fright. "Rats and mice is it! Rats and mice do be the black spirits come to gnaw out our brains. And here they've come for Poor Ellen's wits. They chase Poor Ellen wherever she goes. But she'll give thim the slip on the morrow."

While Joy-of-Life brought Ellen in, quieted her with malted milk and sent her to bed, I puzzled over Sigurd, whose staring eyes and bris-

tling hair still gave evidence of something we could not discern. Other observers of dog conduct have testified to occurrences of this kind, as, very recently, the master of a red cocker spaniel (Walter E. Carr in *The Story of Five Dogs*) and from far antiquity the Arabs, who hold that a dog can see the wings of the Angel of Death hovering over the one for whom Azrael has been sent.

Ellen came down in the morning, still determined on departure and entirely content with the place we had secured for her. All that day through she was her most cleanly, thrifty and cheerful self. Nothing would do but she must sweep the whole house from attic to cellar, especially scouring her own room until it was pure enough for Diana. Pleased with the bustle of packing and getting off, evidently an habitual state of things with Poor Ellen, she graced her farewell with a flourish of economical courtesies. She presented Joy-of-Life with a banana which she had blarneyed from our Italian fruit-vender, and gave me a little jar of cream, begged or bullied from the milkman in the early dawn. As for Sigurd, she made him a square foot of his

favorite corn bread and hung a Catholic medal to his collar. She went off in the best of humor, greatly set up by her own cleverness in having been able to make, so cheaply, such suitable good-by gifts. When the expressman came for her shabby, bulging bag, she treated him to such a nice little luncheon of cookies and lemonade that he offered her a ride to the station. From the driver's lofty seat she waved us a queenly adieu, calling back: "The Lord loves Poor Ellen, after all." Sigurd ran with the wagon as far as the corner. The last we saw of his psychic instructor, she was kissing her workworn hands to him and shrilling back endearments.

THE PLEADERS

Before the Majesty of Most High God
  The gentlest of the glad Archangels came;
Swift down the emerald avenue he trod,
  His eager sandals quivering to flame.
Close at his heels there frisked a dog, his mate
  In bygone journeyings with young Tobias,
A dog "without," whose love had dared the gate,
  Scenting the steps of Brother Azarias,
So-called in those blithe morns when, laughing-eyed,
  By thorn and myrrh, the dew on every stem,
He led the son of Tobit to his bride,
  And the lad's dog went leaping after them.

The little winds that in those sunrise-flushed,
  Fleet plumes had nestled, to the harpstrings flew
To learn gold melodies for May, but hushed
  Was all that glory till a Voice pealed through:
"Mine Angel Raphael, of the Holy Seven
  Who lift the prayers of saints before the Throne,
What wild, unworded anguish troubles Heaven,
  To man's appeal the wailing undertone?
Men's orisons for Peace, for Peace, for Peace,
  Smothered the psalms of Paradise, until
I bade that vain and bitter crying cease.
  My will is Peace. Let mortals do my will."

Before the shining of the Mercy Seat
  The Angel raised a censer. "Lord, I bring
The screams of shell-torn horses, thrashing feet
  Of mangled mules, the pigeon's broken wing,

Gasping of dogs gas-tortured, wounds and woe
  Of myriad creatures by Thy breath endowed
With being. Theirs the prayers that overflow
  This vessel by whose weight my heart is bowed."
Ah, strange to see that poor, vague incense rise,
  Dim supplication crossed by fragrances
Of courage, faithfulness, self-sacrifice
  Even of these brute martyrs, even of these.

"Brother of Sorrows, bear to man those groans
  Of a creation that I fashioned well
And gave to his dominion,—man, who owns
  One morning star to make it heaven or hell.
I am but God, a Pity throned above
  To watch the sparrow's fall, to feel its throes
And wait the slow, sweet blossoming of love,
  Small, kindly loves from which the Great Love grows."
Then Raphael, Healer of the Earth, bowed thrice,
  Withdrawing through the ranks of seraphim
Who smiled to see how, scorning Paradise,
  On frolic feet the dog sped after him.

COLLEGE CAREER

"Thy faith is all the knowledge that thou hast."
Jonson's *Epigrams,* XVIII.

WHATEVER may be thought of Sigurd's college career, there can be no doubt that he careered through college. He was at the top of bliss in a mad run over the campus. With streaming ruff and tail he would rush on like Lelaps, the wild hound of Cephalus on the trail of the monstrous fox sent by a slighted goddess to harass the Thebans and, like Lelaps when the Olympians chose to make the chase eternal by turning both dog and fox to stone, Sigurd would come to a sudden stop on the brow of a hill, standing out against the sky like a collie statue poised for running.

Joy-of-Life could cross the broad meadow almost as lightly and swiftly as he and their morning pilgrimages to chapel were expeditions of high glory. There were hundreds of girls abroad at that hour and often Sigurd would wheel from the path and dash jubilantly toward any figure

that took his fancy, confident of welcome. But if the individual chanced to be a new freshman, not yet acquainted with the college dignitaries, she might meet his advances with fear or annoyance or a still more cutting indifference. Then Sigurd would droop those expectant ears of his and return with dignity to his forsaken comrade. If his greeting were properly reciprocated, he would ramp joyously upon his fellow student and prance about her, leaping to the height of her shoulders in his ecstasy of good-will.

His favorite laboratory was Lake Waban. In the summer afternoons he would tease to have us both escort him up for his swim and if on the way we tried to part company, one or the other turning aside for a more pressing errand, Sigurd would herd us with ancestral art, jumping upon the deserter and gently pushing her back, or standing in the path to block her progress, protesting all the while with coaxing whines, with expostulary barks and with all manner of collie eloquence. If we walked, on the other hand, close together, absorbed in talk, he would jealously push in between us, as he often did when we were having a fireside tête-à-tête or bidding each other good

night. He wished us to understand that Sigurd was the one to be loved and that all affections not directed toward Sigurd were superfluous. But when we both accepted his invitation to the lake, the three hundred acres of the college park hardly sufficed for his antics. Curveting about us till he seemed to be ten collies at once, flashing in ever widening circles over the level and over the slopes, bounding upon us with a storm of gleeful sneezes, he would lead the way to Sigurd's Tub, as he considered it. If some one fell in with us and joined us on the walk, Sigurd, always of courteous instinct, would drop back and follow demurely, or amuse himself at a decorous distance by investigating holes, chasing squirrels and striving with wild springs, scrambles, clawings, to climb the trees from whose boughs they mocked his clumsy efforts. But how rejoiced he would be when the interloper turned off! "There! Gone at last! Now we *will* have fun, all by ourselves!" Then he would cast about for some doughty deed to do, longing to dazzle us by a prodigious feat of strength and skill. If he could find a young tree that our too efficient forestry had cut down he would drag it along, bite and

break away its branches, seize it by the middle and balance it in his mouth as a long pole, constantly lifting his bright eyes to us for admiration.

Once arrived at the lake, it was our duty to find sticks and fling them out over the water to the extent of our strength, while Sigurd swam for them, the farther the better. As he would gallantly splash up from the shallows and, stick in mouth, climb the bushy bank, we had to run from the mighty shaking with which, delivering the prize, he loved to give us a shower-bath. After a few such plunges, Sigurd, while we rested on the bank, would appropriate the green apron of Mother Earth for a towel, rolling over and over on the turf to dry himself and completing the process by scampers in the sun. He disliked being wet, for although these swims in the lake ranked among his prime delights, at home he always resented and resisted a bath and, on a showery day, would often run in to the towel rack, pleading to be wiped dry, and would then forthwith run out into the rain again. In our hottest weather he would slip off alone in the early morning to that still lake all sweet with water-lilies and would

be gone for hours. A few times, in his younger years, our anxiety took us by mid-day to the shore, whence we would see a yellow head well out in the water. At our whistle, Sigurd would turn and swim back to us with an air of surprise and pleasure as if he had quite forgotten that such dear friends were to be found on land. The outcome was not so happy when, tormented in his fur coat by the heat, he had stolen off to one of his secret mire-pits and indulged in a cool wallow. When he came home plastered and perfumed from head to tail, we would greet him with exclamations of disgust, which brought the Byronic melancholy into his eyes, hustle him off to the rocks behind the house, fling pailfuls of warm water over him and do our best to scrape off his pollutions. On one of these occasions, a college-girl lover and Wallace raced him up to Waban and scrubbed and rinsed him until, so they said, the entire lake had changed color.

In the autumn term Sigurd would take a special course in harvesting, frisking through a neighboring orchard and playing ball with the falling apples. The winter term he gave mainly to athletics and dramatics. How bewildered he was

that first snowy morning when he ran out into a strange white ravine bounded by slippery walls and when, desperately lunging over one of these, he felt himself floundering in a drift! His first dubious venture on a crackling sheet of ice taxed his puppy courage, too, but he persisted in his quivering progress across our little Longfellow Pond and swaggered up the further side with his jauntiest sporting air. In later years he enjoyed nothing better than going skating with Lady Blanche, another member of our changeful household, and on a stinging January morning he would outdo the frolics, that Cowper smiled to watch, of the dog who

> "with many a frisk
> Wide scampering, snatches up the drifted snow
> With ivory teeth, or ploughs it with his snout;
> Then shakes his powder'd coat, and barks for joy."

As for dramatics, Sigurd loved to thrust his stick deep into a pile of russet leaves or sparkling snow, and then pretend that he was a sanguinary monster whose prey had escaped him, and dig and nose and scrape and scatter and tear and shuffle with frenzied energy, rumbling all the while growls of awful menace, until he had tossed it

up to seize and worry, display to the audience always requisite for these performances, and then bury it again for a repetition of the melodrama.

When the winter storms kept him in, his surging vitality made him as restless as an imprisoned wind. If the Cave of Æolus boasted a housekeeper, she had our sympathy. All day long Sigurd would scoot and spin about the little range of rooms that we liked to have quiet and orderly, a very electric battery of mischief. He would pick quarrels with the rugs, scatter the pile of newspapers and dance a scandalous jig with that elderly, respectable Bostonian, *The Transcript*. He would bump into a gracefully leaning broom and a meditative mop, knocking their wooden wits together and bringing them to the floor with what he considered a beautiful bang. He would stir up civil war on the hearth till poker and tongs and dust-brush and bellows all set upon one another with hideous clang of combat. At last we would toss over to him, in desperation, an old pair of rubbers, and he would make love to one and try to swallow the other, playing as many parts as Bottom longed for, all the way from Pyramus to Lion.

A new stage was provided for him when the storm was over and we undertook to shovel the drift off the piazza. He would instantly claim the star rôle of rival shovel, pawing the powdery heaps with delirious zest, or he would be the snow itself, ecstatically indignant at being swept down the steps. He played thrilling tragi-comedies with bones, too, especially with one monstrous knuckle that might have belonged to the skeleton of Polyphemus, the prize of one of Sigurd's evening prowls. It was a bitter cold midnight, but our happy rebel, sporting with that giant joint, tossing it about in the snow, losing it on purpose, catching its glimmer by grace of the moon and madly pouncing on it once more, would not obey the bed-time whistle. He stretched himself out, a saffron blotch on the white, and hugged his treasure, crunching away persuasively to convince us that the clock was wrong and it was still only dinner time. Our ignominious resort, in such a case, was to fetch from a certain pantry box, the daily object of Sigurd's supplicating sniffs, a piece of cake, and proceed to eat it, with vulgar smack of ostentatious relish, in the doorway, under the electric light. As ever, this stratagem brought

our mutineer to terms. Giving the bone a last affectionate lick, he came bounding into the hall in time for the crumbs. But his high spirits were far from spent. Though he consented to play Yellow Caterpillar, curling up in the blanketed round clothes-basket which, for the winter, displaced his Thunder-and-Lightning rug, he barked so often through the small hours, in his dreams or out, that our slumbers were literally curtailed. Rebuked into silence, he gnawed his leash in two, tipped over his basket and settled himself for a morning snooze on the forbidden lounge.

It is obvious that Sigurd was not a model of virtue. We did not want him so much better than ourselves. "That dog would be improved by a good licking," said Joy-of-Life's visiting elder brother. But with all respect for elder brothers—my own had nearly hanged Sigurd by an ingenious contrivance of ropes and loops designed to enable me to unleash him on a summer morning from my sleeping balcony—we decided that we would rather have our collie with all his frolic imperfections on his head than cowed into slavish obedience. Only once when, hardly out of puppyhood, he dashed from my side, as we

were walking decorously on the sidewalk, and danced backward on his hind legs in front of a dodging automobile, out-barking its distracted horn, did I attempt to whip him. He had barely escaped with life and limb and, determined to impress him, for his own safety, with his wrong-doing, I caught him by the collar, doubled the leash which I still carried but had almost ceased to use, and began to beat him with it about the head. Sigurd's astonished yelp was answered in an instant from the side street where dwelt the Sisters and, like a white knight of chivalry, Laddie came charging out, thrusting himself between us, leaping upon me and demanding, with a wrath seldom seen in his gentle eyes, that I stop maltreating his twin.

Of course the brothers took the chance to run away together. It was slushy going and when Sigurd came home at seven o'clock, so tired that he could hardly drag one muddy foot after another, he was in shocking trim, his white hose and shirt-front soaked to a disreputable gray. It was unlucky, for his amateur dramatics were to be crowned that evening by a public part on the college stage. He was to be Faithful Dog, watch-

ing beside his master,—a forgotten hero of the Revolution,—as that gallant young lieutenant slept away the hour before daybreak, when he was to be executed as a spy. At a low whistle of the rescuer beneath the window, Faithful Dog was to arouse his master by placing a wary paw upon the sleeper's breast and, when the lieutenant had made good his escape, remain behind to face the angry guard and be shot extremely dead in his master's place. Sigurd had thrown himself into this noble rôle with enthusiasm and rehearsed it several times with distinguished success.

An escort of sophomores had been waiting for him in an agony of impatience and, when he at last arrived, there could be no thought of dinner or a nap. Sigurd was hustled down to the laundry, put through merciless ablutions and rushed off to the college barn, our impromptu theater, in the snug little vehicle that our liveryman called his "coop." Three or four girls were sardined in with him, flourishing towels and doing their best to scrub him dry on the way. But it was a ruffled, soapsudsy and excessively drowsy Faithful Dog that trotted out upon the stage, yawned in the face of the rapturous greeting of his con-

gregated friends, the Barn Swallows, jumped up on the prison cot, never meant for him, and rolled himself into a solid slumber-ball, refusing to wake, not even so much as blink, from first to last of the drama. With natural presence of mind, an essential quality in spies, the hero soliloquized to the audience that his Faithful Dog had been drugged, evoking a round of applause at which Sigurd dreamily flapped his tail.

One rôle that he never could be induced to play was that of Dandy. One Sunday afternoon, when he came limping in with his feet all cut and sore from a morning frisk over rough ice, I dressed them in discarded white kid gloves, tying each firmly round the ankle, and started out with Sigurd for a call on the Dryad. But our sturdy Viking resented such dudish apparel and would flump down, at brief intervals, on the crusted drifts and tug away at that detested frippery with the result that, on his arrival, only the paw he thrust out at his amused hostess was still elegant in a tatter of white kid.

Sigurd believed in elective courses rather than required. There were certain things that, as a

matter of principle, he persistently refused to learn. Though by nature a dig, as my sister's flower-beds too often testified, not her most fervent remonstrances could convince him that bulbs and bones should not be planted together. His general attitude toward education was not unique. He had "come to college for the life." From the narrow paths of learning he bounded off in pursuit of a "well-rounded development." His social engagements were numerous and pressing. Often he had not time, between afternoon tea in one dormitory and a birthday spread in another, to scamper home for the plain parenthesis of a dog-biscuit dinner. Sometimes we would hear our truant, in the small hours, drop down upon the porch with a thud of utter exhaustion, and would learn by degrees, during the next day or two, that he had gone with a botany or geology class on a long morning tramp, played hare and hounds with one of the athletic teams all the afternoon and paraded the town till midnight with a serenading party. Often in the spring weather we would not set eyes on him for two days running, or might, perhaps, catch a passing glimpse of our collie standing expectant on the stone wall

by the East Lodge, watching the stream of girls and waiting for his next invitation. He would dutifully greet us with a bark and a caper and, if we were driving, jump down to follow the carriage, but if one of his student chums came tripping along and threw her arms about him, showering kisses on his sunny head, Sigurd would flourish his tail in rapturous response and off the two would race to "Math." or "Lit." or "Chem." or "Comp." or whatever other branch of knowledge Young America cannot spare breath to pronounce.

We would often see him lying impartially across the knees of a group of girls studying together in some green nook, his plume waving in the faces clustered over Horace or Livy. He had nothing but admiration for such guileless renderings as "The swift hunter pursuing the leper" or "He landed his boats in the sea," and the harder these latter-day Humanists hugged him, the more he sneezed and yawned in a very embarrassment of joy, though when, absorbed in subjunctives, they pinched his silky ears a trifle too hard, he would quietly withdraw and hunt up a stick for them to throw for Sigurd. Not all

his mates were wise in their good-will. They would pick up and toss, for him to chase and worry, rough-broken, splintery pieces of painted board or anything that came handy, and presently a lugubrious dog would appear before his family, laying at our feet, perhaps, a well-licked strip of picket fence, and lifting for our ministrations a bleeding mouth, where the red was mingled with a stain of sickly green.

Sigurd took all manner of liberties even with seniors. At home, though he would gaze into the refrigerator with deep interest, he never ventured to insert so much as his nose, and though a dish of candies might be standing on a low table easily in reach, he merely looked and waggled. Only once, on a Tophet-hot afternoon, while a guest, absorbed in talk, sat oblivious of the plate of ice-cream melting on her knee, did Sigurd slip in his craving tongue and accelerate the process. But with the college girls he knew no such restraints. He was familiar with all their chafing-dish corners and, entering by any door he found ajar, he would help himself to a lunch of fudge and wafers before looking about to choose the softest heap of couch cushions for his nap. When a cut

foot made walking painful, he would prevail upon the girls to carry him, great fellow that he was, and we would sometimes come upon him dangling across a slender hand-chair, while his panting bearers struggled up the hill to College Hall. On seeing us, he would scramble down and sheepishly make off with an exaggerated limp. Once we chanced on a group of freshmen holding a picnic party with King Sigurd enthroned on a mossy log in the center, his gilt-paper crown tipped rakishly over one eye. He delighted in picnics, cross-country walks, the May-day frolic on the campus, and constantly imperiled his life by frisking about on tennis court, golf links and archery fields. The girls would use him as a postman, sending him from one to another with notes, not always delivered, swinging from his collar, and he often appeared at the door of a college fair or other festivity wearing the ticket which some lavish chum had bought for him. He was about the college grounds and buildings so much that we feared he might become a nuisance, as well as depart from the few principles of collie conduct we had labored to instill. Much to his indignation, therefore, we made him address to the

students, through the columns of our little college weekly,

A DOGGEREL PETITION

Sigurd begs to say to his friends
That for certain inscrutable ends,
Quite apart from his own sweet way,
There are laws he ought to obey;
And because the sight of a girl
Puts the tip of his tail in a curl,
And sends, with a pit-a-pat start,
The commandments out of his heart,
He has to entreat you should
All help poor Sigurd be good.
'Tisn't easy to choke one's barks,
With squirrels making remarks;
'Tisn't easy to travel home
With girls enticing to roam.
All nice things seem to be naughty;
So it's not that Sigurd's grown haughty,
When he meets you at eve on the meadow,
A yellow scud in the shadow,
And passes your grocery bag
With only a wistful wag.
The New Year's good resolutions,
If broken, bring retributions;
So Sigurd beseeches—'tis hard—
That you shouldn't call him off guard;
Nor tempt that inquisitive rover,
That affectionate follower, over
The threshold of College Hall;
Nor let him trustfully sprawl
In the pathway of many feet.
And don't, though the sin is sweet,

Don't, for the gleam of his eyes,
His expectant ears' uprise,
For his nose's coaxing nudge,
Feed Sigurd infinite fudge.

That helped him through with one generation of college girls, but after three or four years a fresh appeal had to be made, especially in view of the fact that Sigurd had suddenly resumed the dangerous trick, first taken up on his wild scampers with Laddie, of jumping at horses' heads, and we found some of his younger classmates, for Sigurd belonged to every class in turn, encouraging him in it, because he was "so pretty" in his leaps. Hence once more he reluctantly lapsed into verse and recommended to his intimates

A NOSTRUM FOR SIGURD

It is wrong to spring
  At a horse's nose;
At that quivery thing
It is wrong to spring.
With tail for a wing
  I may chase the crows,
But 'tis wrong to spring
  At a horse's nose.

Call me back from the horses
  With *no, no, noes;*
When I try snap courses
Call me back from the horses.

Though my remorse is
A transient pose,
Call me back from the horses
With *no, no, noes.*

I'm only a collie,
As Wellesley knows;
Though ever so jolly
I'm only a collie.
Save Sigurd from folly,
For folly has foes,
And I'm only a collie,
As Wellesley knows.

There was a perilous season, after a village Airedale had unadvisedly nipped a teasing small boy, when our hysterical local legislation ordered all dogs into muzzles, commanding the police to shoot at sight any canine wayfarer not so equipped. Sigurd, of course, detested his muzzle and though he would sulkily fetch it when he saw us making ready for a walk, he would growl at it and worry it until we had it snapped on, when he would often turn mournfully back from the door or lie down before it literally in flat rebellion, rather than take the air under such humiliating and uncomfortable conditions. He soon began to exercise his ingenuity, however, in the getting rid of that encumbrance, and again and again,

having gone forth a model of compliance with the law, he would come bounding back, muzzleless, triumphant, expecting congratulations. It was hard to find a make of muzzle that he could not push off with his paws or scrape off under a fence or rub off between close-growing trees, and impossible to find one that he could not coax his compassionate girl-chums to take off for him. Melted by his pleading whines, they would slip the muzzle down from his jaws so that he wore it as a pendant over his white vest, a compromise that perplexed our honest college policeman, who, Sigurd's neighbor and friend, solved the problem by consistently turning his back and refusing to see the dog at all. But one well-nigh fatal day a special officer, called in by our stern selectmen for the purpose of hunting down all lawless dogs, beheld Sigurd disporting himself in the public road, his muzzle, as so often, gayly flapping under his chin. According to the man's bewildered account, no sooner had he drawn his revolver and taken good aim at the offender, than "a mob of girls, coming from nowhere and everywhere," suddenly enveloped his intended victim and swept the dog off in their midst to the campus. But the of-

ficer had a determined jaw of his own. He kept watch for that fawn collie and the next time he caught sight of Sigurd, again with a swinging muzzle, he ran a rope through our poor boy's collar and was dragging him off to the town lock-up and execution ground when again an excited throng of nymphs blocked the way.

"How can you be so cruel?" blazed one of Sigurd's fondest playmates, as a dozen arms were thrown about the collie.

"I'm no rougher with that there dog than he is with me," protested the young officer, purple not only through embarrassment but from the tug of war in which he and Sigurd had been matching strength. "He may be your college pet, but his manners ain't no-way ladylike."

Meanwhile one of the girlish hands caressing Sigurd's neck must have succeeded in slipping a buckle, for suddenly his head shot back through the collar, left as a keepsake to the dog-catcher, and our innocent was far on his way toward the safe shelter of home.

This period of persecution extended over some months, for the muzzles had a bad effect on dog tempers and there were more cases of snapping

and nipping than the town, in Sigurd's lifetime, had ever known, though no trace of rabies was detected. It was an anxious season for dog-owners. Our neighboring professor of psychology, she who specialized in spaniels, was overheard by a guest one evening wearily informing a new litter of eight:

"Puppies, this has been a sad day. This morning your ma bit the postman, and this afternoon your pa bit the doctor."

It was a relief to many households when at last the selectmen put their minds on something else.

Although Sigurd was a member of all classes, as well as faculty, and of all societies, he bore, as mascot, a special relation to the Class of 1911, whose color he wore by grace of nature. Glorious he was to behold on Field Day, his coat, well brushed for the occasion, glistening in the sun, a great bow of yellow ribbon standing out like a butterfly from the top of his collar, wagging all over with joyous self-importance as he stood in the front rank of his class, impartially barking applause for both their triumphs and defeats.

With him, as with the girls, the spring term

was the climax of the college year, though not precisely an academic climax. Sigurd still found time to drop in at a lecture occasionally, flumping down beside some favorite fellow-student for a brief repose and rousing now and then to thrust up a sentimental paw for a shake. But he had many class-meetings to attend, where, when "Further Remarks" were called for, he has been known to respond with a loud bark,—a recognized indecorum in the college buildings. But on the whole, he kept the rules save in so far as he might be considered "a musical instrument" in use "out of recreation hours."

The spring term bloomed out in guests like crocuses and Sigurd made a point of attending as many as possible of the luncheons and teas given in their honor. An English lady, a poet and a visionary, a presence like a flame, was one afternoon addressing a choice assemblage in our oriental parlor on the mysteries of the Bahist faith. A torch-bearer of the Persian prophet, she was telling of her first interview with Ali Baha on Mount Carmel.

"And the Master greeted me thus: 'O Child of the Kingdom!' "——

Bump went something against the door, which swung wide, admitting Sigurd, who saluted the company with a comprehensive wave of his tail.

"You beautiful creature!" cried the Englishwoman, winning him to her with an outstretched hand, "I am sure *you* are a Child of the Kingdom," and Sigurd wagged, came up for a pat and dropped down at her feet to slumber out the rest of her impassioned discourse, waking promptly with the arrival of refreshments.

But our Child of the Kingdom, on the very day after he had received this accolade, came home to dinner, for which he had no appetite, not only with a deep scratch, inflicted by the claw of some profane, anti-Bahist cat, down one side of his face, but with his white and golden hair all matted in brown streaks and patches, in witness that a freshman saucepan had spilled its fudge upon him. Where he could get at himself to lick, he enjoyed it very much, but he was deplorably sticky on top.

In the spring, too, there were more dogs about the campus, and battles were frequent. In the interests of academic fellowship we did our best to steer Sigurd clear of encounters with profes-

sorial champions, especially Jerry, an Irish terrier who would fight with his own shadow rather than not fight at all, but one morning our chapel vestibule was the scene of an encounter that Isaac Watts might well have called horrendous.

The aggressor was Coco, a fierce little Boston bull and the pride of one of the town's most honored citizens. Coco fought by method and a very effective method it was. He would sneak up to his chosen antagonist, fly at the forehead, tear the flesh so that the streaming blood blinded his enemy and then try for a grip on the throat. Half the dogs in the village already bore Coco's mark when, one March morning, Joy-of-Life and I went in to chapel, leaving Sigurd, as usual, to wait for us outside. As a dog, whom we did not pause to identify, was trotting down the avenue, we laid strict injunctions on Sigurd not to get into a scrap.

The organ was calling all hearts to worship, and heads were already bowed, when suddenly Sigurd, his earnest eyes trying in vain to explain his difficulties, pressed in against our knees. This was a grave breach of chapel decorum, and Joy-of-Life, rising instantly, led him down the aisle.

As she opened the door into the vestibule, Coco was upon him, and the snarling fury of a dog-fight jarred against the solemn strains of the organ. I slipped out to find Coco hanging from Sigurd's throat, and Sigurd, blood streaming from his forehead over his face, so hampered by a ring of hands pulling on his collar that he could only snap his jaws in air, unable to see or reach his foe. The choir, arrayed for the processional, had broken line and were banging Coco with hymn books, while everybody was wildly issuing orders to everybody else.

"Let the dogs alone, girls. Look out for yourselves."

"Let Sigurd go. Give him a chance to fight."

"Choke Coco off."

"Twist Coco's tail."

"Bring water."

"*Don't* put your hands between them. girls. Keep away."

The janitor, the only man on the scene, had discreetly climbed into a high window-seat, and it was one of the slenderest, most flowerlike maidens there who finally jerked a half-strangled Coco loose and flung him forth from the sacred por-

tals. The choir promptly reformed in rank and, a trifle flushed and disheveled but chanting more lustily than ever, swung up the aisle with the air of the Church Militant. Only the few who were slightly bitten remained behind to be conducted by Joy-of-Life to the hospital for immediate attention to their wounds, while Sigurd and I made for home, marking the trail with our blood. No real harm was done. Coco's owner, though secretly convinced that Sigurd did all the biting, insisted on paying the doctor's bills and, a few days after the encounter, Sigurd, with a scarred forehead, welcomed his injured defenders to a dinner-party, at which I presided with my arm in a sling. Sigurd seemed to feel a dim responsibility for that hurt of mine and, as long as I wore a bandage, would come up at intervals to give it a penitent lick.

At all the festivals of the spring term Sigurd deemed his attendance indispensable. He fell in with the parades, frisked out into the midst of the campus dances, and once, at least, took a conspicuous part in the Tree Day pageant. A graceful, carmine-clad Narcissus had died to slow music on the bank of Longfellow Fountain. The wood-

nymphs and water-nymphs, Diana and her train, even the hilltop Oreads had tripped off the sylvan stage, but the audience, massed on the other side of the pool, refused to take the hint and, instead of breaking up, still sat spell-bound, their gaze fastened on poor Narcissus, who, cramped in the dying attitude, could not conceive any dramatic way of coming to life again. So we bade Sigurd: "Go find," and after two false starts, once for a squirrel and once for a stick, he sped straight for Narcissus and, anxiously thrusting his nose into her face, recognized a special friend and broke into loud barks of joy, while, throwing her arm about him, she sprang no less gladly to her feet. The audience thought it all a part of the pageant, the prevailing opinion being that Sigurd was playing the rôle of Cerberus and welcoming Narcissus to Hades.

But for all his years of enthusiastic college attendance, Sigurd never took a degree. Not even his own Class of 1911 was allowed to carry out its design of dressing their mascot in a specially made cap and gown and leading him with them in the Commencement procession. His B. A. stood only for Beloved Animal.

TO SIGURD

Not one blithe leap of welcome? Can you lie
Under this woodland mold,
More still
Than broken daffodil,
When I,
Home from too long a roving,
Come up the silent hill?
Dear, wistful eyes,
White ruff and windy gold
Of collie coat so oft caressed,
Not one quick thrill
In snowy breast,
One spring of jubilant surprise,
One ecstasy of loving?

Are all our frolics ended? Never more
Those royal romps of old,
When one,
Playfellow of the sun,
Would pour
Adventures and romances
Into a morning run;
Off and away,
A flying glint of gold,
Startling to wing a husky choir
Of crows whose dun
Shadows would tire
Even that wild speed? Unscared to-day
They hold their weird seances.

Ever you dreamed, legs twitching, you would catch
A crow, O leaper bold,
Next time,
Or chase to branch sublime
That batch
Of squirrels daring capture
In saucy pantomime;
Till one spring dawn,
Resting amid the gold
Of crocuses, Death stole on you
From that far clime
Where dreams come true,
And left upon the starry lawn
Your form without your rapture.

And was Death's whistle then so wondrous sweet
Across the glimmering wold
That you
Would trustfully pursue
Strange feet?
When I was gone, each morrow
You sought our old haunts through,
Slower to play,
Drooping in faded gold.
Now it is mine to grieve and miss
My comrade true,
Who used to kiss
With eager tongue such tears away,
Coaxing a smile from sorrow.

I know not what life is, nor what is death,
Nor how vast Heaven may hold
All this
Earth-beauty and earth-bliss.
Christ saith
That not a sparrow falleth
—O songs of sparrow faith!—
But God is there.

May not a leap of gold
Yet greet me on some gladder hill,
A shining wraith,
Rejoicing still,
As in those hours we found so fair,
To follow where love calleth?

FAREWELLS

"The door of Death is made of gold,
That mortal eyes cannot behold."
—Blake's *Dedication to Queen Charlotte.*

We were slow to realize that Sigurd was having too many birthdays. That guardian figure stretched out on the south porch just above the steps, shining like an embodied welcome, had become a part of life itself. Indeed, a caller, not famed for tact, after surveying our Volsung for some time in silence, dropped the cryptic remark: "How much a dog comes to look like the family!" Brightening our busy months with golden glints of romp and mischief and caress, he kept his run of birthdays like festivals which brought no warning with them.

They were celebrated with becoming pomp, with much-wrapped gifts that he rejoiced to open himself and often with a yellow tea. As his taste inclined to broad and simple effects, there would be a giant sunflower in the center of the table, with

strips of goldenrod emanating from it like rays. The guests, his best-beloved of all ages and conditions, would drink Sigurd's health in orangeade and feast in his honor on sponge cake. From the day of Poor Ellen to that of Housewife Honeyvoice, Amelia, a young and comely Irish Protestant, reigned in the kitchen and made it her pride to celebrate Sigurd's anniversaries with all due splendor, though even then she would not intermit the daily scoldings to which she attributed his very gradual growth in grace. For still he would run away at intervals and wallow in all iniquity. If the prodigal returned by daylight and found us together, he would disport himself at our feet in a brief agony of penitence. As he lay on his back, writhing with remorse and apparently trying to clasp his paws in supplication, we would reproach him, to the accompaniment of his hollow groans, until our gravity would break down. Then he would cheerfully scramble up and fetch us his latest rubber toy, with a coaxing invitation to let bygones be bygones and have a frisk with Sigurd. If he came home under cover of darkness, he would shamelessly go straight to his own piazza corner, venting an indignant grunt, like an out-

raged man of the house, if he found his supper soggy and his bed not made.

The birthday teas, though they brought so many of his friends across the threshold, were not an unmixed joy to Sigurd. The flaunting bow of new, stiff, yellow ribbon tickled his ears, until he had succeeded in working it around, a rumpled knot, under his chin, and worse yet were the wreaths of yellow wild flowers that the small fingers of some of his child neighbors had woven for his neck. His share of his own birthday cake, too, was more hygienically apportioned than he approved. What is a speck of yellow frosting on a collie's long red tongue? But Amelia saw to it that his birthday dinner was after his own heart, —fresh corncake, rice and liver, while now and then some devoted sophomore, even though the long vacation had put a thousand miles between them, would send him a home-made chocolate cream as large as a saucer, at which he was allowed only to sniff and nibble.

We may have noticed that Sigurd's girth was ampler and his bearing more sedate than in his younger days, but still he was the first in every frolic and almost as fleet as a deer. He roused

one at the edge of the woods one morning when he was out for an early airing with Joy-of-Life and chased it across the meadows so fast and far that she was in dismay lest he overtake the beautiful creature and pull it down. Even to the last he would let no dog pass him. His frankest admirer and fellow-runner through his sunset years was a simple-minded young collie whom Sigurd would outwit by wheeling sharply, when he felt Sandy gaining on him, and making off at right angles while the precipitate pursuer sped on for some distance in the old direction. But the goal was what Sigurd chose to make it, and Sandy, bewildered by these subtle tactics, always believed himself outrun.

We had come to regard a walk without Sigurd as hardly a walk at all. Perhaps we observed that he found the heat, which brought out his tormenting eczema, a little harder to bear from summer to summer, but our crisp, crackling winters revived him to all manner of puppy antics. I remember, like a picture, one frosty afternoon, the evergreens festooned with ice, while the leafless trees, struck by the level rays of the western sun, glistened with rainbow crystals. Through this

enchanted world, as through the heart of a diamond, Joy-of-Life and Sigurd were coming home. Sigurd, barking his glad music, was bounding hither and thither over the sparkling crust, now trying to fulfill his contract to keep all chickadees and nut-hatches, bluejays and juncos, from alighting on the earth, and now convinced that at last the moment had come when he was to realize his supreme ambition, inherited from Ralph, and catch a crow. Their sardonic caws above his head, as they flapped heavily from pine to pine, made him so furious that he would pounce on their black, sliding shadows, while Joy-of-Life, her cheeks apple-bright with the cold, laughed at him so merrily that he took it for applause.

Yet change was busy about our collie, who welcomed no changes but loved his world exactly as it was. We sold the first home and moved into a more spacious one that we had built on a strip of untamed land hard by. Then a street came, and more houses, and quietly the wildwood drew away from us. Within our own bounds, at least, we strove to keep the forest growth in its own careless beauty, but never a man stepped on the place, brother or guest or gardener or state war-

den or whosoever, but, driven by the deep instinct of the pioneer, he must needs go stealthily forth with ax or saw or shears and lay about him in our happy tangle. The worst of it was that we had to appear grateful.

Sigurd accepted his new abode with but a passing bewilderment. Racing up from the train on his return from a summer in the mountains with Joy-of-Life, he was whistled into the Scarab while yet too utterly absorbed in the rapture of his greetings to heed where he was. After a little he looked about him in obvious surprise and perplexity and set out at once on a tour of investigation, trotting from cellar to attic, nosing into the closets and under the shelves, sniffing at the familiar desks and bookcases and recognizing with a wag his own chair and rug. As soon as might be he was out of doors, examining porches and paths. Then he crossed the intervening bit of wilderness, granite ledge matted over with the red-berried kinnikinic, and woofed for admittance at his accustomed door. He was kindly received and allowed to go about as he liked, upstairs and downstairs and into my lord's chamber, but the furniture was not his furniture, the smells were

not his smells, and within ten minutes he had quitted those rooms, scene of so many puppy exploits, to enter them no more. He knew the difference between house and home.

Yet our new holding did not seem to Sigurd nor to us entirely natural until he had cut one of his unfortunate paws on a broken bottle left by the carpenters as a souvenir and had strewn steps and driveway and lawn with shreds of cotton bandages and adhesive plaster. "When is a clutter not a clutter?" asked my mother, and answered her own conundrum: "When Sigurd does it."

In a snug corner against the south wall of the Scarab stood a massive and elegant erection, with gable roof and olive-green door, that only the unsophisticated called a kennel. It was "Sigurd's House," and as such he accepted it, counting its artistically shingled walls and heavy layers of sheathing paper no more than his just deserts. He delighted in its deep bed of fresh straw which tickled him most agreeably as he rolled over and over in it. He found it an exciting by-play, too, to dash in with stick or bone and lose it under his bedding, which he would proceed to scratch

up with all the fury of a New England matron in housecleaning time. Then he would come swaggering out with the air of duty done, shaking his own skin. Sigurd's House was such a palace that the children of the neighborhood liked to play in it, but our collie deemed this high trespass and, from the screened study porch, would roar indignant protest when five or six chubby tots, with that saucy black spaniel, Curly, would all squeeze in together.

To the Scarab came new friends for Sigurd with new caresses, to which he always made cordial and courteous response. Amelia crossed the ocean to a waiting bridegroom and a happy home of her own, but Housewife Honey-voice, with her little Esther, petted Sigurd even more devotedly.

Sigurd's only difficulty with Housewife Honey-voice, the only shadow on their sympathy, arose from the delicacy of her appetite by which she was inclined, at first, to measure his. When her enthusiasm and culinary skill persuaded the family to go on a vegetable diet, Sigurd gave us clearly to understand that we need not count him in. And when I came home, one evening, from a week's motor trip, Sigurd barely waited for his

customary chant of welcome before gripping my dress and leading me to the refrigerator.

"Hasn't Sigurd had his dinner yet?"

"Why, yes, an hour ago."

"Nonsense, boy! You're not hungry. Nobody is hungry just after dinner."

"What a whopper!" sighed Sigurd, as he pattered after me back to the study.

No sooner had I turned my attention to the accumulation of letters on my desk than again Sigurd pulled gently, yet with determination, at my skirt and insisted on a second promenade to the refrigerator.

"He really is hungry. How much have you been giving him for dinner?"

But when I saw the measure, I heaped his plate, while he eagerly watched the process, waving his tail in triumph, but hurrying once across the kitchen to snuggle his head against the knee of Housewife Honey-voice, looking up at her with those comprehending, trustful eyes that said:

"You didn't *mean* to starve dear Sigurd, and now that you know how big my hollow is, it will be all right forever."

Every autumn a new horde of freshmen fell in

love with him and visiting alumnæ embraced him in mid-campus. Toward the Freshman Twins, who gladdened the Scarab one year, he conducted himself like a sophomore, humoring their childish ways, guiding them through the college labyrinth, serving as a towel for their homesick tears and partaking freely of their consoling fudge, but all with a comical air of condescension. He was himself accustomed to the best society, even seniors. Our gracious college president made him welcome to her veranda, as she sat at tea among her roses; a beloved frequenter of the Scarab, Hoops-of-Steel, though clinging to her preference for boys, accorded him a true if tempered friendship; and even Scholar Carol, our fifteenth-century historian, who affected the fireside sphinx and had named a particularly gallant kitten Eddy IV, counted him only a little lower than a cat. As for the children on our hill, they hugged him to the limit of endurance. His warmest admirer among them was Wee-wee, a rosy bunch of unweariable energy, who, when she came to us of an afternoon in order to give her exhausted parents a brief respite, would wear out the entire family as, one by one, we undertook to amuse her,

and would finally fling herself upon Sigurd, riding on his back, rolling him over and over and examining his paws with an envious admiration that broke forth in the remark: "Wen I'm old and big like Sigurd, maybe I'll have feet on *my* hands."

For two lively years a brace of graduate students, Cherub and Seraph, folded their wings beneath the Scarab rooftree. Cherub was a bit afraid, at first, of "that bouncing yellow elephant," but Seraph instantly became Sigurd's very pink of playmates. Every morning they would start off early for the college library, scampering across the landscape at a rate that sent the sparrows fluttering from their path like so many irregular verbs. Between the meadow and the campus is a perilous stretch of railway tracks and trolley tracks, and here Sigurd would assume full charge of his companion. If the whistle of an engine, as they drew near the crossing, cut the air, Sigurd would leap upon her and, with his paws upon her breast, hold her back until the train had hurtled by, when he would lead her triumphantly across under the trailing plume of smoke. Every autumnal Sunday they spent hours together in

the woods, from which the Seraph would bring home gentians, wych-hazel and a lyric, and Sigurd a ruff all tangled up with burrs. Winter did not daunt their zeal. They formed themselves into a rescue expedition and saved from the frost all manner of wild-flower roots, which the Seraph arranged in rows of pots placed on boards stretched from a little table in her room to her south window. Alas for sweet Saint Charity! There came a day when Sigurd, wishing to study the scenery to verify a suspicion of a dog burglar after his treasure-trove of bones, sprang up and struck his forefeet on the edge of the nearest board with such violence that the whole structure came crashing down, enveloping him in a flying ruin of pots and plants and earth and water. He did not stay to help the Seraph clear up the landslide, but remembered a pressing engagement in the remotest corner of the attic.

Through December these happy comrades explored the fringes of the forest for glowing vines to serve as Christmas decorations, and in the whirling snowstorms of a peculiarly ferocious little February they would come romping home, two white objects plunging through the drifts, look-

ing like Peary and one of his huskies just back from the North Pole. Joy-of-Life had been in Egypt that winter, seeking health after a grave illness, but she came again with April, more welcome than the spring. Sigurd bounded to her shoulders in ecstasy of greeting, his coat ruddy in the sun. He shone more than ever with a supreme content as he sat erect between us while we motored through the miracle of May, under red-budded maples and oaks whose baby leaves, while the orioles shouted to them to hurry up, were trembling from misty pink to golden green. He did not care to run with the machine, however slowly it was driven, but saved his energies for the long rambles with the Seraph, as she went questing for anemone and dogwood, bellwort, violets, columbine, lady slippers and all

"our shining little sisters
Of the forest and the fields."

As the days grew warmer, he would forget the admonitions of previous springs and all his good resolutions, and take a roll, now and then, to Sister Jane's wrath and anguish, in a bed of jonquils or yellow tulips, claiming that their color

made them his by royal right. When we scolded him, he took refuge with the Seraph, though even she was causing him bitter annoyance, as June and Commencement drew near, by her attentions to a fuzzy puppy, Puck, whom she visited almost daily at collie kennels two miles away. He was a prize puppy and it disgusted Sigurd beyond barks to see the fuss we all made over certain dog-show awards that Puck gave the Seraph to bring home, a green ribbon not worth the chewing and an *empty* cut-glass vase. When Puck, on the eve of Seraph's departure, was himself brought to the Scarab and a journeying basket was equipped for him, Sigurd sulked in the shabby depths of his dear old chair. All the small folk of our neighborhood flocked in to pat Puppy Ki-yi, as Joy-of-Life and I privily dubbed our guest, but only Wee-wee, whose own name for the mite was "Minister—Ittle Teeny Minister, coz he stan's on his back legs an' jiggles his arms an' pweaches at us," divined Sigurd's jealous misery. She snuggled down in the chair beside him, hugging the yellow ball into which he had rolled himself and solicitously explaining that "Minister is the best 'ittle dog, and Sigurd is the best gweat *big* dog,"

but the Volsung did not care for a divided homage and shook his ears at all puppy worshipers.

Then the Seraph disappeared, as all his student lovers, one after another, would disappear. Letters came back to him and gifts, but he could not puzzle out what these had to do with the dancing playmate no longer to be found on hillside or by lake. Nor could he foresee the day when that ridiculous Puck, grown into a noble collie, would in his turn sorely miss the Seraph, who had sailed away, on the ship that bore another of Sigurd's most devoted Wellesley lassies, to France. There were dogs on that ship, Professor Peggy and her scarred comrades, veterans of war, that had been sent over, like wounded French officers, to instruct, and were now returning to duty at the front. But Puck, too old for the Red Cross training, was left behind, sniffing up and down the garden paths in patient search for his dainty mistress, who, arrayed in gas-mask and trench-helmet, was serving from a battered camionette hot coffee and cocoa to our boys in khaki just behind the trenches.

In the Orchard, too, the venerable Cousin for whom Sigurd since puppyhood had cherished a

romantic attachment, the white-haired inamorata whom he would run to meet with his most grotesque waggle, was no longer to be found in the familiar nooks from which Laddie had long since disappeared. And now that the all-beloved Elder Sister lay mortally ill, Sigurd pattered over day after day to look in at the sickroom and invite a stroking from the delicate hand that would rest so languidly upon his lifted head. Sometimes he carried her a yellow chrysanthemum or a cluster of cream-colored tea-roses tied to his collar. And when she had passed to Paradise through brain-wandering memories of Italy, as through a vestibule of beauty, Sigurd coaxed long at the closed door, whining softly, calling to his friend, troubled by the silence but incredulous of death.

Because of their vanishing ways, Sigurd had early come to look on college girls in general as an inconstant factor in life and accepted their attentions with the casual air of a confirmed old bachelor, but his faithfulness to his friends of riper age never wavered. Even to the last he always raised for the Lady of Cedar Hill his rapturous lyric cry, though it would sometimes embarrass him by breaking into a hoarse and husky

squeak. He had special ways with each of us. He kept one piquant game for my mother, who, while he wagged his tail in ever wilder circles at her, would wag her *Congregationalist* in exact mockery at him, until he would make a maddened leap and snatch that sacred sheet from her hand.

But he was gentle with old people, even in his frolics, and from the first had felt a certain responsibility for their safety. Joy-of-Life had left him late one afternoon, while he was still a youngster, to guard her mother's nap on the piazza couch, but a white flash of Laddie, temptation incarnate, at the foot of the hill, had sent him careering off into the gloaming. Rising hurriedly to call him back, confused by the sudden waking, his charge had missed her footing in the dusk and fallen down the steps. Her first clear consciousness was of Sigurd standing over her, licking her face and hands with a penitent tongue, nor would he leave her all that evening, lying on the edge of her dress as she sat and trotting close beside her whenever she crossed the room. And when, touched by his concern, she bent to him and said: "I wasn't really hurt, and Sigurd was a good dog to come back," he joyously flopped over on his

spine and presented his snowy shirt-front for a forgiving pat.

A household dear to Sigurd was that in which two of our college professors, long retired, dwelt in sisterly affection. He bore himself with the utmost discretion there, as if aware of a dignity and fragility beyond the wont of households. The classicist, whose Greek precision of accent gave beauty to her least remark, would introduce Sigurd to callers from abroad as "one of our most distinguished citizens," while the botanist, prisoned in a hooded chair on wheels,—ah, the feet that had so often and so lightly carried her in a day over twenty miles and more of the green earth she loved!—liked to have him escort her on her pathetic airings. He was not with her, but attending his own family on a drive one day, when we saw in the village square before us a sudden commotion, people running from all sides toward that familiar little carriage, which, rashly left standing at the edge of the curb with its hood open toward the wind, had been overset, so that the poor lady, strapped to the seat, was standing on her bonnet. Sigurd reached her first of all and when, shocked by the jar into a momentary obliv-

ion, she looked up, "it was," she afterward said, "right into the kindest, most reassuring brown eyes in the world," for Sigurd's head was drooping close above her own and all the help that a collie could give beamed in his friendly gaze.

Hints of age began to appear, reluctant though we were to recognize them, in Sigurd himself,—an inclination toward longer and longer naps in his own disreputable chair, an increasing resentment of sweeping days and housecleaning, and a tendency, long after a swollen ear or a sharp attack of eczema was cured and Sigurd, settling his chin on his paws, had dismissed Dr. Vet with a slow, majestic sweep of tail, to continue to claim the lazy privileges of an invalid. Sometimes his stiffening limbs failed to fold themselves with the old comfort into the hollow of his chair, and he would look up to us in puzzled appeal. He was a handsome collie still, but his manners had grown more reserved and his bearing more stately. He was no longer excited by Commencement festivities, though he would stroll up to take a look at the Tree Day dances and saunter into the Garden Party, accepting the embraces of old friends and new with an amiability only slightly tinged with

boredom. But he loved more and more to bask in the sun on the south porch or to dream, his legs tied into his favorite bowknot, in front of the study fireplace, where Joy-of-Life's annual barrel of Christmas driftwood made the flames look like little rainbows on a holiday.

He was almost ten years old when he was run over by an automobile. Except for a bruised paw he did not seem to be hurt, for he crouched so flat in the road that the machine merely scraped his back, but his nerves were severely shaken. When we came home that noon, he greeted us with a prolonged, strange howl, unlike anything that we had ever heard from him before, and for weeks would not venture out upon the roads without one of us to serve as bodyguard, wheedling until we had to drop our books and devise some respectable excuse for a walk. Left behind at a Greek Letter Society House one evening, he refused to start off for home alone—the bold ranger of a thousand midnights—and his indulgent girl hostesses telephoned for a carriage, so that Sigurd came proudly driving up to his front door in a hack. He so enjoyed the extra petting that came with any mischance that he affect-

ed, when it occurred to him, this terror long after it had faded out, just as he would in running tuck up an injured foot, when he happened to think of it, weeks after it was healed, and hop plaintively on three legs until the sight of a cat or a squirrel made him forget all about it.

Sigurd had several promising sons in the village, and one of these we would gladly have adopted had not our delight in its puppy graces nearly broken his jealous old heart. So we let it go to other admirers and presently lost all trace of his golden scions. But one day, when I was walking with him, a winsome little lad came up and, touching his cap, asked shyly if he might stroke Sigurd, "for he's the papa of my dog Trusty that died." Poor Trusty was a victim of distemper, and the child softly told us all about it, his arms about the neck of Sigurd, who put on an appropriate expression of bereavement.

The burden of the years brought its own compensation. Instead of the darkling escapades that used to distract and worry us, Sigurd became the best of company, in the depths of a winter night. Joy-of-Life was the lark of the household, and I

the owl, so our self-appointed caretaker, after seeing her early to bed, would come downstairs again to lie close against my feet, inviting confidences. When I became too absorbed in my task to answer his remarks, he would still hold forth in a broken conversational grumble, contented, for reply, with the crackling of the fire and the scratching of a pen.

Nor was Sigurd the only one of our blithe fellowship for whom Time was quietly setting up milestones along the changing road. He was still in his prime when, on a date of gleaming memory, the Dryad gave at Norumbega Hall a birthday party for my mother, a party musical with our Poet's own sweet and roguish songs, not only in honor of

> "her who graciously
> With each soft year younger grows,
> As the earth with every rose,"

but in merry greeting of each of the other guests. The white-crowned mother of Joy-of-Life was there, and the mother of the College Reconciler,

> "Who, over and over
> (The Lady from Dover),
> Turns thistles to clover."

The spirited hostess of Norumbega, a bright-eyed little grandmother immensely proud of that distinction, sat opposite the presiding Dryad, and beside my mother was her Mount Holyoke classmate of the heroic days of Mary Lyon, our gentle Librarian Emeritus, so modest from her long maidenhood that she was distressed at the infant art of aviation, fearing that one could no longer brush one's hair in a dressing-sacque free from the peril of a man swooping down from the clouds to peep in at the window.

It is but a few years since that hour of

"Laurels and laughter and light,"

yet all those smiling elder faces, and not those only, have vanished away.

Sigurd had his part in that fairest of our festivities, for an impressionistic picture of him shines from the stanza that the Dryad addressed to Joy-of-Life:

"This lady is always attended
By a golden and comet-y trail
Of light, speed, sound, fury all blended.
This lady is always attended
By a beautiful vision and splendid,
A flaunting and triumphing tail.
This lady is always attended
By a golden and comet-y trail."

A saucier dinner-card was mine:

"You see her start out all agog
For chapel, pursued by her dog.
You may think her a saint,
But he thinks she ain't,
When she sets him to guarding a frog."

A dagger affixed to this effusion called attention to a learned note:

"This is a scientific error: the beast should be *Bufo Lentiginosus* not *Rana catesbiana.* Such errors are common in the best poetry."

As successive sorrows cast their shadows on our hearts, as the mothers slipped away, as the Dryad was smitten down in her brightness, a star fallen from midsummer sky, Sigurd proved himself a very comforter. The sympathetic droop of his ears and decorum of his disconsolate brown eyes in the first hush of mourning and, in the later loneliness, his nuzzling head against the knee, touches of a pleading tongue on hand and cheek, his insistence on an answering smile, a pat, a romp, his conviction that, while sun and wind made holiday and the wood was full of sticks to throw for Sigurd, it was natural to be glad, helped us better than more formal consolations. Both

solitude and society, both ignorance and wisdom, he could press close to the hurt without intrusion. Often when one or the other of us, forgetful of the work upon the desk, had let the cloud creep over, Sigurd would rouse himself, trot across to the fireplace, select from the basket a piece of light kindling wood, and present it with the clear intimation that it would be more true to love to cheer up Sigurd with a bit of play than to lose the hour in grieving.

Rarely in his joyful life, and then but for a matter of days or weeks, had we both been away from Sigurd. He hated to have either of us go. He knew only too well the meaning of trunks and suitcases and always stalked uneasily about the room, getting in the way as much as possible, during the process of packing. When at last he saw these objects of ill omen closed and carried downstairs, followed by one of his mistresses in traveling garb, he would desperately take his stand in the doorway and, planting his legs like principles, do his best to bar her exit. For a few days he would be very restless, watchful, anxious, keeping close to the mistress who stayed behind to question her with troubled looks and entreat her not

to abandon Sigurd; nor was the missing all on his side. The summer of 1908 was so hot that our gasping collie would tease his friends to fan him and, for the first and only time, we had him shaved. His bright hair, duly cleansed, was made up with corn-colored silk into a sofa-pillow and sent to Joy-of-Life, then sojourning in strange places, now among the Mormons, now on an Indian reservation, gathering material for her two vivid volumes on the *Economic Beginnings of the Far West;* and she assured him that his "yellow bunch of love" was a magical cure for a certain ache beyond the ken of the doctors. But grievously abashed he was with only the white waves of his ruff, his fore-pantalets and plumy tail unprofaned by the shears, and his sufferings from mortification and mosquitoes outwent all that he had endured from the heat. As his silky undervest grew long enough to curl, he reminded us of Cagnotte, the supposed poodle bought for three-year-old Gautier by his nurse, on whom the Paris dealers palmed off a cur sewed up in a jacket of lamb's wool.

On summer vacations our Volsung sometimes went up into New Hampshire with one or both

of us. He especially rejoiced in our cottage life on Twin Lake, where Sigurd renewed his youth, pursuing

> "the swallows o'er the meads
> With scarce a slower flight."

Here he learned to scratch up his own bed in the pine needles and to wash his stick at the edge of the lake after a game, though we never quite succeeded, on account of his masculine prejudices, in teaching him to wash his dinner-plate. There were drawbacks, however, about these summer travels with Sigurd. His first concern, on arriving at a new place, was to go the rounds of the neighborhood and knock over all the dogs. Having thus established our popularity, he proceeded to make himself at home, welcoming most affably the dog-owners who called to complain of his exploits.

One summer he was with Joy-of-Life up in Franconia, where they loved to climb the scenery, Sigurd taking immense satisfaction in his duties as guide. "Find the path, boy," she would bid, and very proudly he would run at a little distance before her, nosing out the way. It was on one of these excursions that he came upon a scattered

flock of sheep and—hey presto!—was instantly transformed into a dog that we had never known. Uttering a curious "Yep, yep, yep!" unlike any sound he had ever been heard to make before, he sped away toward those astonished sheep, rounded them up and drove them, much too fast for their comfort, to the furthest limit of their sloping pasture, where Joy-of-Life found him, panting in tremendous excitement, holding the sheep, a woolly huddle, penned into an angle of the deep stone walls. The next morning he was off before daybreak and, after an arduous search, she found him again playing stern guardian to that same embarrassed flock. If only the Lady of Cedar Hill had offered him the lordship of a sheepfold instead of a cattle-barn, Sigurd would have been Njal to the end of his days. But Joy-of-Life, afraid that the ancestral Scotch conscience so suddenly awakened in him might not be to the liking of the Franconia farmers, decided on an immediate return to the Scarab.

Sigurd always detested train travel, and this time he barely escaped a tragedy. The baggage car was so full that to him could be allotted only a space the size of his body. Into that narrow

cavity he was confined by walls of trunks that towered on every side. Within an hour of Boston an abrupt jolt threw the passengers forward in their seats. Beyond a few bumps and bruises no harm was done and Joy-of-Life speedily made her way forward through the disordered train, which had come to a standstill, to the baggage-car. Here she found a scene of disastrous confusion, trunks and valises pitched madly about, one baggageman groaning with a broken arm, on which a doctor was already busy, and the other bleeding from a cut across his forehead. For very shame she could not speak of a collie until, under the doctor's directions, she had washed and bound up that cut. It was her patient who mentioned Sigurd first.

"By George, your dog!" he said. "He's down under that tumble of trunks over there. Not a yelp from him. I'm afraid he hadn't a chance."

Brakemen had pushed in, by this time, and with ready sympathy undertook to clear a way to the corner where Sigurd had been imprisoned. A monster crate had fallen in such a way as to roof him over and, when this was dragged aside, there crouched Sigurd, showing no physical in-

jury but utterly motionless, staring with blank eyes at his rescuers.

"Back broken," suggested one of the men.

But Joy-of-Life gave, though from pale lips, the glad, out-of-door trill that Sigurd knew so well. He quivered and, with one tremendous bound, cleared the intervening heap of baggage and reached her. She sat on a portmanteau, with her arms about him, till they arrived at Boston, and then led him down the platform and took him with her into a cab. All the time Sigurd was strange, remote, moving like a body without a spirit, unresponsive to all her attempts at comfort and cheer. But during the long wait for her missing trunk, Sigurd suddenly brightened up and tried to scrabble out of the window into the cab drawn up alongside. It was occupied by a plump, elderly couple, who gleefully pulled him in, and to them Sigurd at once began to tell, in eager whines and pitiful whimpers, that hardly needed Joy-of-Life's commentary, the story of his peril.

"Poor fellow! Poor beauty!" they crooned. "We know, we know. Our own dear collie was killed in just such a mix-up twenty years ago. Your collie knew that we would understand."

And Sigurd, restored in soul at last, licked their kind old faces and retired to his own cab. By the time he reached home, he was so completely himself again that he ate a hearty dinner and spent the better part of the evening scratching up the straw in Sigurd's House to see what treasures dogs and children might have stored there during his absence.

In the scorching July of 1913 we both left Sigurd for a year. The poor lad was so wretched with the heat that we hoped he might be less keenly aware than usual of the packing; but he knew. I do not like to remember the look in his eyes when, that last morning, he was brought up from his retreat in the cellar for good-by. I turn from that memory to his antics a few evenings earlier, when he had been out frisking with some dog callers in the comparative cool. He woofed imperiously at the screen door and, as soon as it was unlatched, dashed it open and came tearing into the study to demand of me some service that I was slow to comprehend.

"How dull you are to-night!" he grunted and, flouncing down beside me, fell clumsily to work on a hind paw. Investigating, I found a long thorn

run up into the pad. It took me a minute or two to grip it and pull it out, while Sigurd, wincing a little but with full confidence in my surgery, waited as patiently as a boy when a ball game is on. When the thorn was drawn, he gave one flying lick to his foot and another to my hand—"Much obliged, but you might have been quicker about it"—and bounded back to his play with puppy eagerness.

We had made all possible arrangements for his comfort, boarding him still at his home where three of the household remained with the new tenants, but he was no longer the Lord of the Scarab. We knew that he would do his golden best and we hoped that in his own sweet wisdom he would realize that love never goes away, but as he watched and searched in vain, week after week and month after month, Sigurd drooped, and grew deaf with listening for voices over sea. Old friends took him on the short walks that sufficed him now and affectionate greetings met him everywhere on campus and on street. He would often be seen napping on one neighborly porch or another, for he dwelt more and more in the dim land of "Nod, the shepherd," consorting with

"His blind old sheep-dog, Slumber-soon."

Housewife Honey-voice gave him true and tender care, and when, on a zero night, she had to deny him the warmth of the Scarab and put him to bed, well tucked up with rugs, in Sigurd's House, she would tell him, for the strengthening of his spirit, that "even Jesus Christ slept in the straw."

For our own part, we tried not to think too much of our forsaken collie, but up in Norway we heard dogs called by his name and even on our housetop promenades in Seville we were reminded of his frolic grace by a scalawag puppy on a neighboring flat roof, a gleeful little gymnast whose joy it was to leap up and jerk the linen off the line. Sigurd's friends and ours wrote to us of his welfare with a cheerfulness that was apt to waver before the end of the paragraph.

"I met him on the campus yesterday," scribbled Nannikachee, "and when I asked him where his professors were, he galloped all over the snow, remembering you as juncos, and on second thought he reared up against an oak and barked up into its branches to scare you out of your holes, con-

vinced that you had come to a bad end and been turned into squirrels. Such are the workings of the mighty mind you two sillies credit him with! He looked as round and yellow as a Thanksgiving pumpkin, but there was something wistful about him, too."

On the twenty-third of May, within a month of our return, Sigurd died. To all his losses had been added, that spring, the loss of College Hall, through whose familiar corridors he had roamed as usual, always seeking, one March afternoon, and which he found the next morning a desolation of blackened walls and blowing ashes. If Sigurd could have counted into the hundreds, he would have known that every girl was safe, but if he could have read in the papers of the quiet self-control with which, roused from their sleep to find the flames crackling about them, they had steadily carried through their fire-drill, formed their lines, waited for the word and gone out in perfect order, he would have been no prouder of them than he always was. Of course his Wellesley girls would behave like that.

Sigurd crowded with the rest of the college into close quarters, where he was more than ever

underfoot. On that languid twenty-second of May he slept all day along the threshold of the improvised postoffice, and the hurrying feet stepped over him with unreproaching care. But with the arrival of the late afternoon mail, the postmistress, knowing the rush that was to come, said kindly to him:

"Now, Sigurd, you must really go away."

He rose slowly and moved from door to door till he came to the office of the Christian Association. Assured of Samaritan shelter here, he finished his snooze on their one rescued rug, but arrived at home in punctual time for his dinner, and that night it chanced to be the dinner Sigurd liked best. Little Esther, who had a romp with him on his arrival, said he "smiled all over when he smelt the liver cooking."

He scraped out his pan to the last crumb and then lay down in a favorite burrow of loose, cool earth for a twilight revery. One of the household, a new lover, invited him to take a stroll with her, but he excused himself with a grateful rub of his head against her knees.

He slept in Sigurd's House, as usual, and started out soon after dawn, as usual, to go for a

splash in a brook not far away. An early riser, intent on making up her count of birds, met him and reported that he was trotting briskly and saluted her with "a sunny twinkle of his tail." Across the road from the brook is a pleasant old homestead under whose great trees Sigurd often took a morning nap before returning to the Scarab. Its occupants looked from the window, as they were dressing, and saw him lying at ease under a spreading evergreen. An hour later, as they rose from breakfast, they observed that Sigurd had not changed his posture and, going out to bid him good morning, found him lifeless. There was no injury on his body nor any sign of pain or struggle. He had made friends even with Death.

Did he, like the old hero Njal, "gentle and generous," foreknow his end as he chose out this quiet, beautiful spot? "We will go to our bed," said Njal in the saga, "and lay us down. I have long been eager for rest."

A grave was dug for Sigurd on the brow of Observatory Hill over which he had so often sped in the splendor of his strength, and there, under the pines, some score of his closest friends

and ours gathered the following morning. With the reading of dog poems and the dropping of wild flowers they gave the still body, that was not Sigurd, back to earth. Jack pressed close to his mistress, whose Wallace sleeps near by, and whined as the box was lowered, while little Esther, beholding for the first time a burial, broke into wild crying.

In the autumn I stood by the grave, on which the one dear Sister left in The Orchard had planted violets and periwinkles from Laddie's mound, and watched a kindly young workman set above it a low granite block inscribed, "Sigurd—Our Golden Collie. 1902-1914." As I strewed the stone with goldenrod and turned away, there echoed on the air ancient words from the Greek Anthology, "Thou who passest on the path, if haply thou dost mark this monument, laugh not, I pray thee, though it is a dog's grave. Tears fell for me."

Sigurd would have been well content with the honors that his College paid him,—an obituary notice written with tenderest sympathy, a commemorative letter from his Class of 1911 and

many a student elegy. It shall be his own class poet who paints the final picture:

"A dancing collie and gay woodland sprite,
Philosopher, friend, playmate unto each,
Quiet in trial and charming in delight,
Without the doubtful benefit of speech.

* * * * * * *

When snow was over earth and lake and sky,
How often where pale hemlock boughs bent low
Have we beheld his flying shape go by,
An arrow sped from an immortal bow!"

TO JOY-OF-LIFE

So that was why our collie went away,
  Wise Sigurd, knowing you would come
Ere a new springtide by the valley gray,
  Planning to guide you home,

To bark Heaven's earliest welcome, to entice
  Those dearest feet the dim glen through,
Then proudly up blithe hills of Paradise
  To "find the path" for you.

II

OTHER COMRADES OF THE ROAD

THE PINE GROVE PATH

Our festal day was yet so young,
As through the pines I came to you,
The level sunrise lightly flung
Before my feet, O eager feet,
A flickering path of flame to you.

The purple finches, breakfasting
On pinecone seeds, in charity
Tossed down the silky scales, to bring
My human heart, O singing heart,
A share of their hilarity.

But gladder than those revelers
So raspberry red, I sped to you,
Beyond the pines, beyond the firs,
A birthday guest, O blissful guest
To tread the path that led to you.

ROBIN HOOD

"The little bird with the red breast, which for his great familiarity with men they call a Robin, if he meet any one on the woods to go astray, and to wander he knows not whither out of his way, of common charitie will take upon him to guide him, at least out of the woods, if he will but follow him, as some think. This I am sure of, it is a comfortable and sweet companion."

—*Partheneia Sacra.* By "H. A." 1533.

THE early history of Robin Hood, like that of too many illustrious characters, is veiled in obscurity. I never knew his parents nor was I ever on speaking terms with any other member of his family. I cannot tell whether his nursery was set in an apple tree or elm or oak or pine, nor whether it was wind or boy or other untoward circumstance of nestling life that cast his helpless infancy adrift upon the world. Our earliest knowledge of Robin Hood dates from Sunday morning, June 16, 1901, when a group of Wellesley children, demurely wending their way to Sunday School across a bit of open green, heard chirps in the grass and picked up a baby robin, cold, hungry,

bedraggled, pecked and generally forlorn. They took him to Sunday School, muffling him in a spick-and-span small handkerchief when his cries became too shrill and, after this vain attempt at spiritual comfort, gave him to one of their mammas, who, for several days, managed to sustain him on experimental diets. Thursday morning, being about to make her summer exodus, she cheerfully transferred her fosterling to me. Her farewell attention, a spoonful of milk poured down his yawning throat, nearly ended his adventures on the spot. He turned up his eyes, gasped and stiffened, but with admirable presence of mind she balanced him on his bill, gave him a dexterous tap in the crop and wiped up the milk from the table, while Robin, blinking ruefully, resigned himself to a nap in my pocket. He woke before we reached home, however, and demanded luncheon so imperiously that I called at the nearest house and begged for bread. At the drug store I paused again for water and, to make better connection between this fluid and the depths of that bright orange cavity which Robin so confidingly opened, I bought a medicine-dropper, but soon found that a finger-tip would do as well.

Owing to these attentions by the way, Robin Hood was in an agreeable and sociable frame of mind when he first met his adopted family, yet all his baby graces gained for him only a mocking reception. He was such a dumpy, speckle-breasted fluff, with funny folding legs that could not hold him up on the perch, no tail and an utterly disproportionate amount of bill, that it was impossible to take him seriously, but his trustful little heart never once suspected that we were making fun of him. He cuddled down cosily on an improvised couch in the corner of a canary cage and devoted himself to a steady alternation of snoozes and gorges. Everybody laughed at him —the Dryad, who declared him a little monster of greediness and bad manners; the chipmunks, who peered curiously into his cage whenever we left it for sun and air on the piazza; even Joy-of-Life, who promptly sallied out with a long iron spoon to dig him worms. For Robin Hood would keep on ringing his dinner-bell, so to speak, even while the moistened bits of bread were being thrust down his vociferous throat, ceasing from that hungry clamor only when he was stuffed to the point of suffocation. Then, with a ridiculous

little grunt, he would topple off the supporting hand back to his trundle-bed and doze like a dormouse only to awake, in half an hour or so, an utterly famished birdling, all one yellow gape of tremulous eagerness and outcry.

At this stage of development, living to eat, and eating to sleep, Robin was left for several days in the care of Dame Gentle, kindest of neighbors, pending the absence of his foster family. Here he was petted to his babyhood's content and soon evinced a docile, affectionate disposition. He took a dislike to his cramped canary cage, but now he was strong enough to perch, and once placed on a chair rung by a hand he trusted, he would sit quiet from one feeding time to the next, or until he heard a familiar voice or step. Then, floppity-flop, down to the floor would tumble Robin and hop joyously to meet his friend. He soon had a soft, crooning little note for Dame Gentle. and all the summer long, while he became a general chatterbox, kept a peculiarly confidential accent and manner for her.

We resumed our charge on the third of July, but on the Fourth our attention was somewhat diverted from Robin by the gift of a baby vireo,

apparently wounded by a fall from the nest. This green jewel, wild as a windy leaf at first, was soon tamed, but his diet proved a difficult problem. Robin Hood was only too ready to eat anything and everything, but the tiny vireo, though calling piteously for food, turned his bill away in sore disappointment from our various offerings. He would not touch the crumbs of softened bread, nor Robin's favorite mess of mashed potato and hard-boiled egg-yolk. We consulted all our bird-books, and when we learned that the case demanded "masticated insects," we sat down and looked at each other in despair. I generously offered to catch any number of insects, if Joy-of-Life would do the masticating, but little Liberty Bell finally compromised on a masticated raspberry. The next day, mocking-bird food was procured for him, and this he swallowed with apparent relish, but still he did not thrive.

On Sunday, the seventh, an eager troop of children brought to our door another fallen vireo, this wee waif seeming in worse state than the other. We named him Church Bell and cherished him as tenderly as our ignorance might, but I hope Cornelia never had half the trouble with

her jewels that our pair of emeralds gave us. Their sharp, incessant, querulous pipe, the utterance of pains we could not soothe, was so trying to the nerves that, when I heard Joy-of-Life dropping books, I would transfer the nest from her desk to mine, and when Mary came up with a message from the grocer to find me spilling ink, she would take the vireos down to her ironing board and drown their plaints by her lusty voice of song. They were exquisite little creatures to see, and as trustful with us as was Robin himself, but we never had the key to their mystery. They would cry even in sleep and had hours of violent trembling. We would sometimes put them in the rough, outdoor cage which had been built for Robin, a large, square, unfloored box with roof and walls of woven wire. He looked big and lubberly beside them, like Puck beside Oberon and Titania, but he was always good-natured with his dainty guests and often tried to join in the conversation as they sat, pressed close together, on the far end of the twig which served him for a perch, lamenting like elfin Banshees. A touch of chilly weather ended their brief tragedy. Liberty Bell was hushed forever in the dawn of Tuesday,

the ninth, and by Wednesday noon Church Bell lay silent beside him in the rockery which was already the burial cairn of three beloved chickens, Microbe, Pat and Cluxley.

Meanwhile Robin Hood had been causing his share of anxiety. The birdlings were all so tame that, in feeding them, we used to throw back that half of the cage-top which served as lid, whereupon they would fly up to the edge of the box and sit there in a row for dinner. Occasionally one of the vireos would flash up into a low tree and wail for food until we had to bring the step-ladder and fetch him down. But it was not until Robin's winglets were fairly grown that he seemed aware of the existence of trees. Then, suddenly, one azure afternoon, he glanced up, cocked his head, spread his untried Icarus-plumes and was off. In instant consternation, the whole family trooped after him, so far as groundlings could, while he flew from tree to tree and roof to roof. Chirping in his affectionate fashion, he peeped down upon us with evident surprise as if to ask, "Why don't you come, too? It's much nicer up here." Innocent of mirrors, he probably thought that we looked just like him, or that he looked just like

us, and he could not understand why we chose to be earth-gropers when the leafy branches swayed so delectably in mid-air. But he was such a social and kindly little bird that, on our repeated calls, he came dipping down to us and, without protest of a feather, let himself be shut into his cage again.

Now we were face to face with the question that had already cast its shadow before. Should we make a life-long captive of our Robin, who took so pleasantly to human ways, or should we give him the perils and delights of liberty? Mary's eyes were very wistful, and Joy-of-Life and I reiterated to each other that our house-reared bird would be handicapped in the green-wood struggle for life, that he was necessarily weaker and less wary than other young robins, that there were white kittens next door, that a gaunt, gray hunting-cat had been seen lurking about the wire box—and yet, all the while, we knew what we must do.

"He who bends to himself a joy
Does the wingèd life destroy;
But he who kisses the joy as it flies
Lives in eternity's sunrise."

And so, on the following day, whenever any of us were at leisure to guard our artless adventurer from the dangers of the yard, we set the cage-lid wide and let him go where he would. He made small use of his privileges at first. Little runs on the lawn amused him for a while, but he would soon mount to the piazza rail and tease the occupant of the steamer chair for food and petting. His hops over the shelving rock behind the house were feeble; his trips of exploration to the neighboring trees and roofs were brief. He was hardly more than a baby robin yet and, soon wearied, he would go back into his cage for a nap on the familiar perch. An old maternal robin showed much interest in this lonely, weak-legged youngster, who seemed so unthrifty about picking up ants for himself, but he squealed with fright and flew to us whenever she approached him. She would stand silently beside the cage and study him through the wire while he slept, but whether she was the matron of a robin-home for crippled children, or one of his kinsfolk puzzling out a likeness, our bewildered fosterling, whose idea of mother-birds was formed on Dame Gentle and

ourselves, would have, from first to last, nothing to do with her.

But one evening, July 7th, just as we had finished giving Robin Hood a particularly good supper on the edge of his box, he suddenly soared and left us. The house stands

"About a young bird's flutter from a wood,"

and, to our dismay, Robin Hood made thitherward as if it were Sherwood Forest, disappeared among the dusky treetops and returned not a chirp to all our agitated calling. He had not passed a night out of doors for the three weeks that he had been under human guardianship, and we felt that anything from a fatal chill to a fatal hawk might befall him. But the first sound that greeted my waking senses in the morning was Mary's delighted, rich-toned, "Why, Robby!" and there, on top of his cage, sat a hungry, happy little bird, chirping eagerly and gesticulating with one wing in a funny fashion of his own, peculiar to seasons of excitement.

Mary—be it said in passing—was Cecilia's predecessor and for several years, at the outset of our housekeeping, gave us a devotion only sur-

passed by her devotion to her own large and lively family. They lived but a few miles away, in the Boston suburb known as Jamaica Plain, and Mary was subject to violent attacks of homesickness, especially at Christmas, Easter, Hallowe'en and Thanksgiving, so that we were usually deprived of her services when we needed them most. Once at home, she would feast and frolic until she had made herself just sick enough to have a pathetic pretext for prolonging her absence day after day. When she turned up at last, her Irish wit would inevitably forestall and frustrate any little unpleasantness that might be awaiting her. I had mentioned at table one evening, while Mary was changing the courses, that, lunching with our college president that day, I had enjoyed luscious grapefruit fresh from the West Indies, "brought her by a private hand from Jamaica." From her next truancy Mary returned with a bulging paper bag in her arms, which, even while my lips were parting to utter a deeply meditated reproach, she dumped upon me with her rosy cheeks aglow and her round blue eyes all twinkles. "Here's grapefruit for yez, brought by a private hand from Jamaica—Plain." The family, waiting about

gleefully to hear me deliver that purposed scolding, broke into a shout of laughter, and the honors of the day rested, as always, with the culprit.

During one of these vacations, intolerably prolonged by excuse after excuse, our patience gave way and we availed ourselves of a sudden chance to put in her place, as temporary substitute, a highly competent (and expensive) Scandinavian woman. Thus we entered upon a month of unparalleled luxury, for Gunilla proved to be a cook of the first order. We were quite below her standard of household opulence and elegance, as we realized when she asked us, with her invariable bearing of respectful dignity, if we would kindly tell her where our wine cellar was located, but she was disposed to take a rest between great houses and provided for our simple needs with indulgent efficiency as long as her whim lasted. Although she had broiled and roasted for a governor, a bishop, and various magnates of industry, she turned to scrubbing for recreation as naturally as czars and kaisers turn to chopping wood. She beat every particle of dust, after sweeping, out of broom and whisk, and before

hanging out the clothes, she scoured the line and every astonished clothespin. The sheets and other flat pieces sent home from the laundry she straightway plunged into her own tubs. Her pantry shone with obtrusive cleanliness and every dish came glistening to the stiff, high-lustered table-cloth, where her spiced breadsticks were cradled in fresh napkins for each dinner. Her kitchen range fairly dazzled the eye with its sable brightness, and we were so proud of the toothsome concoctions that came crackling and crinkling from it as to give, under her smiling encouragement, a ruinous series of banquets to our campus friends.

Promptly on Gunilla's departure, Mary came charging back to us, fired with jealous wrath. Indeed, she would talk of little else but the enormities of extravagance committed by "The Gorilla," until Robin Hood's advent effected a welcome diversion.

For the week following his first venture into the trees Robin grew braver and stronger every day. He had no feathered acquaintance and kept close at home, hopping about under the rose-bushes with a comical air of proprietorship, bath-

ing in an old flower-pot saucer in his open cage and sitting sociably, for hours at a time, on Joy-of-Life's window ledge or Mary's, or on my window box for winter birds. He could feed himself by this time, but he still liked better to be fed. His table manners showed marked improvement from his "little monster" age. He no longer guzzled, and was becoming quite capable of picking up his own living. Sometimes, when the ants were abundant, he would try the experiment of self-support for half an afternoon. He was still a very guileless birdling, and would fall sound asleep squatted down on any sunny shelf of rock or even in the middle of a path, regardless of the prowling tabbies that had already made way with our stonewall colony of chipmunks. We encouraged him to frequent his safer haunts on roof and window box by keeping fresh water and plentiful supplies of mocking bird food ready for him there, but we had to know where he was from dawn to dark, although the July dawns seemed to come in the middle of the night. Morning after morning, not daring to trust our innocent even with the early worm, I would slip on dressing-gown and slippers and be out seeking him by

three or four. And there, hopping across the already heated concrete, would come skurrying an enthusiastic little speckle-breast, flapping one wing in salutation and twittering indignantly, "Morning! Breakfast! Morning! Breakfast!" as if he had been up reading the newspaper for hours. He would ride trustfully on my hand into the house, take his food and drink, and then contentedly go to sleep again, perched, by preference, on top of a door.

But one Saturday morning I called Robin Hood in vain. The air, ringing with bird-carols, held no music so precious as his hungry chirp. Joy-of-Life was now a thousand miles away, but Mary and Dame Gentle joined anxiously in the search. We were a distracted household when, at eight, a ruddy young Audubon from the hilltop arrived, bringing in one hand our overjoyed little truant, and in the other another fledgling robin, with the merest beginnings of a tail—a waif picked up by the roadside. Audubon reported that, as he was busy in his garden, a young robin had flown down and alighted at his feet, fluttered there a moment and raised the nestling cry for food. Happy Robin Hood, to have chosen from all the boys of

Wellesley the one wisest in benignant woodcraft! Audubon slipped quietly to the ground, caught a caterpillar and held it out to Robin, who came fearlessly to his hand and choked the furry delicacy down. Then Audubon was sure that this was our famed fosterling and, taking up the unsuspicious little fellow, hastened to bring him down the hill to his home.

The new arrival from the greenwood, whom we dubbed Friar Tuck, promptly belied that jovial memory. He was a wild, sullen, desperate little outlaw, whose chirp was a metallic click and whose bill had to be pried open before he would eat. Not even Robin Hood's hospitable chatter could dispel his scared, defiant misery, and on the second morning, unable to bear the look he turned up to the trees, we lifted the cage lid and let him fly. We never, to our knowledge, saw Friar Tuck again, and although we often listened for his uncanny chirp, it was not heard—not even by Mary, whose imagination so expanded under these Natural History studies that she would rush upstairs several times a day to report all manner of rainbow-colored fowl that she had discovered in the thickets. By the following winter, her Celtic

vision had soared beyond all bounds. "The cherubs are shoveling snow off the porch of Paradise this morning," I once happened to remark, whereat Mary, plumping down the hot coffee-pot helter-skelter, sprang open-eyed and open-mouthed to the window, gazing ecstatically up into the white whirl of the storm. "I see thim! I see thim! The shining little dears! It's using their wings for shovels they are, and I see one of their feathers afloating down in the snow."

As the summer went on, Robin Hood became the pet of the neighborhood. Even Giant Bluff, who had moods of declaring that "what with 'Biddy-Biddy' on one side, and 'Robby-Robby' on the other, this hill ain't fit for nothin' but females to live on," would bring tidbits to our Speckle, who soon saved him the trouble by making frequent calls at the front door. A guest of that house used to come to her window in the early morning and sing him "Robin Adair," while he stood on the opposite roof attentively listening, his head cocked and his bright eye turned on the serenader.

But he was a loyal little soul. He spent much of his time on Dame Gentle's piazza, and al-

though Joy-of-Life, just before her departure, treating him for asthma—due, the sages said, to an overhearty diet in his inactive babyhood—had popped an unhappy worm dipped in red pepper down his throat, yet even this Robin could forgive. It had hurt his feelings at the time. He had withdrawn to his best-beloved branch on his best-beloved oak and maintained an offended silence for half an hour, but with the sting his anger went, and for days after Joy-of-Life's disappearance, Robin would fly up to her window ledge and chirp to the closed blinds.

During this second week of freedom, his experience was enlarged by a thunderstorm, which he contemplated with lively astonishment from within my window, but the next morning worms were plentiful, and there, to Giant Bluff's inordinate pride, was Robin trotting about the lawn like an old hand, turning up bits of turf with a grubby little bill and actually getting his own breakfast.

A day or two later our fledgling began to sow wild oats. Thursday afternoon Mary missed him and, hunting for him beyond the cairn, which she designated "The Pets' Cemetery," found him lending charmed attention to a big, red-breasted

robin, who dashed off so guiltily that he bumped himself against the fence. All Friday our Speckle was shy and wild, flying about the edge of the wood with this first friend of his own feather, but he came to perch on the piazza rail at twilight, as usual, keeping us company while we took our open-air dinner, and responding to our blandishments with a drowsy chirp. When he soared to choose his slumber-spray in one of the tall trees before the house, we strained our eyes to follow him into the shadows and called up laughing counsels and good-nights as long as he would answer. But the next morning an evil-eyed black cat sat on our steps and, hour after hour, no Robin Hood appeared. Mary spent most of the forenoon in the woods and, after luncheon, we both went calling through a leafy world with a Babel of chirps about us. "Thim birds, they're just a-mocking me," wailed Mary. But suddenly we both heard, hurrying along the air, that dear, unmistakable baby squawk, and in an instant more our own little Speckle came plumping down on my head, where he rode triumphantly into the house, flapping his funny right wing all the way and gasping with speed and excitement. He had perhaps

been in a fight, for one side of his guileless face was badly pecked. Throughout the afternoon he devoured one full meal after another, allowing ten-minute siesta intervals, with all the enthusiasm of a prodigal son, and then he must have a bath, and then he must be held and petted, and all the while—yep, yep, yep! flop, flop, flop!—he was trying to tell the story of his terrible adventures. Whatever they were, he was a reformed little robin, and spent the Sunday partly on my window box, where he would play for fifteen minutes together with the nutshells that the chickadees had emptied, and partly under a leafy canopy in the oak within easy squirrel-leap beyond, not having a chirp to chirp to any bad bird who would lead him into mischief.

For a fortnight longer Robin was our daily joy. It seemed to make us intimates of the woods to hear, as we were walking there, the hail of a familiar voice from overhead and look up to see our own small Speckle peeping down at us from some breezy twig against the blue. For he soon recovered from his penitence and went sailing through the trees on ever longer voyages of discovery, being often out of call for two or three

hours at a time. But he was always on the window box, where no other robin ever came, in the early morning from half-past three on to seven, overflowing with conversation and insisting on intelligent replies to his remarks. At intervals throughout the day, too, I would hear a soft thud on the box, followed by a chirp-p-p and the flap-p-p of a very impatient and business-like little wing. On these occasions Robin Hood was quite too much occupied with his greenwood affairs to feed himself, and I must needs drop book or pen and cram refreshment down his importunate yellow gullet till it could hold no more. Then he would hop across to his Japanese water-cup, take a dozen eager dips, wipe his bill first on one side, then the other, on the edge of the box, and then, flapping his wing for good-by, sweep off again. In the middle of every forenoon and, during the hottest weather, of the afternoon as well, he alighted on his cage and called imperiously to Mary to bring him fresh water for his bath. We shut him in during this and during his sun-baths, since he enjoyed these rites so much as to be even more than commonly oblivious of cats.

On the evening of July 24 the mercury

"dropped on us," as Mary said, some thirty degrees, and a drenching rain fell all night—a new experience for Robin Hood, who appeared at my window Thursday morning, a draggled little vagabond. Had there been no wise robin at hand to teach him how to take the oil from his back pockets and convert his airy fluff into a tight-fitting waterproof? He was glad to come in out of the wet and spent the forenoon in Mary's kitchen, letting her fondle him as she would, but flying with alarm from the proffered caresses of market-man and grocer-boy. In the course of the next few days, however, he began to protest a little when even his old friends stooped to take him up. He would hop backward, snapping his bill, but he seldom flew and, if the hand did not remain closed upon him, but left him perching free on wrist or finger, he was entirely content.

On August 8 we did our Robin wrong. An expected dinner guest had expressed a desire to see him and, as by this time he was spending his nights, presumably, in a far-off Robin roost, for which he sometimes started early in the afternoon, Mary caught him during the absorbed ecstasy of his sun-bath and shut him into the cage. This

was still a favorite resort of his, and he did not object in the slightest until a young robin playmate with whom he was in the habit of flying to the roost whistled for him from a scarlet oak. Then Robin chirped to us to let him out, growing frantic with excitement as we, hitherto so prompt to obey his behests, made no move for his release. He called and called again, beating about the cage and even breaking into a song of wild entreaty. Shame-faced and conscience-stricken, we yet put him off, expecting our guest minute by minute. It was nearly seven when regrets were telephoned, but by that time Robin was in a panic and smote our hearts by the terror with which he fluttered back from us as we bent over the cage.

The instant the lid was raised he whirred up to the scarlet oak, where his faithful chum still waited, but before their belated departure Robin flew down to Dame Gentle's window and told her all about it, and then over to Giant Bluff's piazza, where he rehearsed his grievances again in a scolding chirp never heard from him before.

We closed the house on the fourteenth and went away, unforgiven by Robin Hood, who has never, so far as I know, come to human hand

since Mary's clasp betrayed him to captivity. During those six days we caught flying glimpses of our estranged fosterling, easily recognized from a distance by the two white feathers in his tail, and a few times he started, by sheer force of habit, to hop across the road to us from Dame Gentle's, but, half-way over, he would turn sharply about, give an angry little yep, and hop back again.

When we reopened the house in late September, not even Dame Gentle had recent news of Robin Hood, and all the winter long we carried a sorrowful sense of broken friendship. We were anxious about our hand-reared birdling, too, hardly daring to hope that he could survive the perils of migration. What a desperate adventure it seemed!

> "Who hath talked to the shy bird-people,
> And counseled the feathered breast
> To follow the sagging rain-wind
> Over the purple crest?"

But on the sixth day of March Robin Hood came home. There had been a baby blizzard the night before and, as we returned from college in

the early afternoon, I noticed birdtracks in the light snow that still mantled the piazza rail.

"See those prints, right where Robin Hood used to sit and watch us take our supper!" I exclaimed, a wild hope knocking at my heart, but Joy-of-Life thought it a case of hungry tree sparrows and, with her especial tenderness for the plucky, one-legged fox sparrow that had consorted with them all winter, went in to find them a choice handful of scraps. But when, a few minutes later, I entered my chamber, there outside his accustomed window, on the feeding-box now drifted over with snow, sat a great, plump, glossy redbreast, staring into the room with Robin's own bright eyes and cocking his head to listen to our welcome. He fluttered back to the nearest tree, when we opened the window, indicating that he had learned a thing or two, in the gossip of the long aerial journeys, about the human race, nor did he ever again enter the house nor let us touch him, but he kept close by, for weeks, perching in his old familiar places on roof and rail and window-ledge, hopping in our walks and gamboling in our eyes. Out in the open, he would come within a few inches of us and there take his stand

and chirp the confidences that we would have given all our dictionaries to comprehend. He was such a tall, stately robin, with such an imposing air of travel and experience as he stood erect, swelling his bright breast with the effort to relate his Winter's Tale, that Joy-of-Life rechristened him Lord Bobs.

In course of time our gallant fledgling appeared in company with a mate, most disappointing to our romantic anticipation,—a faded crosspatch old enough to be his grandmother, a very shrew who scolded him outrageously whenever she saw him lingering beside us. She told him we were ogres, alligators, everything that was horrible and dangerous, and threatened to peck out his last pin-feather unless he flew away from us at once. A selfish old body she was, too, monopolizing the rock-bath, as if she were taking a cure for rheumatism, whole hours at a time, while Robin Hood, hot and dusty, waited on her pleasure in the drooping branches above. But despite her shrill remonstrances, he would still visit the window box, perching on Downy Woodpecker's marrow-bone for an opera stage and trilling his matins and vespers to our delighted ears. We were as proud

of Robin Hood's singing as if we had taught him ourselves. Between his carols our troubadour would take a little refreshment, trying in turn Nuthatch's lump of suet, Bluejay's rinds of cheese, Junco's crumbs and his own mocking-bird food, or quaffing rain water from Chickadee's nutshell cups. He would sometimes hop to the sill and, close against the glass, watch all the doings in that world which lay about him in his infancy. We looked forward to an hour when he might bring his own little speckles to play, as he had loved to play, with the empty nutshells, but Mrs. Robin hustled him off to the woods for the nesting season and we were never able after that first spring to distinguish him with certainty among our robin callers. None the less he had made the summer and all summers happier for us by his gracious though guarded pardon for our unkindness.

> "Truth never fails her servant, sir, nor leaves him
> With the day's shame upon him,"

and even over wild-bird tradition and matrimonial tyranny the truth of our love for Robin Hood, its single lapse forgiven, had prevailed.

WHY THE SPIRE FELL

Our Emperor built a marble church
So holy never a bird might perch
On cross or crocket or gilded crown,
A fretted minster of far renown,
But still the spire came crashing down.

They stoned the swallow and limed the lark;
A rosy throat was an easy mark;
The tiniest wren that built her nest
In Christ's own halo, on Mary's breast,
Was scared away like a demon guest.

Once, twice, thrice, the glistening spire
That soared from the central tower, higher
Than all its clustered pinnacles, fell,
And not one of the carven saints could tell
The cause, though the emperor quizzed them well.

Down in the cloister all strewn with chips
Of alabaster and ivory tips
Of pastoral staffs and angel wings,
In a rainbow ruin of sacred things
He held high court in the way of kings.

All the while in a royal rage
He pelted with fragments of foliage,
Curly acanthus and vineleaf scroll,
Finial, dogtooth and aureole,
The linnets and finches who came to condole.

Crowned with a cobwebby cardinal's hat
That swooped from the vaulted roof like a bat,
On a tilted porphyry plinth for a throne,
The emperor summoned in thunder tone
The hallowed folk of metal and stone.

Martyrs, apostles, one and all,
Tiptoed down from the quaking wall;
Crusaders, uncrossing their legs of brass,
Sprang from their tombs; over crackle of glass
Balaam rode on a headless ass.

But not one of the sculptured cavalcade
Flocking from choir and creamy façade,
Deep-arched portal and pillared aisle
Had a word on his lips, though all the while
Gentle St. Francis was seen to smile.

Whistles, chuckles, warbles tried
To give the answer the saints denied;
Gurgles, tinkles, twitters, trills,
Carols wild as wayward rills
Troubadouring daffodils.

St. Peter, high in his canopied niche
Set with jewels exceeding rich,
Was dancing a hornpipe over the clock,
But before the gargoyles had time to mock
From his shoulder crowed St. Peter's cock.

"Kirikiree! Creative Love
That folds the emperor folds the dove.
No church is finished, though grand it be,
That lacks the beauty of charity.
Buttress your spire. *Kirikiree!"*

So our Emperor reared the spire anew,
Yon shaft of glory that cleaves the blue,
Held in its place by the lightest things
God ever fashioned, the wee, soft wings
Of the birds that join in our worshipings.

AN EASTER CHICK

"Only, what I feel is, that no charity at all can get rid of a certain natural unkindness which I find in things themselves."

—Pater's *Marius the Epicurean.*

The grippe had held me a prostrate prisoner for weeks. Books, pencils, people were forbidden. It was a strange but not unhappy Lent to lie helpless day after day, gazing through my blessed square of window into a first snowy, then blowy, often rainy and rarely sunshiny patch of woodland, watching the brown oak leaves whirl in hurricane dances above the pine-tops, and the crows wing their strong flight against the gray of the sky. As a cumberer of the earth, I was meekly grateful for the least attention from this active outdoor world, for the cheery pipings of the chickadees, whose wee black bills pounded the marrow-bone on the window-sill, for the guttural greetings of the white-breasted nuthatches who played the acrobat on the swinging, open-work bag of cracked walnuts outside the pane, even for

the jeers of the bluejays who swooped to the sash and dashed off like triumphant Dick Turpins with our bounty of bread and cheese.

So Joy-of-Life, hearing of a Boston confectioner's pious offer to bestow an Easter chicken on every customer who should alleviate the fast by the purchase of two pounds of expensive candies at any time during Holy Week, thought she would add to my feathered acquaintance a more intimate companion. Herself an abominator of sweets, she heroically passed a dollar and a half across the counter and received in exchange, beside two boxes of riotous living, a tiny chick, only a day or so out from egg and incubator.

It was pretty, she said, to see the interest with which the tired shop-girls bent over that fluffy morsel of life, petting it with light touches and soothing words, as it was tucked away, with Indian meal for provender and a wad of cottol-wool for bedding, in a gay pasteboard houselet. The color of this miniature mansion was russet flecked with black. The door was a painted sham, but the red-tiled roof swung open. The window boasted four oblong apertures, and the whole establishment was symmetrically set in a half-inch estate of

the reddest pasteboard clay. The girl made the roof secure with a few turns of silver cord and the captive was reduced to thrusting an indignant yellow bill through one after another of his window openings, expostulating with all creation in a series of shrill chirps. As the customer stepped out with her premium in hand, the candy-coveting group of ragamuffins outside the window surged forward in rapture at sight and sound of the chicken, and one particularly grimy urchin reached up both arms toward it with such an imploring gesture that the birdling almost changed ownership then and there. But Joy-of-Life bethought herself in time of the conditions of tenement and alley, not favorable to the development of any sort of biped, and said:

"It is for a sick lady. Don't you want her to have it?"

And the tatterdemalion slowly dropped his wistful hands, sighing dutifully, "Yes, m'm."

The chicken-bearer's dignified progress, "cheep, cheep, cheep," across the Common and Public Gardens and through the Back Bay section, afforded her a new gauge for testing human nature. Colonial Dames who looked an aristocratic re-

buke she put lower in the scale of sympathy than the Italian organ-grinder whose black eyes laughed frankly into hers, while the maid who opened a door in Newbury street, where Joy-of-Life had a call to make, fell with her shocked, contemptuous stare quite under passing rank.

It was late in the evening before I heard upon the stairs a welcome tread, mounting to that queer accompaniment of cheep, cheep, cheep, now pitched upon a key, had we but ears to hear, of acute distress. My delight in greeting the chicken was not reciprocated, and no wonder. Our unconscious, ignorant crimes against his frail little being had already begun. Joy-of-Life, ever most tender toward the weak, enjoyed, moreover, the advantage of having been reared upon a farm, where she had often watched the life of coop and poultry-yard, but not even she was wise enough to give that chicken comfort.

She had carefully seen to it, all the journey through, that he had oxygen enough. The March wind blew so harshly that she had wanted to shelter the fairy chalet under her cloak, but had feared that the yellow bill, forever thrusting itself through the small casement, would gasp for

air. Air! That is the least of a chicken's wants. With all his baby energy, Microbe, as we promptly christened him, had called for heat, heat, heat, and had not been understood. Those thin pasteboard walls and that shred of cotton-wool had left him practically naked to the blast, and he was chilled—poor innocent—to the bone.

And still, in our big, human obtuseness, we did not comprehend. We brought him meal mixed with cold water—an atrocious diet from which he angrily turned away. All at cross purposes, we flattered him foolishly in our alien tongue, while he remonstrated passionately in his. At last the warmth of the room and very weariness quieted that incorrigible cheep a little, and he was put downstairs out of invalid hearing, with a strip of batting cast, like a snowdrift, over his jaunty dwelling.

The family went snugly to bed, while the furnace fire burned lower and lower and the chill of the small hours stole through the house. A less mettlesome chicken, overwhelmed with the loneliness and cruel cold, would have yielded up its accusing little ghost then and there, but this mite

had a marvelous spirit of his own and struggled against fate like a De Wet.

In that heavy hour before the dawn, Joy-of-Life was roused from sleep by such desperate chicken shrieks, "Yep, yep, yep! Help, help, help!" that no doors could shut them out. Shivering in her dressing-gown she went down to our unhappy fosterling, who lay stiff and straight, with head thrust forward and legs stretched back, apparently *in articulo mortis*. The rigid bit of body was cold to her touch, and the only hopeful sign was that shrill, protesting chirp, into which all remaining vitality seemed to be forced. Holding the downy ball compassionately between her palms, this ineffectual giantess—from Microbe's point of view—reflected on the possibilities of the situation only to be baffled. The kitchen fire was out, the oven had not a hint of warmth in it, there was no hot water for the rubber bag. Besides, the chicken seemed too far gone for restoration, and she guiltily smothered him away under the fold of cotton batting and retreated to her chamber. But Microbe had by no means surrendered his sacred little claims to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The persistent prick of his

muffled, frantic cries drove sleep from her pillow. She rose once more and, by inspiration, carried the diminutive mansion down cellar, where she placed it on top of the furnace! Instantly the genial heat reached that exhausted chick, who had battled for it so valiantly and long. The white-barred lids slipped up over the round black eyes —for chickens literally "shut their peepers up"— and he was asleep before his rescuer had turned away.

Joy-of-Life did not believe such a day-old atom of mortality could survive this woeful night. She came to my bedside at the breakfast hour and prepared me solemnly for word of Microbe's premature decease. But little did we know as yet the meaning of that maligned phrase "chicken-hearted." She descended at a funereal pace to the cellar, but with the sound of her swift returning feet I laughed to hear, clearer from stair to stair, an eager, spirited little pipe, "Chip, chip, chip! What's up now? Where are we going on this trip, trip?"

Such a wide-awake, enterprising speck of poultry it was that Joy-of-Life proudly set upon the counterpane! He gave prompt proof of his ac-

tivity by scrambling madly for my plate, and fluttered down, with yellow winglets spread, exactly in the center of my slice of toast.

"It's spring chicken on toast he's giving yez," cried our delighted Mary, and in honor of that ready display of Irish humor, his name was forthwith abbreviated to Mike.

Then he hopped up into my neck, cuddled down, sang a little, contented song and went off to sleep again, waking to find himself the ruler of the roost.

Word of our mutual devotion went abroad and forthwith the critics began. A high-minded friend sent word that if she heard of my lavishing any more affection on that ridiculous little rooster, she would come and wring his yellow neck, and even the Madre herself, she who had borne with my foibles longest and most indulgently, wrote in a flash of scandalous uncharity that she wished I would rest content with the wild birds that God had made, and not waste attention on an illegitimate, incubator chicken.

But "God be with trewthe qwer he be!" The foolish fact is that, in the restlessness of convalescence, when work and worry, thought and

humanity must still be shooed from the threshold, I found hourly mirth and comfort in that dot of sunshine. The phenomenal mists and rains of this first April of the new century caused such a dearth of golden lights in the world that a yellow chicken acquired peculiar values. The furnace-man said he was a Wyandotte and, as a feminine household, we invariably put absolute faith in the word of our furnace-man. I do not know how Wyandottes ought to look, but I know that this was a daffodil-colored mite, with legs and feet more slender than chicken wont, and with a hundred diverting, confiding, tyrannical little ways.

I never ceased marveling at the pluck with which this Lilliputian tackled life in the midst of such Brobdingnagian surroundings. The only time I ever saw him scared was when a guest, so well acquainted with chickens as to venture on personal liberties, flourished her glove over the graveled box that served poor little Mike for his Earthly Paradise.

"Squawk! squawk!" he cried in an agitated pipe I had not heard before, and scrabbled wildly to the shelter of my hand, nestling out of sight under the palm in his favorite fashion.

"Did you hear him call hawk, hawk?" asked my erudite visitor. "We have an old biddy at home who nurses a grudge against me this week because I will not let her set, and the last time I went out into the henyard, if she didn't scream hawk, hawk, just like that, and send the chickens scuttling to cover under the barn! The hateful thing! She knew how insulted I would feel to be taken for a hawk!"

But apart from that trying occasion, Mike was a scrap of valor. No member of the family was tall enough to disconcert him. He pecked whatever he saw, from his own feet to the register, and would pounce like a baby pirate upon objects many times larger than himself, cheeping to the world his tidings of magnificent discovery. I am no pastoral linguist, but I learned the rudiments of chicken language from Mike, who was such a chatterbox that he twittered in his sleep.

Meal-times, which he liked to have occur every hour from dawn to dark, brought out his conversational fluency at its best. We tried many experiments with his diet, in obedience to many counselors. We were told that his Indian meal should be mixed with scalding water, that he was

too young for this hearty dish and should be fed with dry oatmeal, that minute crumbs of bread would comfort his crop, that larger bits of bread, kindly masticated in advance, were better, that sour milk was essential, mashed potato indispensable, string beans a plausible substitute for angleworms, that he must be given a chance to swallow gravel to assist the grinding in his wee gizzard mill, and that his cereals should be discreetly spiced with grubs and lettuce leaves and such spring dainties. Whatever we were told to do, we did. Mike's repasts were thus seasons to him of delicious excitement, and he would tear deliriously from one end of his box to the other, pecking to right and left, exclaiming in high glee, "Tweet, tweet! Something to eat! Bless my pin-feathers! Here's a treat!"

This up-to-date son of an incubator had an obstinate instinct in him which made the tap of my finger on the floor of his box equivalent to the tattoo of a hen's bill beside some scratched-up delicacy, and it was funny to see him rush to the sound, his black eyes shining with joyous expectancy. So queerly did instinct serve him that he would grab the goody as if a brood of famished

brothers were on his heels and, spreading his bits of wings, race off with his prize, most indiscreetly shrilling as he went, "Twit, twit, twit! You shan't have a bit," and gobbling it down in a corner with choking precipitation.

One of the "Arrows of the Wise" carries the point, "Be not idle and you shall not be longing," and I had no chance to miss my customary vocations with this importunate cockerel demanding constant society and care.

Hatched to the vain anticipation of brooding wings and crooning cluck and the restless pressure of other downy little bodies all about him, Mike was a lonesome chick and could not bear to have his sorry substitute for a mother-hen out of sight and sound a minute. His box must be within reach of my hand, whither every few minutes he would run for a snuggle and a snooze, turning a disdainful back on the elaborate hot-water-bottle and cotton-batting shelters I had been at such pains to erect. The life in him craved contact with life. If I withdrew my hand, having occasionally other uses for it, or neglected to respond to his casual remarks, my ears would suddenly be assailed by a storm of piteous chirps,

the neck would stretch until two round eyes peered anxiously above his castle wall, and then, with clamber and scramble, that indomitable little spirit would achieve the impossible and land a fluttering fluff-ball against my face. When I was well enough to move from room to room Mike would dare the most terrific tumbles from his box to come chasing after, though every threshold was a towering obstacle over which a Labor Union of wings and legs could barely carry him.

After he had eaten his supper, with undiminished enthusiasm, and had drunk his fill from a butter-plate, lifting his yellow bill to heaven with every drink, and giving thanks, as all good chickens do, we used to tuck him away in a basket. At first we buried him deep under a light mass of cotton-wool, from the precise center of whose surface his head would shine out in the morning like a star set in fleecy clouds; but the chief of our advisory council warned us that the films might get into his eyes and down his gullet with disastrous results, and suggested instead the use of a retired table-scarf. Chicken in the cloth, cloth in the basket, basket on the register, the family would compose itself to listen to the "Life of

Huxley," while the softest, drowsiest nest song, "Tweety-tweet! Tweety-tweet!" from the depths of the table-scarf accompanied the voice of the reader. The elfin music-box would fall silent presently, but when bedtime came, and Joy-of-Life, before taking the basket down cellar to hang it near the furnace for the night, brought it to me that I might ask, no matter how quietly, "All well, Mike?" a dreamy little note would instantly float back, "Tweety-tweet! Sleeping sweet!"

We grew so fond of our pet as to dislike to see him deprived of the natural companionship of chickenhood, and two other downy midgets—a Penciled Brahmapootra, the gift of the market-man, and a Plymouth Rock, from the Lady of Cedar Hill—were procured to bear him company. The first we dubbed Patience, as the proper associate of a Microbe, but this beautiful little fowl, whose golden face and delicately striped body gave it a wild-bird look, developed such shillalah characteristics, especially when Mike made off with the choice morsels, that his name was speedily curtailed to Pat. The Plymouth Rock was called Cluxley, in memory of our evening readings; but a meek, illogical, not to say unscientific

henny-penny she proved, who would stand gazing on a dainty until one of her foster-brothers had snatched it up and then industriously go and scratch for it in all the places where it never could have been. Pat was a self-reliant, material-minded younker, and we let him go his own lively way, with the minimum of handling, but our brown Cluxley was of a clinging disposition and had an embarrassing habit of imperiling her life by stealthy excursions up loose sleeves. Mike did not welcome these birds of his own feather any too cordially and held somewhat aloof from them to the end. One of my students sent in a pair of dainty blue slippers, fortunately too small, as thus my conscience was clear in devoting them to the welfare of my immediate brood; but I always had to see to it that Mike and Pat took their siestas in separate slippers, where they would drowsily flute away in musical rivalry. Cluxley, with her customary indiscretion, bestowed herself one day in a damp rubber for her nap and caught a bad cold, which we successfully doctored with hempseed.

Mike had begun to show signs of feathers and once he tried to crow. He had become less de-

pendent on me for intimate society, his attention being much taken up with thwarting Pat's designs on the tidbits, but he could by no means dispense with me as general protector. If I were in the room, or close beside them in a steamer chair out of doors, he was willing to ramble a bit with Pat and Cluxley, always taking the lead, but I could not slip away and leave them, even in Mary's charge, without immediate consternation, protest and pursuit on Microbe's part. He was such a humanized chicken, coming at the call of his name, loving to eat from the finger, cocking his little head so sagely when he was addressed and politely cheeping a response, that he became perilously attractive to the children of the neighborhood. Sturdy schoolboys would kiss his yellow softness on the sly and we often had to rescue him from the unskillful clutch of loving childish hands.

When a luncheon was brought to me out of doors, all three chickens would come winging and scrabbling up the rug that wrapped the sorceress of the steamer-chair and dispose themselves about the edge of the tray, chirping continuous amens to the grace steeped in ancient witchcraft:

"Spread, table, spread.
Meat, drink and bread.
Ever may I have
What I ever crave,
When I am spread.
Meat for my black cock,
And meat for my red."

Now that I was to be seen outside the house with my little brood, kindly neighbors came from all sides with offers of more chickens, but my family cares were already heavy for a convalescent, and experience had taught me that

"true happiness
Consists not in the multitude of friends,
But in the worth and choice."

Occasional misgivings as to the future crossed my mind. I had often seen reposing sheep blocking up the doorways of Andalusian homes,—Easter lambs given, all gay with ribbons, to the children the year before and still withheld by family affection from their natural destiny of mutton. The Dryad looked forward with glee to my appearance on the academic platform with three full-grown fowls roosting on the back of my chair or stalking up and down the desk, picking up bits of chalk and pencil whittlings, but such embarrassments were not to be.

Mike was the first to sicken. His name may have been against him or the long confinement in the basket may have injured him. The table-scarf may have been too heavy to admit of his standing and moving during the night as a chicken should. He suddenly became crippled, as with paralysis. One morning, although he breakfasted with abundant relish, he insisted on hiding in my hand immediately after. I wanted him to run about for exercise, and twenty times put him back into his box, but he returned to me twenty-one and had his own way for a while, until Mary played the kidnapper. Coming down stairs half an hour later I heard her remonstrating with Mike, who was cheeping wildly.

"Faith, Mike, ye're that onraysonable I can't plaze yez any how. There's Pat and Cluxley as good as clover in the kitchen, but I let yez into the dining-room, and still ye're discontinted, and now I've let yez into the parlor, Mike, and not the parlor is good enough. Whativer is it that ye can be wanting?"

Poor Chicken Little! He heard my voice and started to meet me, but with such hobbling, staggering, bewildered steps that, at last, the threshold

overthrew him. We did for him what we knew—and we knew nothing—that day and the next, and he sang his tuneful tweety-tweet on Monday night; but on Tuesday morning, a fortnight from his coming, when I asked for my chicken, they brought me a ghastly little form lying among primroses.

I might say that I met the loss of my tiny comrade with adult dignity and composure, but

> "Syr, for lying, though I can do it,
> Yet am I loth for to goo to it."

The core of my grief is the sense that my blundering devotion cut short, on the very edge of spring, that gallant little life which brought help to me in my heavy hour, and which had in it all the promise of a Chaucer chanticleer.

In deep humiliation, we forthwith gave Pat and Cluxley over to higher intelligence than ours, to a neighbor's hen who had no narrow parental prejudices, but amply gathered them in with her own brood. Pat was the beauty of the coop, but in a day or so his legs began to waver and sink under him, and he, too, never knew a Maytime. Cluxley was always the belated one and outlived

him some three days, but on the fourth morning she went staggering into the undiscovered realm.

People say, "But you did well to keep your Easter chicken alive fourteen days. If the truth were known, you would find that very few of those candy-sale chickens hold out so long as that. We bought one for the children, but it was dead before Sunday. It is next to impossible to raise chickens by hand, even with experience. As to the ducklings that are coming into fashion for Easter gifts, they die sooner than chickens."

Then to our moral, for Mike's small story surely has a moral, though it does not matter in the least to Mike. I have no delusions there.

"All men are
Philosophers to their inches,"

but chickens' inches are so very few that there is no room for altruism in their philosophy. Yet the thought of how much these wee innocents may suffer from the incompetence of those who so lightly assume their fostering urges a protest against keeping Easter, the Festival of Life, by such wanton sacrifice of life. How can we reproach the Spaniards, who celebrate their Easter

by the merciless bullfight, while we permit this cruelty to tender chickenhood?

A chicken's death is not more trivial than a sparrow's fall. St. Francis of Assisi would have cared.

But beneath it all lies the old, dark problem of creature existence. They are so ready to trust and love us, these feathered and furred companions of ours on the strange, bright star that whirls us all through the vast of ether to an unknown rhythm, and we, with a lordly selfishness that scoffs at question, slaughter them for our food and clothing, hunt them for our sport, make them our drudges in peace and our victims in war. I can never forget the eyes of a calf that ran to me from his butcher in Norway,—of a kid that I saw struggling away from the knife on Passover eve in Palestine. Yet such is the order of the earth. All carnivorous creatures prey upon the weaker. Water and wood and field and air are but varying scenes of the unpausing tragedy. Why, if it must be so, were these doomed animals endowed with the awful gift of suffering? And what recompense, even in the far reaches of eternity, can their Creator make to these myriad mar-

tyrs for their griefs and tortures? Is He the God of Hardy's *The Dynasts*, careless of mortal agonies? There dwelt a truer God in Shelley's heart, the *cor cordium* of him who wrote:

"I wish no living thing to suffer pain."

HOW BIRDS WERE MADE

Above his forests bowed the Spirit, dreaming
Of maize and wigwams and a tawny folk
Who should rejoice with him when autumn broke
Upon the woods in many-colored flame.
Pale birches, maples gleaming
In splendor of all gold and crimson tints,
And dark-green balsams with their purple hints
Of cones erect upon the stem, awoke
In his deep heart,
Though thought had yet no words,
Beauty no name,
Creative longing for a voice, a song
Blither than winds or brooklet's tinkling flow,
His own joy's counterpart.
He breathed upon the throng
Of wondering trees, and lo!
Their leaves were birds.

The birds do not forget, but love to fellow
The trees whose shining colonies they were;
Else wherefore should the scarlet tanager
Fling from the oak his proud, exultant flush
Of music? Why mid yellow
Sprays of the willow by her empty nest
Lingers the golden warbler? Softly drest
In autumn buffs and russets, chorister
Sweetest of all,
Angel of lonely eves,
The hermit thrush

Haunts the November woodland. In them bides
Memory of that far time, ere eyes of men
Had seen the tender fall
Of shadow or the tides
Of silver sunrise, when
The birds were leaves.

TAKA AND KOMA

"What madness is it to take upon us to know a thing by that it is not? Shall we perswade our selves that wee know what thing a Camell is, because wee know it is not a Frogge?"
—Barckley's *Felicitie of Man.* 1603.

To console me for the loss of the chicks, Joy-of-Life went into a Boston bird-store one day and, in defiance of all her principles and mine, bought me a Japanese robin. When she presented him, the daintiest little fellow, mouse-color, with touches of red and gold on wings and throat and the prettiest pink bill, I met her guilty look with one of sheer astonishment.

"A Robin Redbreast in a cage
Puts all Heaven in a rage,"

I quoted.

"But he was in a cage already," she weakly apologized, "and we'll be very good to him."

"Good jailers!"

"But liberty here would be his undoing, and I can't take him over to Japan. Come! It's time that you said thank-you."

But Taka, named after a Japanese boy of Joy-of-Life's earlier acquaintance, proved a dubious blessing. He was in angry temper from the first, and a brilliant new cage, fitted up with all the modern conveniences and latest luxuries, failed to appease him in the least. He would thrust his head between the gilded bars so violently that he could not draw it back, and while we were doing our clumsy best to extricate him he would peck our fingers with furious ingratitude. He upset his porcelain dishes, declined to use his swing and, as a rule, rejected all the attractions of his criss-cross perches, fluttering back and forth and madly beating against the bars or huddling in an unhappy little bundle on the floor. It was a matter of weeks before we could coax him into conversation, and then his abrupt, metallic chirps were so sharp that Mary, who scorned and disliked him as a foreigner, was scandalized.

"Don't ye talk with him. It's all sauce that Jap is giving yez."

Even Robin Hood, social little fellow that he was, tried in vain, later on, to make friends with this ungracious stranger. The East and the West could not meet. In response to Robin's cheery

chatter, Taka would bristle, turn away and maintain a stubborn silence.

I used to carry his cage out of doors with me and set it up on the bank, where crocuses followed snowdrops, and tulips followed crocuses, beside the steamer-chair, hoping that he would feel more at home amid the blossoms and bird music of the spring. But there little Lord Sulks would sit, bunched into a corner of his palace, deigning no response whatever to the soft greetings of the bluebirds, those "violets of song," nor to the ecstatic trills of the fox sparrows, nor even to the ringing challenge of Lieutenant Redwing, as he flashed by overhead on his way to Tupelo swamp.

A calling ornithologist examined Taka carefully and concluded that he was an old bird, although the dealer had glibly represented him as being in the very pink of youth. So our poor prisoner was perhaps not born in captivity and may have had more than ancestral memories of spreading rice fields, tea plantations and holy bamboo groves. Our brave blue squills, our sunny forsythias, our coral-tinted laurels could not break his dream of flushing lotus and flaming azalea. What was our far-off glimpse of silvery

Wachusett to the radiant glories of sea-girt Fuji-yama? I hinted that a pet monkey might solace his nostalgia, but to such suggestion Joy-of-Life remained persistently deaf.

The children of the neighborhood found him, sullen though he was, a center of fascination, and would crowd about his cage, pointing out to one another the jewel tints in his plumage.

"Cutest bird I ever seed 'cept the flicker," pronounced Snippet, whose straw-colored hair stood out like a halo.

"Chickadees are nicer'n flickers," protested wise little Goody Four-Eyes. "A chickadee eats three hundred cankerworms in a day and over five thousand eggs—when he can get 'em."

The boys gave a choral snort.

"Who does the countin'?" demanded Punch.

"Wish *I'd* been born with all the learnin' in me," scoffed Snippet.

But Goody, who had gathered many a pine-cone for our feeding-boxes and, her snub nose pressed snubbier yet against the window pane, had watched the black-capped rolypolies twitch out the winged seeds, stood her ground.

"Does, too," she averred stoutly. "Boys don't know about birds. They stone 'em."

"And girls wear feathers in their hats."

"I don't, but Snippet's mamma does."

"Doesn't neither. She jes' wears regrets on Sunday."

"You don't say it right, but you're nothin' but a small boy."

"I'm seven," blustered Snippet, "and I think I'd be eight by now, if I hadn't had the measles."

"Where's Taka?" I exclaimed.

In the jostling of the children about the cage, the door, accidentally or not, had been slipped ajar, and Taka, taking advantage of the heat of the discussion, had escaped.

The youngsters raised a whoop that might well have scared him to the Pacific, but not the stir of a bird-wing could be perceived anywhere about.

Cats!

"Run to the house, Punch, please, and call out everybody to help us find Taka."

I had selected Punch as the boy of longest legs, forgetting his partiality for Mary's doughnut jar. He chose the route through the pantry with the result that when, after a suspiciously long inter-

val, the rescue party arrived, Mary was dancing with wrath.

"Shure," she panted, "that gossoon would be a good missenger to sind for Death, for he wouldn't be after gitting him here in a hurry at all at all."

We hunted and we hunted and we hunted. We hunted high in the trees, which the boys and Goody, too, climbed with an activity that surprised the woodpeckers; we hunted low in the grass, interrupting a circle of squirrels gathered around a toadstool, as around a birthday cake; but no sign of Taka. We searched hedges and shrubbery, but no Taka. We chirped and we whistled, though well aware that even if Taka heard us he would not answer.

The western sky was a brighter red than Goody's hair-ribbon before we sat ourselves down, discouraged, on the piazza steps to wait for Joy-of-Life.

One by one the children had been summoned home, all but Wallace. He had by telephone directed his parents, who used to be older than he but whom he now watched over with solicitude,

to eat their supper without him and go to bed as usual in case he should be detained.

"I don't like to think of that little goldy head out in the big dark all night," I said.

"Maybe a star will suppose it's another star and come down and stay with it," suggested Wallace, trying to buttress my sagging courage.

"His winglets are so wild and so weak."

"I believe the other birds know where he is. Please tell us," entreated Wallace, addressing a solemn crow that had just flapped over from the wood to a neighboring fence-post.

"Now it's no use to be asking of His Riverence," put in Mary. "All the crows were prastes once and they talk only the Latin."

It was one of Joy-of-Life's miracles. It was almost dark when, tired and hungry, she came home from Boston,—from a committee meeting of philanthropists who had been quarreling as only philanthropists can. She looked into Taka's empty cage, stayed but for a glass of milk and a few inquiries as to our field of search, and then, taking an electric torch, slipped softly into Giant Bluff's cherished tangle of luxuriant rosebushes, where the rest of us had not dared to venture.

In a few minutes she emerged, scores of irate briars catching at her clothes and hair. She was crooning as she came out and in her safe clasp nestled a sleepy little bird.

Soon after this episode, Joy-of-Life went west for her summer sojourn among the birds at a Wisconsin lake, leaving to Mary, Robin Hood and myself the guardianship of that forlorn mite. He was as obstinate as ever in his lonesomeness, always pettishly rebuffing the friendly advances of Robin and, though I would take his cage to the vicinity of bird after bird, hoping that in some one of these he might recognize a kindred spirit, he found nothing of his feather. The white-breasted nuthatch, after nearly two months of absence, presumably for the rearing of a brood in leafy seclusion, returned for a call at the feeding-box, looking as genteel as ever in his tailor-made gray suit, but so preoccupied with domestic memories that at first he would say nothing but "Spank! spank! spank!" I brought Taka to the window and he looked on disdainfully while I tried to win Nuthatch back to his winter phrase of "Thank! thank! thank!" Only once did he revert to bachelor freedom of expression. That

was when he fluttered up to the nutmeat bag and found it dangling empty:

"What a prank, prank, prank, to rob my bank, bank, bank! oh, the offense is rank, rank, rank!"

At this explosion of resentment Taka gave an involuntary chirp, and Nuthatch, the most inquisitive and alert of all our bird visitors, looked the stranger over keenly before he retorted with shocking rudeness, "You're a crank, crank, crank," and flew off to see what the brown creeper, zigzagging wrong side up about the rough-barked trunk of an old oak, was finding good to eat.

Once I carried Taka well out into the wildwood, but he was not interested in any of its busy tenants,—not in little Chippy, who all but pushed his russet crown between the bars of the cage, nor in Yellow-Hammer, stabbing the ground for ants, nor in

> "yonder thrush,
> Schooling its half-fledged little ones to brush
> About the dewy forest."

At last, one afternoon, after Taka had been moping for hours in deeper gloom than usual, I impulsively held up a hand-glass before him. As soon as the solitary caught sight of that other

Japanese robin he broke out into excited chirps and twitters, and suddenly, to my astonishment, caroled forth a ravishing song. I hastily put the glass away, but he began calling, calling, calling with a wistful eagerness that could not be endured. He kept it up till dark and began it again at dawn, so hopefully, so yearningly, that, principles or no principles, there was only one thing to do.

I went into Boston that morning and, stopping at a Japanese store, asked their word for robin.

"Kóma-dóri, or Little Bird, usually called Koma, the Little One."

So on I fared to the bird-dealer's and bought Koma for Joy-of-Life. He was the only Japanese robin they had left, and the dealer swore that he was Taka's brother, but I suspected that the relationship was nearer that of great-great-grandson, for Koma, smaller than Taka, of brighter gold and more vivid ruby, was the quintessence of vital energy, a very spark of fire. He fought like a mimic Hector while the dealer was catching and boxing him, and all the gay-hued parrots jumped up and down on their perches and

screamed with the fun of having something going on.

The dealer declared that the two birds would thrive best in the same cage; so I introduced Koma into Taka's commodious abode that afternoon and listened in high content to their jubilant bursts of song. They went to sleep on the highest perch with their tiny bodies cuddled close together, but during the following week their love lyric was punctuated by several fights. Taka, hitherto so contemptuous of the comforts of his cage, now wanted to swing whenever he saw Koma swinging and insisted on shoving his guest away and eating from the very seed-cup that Koma had selected, whereupon Koma, a glistening ruffle of wrath, would fling himself in furious attack upon his honorable ancestor.

Mary, whose partiality for Koma, little beauty that he was, attempted no disguise, maintained that Taka always began the combats and was always worsted; but I was not so sure. Koma, a restless gleam of chirp and song, was such a violent character that twice he rammed his head between the upper wires of his cage and nearly hanged himself. Some heathen deity had given

him, for his protection, a tremendous voice, and his shrieks soon brought me running to his rescue. Both times, as soon as I had parted the wire and released the lustrous little head, Taka, wildly agitated through the minutes of Koma's peril, turned fiercely upon me and accused me of the trap.

"*You* did it! Ugly thing! *You* did it! You nearly killed my Koma."

And poor little Koma, gasping in the gravel, would chime in faintly but with no less resentment, "*She* did it."

Yet within an hour they might be fighting again, and I would find them spent and panting, glaring at one another from opposite sides of their limited arena, with deep cuts about the little warrior faces.

"Taka," I would remonstrate, "aren't you ashamed to treat your own clansman like this, when you wanted him so much?"

But Taka and penitence were far asunder. "It's my last tail-feather—chir-r-r! Koma, he hasn't any tail at all—chir-r-r! No more have I now. Don't care a grub. I pulled *his* out. Catch me that fly, can't you? Who-oo-oo-oop!"

Koma, whose song had an entrancing gypsy

note, was so much the wilder of the two that Taka seemed comparatively tame. Koma's terror of human monsters was unconquerable, and his panics, whenever one of us neared the cage, soon destroyed the frail confidence that our long patience had been building up in Taka. Presently we had two out-and-out rebels on our hands, and even Dame Gentle, who "had a way" with birds, could not cajole them into a League of Lovers.

When the cage door was opened for putting in or taking out the small glass bathtub, it was a ticklish matter to prevent their escape, for they could dart like mice through the least crack and, sly atoms of conspiracy, were always on the lookout for a chance. Warned by bitter experience, we saw to it that the windows were closed before that perilous task was undertaken, but too often a victorious squeal from Koma would announce his exit, and Taka, hopping in sympathetic exultation from perch to perch, would urge him on with ancient Japanese war-cries while he soared from mantel to chandelier, vanished in the folds of a portiere or flashed from fern to rubber-plant. If he succeeded in reaching the entry, he would prolong the game by hiding in overshoes and um-

brellas, while Taka, now that Koma was away, would at once set up his pleading, poignant call and never cease until the truant, snapping his pink bill and kicking fiercely with scratchy little claws, was thrust back into the cage. Much as Taka might play the tyrant, he could not bear having Koma out of his sight and reach. Once, after an especially savage duel in which Koma had been badly trampled and pecked, we put the wounded hero into a cage of his own and hung it in the adjoining room. Forthwith both those scamplings raised such a prodigious outcry and lament, taking on as if their naughty specks of hearts were broken, that we brought back Koma's cage and hung it in the window beside Taka's. But even so they scolded and protested and, as the shadows fell, established themselves each on the extreme end of a perch, as near one another as they could get, but with the cruel wires and a few inches of space between them. Still they fumed and fretted until we returned Koma, mauled as he was, to Taka's cage, when instantly they nestled their plumy sides close together and blissfully went to sleep.

Yet we kept both cages in use, separating our

tiny incorrigibles when their battles waxed dangerous. They loved to talk them all over afterwards, gabbling like schoolboys, but if one of us chanced to approach the window—"Sshh! Don't tell the ogre," and in an instant they were dumb as toy idols. When we had time, we would occasionally, after taking all due precautions, throw wide their cage doors and invite them to enjoy the freedom of the room; but liberty so given they despised. Only stolen fruit is sweet. After much deliberation and consultation, they would stealthily steal out and skurry about the floor like rats for a while, hunting for bugs and worms. When it became evident that our rugs did not furnish such refreshment, they would cuddle up together in Taka's cage and spoon. Koma would tuck his shining wee head down on Taka's shoulder, and Taka would gently peck him all over from the tip of his bill to his claws. Then, more often than not, they would bristle and square for the fun of a fight. At this point we would try to catch Koma and put him back into his own safe cage, but even when his little coxcomb was so bloody that I had to wash it off under the faucet, he was the top of ingratitude, gasping and

clattering with fury. All the while Taka, who had cut that poor pate open, would be trilling abuse. A pugnacious pair of fairy Japanese pirates they were!

We kept those midgets, a daily trouble and amusement, through the winter. They sang like angels when it pleased them and in the intervals conversed exclusively with each other in a harsh, metallic chatter that filled the house. But one sad June morning we found Taka in the bottom of the cage, on his back, the uplifted claws pathetically curled, the wee body stiff and cold.

"The bird is dead
That we have made so much on."

Koma knew what had happened and bewailed his loss in such a shrill, incessant keening that when, a few days later, an east wind gave him a swiftly fatal chill, we could only be glad to have that pitiful piping hushed.

Little aliens! We had never known them.

WARBLER WEATHER

The oak-leaves yet are doubting
Between the pink and green;
Half smiling and half pouting
Our shy New England May
Touches each happy spray,
And at her call the runaway
Warbler tribes convene.

The gold-flecked Myrtle flitters,
The Redstart dives and spins,
The gay Magnolia glitters,
The little Rubycrown
Twinkles up and down;
The fairy folk have come to town
With all their violins.

Our garden party sparkles
With varied warbler wear,
The olive suit that darkles
To umber, russet crest,
Blue tippet, crocus vest;
New fashions come with every guest,
Winged jewels of the air.

Their treetop conversation
Is sweetest of the sweet,
With flashes of flirtation
As gallants bow and dip.
"Witch-e-wee!" "Cher!" "Chip-chip!"
Too elfin fine for human lip
Their dainty: "Tzeet! tzeet! tzeet!"

When we shall walk together
In Paradise, Most Dear,
May it be warbler weather,
Divine with flutterings
Of exquisite wee wings,
Our own familiar angelings
That piped God's praises here.

SUMMER RESIDENTS AT A WISCONSIN LAKE

By Katharine Coman

"Another beautiful day of sunshine and shimmering leaves and bird-notes and human love."

—Katharine Coman: *Letter.*

The summer resort in question is only one of the numberless lakelets that dot the hill country of Wisconsin; a mere dimple in the sunny landscape, filled with limpid water. The banks are overhung by beautiful lindens and mammoth oaks and by hoar cedars of a thousand years' growth.

So sloping are the shores that reeds and rushes run far out into the lake, carrying the green life of the earth into the blue heaven of the water. Creeks and bayous stretch in turn far back into the land, and the reeds and rushes follow after. Knee-deep in the swamps stand the tamarack trees. Their cool shades cherish the mystery of the primeval forest that held undisputed sway in this region only fifty years ago. Back on the hills

lie rich grain fields and comfortable farmhouses, each defined against the sky by its windmill and cluster of barns and haystacks.

This is an ideal summer residence for birds who have a mind for domestic joys. Nothing, for example, could be better adapted for nesting purposes than these cedar trees; not so much the centuried veterans, as the young things of ten or twenty years' growth. Their dense and prickly foliage promises security from invasion, while the close-set branches offer most attractive building-sites. Here the robins place their substantial structures; a masonry of sticks and mud, hollowed out within into a chamber as round and smooth as if molded on a croquet ball, and lined with fine, soft grasses. The catbirds build more loosely, weaving strips of cedar bark into a rough basket. The interior is softened for the tender bodies of the anticipated nestlings by coils of horse hair. The mourning dove lays her eggs on a frail scaffolding of cedar twigs, with the merest suggestion of padding. How the eggs are kept in place on windy days is a mystery to the uninitiated. As for brooding the young, the mother bird soon gives over the attempt to do more than sit along-

side her twin fledglings. The cedar birds, despite their name, are oftenest found in the linden trees. Rowing along the water side one may see the slender bodies tilting on the top-most branches, flitting to and fro among the pendant yellow bracts, peering shyly this way and that, whispering to each other sage words of caution as to the queerness of all the world "save thee and me, Dorothy." Gentle little Quakers they seem in the daintiest of dove-color plumage. They are connoisseurs in the matter of foods, as well as of dress. Nothing pleases their palate so well as the wild cherries that ripen by the roadside. The sweet kernels of the linden fruit are not bad eating, however, if one may judge by the quantities of split shells to be found beneath the trees. The lake is sought out by birds as well as humans for the pleasure of bathing in the cool, fresh water. Sit quietly by some pebbly bank for a half hour or so, and you cannot fail to see robin or bluejay or turtledove come down to take his daily plunge.

The reedy marshes are beloved by the redwings. The thick-set tufts of the cat-o'-nine-tails afford ideal sites for summer cottages, with building material close at hand. Here, too, the marsh

wrens weave their oven-shaped nests and hang them among the banners of the iris. The water-lily pools are alive with summer folk. Quaint, unwieldy bitterns flap their slow way to nests well hidden in the reeds. Coots steal in and out *en route* to their lake dwellings. The broad green pads offer the Virginia rail a secluded perch, where he may consider which quarter of the shining mud flats will prove the best feeding ground for the day. A trim little figure in gray and tan, he gathers no soil from the black ooze through which he wades. Another dainty person who haunts these same shallows is the spotted sandpiper, the much loved "teeter-tail." He runs tipping along the water's edge, with an occasional short flight, as much at home among these placid ripples as by the booming sea. The kill-deer plover vibrates between the grassy meadow and the beach, but he, as well as the sandpiper, prefers to stake his domestic happiness on dry ground. Among the birds of the shore, the kingfisher is most in evidence. Conspicuous in blue coat, gray waistcoat and broad, white collar, he flies along the beach seeking for the dead branches of oak or cedar that shall serve him as a look-

out station from which to spy upon the finny folk swimming in the water beneath. A flash in the air, a splash in the water, and the "expert angler" dashes triumphantly home, his watchman's rattle announcing victory and fresh supplies to the awkward squad of baby kingfishers deep in the clay bank awaiting his arrival.

Back in the meadows where thistles and wild lettuce are going to seed, the hard-bills spend their holidays. Goldfinches cling to the thistle tops, merry little clowns in yellow and black, antic tumblers no less agile and versatile than the chickadee. Dickcissels search the purple ironweeds for provender, and song sparrows flit along the blossoming fence rows. Kingbirds perch at a point of vantage and watch their chance for a dash at a grasshopper. Fine fighters these fellows, fully equal to defending their well-feathered nests against all comers, and therefore disdaining concealment. Bluebirds carol high in the air their song of peace on earth and goodwill to man. Humming birds hover over the milkweeds, bent on extracting not honey only, but toothsome insects from the rosy blooms.

The tall oaks are sought out by the orioles,

tanagers and grosbeaks,—a brilliant and tuneful company. Here, too, the vireos, warbling, red-eyed, white-eyed and yellow-throated, spy out invisible insects under the growing leaves. Warblers throng the woods in May and June, reveling in the bursting buds; but most of them have pushed on to Canada for the summer season. Only the black and white creeper remains to nest in Wisconsin. The resounding tattoo of the high-hole rings from the bole of a blasted tree. The wood looks as if riddled with bullets. The red-headed woodpecker follows close on his yellow-winged cousin. Both find an abundant supply of ants in the decaying forest. High in a fork of the branches the red-tailed hawk pitches his tent, a ragged, black wigwam, rivaling that of the crow for size and inaccessibility.

The haunts of men are not wholly eschewed by our little brothers of the air. The peewee loves to place his nest under the eaves of a sheltering porch, and the phœbe is no less sociable. The presence of human beings does not at all disconcert their housekeeping arrangements. I have seen a young brood fed and fondled, and finally

piloted forth for their first journey in the world, within ten feet of a hammock full of children.

To see the water birds at home one should take a boat in the early morning or toward nightfall, and float silently on the open bosom of the lake. Then you may watch the black terns wheeling and turning in the blue sky, like beautiful great swallows. They are easily distinguished even at a considerable height by their white wing bars. A loon paddles slowly across the bay with tantalizing unconcern. It is of no use to follow him, however, even with muffled oars. He knows a trick worth any two of yours. Huge fellow as he is, he dives beneath the surface, leaving not a ripple behind him. After five minutes of puzzled waiting you may see him—or is it his double?—pop up from the water many rods away, as serene and still as if he had not just executed a submarine maneuver hardly to be excelled by the latest torpedo boat. Quite as expert a performer is the pied-billed grebe, who swims long distances with body submerged and only the tip of the bill out of the water. Unobserving gunners conclude that he has gone to the bottom of the lake, and call him the hell-diver. The grebe spends half

of his life in or on the water. His nest is a raft buoyed upon a clump of decaying vegetation, and looks like a floating island moored to a reed. Birds of the lake, too, seem the swallows—tree swallows, rough-winged and barn swallows. They skim the water hither and yon in mad pursuit of prey. No degree of familiarity with their mud nests avails to deprive these winged atoms of their halo of spring and romance.

Birds of high degree occasionally visit our humble lakelet. A bald eagle has been seen on the lightning-scarred branch of its tallest oak. Blue herons flap their majestic way from shore to shore. If you were born with a silver spoon in your mouth you may even be so lucky as to see a snowy heron passing through to some heronry in the wilds of Canada. The night herons come every spring to their ancient rookery in a swamp hard by. As the shadows fall the birds may be heard calling, "squawk, squawk," while they make their way down the creek to their fishing grounds in the lake.

For the better part of our bird neighbors the summer sojourn is no *dolce far niente*. They come north that their babies may have wholesome air

and suitable food. A gay young husband, like the ruby-throated humming bird, shirks domestic responsibilities, but he expects only two wee nestlings. A brood of five or six requires the assiduous attention of both parents. Baby blue jays, for example, seem to have an unlimited appetite. Their scolding, snarling cries begin with the early dawn and only cease with nightfall. Even after the rascals are flown one may find an anxious mother vainly striving to satisfy her clamoring darlings, as she hurries from one to another with some choice tidbit. A great hulking fellow, as big as his parents and as gayly feathered, will stand crying like an infant, with wings a-tremble and mouth a-gape, waiting for the food to be thrust down his throat. Young robins are hardly less rapacious but far more tractable. I was one day watching the début of a family that lived in a neighboring cedar tree. The mother bird was having an anxious time, for each young one, as he spread his wings, made but a flap or two and fell sprawling into the network of branches beneath the nest. One young hopeful essayed a more ambitious flight and came down to the ground. He had no thought of fear and, being

of an inquiring turn of mind, came hopping through the grass to see what I was like. Such a dear little man, in polka dot pinafore and white ruffles! But "chuck, chuck," mother robin called a warning note, and like a flash he turned tail and bolted into the bushes. I found him later perched on a branch within easy grasp of my hand. He gazed at me for some minutes with eyes full of baby wonder; then, remembering the maternal admonitions, he fled to a higher branch. Of all feathered mothers the catbird is the noisiest. She flits restlessly about, eying from every point of vantage the intruder who dares to show an interest in her housekeeping. I determined to sit it out one morning, pitting my patience against her sympathy for the hungry young ones. After two hours of flutter and meow the mother heart could no longer resist the appeal of the gaping yellow mouths. With sudden resolution she dashed straight to Farmer Black's gooseberry patch, seized a berry and returned in a flash. The luscious morsel once divided among the small fry, however, she flew back to her post of observation.

The turtledoves seem a sentimental lot. Dur-

ing the courting season an enamored swain will sit for hours in silent contemplation of his own graceful pose, or chanting softly, "I am alone—alone—alone." The nest once built and the young ones hatched, he hovers about in tender constancy, bringing food to the mother as well as to the babies, and perching alongside of the nest as close as circumstances will allow. The little people are carefully tended until they are well-nigh grown, though they look most uninteresting objects. A young dove will sit silent and motionless for hours at a stretch, the only sign of life the glitter in his bright, bead-like eyes. Decide that he has gone daft, however, and venture a step too near,—presto! With flutter and whirr he takes to wings, and is off as if flying was as simple a feat as the traditional "falling off a log." The jaunty kingfisher, too, makes a devoted parent. One day we saw a fledgling fly straight out over the lake. The mother bird followed close, uttering cries of alarm. But, alas! she could not lend him wings. His young muscles were unequal to his ambition, and the little body dropped into the water. Both parents dashed madly back and forth over the still, shining surface, and then

wandered disconsolately from tree to tree along the shore, voicing their grief in wild, rattling cries.

Bird families hold together long after the nest is abandoned. They may be seen toward nightfall making their way by twos and threes to the tamarack swamp across the lake. The close-set, symmetrical branches provide the best of perches for inexperienced feet. "Birds of a feather flock together" when it comes to a question of lodging houses. One evening I counted one hundred and fifteen kingbirds roosting in the tapering spires of the tamarack trees.

September days are heralded by the return of the birds who have summered in Canada. Fox sparrows stop with us a week or so on their southward journey. The evening grosbeaks have come down from far Saskatchewan, and are thinking of spending the winter here. Wild geese wake one o' nights, with their hoarse "honk, honk." They have stopped for a taste of our tender frogs, but will soon re-form their triangular caravans and push on to the South. Ducks, mallards and canvasbacks, feed and fatten in the shallow water among the reeds. The gunners arrive as soon as

they, however, and will soon frighten them away. Everybody is getting ready for the great migration. Troops of young birds flutter through the trees, like autumn leaves blown by a gust of wind. They are taking their first lessons in migration and in food supply.

The natives look on at these preparations with cynical unconcern. Blue jays chatter and scream with a daily extension of their marvelous vocabulary. Crows come proudly out from the deep woods, leading black, ungainly broods, and direct their flight to the ripening cornfields. Nuthatches, the white-bellied and the Canadian, bustle about the tree trunks, bent on making the most of their time while Jack Frost spares the insect life. The chickadees, nature's acrobats, turn somersaults among the branches in sheer defiance of the law of gravitation. The cares of summer are over and done with. The woes of winter do not terrify this morsel of india rubber and compressed air. The English sparrow pursues his ubiquitous search for food with insular disdain of everything he does not understand. He has penetrated our sylvan retreats and secured a foothold here by the most impudent of squatter claims. He lives

and multiplies by dint of a systematic disregard of everybody's rights. The manners and the morals of the great city cling to him. He will have nothing in common with our country ways. He brings with him the blight of civilization.

THE JESTER

Myths from earth's childhood tell
Of Godhood visible,—
Indra, the azure-skied,
Four-handed, thousand-eyed;
Far-wandering Isis, chief
Lady of Love and Grief;
Zeus, on each rash revolt
Hurling the thunderbolt;
Woden of warrior form
Gray-mantled with the storm;
Lir of the foam-white hair,
Mad with the sea's despair.

But of those Splendors who
Conceived the kangaroo,
With gesture humorous
Shaped hippopotamus,
Intoned the donkey's bray
And, in an hour of play,
Taught peacocks how to strut?
Holy is Allah, but
Is holiness expressed
In hedgehogs? Whence the jest?
Even in creation's dawn
Was Puck with Oberon?

EMILIUS

"O, I could beat my infinite blockhead."
—Jonson's *The Devil is an Ass.*

Professor Emily has the kindest heart in the world and is always doing good. Her charities would make a rosary more fragrant than sandal-buds. And yet, perhaps, one time out of a thousand, her intention and her action trip each other up.

One day in early June she met on our village sidewalk, half a mile from the nearest pond or brook, a snapping turtle of formidable proportions, easily weighing his twenty or twenty-five pounds. In characteristic fashion she stopped to consider what she could do for him. Though he was, for his own part, neither cordial nor communicative, she decided that he must have lost his way, since the water, his natural habitat, lay behind him, and by a dexterous application of boot and stick she turned him about, quite against his will, so that his snout pointed toward home. But

the turtle, a surly, obstinate fellow, with no respect whatever for academic authority, refused to progress in the appointed path, and for some five minutes they argued it out together, with no manifest result except a distinct access of temper, rather evenly divided.

Your true philanthropist is not easily balked, and Professor Emily, returning the scrutiny of those small, keen, sinister eyes that watched her every movement, skillfully dodged that dark, vicious head which kept lurching forward from the olive-mottled shell in lightning-swift motions, seeking to strike this determined benefactor whom only muddled wits could mistake for an enemy.

"No, you don't," she answered him sternly, retreating before a sudden forward scramble of the broad webbed feet. Regardless of the terrified protests of a group of freshmen, who had gathered on the outskirts of the fray, she executed a rapid rear movement and seized the reptile firmly toward the end of its long, rough tail. Swinging this furious Caliban clear of the ground and holding it well out from her body, she considered what to do next.

The noon had suddenly turned hot. She found

herself panting a little. That turtle was surprisingly heavy. He was awkward to handle, too, twisting his neck back over his shell and darting it out left and right to a disconcerting distance. Soothing tones had no effect whatever and there seemed to be no suitable surface to pat. Even if he could and would have told her the exact location of his native creek, it might prove an irksome task to carry him so far, with those powerful jaws snapping most suggestively, only biding their time to get in an effective argument. Our house was close at hand. Why not accomplish two good deeds in one and give this self-willed waif to us for a pet? He would have a happy home and we another of God's creatures to love.

Dear Emily!

A shriek from Mary brought us to the kitchen. There was our household staff and stay mounted on a chair, clasping her skirts tight about her and apparently addressing the ceiling. There was our generous-hearted friend, flushed and weary, but, by a miracle, unbitten. There was our neighbor, Young Audubon, a budding naturalist, who had come to her aid *en route* and shared the honors of the delivery. And there was an indignant

snapping turtle, lying on its back in the middle of the kitchen floor. Notwithstanding the pale yellows of its under-side, shell and legs and tail, its expression was profane.

Joy-of-Life told Mary to be quiet. I poured the philanthropist a glass of water. Then, exchanging eloquent glances, we learned of the new pleasure in store for us.

"They make very nice pets," declared the donor, beaming with benevolence. "Large specimens live for hundreds of years. They are not at all exacting about their food and can be trained to eat from the hand."

"Not from mine," screamed Mary, bouncing up and down on her chair.

"Wasn't it Pierre Loti who had a pet tortoise?" continued Emily. "Its name was Suleima and it used to play with his white kitten. You might name the turtle Suleima, after its literary cousin."

"No. We'll name it Emilius, after you, if it must be named at all."

"But we haven't even a black kitten," protested Joy-of-Life, "and so little time for playing ourselves, that I am really afraid——"

"The dear might be dull. Wouldn't you better take him back to where you found him?"

"And leave him on the road? Lost? For motors to run over? How could he get out of their way? What does he know about motors?"

We admitted that he did not look modern.

"Besides, I must run to catch that next train. I've just remembered that I am due at the Melting Pot conference in town."

"Isn't there room for Emilius in the pot?" I called after her, but she was gone without waiting to be thanked.

"If ye'll put the baste in a suitcase," proposed Mary, "it's mesilf will take it over to her rooms an' lave it there."

But Young Audubon, who had been lying on the floor, examining Emilius from the tip of his tail to the snub of his snout, was enraptured,—so enraptured that the chelonian, as he called it, was pressed upon him as a free gift, regretfully declined because of certain prejudices on the part of a devoted but unscientific mother.

"I can study him almost as well over here," cheerily said Young Audubon. "Now the first thing to do is to drill a hole in his carapace."

"Carry what?"

"Upper shell, you know."

The boy, a blond, blushed pink at our ignorance and managed, in an offhand way, to touch the lower shell when he lightly referred to it as the plastron.

"The drilling won't hurt him. He won't even know it's happening."

Whatever the darkened spirit, inaccessible in its armor, thought of the subsequent proceedings, it registered no objection. Defenseless in his undignified position, Emilius suffered our well-meant attentions in bitter silence. The hole was drilled, the turtle tipped over, grasped again by his peculiarly unattractive tail and borne triumphantly to the grassy bank behind the house, where, like any domestic animal, he was tethered to a tree.

"What next?" asked Joy-of-Life, who was already losing her heart to the unresponsive monster.

"Water," pronounced Sir Oracle. "Turtles won't feed except under water. They can't swallow if their heads aren't completely immersed. It will take your largest dishpan——"

"It's mesilf that is going home to-morrow—to stay," announced Mary.

"Wouldn't a washtub do?" compromised Joy-of-Life. "There's that old one, you know, Mary, that you never use."

"First-rate. Show me where to find it, Mary. I'll give you a start to that wild cherry."

With a craft beyond the semblance of his open countenance, Young Audubon raced Mary to the cellar, where she arrived panting too hard for protests. They soon returned in amicable companionship, carrying a battered blue tub between them.

Jerking up Emilius by the cord, we plumped him into the tub, poured in abundant water and left him to be happy. Then our troubles began.

In the first place, Emilius absolutely refused to eat, in water or out. Understanding from our one authority that he needed a carnivorous diet, we tempted him, day after day, with every variety of meat brought to our door in the butcher's white-hooded cart with its retinue of hungry dogs, but nothing whatever would our boarder touch. And in the second place, he was, unlike Diogenes, forever scrambling out of his tub and digging

himself in at one point or another on the bank. Several times a day one or the other of us might be seen tugging up Emilius by his cord from the bowels of the earth and solicitously dumping him down again into his tub of water, which a shovelful of mud, shreds of meat and other attractions still failed to render homelike. His one object in life was to get out of it.

"If Emilius would only take a nap!" I sighed one warm afternoon, when I had just rescued him from a deep pit of his frenzied digging for the third time that day.

"Read him poetry," advised Joy-of-Life. Magical snatches of Bliss Carman's deep-sea songs ran through my head:—

"When sheering down to the Line
Come polar tides from the North,
Thy silver folk of the brine
Must glimmer and forth;"

* * * * * *

"The myriad fins are moving,
The marvelous flanges play."

Chesterton, who chuckled over another grotesque denizen of the deep, would have felt the charm of Emilius:

"Dark the sea was, but I saw him,
One great head with goggle eyes,
Like a diabolic cherub
Flying in those fallen skies.
* * * * * *
"For I saw that finny goblin
Hidden in the abyss untrod;
And I knew there can be laughter
On the secret face of God."

But it was almost too early for Chesterton, and quite too early for the fascinating fish poems of Rupert Brooke or for Chauncey Hickox's feeling apostrophe to a tortoise:

"Paludal, glum, with misdirected legs,
You hide your history as you do your eggs,
And offer us an osseous nut to crack
Much harder than the shell upon your back.
No evolutionist has ever guessed
Why your cold shoulder is within your chest—
Why you were discontented with a plan
The vertebrates accept, from fish to man.
For what environment did you provide
By pushing your internal frame outside?
How came your ribs in this abnormal place?
Inside your rubber neck you hide your face
And answer not."

Besides, I had no ground for hope that Emilius would be pleased by my reading of poetry or by anything else that I could do for him. He impressed me as intensely preoccupied, a turtle of a fixed idea.

I was standing by the tub at sunset, trying to ingratiate myself with its sulky occupant, whom I had just dragged up from his latest hole in the bank, by tickling his flippers with a playful twig, when Giant Bluff strode over from his adjacent territory and made us a party of three.

"How's your snapper?"

"I don't know. He doesn't tell. But I'm afraid he can't be feeling very fit, for he hasn't eaten anything since he came, a week ago."

"Hasn't, though? Huh! Looked out of my window at three o'clock last night and saw it grazing out there at the length of its rope, munching grass like any old cow."

Previous conversations with Giant Bluff had impaired our faith in his strict veracity.

"I thought turtles ate only animal food."

"If it's fresh and kicking. What you ought to do is to catch it a mess of frogs. 'Twould tear a live frog to pieces fast enough. But you've starved it to grass. That's all right. I raised turtles out on the Mojave desert one spell and fed 'em on nothing but grass. Quite a dainty out there. Sold 'em for five dollars apiece. Turned over a cool thousand——"

"Of turtles?"

"Of dollars. Easy's winking. This snapper of yours wouldn't be bad eating. Might fetch five cents a pound in the market."

I was not exactly fond of Emilius, but I hated to hear him discussed as edible pounds. Moving away a little, I began to stir lightly with my twig the loose earth in his last excavation. Giant Bluff was no favorite in our neighborhood, into which he had intruded, a stranger from the wild west, a year or two before. His little habit of sitting on his back steps, Sunday afternoons, with a rifle across his knees, and shooting with accurate aim every cat and hen that trespassed on his land was in itself enough to account for his unpopularity.

The shooting, however, except when a pet rooster or tabby was the victim, thrilled the children on the hill with a delicious terror. Only that morning I had seen Towhead, crouched behind a clump of syringas, playing sharp-shooter.

"Here!" he was shouting to Rosycheeks, who was approaching very slowly, like a fascinated bird. "Hurry up! You've got to come walking by and be shot."

"I doesn't want to," sobbed poor little Rosy-cheeks, "but I's tomin',—I's tomin'."

The glory of Giant Bluff, whose boasts were as prodigious as his profession was mysterious, had recently, however, been tarnished by an open discomfiture. One of our oldest and most respected citizens, a Yankee in blood and bone, driver of a depot carriage, had incurred Giant Bluff's deadly displeasure. And this was the way of it. In this beginning of our sleepy summertide, when the campus was as empty of life as a seigniorial park, when the citizens were able to use the sidewalks and the shopkeepers dozed behind their counters, the New York train dropped at our station a sharp-voiced young woman in a flamboyant hat.

Uncle Abram, the only driver to persist in meeting trains through the long vacation, watched from his carriage, with indifferent eyes, her brisk approach.

"Is this a public vehicle?"

"Think likely."

"Do you know where Mr. Benjamin Bluff lives?"

"Maybe."

"Take me there."

On the way the fare, Giant Bluff's daughter by a former marriage, questioned Uncle Abram as to her father's business and position in the town, but she might as well have tried to wring information from Emilius. Arrived at the house, she bade her driver inquire for her if Mr. Bluff was at home, saying that otherwise she would not call.

Mrs. Bluff, whom Uncle Abram had never met before, answered the bell.

"Mr. Bluff in?"

"No. Why?"

"Nothin' partic'lar," and Uncle Abram backed himself away.

"Well?" queried his passenger, as he started up Daniel Webster with a professional crack of the whip.

"Ain't to hum."

"Who came to the door?"

"Lady."

"What lady?"

"Dunno."

"Was it his wife?"

"Dunno as 'twas his wife."

His exasperated fare, afterwards tracking down her parent in Boston, made use of this incident for the slander of her stepmother.

"A nice impression she makes, to be sure! Even that numskull of a driver doubted whether she was your wife or not."

Giant Bluff came back that evening breathing out threats of slaughter. Before midnight it was noised all about our village that he had sworn to shoot Uncle Abram on sight. The old driver was warned by a group of excited boys who found him serenely smoking over a game of checkers and were quite unable to interest him in their tidings. But the next day, when the station platform was well filled with our business men waiting for the eight o'clock into town, Uncle Abram drove up to the depot and reined in Daniel Webster just against the spot where Giant Bluff was standing, a little aloof for the reason that nobody cared to stand with him.

Taken by surprise as Uncle Abram coolly looked him over, Giant Bluff, unexpectedly to himself, said:

"Good morning."

"Ez good a mornin' ez God ever made."

Giant Bluff, who prided himself on his atheism, began to swagger.

"That's stuff and nonsense. Only babies and fools believe such rubbish nowadays."

"Thet so? Ain't no God, eh, and he never made no mornin's? Wal! Maybe ye'll put me in the way of findin' out about quite a few little things like that. I've hearn tell thet ye're goin' to shoot me, an' my rheumatiz is so bad this summer thet I'd be obleeged if ye'd shoot me right now an' hev it over."

"You—you insulted my wife," gasped Giant Bluff.

"Not a nary," protested Uncle Abram, with a touch of indignant color in his weather-beaten cheeks. "I said I didn't know whether the lady thet come to the door was your wife or not, an' no more I didn't. I hedn't never seen her afore. But even s'posin' thet your morals didn't hurt you none, do ye think I'd let it out to a stranger? No, siree; I'd a kep my mouth shet, for the credit o' the town. An' now thet I've had my say on thet little misunderstandin', ye kin shoot me ez soon ez ye like."

The crowded platform roared for joy, the op-

portune train came in, and Giant Bluff, the first to swing aboard, was not seen in the village again for a fortnight. So it came to pass that he was but newly acquainted with Emilius.

As I was aimlessly poking about with my twig in the last of those mysterious holes which Emilius had been so desperately resolved on digging, a number of small, round, white objects came to view.

"Why, what are those?" was my imbecile exclamation, stooping to see them better in the half light. Forthwith Giant Bluff was stooping at my shoulder.

"*Eggs*. Didn't you ever see turtles' eggs before? It beats me what you learned ladies don't know."

I went abruptly in to Joy-of-Life, and there we sat in the dusk, overwhelmed with contrition. Poor, dear, misunderstood, ill-treated Emilius! All he wanted was a chance to get away from the water and lay her eggs in some warm, deep chamber, where he could lie hidden for days, and they for weeks, in comfort and security. And how we had worried her with our continual upjerkings and immersions, how we had kept him digging one

forbidden nursery after another, how arrogantly we had set ourselves against the unpersuadable urge of instinct!

Before breakfast the next morning we hurried out together to set Emilius free. There was no Emilius. The tub stood empty, from the tree dangled a bit of cut cord, the loose earth that marked the holes had been neatly raked over, there were no small, white, round objects to be found. Had Emilius gone for good and taken his eggs with her?

As we searched the ground in vain, Giant Bluff sauntered out of his back door, smiling an inscrutable smile.

"Saw that snapper of yours walking off an hour since. It went under the back fence out into the woods. Reckon you can't catch it, though it was traveling rather slow; couldn't hurry much, for it had a dozen little turtles trotting along on each side. Quite a handsome family!"

Joy-of-Life and I, turning our backs on that stupendous liar, stared at each other with horror dawning in our eyes.

Had he——? Would he——? Could he——?

Emilius!

HUDSON'S CAT

"This night our cat ranne crying from one side of the ship to the other, looking overboord, which made us to wonder; but we saw nothing."

—*Juet's Journal.*

What did you see, O pussy-cat-mew,
Pet of the *Half-Moon's* turbulent crew?
Who taught them mew-tiny? Wasn't it you?

Juet kept journal of storm and fog
And the mermaid that set them all agog,
But what has become of the cat-a-log?

Henry Hudson, the master sage,
Writ large his name on history's page,
But you, you too, were a purr-sonage.

Shall the tale slight you, whose tail was a-quiver
As you and Hudson sailed up the river
Made only his by Time the giver?

Why did you take to adventuring,
Puss-illanimous fireside thing?
What was the cargo you hoped to bring?

Did you dream of multitudinous mice
Running about the Isles of Spice
In a paradoxical Paradise?

Were you not homesick where monsters swam,
Dolorous dolphin and clamorous clam,
For your sunny stoop in Amsterdam?

Months at sea, while the billows roared,
And the Milky Way not a cupful poured;
No wonder Tabby looked over-bored.

You had your feelin's, as felines go,
Poor little puss. What scared you so?
O stupid sailors that didn't know!

Was it a dogfish struck the spark
From your sea-green eyes with the quaint remark
That you were sailing upon a bark?

Millions of happy pussies fall
Into oblivion; still you call
From the top of your ancient cater-wall,

Call on the centuries to concur
In praise of Tabby the Mariner,
Who discovered the Catskills, named for her.

CATASTROPHES

"And when Maeldune and his men went into the best of the houses they saw no one in it but a little cat that was in the middle of the house, and it playing about on the four stone pillars that were there, and leaping from one to another. It looked at the men for a short space, but it did not stop from its play." —Lady Gregory's *Book of Saints and Wonders.*

People are people, and cats are cats. We do not know our pussies. We pet them but we cannot tame them. Landor's Cincirollo,

"wagging his dread jaw at every chirp
Of bird above him on the olive branch,"

is latent in Wordsworth's

"kitten on the wall
Sporting with the leaves that fall."

These charming fireside tenants of ours have their own concerns, which lie aloof from the human. Even nursery-lore bears witness to this:

"'Pussy-cat, Pussy-cat,
Where have you been?'
'I've been to London,
To see the Queen.'
'Pussy-cat, Pussy-cat,
What did you there?'
'I frightened a little mouse
Under her chair.'"

But if we cannot forego the consciousness of those tiger claws hid in the velvet daintiness of the light feet, neither can tabby put her trust in us. Race memory and, too often, individual experience accuse us. Her reticence with humankind, her stealth, her self-reliance, might well have been stamped deep into cat character by the monstrous cruelties she has suffered at our hands. Her reputed connection with witches, of whom it is estimated that Christendom put to death some nine million, involved the poor animal in their hideous tortures. Indeed, she caught it from all sides. Cats were flung into the bonfires to perish with the helpless old crones who had cared for them. A witch might be exorcised by whipping a cat, like the wretched puss long and solemnly flogged by twelve priests "in a parlor at Denham, til shee vanished out of theyr sight." And it was a cat, so confession on the rack declared, that after an accursed christening was cast into the sea to raise a storm that should drown James of Scotland, "the devil's worst enemy," on his wedding journey home from Denmark. This royal witch-hunter, who came thirteen years later to the throne of England, was not content until thirty

human victims had paid by horrible deaths for the black art of that storm.

A few of these maligned cats have left a distinctive record on the blurred page of history. Rutterkin, the familiar of Agnes Flower, whose very name should have attested her innocence, was black as the soot of hell, but Mother Fraunces, who learned the secrets of sorcery from her own grandmother, had "a whyte spotted cat * * * to be her sathan," while the leader of the infernal chorus in the cavern scene of *Macbeth* was a tabby:

"Thrice the brinded cat hath mewed."

Into other inoffensive little beasts, "hedge-pigs," puppies, owls, bats, crows, rabbits, toads, the evil spirits were believed to enter, though Thomas Heywood notes with satisfaction that no imp was ever so sacrilegious as to masquerade as dove or lamb; but the cat calumny has lasted longest.

"And shall I be afrayd
Of Cats in mine own Countrey?"

Some of us are, for a recent criminal trial in one of the Middle States brought out the fact that many an American pocket, even to-day, car-

ries a silver bullet as a talisman against the "black hex," or witch-cat.

Yet from the cruelties of superstition poor puss has suffered less than from the cruelties of sport. Rustic festivals in Merry England were not complete without the archery matches whose target was a terrified, bleeding cat, hung up in a wicker "bottle," while shouts of glee greeted the successful hits in the whizzing storm of arrows. As a special merry-making, a great company of our jovial ancestors would set forth on horseback, with drum-beating and all manner of hullabaloo, attended by half the population of the town, to enjoy themselves at the expense of some ill-fated pussy. A barrel, half full of soot, was swung from a cross-beam firmly fixed on two high poles. Into this barrel she was plunged and under it the valiant horsemen rode as gayly as the English ride to a fox-hunt even yet, striking it tremendous blows with clubs and wooden hammers. If any life was left in the bruised and mangled cat, after the destruction of the barrel, the man who put an end to her by some spectacular novelty of barbarity was the hero of the day.

How can we expect wise old Grimalkin to for-

give us our atrocities? She remembers. Accepting or rejecting at her pleasure what courtesies are offered her, she maintains her own reserves. Rare are the recorded instances of her going out of her way to serve mankind, to whom she owes no debt of gratitude. Yet a legend, attested by two portraits of this Good Samaritan, tells that when Sir Henry Wyatt, father of the poet, was imprisoned in the Tower under Richard III and left to perish of starvation, a cat came daily to his window-grating, bringing him a pigeon from a neighboring dove-cot, which doubtless had its own opinion of her charity. No wonder that Sir Henry, in his later, honored years under the Tudors, "would ever make much of cats, as other men will of their spaniels or hounds."

With the best will in the world toward *felis domestica,* I have never been able to maintain fortunate relations with the individuals that have come my way. Colleagues of mine have reared kittens that have become the pride and joy of their hearths, as yellow Leo, who passed from the happiest of homes into a lyric shrine; but my own cats make a sorry parade down the avenue of memory. At the far, dim end of the avenue

glints out a chubby child in a calico-caped sunbonnet, laboriously trundling in her doll-carriage five blind kittens, with the benevolent intent of giving them a pleasant airing. The little copper-toed shoes bump on the rocks and are caught in the brambles of that rough pasture, while at every jolt that sprawl of kittenhood overflowing the small red chariot miauls so dolorously that their benefactor is sorely tempted to sit down and cry with them. But amazement at their lack of appreciation is less than resentment at the conduct of their grim, gray mother, Old Spotnose, who comes tearing after in fierce pursuit and overtakes the rocking vehicle, whence she snatches one of the wailing passengers by the scruff of its neck and races back with her dangling burden to the woodshed. Determined to make the remaining kittens happy, the child goes tugging and panting on, but still there is heard that dreaded rush in the rear, and another, another, another and yet another of those squallerkins is kidnapped. Nothing is left at last but an empty doll-carriage, overturned among the daisies and, deep within the sunbonnet, a puckered, crimson face flowing with tears.

Throughout my childhood Old Spotnose continued to be an unsocial and ungracious being. Perhaps annoyed by our persistent attentions to her frequent families in the woodshed, she sought out all manner of hiding-places from haymow to cellar. Memorable is the Sunday morning when our mother lifted down the hatbox from her upper closet shelf and looked in, her Sabbath expression completely destroyed, to find a huddle of new kittens reposing in the crown of her best bonnet. The sudden disappearances of these successive kitten groups were to my slowly dawning apprehension first a mystery and then a horror. Old Spotnose finally took to the woods, returning to the kitchen door for food, a gaunt, half-savage creature, only under stress of icebound weather. When we moved away from the village, she could not be found, but one of my brothers, back for a visit the following summer, heard that she had been seen skulking about the house and that kindly neighbors had thrown meat and fish in her way. Carrying a basin of milk, he went to a break in the barn foundations and, lying flat on the ground, called and coaxed. Relenting toward humankind at the last, sick Old Spotnose,

hardly more than skin and bone, crawled out to him. She would not taste the milk, but she lay against his knee for a while, accepting his caresses; then dragged herself back under the barn to die alone.

From that time to this, all my personal relations with cats have ended in grief. One engaging kitten after another grew into romantic or adventurous youth only to meet disaster. Perhaps our most heart-rending experience was with Triptolemus, taken from his mother in such tender infancy that we could not teach him to lap milk or even suck it from the finger. Finally he solved the problem himself by tumbling into the saucer and, when he was lifted out, licking his feet with relish. For days he insisted on the saucer promenade, taking nourishment only by applying his wayward little tongue to each foot in turn. From a roly-poly innocent, wondering at the world out of the roundest of blue eyes, he grew, with the astonishing speed of kittenhood, into a profligate young ruffian, limping home from one disreputable fight after another with torn ears and gashed neck and thighs. One wound deepened into a festering, offensive sore, beyond the cure of our do-

mestic surgery, and as veterinaries and animal hospitals were then foreign to our experience, a brother, in my absence, was bidden take the cat down to the river and drown him. Very slowly the executioner, a stout bag in his hand, made his way to the water's edge, Trip careering about his feet and playing with the fatal string. The bag was weighted with stones and the cat was ordered to enter the open mouth. Trip sniffed at it suspiciously, did not like the game, but looked up trustfully into the familiar face and obeyed. The boy who flung that bag out into the current and came running home as if nine reproachful little ghosts were at his heels could never be brought to drown a cat again.

Later on, there was a graceful mite, Argon, whom I can still see jumping after moths in the moonlight; but before the moth-season was over, there came a night whose darkness never rendered him up. Strayed or stolen, killed, chased, enchanted, it was not for us to know.

Years after, our home rejoiced for a few brief weeks in the charms of Frisky Fuzzy, a peculiarly affectionate, confiding kitty, who met a cruel death by the teeth of the rector's terrier. This

young priest was a holy man in general, but he had no regard for the sixth commandment as broken by his dog. All the neighborhood was aroused, for one beloved puss after another had been left torn and bleeding by that hypocritical little brute, who always kept an eye out for fresh victims as he trotted sedately at his master's heels, making pastoral calls. When at last vengeance found him out and the dog lay poisoned on the parsonage steps, the rector's grief was so sincere that my anger melted in sympathy. There had been a coolness between us since Frisky Fuzzy's fate, but on the next occasion when we met at a neutral tea-table, I attempted a reconciliation.

"Perhaps your dog and my cat have made up our quarrel in heaven," I began, passing him the sugar.

"I don't believe your cat went to heaven," he retorted, passing me the lemon.

Our last attempt at a home kitten was with a little sprite of so perverse and irreverent a temper that the most liberal theology could hardly hold out to us the hope of finding her again in any Paradise where pious pussies congregate.

This impish being was foisted upon us by an old friend whose persuasive powers, as I had long known, were irresistible. In tones that were dulcet even by way of the telephone she invited me to shelter her wild young puss, Polly, during the summer, while she closed her own house and, bearing Billy in a basket, sought the repose of an ocean isle.

"Why don't you carry Polly with you, too?"

"There isn't room in the basket and, besides, I'm sure that *two* cats would be against the rules of the railroad."

"But Polly takes to the trees whenever I try to pat her. She would run away."

"Oh, I can arrange that for you very nicely. I'll let you have a kitten of hers and then she'll be perfectly contented."

"A kitten of Polly's! She is only a kitten herself."

"Yes, you are quite right, as usual. One kitten might not be enough to steady her. It would be better for you to have two, and then Polly will be kept busy in teaching them to play together."

"Now how many catkins have you over there? Own up."

"Well! Not counting the pincushion pussy that the mice like to nibble, we have six on hand just now,—Billy and Polly and the four kits. Such darlings! Everybody wants them. The competition is really terrible, but of course I insist that you shall have first choice. Come over this afternoon, please. We are taking the early train to-morrow morning."

Spellbound by the cheerful audacity of these proposals, I went, and when, after much active exertion on our part, Polly had been caught and securely hasped down under a heaving basket-lid, I dubiously selected two of her blind babes to bear her company.

"Who takes the other two?"

"You do," responded my friend more winsomely than ever, "unless you want to be a horrid Herod and go down in history as another slayer of the innocents. Look at those little dears! Listen to them! Have you the heart to ask me to drop them into a pail of cold, cold water? What sort of a physiologist are you to suppose that kittens, born only yesterday, could live without their mother? And Polly would miss them dreadfully. I never saw a more devoted family. As soon as

they are old enough to gambol, they will be such a pleasure for you all,—especially your sister. And you can easily find nice homes for them, if you want to give them away later on."

The four members of our summer household each had the privilege of naming one of the kittens. Housewife Honeyvoice called the black one Topsy; the small schoolgirl, Esther, dubbed the prettiest Daisy; I gave to the homeliest the encouraging appellation of Cinderella, and Sister Jane, returning from a visit to find the feline family in possession, promptly branded the fourth as Beelzebub. Out of deference to her outraged feelings, a nursery was prepared down cellar, where Polly, for so inexperienced a parent, took excellent care of her babies except when my officious ignorance interfered.

Still a blunderer, I put the kittens out on the south piazza the second day to treat them to a bracing interlude of air and sunshine. Polly at once went frantic, mewing and scratching for readmittance. Presently a succession of queer, soft thumps brought me to the scene, and there was Polly, Beelzebub flapping from her mouth, climbing madly up the outside of the screen door. As

soon as she saw me, she parted her jaws to emit another of those shrill meows that had been profaning the peace of the house and down fell poor Belze with a piteous whack on the piazza floor.

Close scrutiny of the situation revealed a big, saffron-colored cat, with a dangerous glint in his green eyes, peering from the shrubbery and, self-rebuked, I restored Polly and her jewels to the safe seclusion of the cellar.

But I still held to my faith in the open air and, as soon as the kittens began to blink, Housewife Honeyvoice and I pulled out from the lumber that chokes up cellars under feminine charge the big wire box which had been the Castle Joyous of Robin Hood. Planted firmly on the grassplot outside the cellar door, with a cat-hole just large enough for Polly cut in the wire, it was so secure as to appease even her maternal fears. Every morning she marshaled her little troop out to this new abode, carefully drove them all in and tended them there until sunset, when she led them back to the cellar. All the cats in the vicinity came to call, but Polly was the very spirit of inhospitality. She always maintained an anxious guard against marauders and, at the approach of the most amiable

old gossip, would fill up the wire doorway with her own slender body, spitting and bristling in the very face of the disconcerted guest. Cinderella, the most precocious of the kittens, observed with admiration this form of welcome and scandalized all observers by scampering to the door one day, as her mother was returning from a brief constitutional, and with all due ceremonies of defiance refusing her admission. After one astonished instant, Polly recovered her presence of mind, bowled out of the way that comical ball of impudence and made it her first parental duty, after entering, to box Cinder's ears.

As the kittens grew older, they had the run of the house, which they filled with elfin mirth of motion and reels of Puckish revel. Placed in a row on my desk, they would watch the moving pen with fascinated eyes, till one shy paw after another would steal out to investigate and presently there would be a flurry of funny antics all over a blotted page. By autumn they had all gone their ways to different households, except Esther's Daisy, whom we kept, but the joy of kittenhood was the only life they had. Doom, like a black cat hunting mice, speedily caught them all, un-

less, perchance, dogs and motors were kinder than we fear to Cinder, who, one winter day, after her morning saucer of milk, struck blithely out into the sunshine from the best of homes and never, though search, inquiry and advertisement did their utmost, was heard of again. Little Bub proved so puny that he was left with Polly, reinstated, much to her content, in her own kingdom, but not even her puzzled solicitude, varied by cuffings, could keep him alive. As for Topsy and Daisy, I have not the heart to tell how they perished, but though I say it as should not, Daisy was too bad for this world. An incarnate imp, she mocked all discipline and scorned all affection, capering into new mischief at every rebuke and scratching herself free from caresses. Despising laps and cushions, she took to the air like an aeroplane, forever on the leap from one forbidden shelf, mantel or flower-pot to another. Her agility was supernatural. She would hang from a curtain cord, spring thence to the top of a door, pounce on a bowing caller's back, and within ten seconds fill the hall with such skurry and commotion that Hecate and all her witches could have done no more. She could not keep quiet, even at night, until House-

wife Honeyvoice devised the plan of putting her to bed in a basket, with a cork dangling from the handle for her to play with in her dreams.

Joy-of-Life was ill that winter and, because the kitten's pranks would now and then divert a suffering hour, we bore with Daisy as long as patience could, until, indeed, she forsook the house and set up an independent establishment with a battered ruffian of a cat under our south porch. Before forsaking the house, she had derided everything in it. She had, indeed, an uncanny gift of singling out for her most profane attentions the special objects that humankind holds sacred. On the top of my desk stands a small Florentine bust of Dante, whose austere countenance she loved to slap. Beyond it hangs a cross of inlaid olive-wood from Jerusalem, apparently inaccessible, but this infant athlete, precariously balancing with one foot on the curved woodwork of the desk and two feet clawing the wall, would stretch herself out like an elastic until her free foot could give the lower tip of the cross a smart rap and set it swinging. Punished, she would strike back, hitting us in the face with an absurd, soft paw; called, she would run away; caught, she would kick and bite.

Our most tactful cajolery she met with suspicion and disdain, if not with open ridicule. Graceful as a whirling leaf, she was untamable as the wind that whirls it,—the wildest wisp of kittenhood that ever left an aching memory.

Since the tragic exit of Daisy, whose confidence I could never win,—and her cynical little ghost bids me admit that her distrust was borne out by the event,—I have counted myself unworthy to take any kitten to hearth and home. I doubt if any would come. My neighbors across the way have a lordly old Thomas, who, smelling dog on my skirts, spits at me as I mount the steps. My neighbors of the cross-cut have a glossy black puss in a resplendent red collar, who politely but unrelentingly evades all my advances. The feline heart has found me out. Yet I still cherish a wistful regard for these delicate-footed, wary creatures, who develop so suddenly from madcap frolic into dignity, discretion and reserve, keeping even in the most domestic surroundings a latent sense of a free life elder than civilization, when, as Swinburne tells his silken crony:

> "Wild on woodland ways your sires
> Flashed like fires."

A friend of mine, a scholar, and therefore proud in thought and poor in purse, living at the top of a London apartment house, had a cherished cat by name of Fettles, who never touched the ground from September to June. Rooms and corridor limited his promenades, except for a long box of plants that filled the diminutive balcony. To the casual eye he seemed well content with his cloistered life, purring on cozy cushions, performing painstaking toilets, cuddling down on the table close to the arm of his mistress as she read and wrote, even condescending, for her pleasure, to play with a tassel or ball, but I noted that my arrivals brought to Fettles a quivering excitement. It was not my conversation, which he ignored, nor my gifts, for after his first scandalous orgy on American catnip I was forbidden to bring him anything more tempting than a chocolate mouse. It was my boots, especially if I had been walking across Regent Park and brought in honest earth instead of pavement scraps and taxi smells. Fettles would rush to my feet and sniff at sole and heel and toe, arching his back and lashing his tail when the odors brought him peculiarly thrilling tidings of the strange world so far below his bal-

cony. In the summer he was the guest of a Devonshire cottage, but for the first week or two he would be frightened by the vastness and queerness of out-of-doors. He would crouch for hours on the threshold, looking out with mingled ecstasy and terror on the garden, now and then reaching down a dubious paw to touch the warm brown earth. By degrees he could be coaxed to join his mistress at afternoon tea under the plum trees, cautiously placing himself in touch of the hem of her gown. The summer would be half over before he was at ease in his brief Paradise.

Fettles, by the way, was succeeded by Thomas Heywood, and Tommy Heywood by Sisi, the only Londoner I know who enjoyed the air-raids. Whenever a Zeppelin alarm scared the lodgers out of their "honey-heavy dew of slumber," Sisi had the sport of his life. Knowing that his mistress, even if a bomb were crashing through her ceiling, would not abandon him, he would dash hither and yon in a rapture of disobedience, now under the bed, now behind a bookcase, continually evading her frenzied clutches. Slippered feet went skurrying past the door, but still Sisi sprang and scampered, even wheeling about in giddy cir-

cles as if this were the chance of chances for a kitten to catch its tail. My friend, with Sisi clasped to her panting breast, was invariably the last lodger to reach the refuge of the cellar.

The cats of legend are not as many as one would suppose, or perhaps the fault is still mine. Even here they evade me. I can call but few to mind, Puss in Boots, Sir Tybalt in the animal epic of *Reynard the Fox,* the Kilkenny cats of tragic fame, the grinning Cheshire cat—for whose like I vainly looked in Cheshire—the mysterious Knurremurre of Norway, and the far-fabled "King of the Cats." English chronicles, none too authentic, tell of a busy mouser that made Dick Whittington mayor of London, and of a faithful puss who ventured down a chimney of The Tower to cheer her imprisoned master, the Earl of Southampton, by a call. More worthy of credit is John Locke's account, preserved by Hakluyt, of an honorable incident in his voyage to Jerusalem, undertaken in the spring of 1553. The pilgrim ship was about fifty miles from Jaffa, when it "chanced by fortune that the Shippes Cat lept into the Sea, which being downe, kept her selfe very valiauntly above water, notwithstanding the

great waves, still swimming, the which the master knowing, he caused the Skiffe with halfe a dosen men to goe towards her and fetch her againe, when she was almost halfe a mile from the shippe, and all this while the ship lay on staies. I hardly beleeve they would have made such haste and meanes if one of the company had been in the like perill. They made the more haste because it was the patrons cat. This I have written onely to note the estimation that cats are in, among the Italians, for generally they esteeme their cattes, as in England we esteeme a good Spaniell."

Petrarch and Tasso are eminent witnesses to the Italian fondness for cats. The French, too, have long been famed as cat lovers; Montaigne, Chateaubriand, Gautier, Pierre Loti, Jules Lemaitre, Baudelaire, La Fontaine, Champfleury, Michelet have all written charmingly of the Fireside Sphinx, leaving it to a Belgian poet, Maeterlinck, to present poor pussy as a stage villain. English literature takes less account of her, though Chaucer keenly expresses the friar's choice of a comfortable seat by telling how

"fro the bench he droof awey the cat,"

and Skelton has poured invective on the slayer of Philip Sparow, calling down vengeance

> "On all the hole nacyon
> Of cattes wilde and tame;
> God send them sorowe and shame!"

No reader of Tudor drama needs to be reminded of Gammer Gurton's Gyb, crouching in the fireplace, where her eyes, mistaken for sparks of fire, refused to be blown out. Shakespeare's frequent references to the "harmless, necessary cat" are as accurate as they are nonchalant, but Milton does not mention her in his account of the creation, although she would certainly have been more comforting to Eve, at least, than "Behemoth, biggest born of earth," or "the parsimonious emmet." Indeed, an Arabic story of the creation claims that the dog and cat were allowed to accompany Adam and Eve, for their protection and solace, into the waste beyond the flaming sword. Herrick's "green-eyed kitling;" Walpole's Selima of

> "The fair round face, the snowy beard,
> The velvet of her paws,
> Her coat that with the tortoise vies,
> Her ears of jet and emerald eyes,"

—charms all forfeit to her longing for stolen goldfish; Arnold's Atossa

> —"So Tiberius might have sat,
> Had Tiberius been a cat,"—

have made their way into poetry, but prose, especially the familiar prose of letters, has kept green the memory of many a pussy more. We love Dr. Johnson the better for his consideration of Hodge "for whom," reports Boswell, "he himself used to go out and buy oysters, lest the servants, having that trouble, should take a dislike to the poor creature." Of course the tender-hearted Cowper cared for cats, and even the industrious Southey would turn his epic-blunted quill to accounts of Rumpelstilzchen and Hurlyburlybuss,—sonorous cat-names closely pressed upon by Mark Twain's Sour Mash, Apollinaris, Zoroaster and Blatherskite, while Canon Liddon's Tweedledum and Tweedledee of Amen Corner are not far behind.

No portrait of a cat in English verse is more vivid than that given in the sestette of Mrs. Marriott Watson's oft-praised sonnet:

> "Sphinx of my quiet hearth! who deign'st to dwell
> Friend of my toil, companion of mine ease,
> Thine is the lore of Ra and Rameses;
> That men forget dost thou remember well,
> Beholden still in blinking reveries,
> With somber, sea-green gaze inscrutable."

It is pleasant to think that the race memory of puss goes farther back in time and farther east in geography than the witchcraft cruelties of Christendom. The Mohammedan faith has been kinder to her than ours. Persia has ever held her in affection. Mahomet cut off the flowing edge of his sleeve rather than disturb Muezza's nap. But most of all her inherent aristocracy springs from those shining centuries by the Nile, when under the protection of the moon-eyed goddess Pasht she was honored in life and embalmed in death. The supreme Ra, the Sun God, was addressed as "the Great Cat," and *The Book of the Dead* holds the mystic text: "I have heard the mighty word which the Ass spake unto the Cat in the House of Hapt-re."

TO HAMLET, A COLLIE

Strange dog, with terror planted in your heart,
At your dim root of life a piteous dread
Foreboding evil doom, a panic bred
Of some fierce shock to puppy nerves! No art
Home kindness can devise prevents your start,
Wild stare and panting breath at each new tread;
Your anxious eyes keep watch, uncomforted
By our poor love, too weak to take your part
Against that fatal menace which, for us
No less than you, lurks in the coming springs.
Of all our creeds and dreams incredulous,
Thrilled by these sudden agonies, you quake
Through all your lithe young body. What should make
A collie know the grief of mortal things?

HAMLET AND POLONIUS

"There's something in his soul
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood."
—Shakespeare's *Hamlet.*

It was a beautiful morning, whose beauty could only hurt, of the first June since Joy-of-Life went away. All green paths were desolate for lack of her glad step. And the stately kennel that had been known from the first as "Sigurd's House" stood silent, its green door closed on bare floor and cobwebbed walls. Stray cats passed it unconcerned and hoptoads took their ease on the edges of "Sigurd's Drinking-cup" hollowed out in the adjacent rock. In an hour when the pain of living seemed wellnigh unbearable, the Angel of Healing called me up by telephone. His voice was gruff, but kindly.

"Say, you miss that old dog of yours a sight, don't you?"

I could feel the confidential pressure of Sigurd's golden head against my knee as I briefly assented,

recognizing the speaker as the proprietor of certain collie kennels not far distant.

"He had a right good home, that dog had, and you must have got pretty well used to collie ways."

"If you were going to ask me to buy another collie, please don't. Sigurd is my dog—forever."

"Well! Since you put it that way—but I'm at my wit's end to get rid of a collie pup—a pretty little fellow, rough Scotch, sable and white, like yours—that's scairt at his own shadow."

"What scared him?"

"Blest if I know! His sire, Commander, and his dam, Whisper, are as nice, normal, easy-tempered dogs as you could find anywhere, and their litters take after 'em—'cept this youngster, who sulks all day long off in some dark hole by himself and shakes if we speak to him. Nobody has mishandled the little chap so far's I've ever seen or heard, but the least thing—a shout or a rattle of tools or any fool noise—throws him into such a funk that all the rest of the puppies are getting panicky and the whole caboodle is running wild. There's no two ways about it. I've got to clear that born ninny out. I sold him a month ago to a lady for fifty dollars, but she brought him back

in a week and said he was about as cheerful company as a tombstone. Now see here! You can have him for twenty, or for nothing, just as you feel after you've given him a try."

"But I don't want him. I shouldn't want him if he were the best dog in the country."

"Then I reckon I'll have to shoot him. I could give him away, but he's such a wretched, shivery little rascal that most any sort of folks would be too rough for him. 'Twould be kinder to put him out of the world and done with it. He's had seven months of it now and pretty well made up his mind that he don't like it. I did think maybe you might be willing to give him a chance."

I was surprised to hear my own voice saying into the telephone: "I'll try him for a few days, if you care to bring him over."

Yet I dreaded his coming. The friend who gave us Sigurd had offered us the past winter a very prince of puppies, the daintiest, most spirited, most winsome little collie that a free affection could ask, but Joy-of-Life and I could not make him ours. We could regard him only as a visitor in Sigurd's haunts, and the Lady of Cedar Hill, resenting the name of Guest which we had given

him, re-named him Eric and took him to her own home. Here she soon won the utter devotion of his dog-heart, which, though now no longer beating, through that ardent and faithful love "tastes of immortality."

I was in the veranda off the study, trying to busy myself with my old toys of books and pen and paper, when the young collie was led in by a small girl, the only person at the kennels whose call he obeyed or whose companionship he welcomed. Deposited beside my chair, he promptly retreated to the utmost distance the narrow limits of his prison-house allowed, panting and quaking.

"Be good, Blazey," the child admonished him, stroking his head with a sunburned hand from whose light caress he at once shuddered away. "I'll come to see you by and by."

"By and by is easily said," the puppy made answer with incredulous eyes that first watched her out of sight and then rolled in anguish of despair from the wire screening of the porch to roof and wall.

"Is your name Blazey?" I asked him gently, but his fit of ague only grew worse as he turned his ghastly stare on me

"with a look so piteous in purport
As if he had been loosed out of hell
To speak of horrors."

"I made further efforts at conversation while the day wore on, but that little yellow image of throbbing terror, upright in the remotest corner, would not even turn its head toward my voice. In vain I remonstrated:

"Alas, how is't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep."

The constant tremble of the poor, scared, pitiful puppy was intensified by every train whistle and motor horn to a violent shaking. I could not flutter a leaf nor drop a pencil without causing a nervous twitch of the brown ears. Suddenly the crack of an early Fourth of July torpedo electrified him into a frenzy of fright. If it had been the fatal shot in reserve for Blazey he could not have made a madder leap nor wheeled about in more distracted circles. In one of these lunatic reels he struck against me and, gathering him close, I crooned such comfort as I had into that dizzy, quivering, pathetic face; but he tore himself loose and fled gasping back to his corner be-

seeching a perilous and cruel universe to let him alone. I, for one, declined:

"Angels and ministers of grace, defend us!—
Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou comest in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee; I'll call thee Hamlet."

The puppy accepted his new name, as he accepted his dinner, with lugubrious resignation and the air of saying to himself:

"Heaven hath pleas'd it so,
To punish me with this, and this with me."

His misery was more appealing than a thousand funny gambols could have been, and the household, those of us who were left, conspired in various friendly devices to make him feel at home. The child at the kennels had taught him one sole accomplishment, that of giving his paw, and Sister Jane, in a fine spirit of sacrifice, made a point of shaking hands with him long and politely at least a dozen times a day, rushing to a faucet as soon as this hospitable rite was accomplished for a fierce scouring of her own polluted palms. Housewife Honeyvoice tempted his appetite with the most savory of puppy menus and kept up such a flow of tuneful comment while he ate that, even

in his days of deepest gloom, he rarely failed to polish his dish and then thump it all about in an unscientific effort to extract gravy from tinware. Esther's arms were now as strong as her feet were lively and, after the first week or so, he would let her pick him up like a baby and carry him about and would even be surprised, at times, into a game of romps. He needed play as much as he needed food, but he was curiously awkward at it, not merely with the usual charming clumsiness of puppies but with a blundering uncertainty in all his movements, miscalculating his jumps, lighting in a sprawling heap and often hurting himself by a lop-sided tumble.

Yet apart from these brief lapses he maintained his pose of hopeless melancholy, varied by frantic perturbations, until his new name fitted him like his new collar.

"How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!"

He was not, to be sure,

"The glass of fashion and the mold of form,"

for his nose, from the bench point of view, was nearly half an inch too long. But his "dejected haviour" and deep-rooted suspicion of his sur-

roundings were Hamlet's own. He felt himself "be-netted round with villanies" and apprehensively watched the simple ways of our family in profound despondency and distrust. The fears that haunted him kept him so hushed that we grew to believe he was actually dumb,—a defect in physical endowment that might account for many abnormalities. Now and then the rigid little figure beside me on the veranda—for gradually, day by day, he edged an inch or two nearer—would give a stir of weariness or even drop, exhausted, for a nap, but in the main

> "as patient as the female dove
> When that her golden couplets are disclos'd,
> His silence" would "sit drooping."

Through all the hot summer days I had to see him,

> "A dull and muddy mettled rascal, peak
> Like John-a-dreams,"

but as soon as we reached the cool cover of dusk, I would lift the now crouching, anxious puppy to his four feet and snap on his new leash.

His troubled eyes would well over with expostulatory questions:

> "Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?"

"We're going to walk, Little Stick-in-the-Mud. Come on!"

And thus Hamlet, "with much forcing of his disposition," would undergo the daily constitutional, which he converted into a genuine gymnastic exercise for us both by pulling back on the leash with all his considerable strength, protesting:

> "It is not, nor it cannot come to good;
> But break my heart, for I must hold my tongue."

In this ignoble fashion I would drag him along for a mile or so of the least frequented road, until he would suddenly fix his slender legs and refuse to be budged:

> "Where wilt thou lead me? speak;
> I'll go no further."

"Very well! If you insist on turning back here, you know what will happen. It will be your turn to drag me."

To this he had always the same rejoinder:

> "'Tis true 'tis pity,
> And pity 'tis 'tis true."

So Hamlet, all his soul set on getting back to the comparative security of that veranda, would fall to tugging like an infant Hercules, scrabbling me along, regardless of sidewalks, by the nearest route to safety, till I felt myself, on reaching home, more than ever a "quintessence of dust."

When I tried him off the leash, he would, even into the autumn, run back to the kennels, though he would let no one there touch him but the gypsy-tanned child. Later, he would slip back to the Scarab, usually after dark, but be afraid to come near or ask admittance, sweeping around the house in wide, wistful circles. It took our softest coaxings to bring that palpitating puppy across the threshold and, once in, we all had to shake paws with him many times before he would believe himself welcome and sink down at my feet to sleep away his tiredness and terror. It was midsummer before I dared loose him on the campus for a free scamper, from which, hesitant, with many tremors and recoils, he came back to me in answer to my call. I thought then that the battle was won, but the next time I ventured it, and the next, he ran away. Yet before the leaves fell we had made such progress that when I fastened on his leash and invited him to go to walk,

> "there did seem in him a kind of joy
> To hear of it."

For weeks the rooms of the house were to this kennel-bred puppy no better than torture-chambers, being full of strange, sinister objects, for to

Hamlet, even yet, the unknown is a menace and a dread. Brought into study or dining-room, he would "wax desperate with imagination," throwing wild looks at ceiling and walls and then spinning about and about like an agonized top. "Upon the heat and flame" of those excitements it was hard to persuade him to "sprinkle cool patience," but in process of time he became accustomed to rugs and furniture and even, after repeated assurances, grew to understand that Sigurd's chair was at his service.

By mid-winter he had come to realize, with a touching relief and responsive fervor of affection, that the members of the family were his friends, but he was still thrown into a panic by the door-bell and the murderous monsters whose entrance he believed it to announce. Every arrival he regarded as an agent of Hamlet's doom and fled precipitately to chosen places of concealment on the upper floors. Yet curiosity was strong in the little fellow, too. As I sat chatting with a caller, I would presently be aware of an excessively unobtrusive collie stealing down the stairs. Quivering all over, in awe of his own daring, he would place himself erect on the thresh-

old with his face to the hall and very slowly, inch by inch, would "like a crab" back into the room, edging along on his haunches, steering his blind course for the further side of my chair. Still keeping his back to the stranger, he would reach up a pleading paw for me to clasp and then, regarding himself as both invisible and protected, listen keenly to learn if the conversation were by any chance about Hamlet.

He was as timorous out of doors as in, having little to do with other dogs, save with a benignant collie neighbor, old Betty, and yielding up his choicest bones without remonstrance to any impudent marauder. If I reproached him for his pacifist bearing, he would touch my hand with an apologetic tongue and look up with shamefaced eyes that admitted:

> "it cannot be
> But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall
> To make oppression bitter."

It was his habit to take legs, rather than arms, "against a sea of troubles," and when enemies loomed on the horizon he would precipitately make for home. He was by this time dog enough to be overjoyed if one of us summoned him for a walk.

"What noise? who calls on Hamlet?"

And all his belated frolic of puppyhood came out in impatient collie capers while, with our intolerable human tardiness, wraps were donned and doors thrown open. And then the leaps of ecstasy!

"Go on; I'll follow thee."

But he hated, and still hates, to be out in the great, dangerous world of noises, people, motors, alone by daylight. "Nay, come, let's go together," is his constant plea. But if no one of the household is at liberty to companion him, he prefers to wait for his exercise till "the very witching time of night," when he plunges into the mystery of the woods or runs by moonlight along deserted roads. During his first winter, on returning from one of his nocturnal rambles, he would stand, snow-coated, without a whine or scratch, shivering at the outside door, silent even under the beating of an icy storm, until some anxious watcher caught sight of him and let him in. He had been with us over a year before he found his voice. Then, one noon, a brisk step coming up to the south porch along our private path took Hamlet by surprise. His quick, shrill protest astonished him as much as it did us and

he promptly rushed to refuge under the table. But having shattered our psychopathic theories and confessed that he was no mute, he took to barking with immoderate enthusiasm that has already more than made up for lost time. Yet as with his movements, so his barking is odd,—discordant, off the pitch, "jangled out of tune."

These tremendous bouts of barking, combined with his excitable and suspicious temperament, have given our timid collie a preposterous reputation for ferocity. Callers wise in dogs observe that even as he roars he runs away, wagging his tail, and come boldly on to the north door, while Hamlet announces and denounces them at the south:

"O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!"
"A guilty thing."
"A puff'd and reckless libertine."
"A pestilence on him for a mad rogue!"
"What, ho! help, help, help!"

But when he has torn his "passion to tatters, to very rags," he slips in shyly to greet the accepted caller, usually seating himself, according to his own peculiar code of etiquette, with his back to the guest, but sometimes, especially if it is a college girl "in the morn and liquid dew of youth,"

he will, instead of taking his accustomed place by me, lie down at Ophelia's feet, explaining:

"Here's metal more attractive."

Hamlet is a delicate subject for discipline as any sign of displeasure on the part of the few he trusts will fling him back to his puppy state of quivering misery. But for his inhospitable clamors he is occasionally shut up in the telephone closet, a custom which he considers

"More honour'd in the breach than the observance."

Released, he bounds toward us beseeching caresses and every assurance that we have forgiven him and love him still. But he is just as ready to bark at the next arrival, though the dread word CLOSET will sometimes arrest a roar in mid-career. His sense of duty, as the guardian of the house, is inextricably intertwisted with his desire to be good.

Hamlet has, indeed, an uncharacteristic conviction of the preciousness of property. He did not learn it from me. I resent the metal that outlasts flesh and bone and am careless about locking doors since against grief and death no bolts avail; but Hamlet, had destiny put him in his proper place, would have ridden through life on

top of an express wagon, zealously guarding its packages from every thievish touch. As it is, he keeps an embarrassing watch and ward on my desk and bookcases. Often a seminar student, reaching for a volume that promises to throw light on the discussion, is amazed by the leap of what had seemed to be a slumbering collie, now all alert and vigilant, gently nipping her sleeve to hold that arm of robbery back. Or in the midst of committee toils, a guileless colleague may move toward my desk to make a note. From the hall Hamlet dashes in with gleaming eyes and, as she turns in astonishment, squeezes his yellow bulk between her and that mysterious altar of my midnight devotion and firmly shoves her back. These policeman ways of his are not universally endearing and, in return, he has no faith whatever in the honesty of my associates, "arrant knaves all." He has never put aside his dark suspicions of one who is not only generosity itself, but a socialist to boot, because on his first Christmas Eve in the Scarab she had been so kind as to act as her own Santa Claus and take away her labeled packet from the pile of tissue-papered and gay-ribboned gifts in a corner of the study. Although I had

noticed that the puppy made a point of lying down before that heap, I did not realize that he, terrified and bashful as he then was, had constituted himself its custodian, till this action of hers left his soul "full of discord and dismay." Even yet he heralds her approach with consternation:

"O shame! where is thy blush?"
"A most pernicious woman!"
"Marry, this is miching mallecho; it means mischief."

So our dog has few friends outside his home. It is difficult to maintain with the children on the hill the pleasant fiction that their Christmas playthings come from Hamlet when it so obviously "harrows" him "with fear and wonder" to see the little recipients allowed to bear these objects away. Laddie's mistress, ever gracious, pets and praises him, and hers is the only home in the village at which, sure of a happy welcome and delectable bits of bread and butter, he consents to call, but Jack's mistress, catholic as her sympathies are, remembers an unlucky encounter from which her famous comrade retired, blinking queerly, the loser of a tooth. It is, of course, her theory that Hamlet feloniously reached into Jack's mouth to snap out that treasure, while to me it seems

crystal clear that Jack uprooted the venerable fang himself in an unholy effort to bite Hamlet; but now the collie is shut up whenever the terrier comes, though they manage to exchange through the windows a vituperative language not taught in our curriculum.

Hoping to extend this too limited circle of Hamlet's friendships, we have accepted as a summer guest a cynical old parrot, who has already, in a lifetime cruelly long for a captive, known a variety of vanishing households. The tones that Poor Pol echoes, the names that he calls, insistently and vainly, in his lonesome hours, the scraps of family talk dating perhaps from five, ten, twenty years ago that his strange voice, a mockery of the human, still repeats, make him, even to us, an awesome personage, a Wandering Jew of the caged-pet generations. What does he miss, what does he remember, as he sits sweetly crooning to himself "Peek-a-boo, Pol," and then rasps crossly out, "Wal! what *is* it?" and then falls to a direful groaning "Oh!" and "Ah!" over and over, more and more feebly, as if in mimicry of a death-bed, and suddenly spreads his wings, hurrahs like a boy on the Glorious Fourth and storms our ears

with a whole barn-yard of cackles and cocka-doodledoos?

For the first few minutes after the arrival of Polonius, Hamlet regarded the great cage, set on top of a tall revolving bookcase, and its motionless perching inmate, whose plumage of sheeny green was diversified by under-glints of red and the pride of a golden nape, as new ornaments committed to his guardianship. Erect on his haunches, he gazed up at them with an air of earnest responsibility, but when Polonius, cocking his head and peering down on the collie with one round orange eye, crisply remarked:

"Hello! What's that? Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!"

Hamlet went wild with amazement. After making from every side vain leaps and scrambles toward the unperturbed parrot, he tore from one of us to another, with whines and imploring gaze striving to learn what this apparition might mean

> "So horridly to shake" his "disposition
> With thoughts beyond the reaches" of his soul.

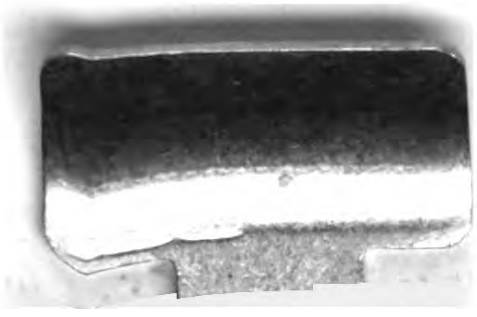
A week has passed and I begin to fear that Hamlet's antipathy to Polonius, "a foolish prating knave," a "wretched, rash, intruding fool," is too deeply rooted in drama for life to eradi-

cate. The fault does not lie with the parrot. Though with him, as a rule, "brevity is the soul of wit," he accosts Hamlet quite as cordially as any other member of the family, with "Hello" when the dog trots into the room and "Good-by" when he trots out. He is, indeed, so far in sympathy with Hamlet that, well-nigh to our despair, he seconds the collie's uncivil clamor when the doorbell rings by stentorian shouts of "Fire! *Fire! !* FIRE! ! !" We do not admit that, in general, Polonius talks only "words, words, words." If he does, the coincidences are uncanny, for he warns "Look out" as we lift his heavy cage and pronounces "All right" as we set it safely down. I was adding a column of figures yesterday and, as I named the total, Polonius said in an approving tone: "That's right; that's it." He has a mild curiosity about our doings and occasionally responds to our overtures by offering to an outstretched finger the chilly grip of his clay-colored claws,—invariably, like a well-bred bird, presenting the right foot. If Housewife Honeyvoice undertakes to scratch the parrot's green head, Hamlet rears up against her and insists that the same ceremony be performed on his yellow one.

Polonius, for his part, though too blasé for jealousy, has a proper self-respect, and when he overhears us comforting our troubled collie with murmurs of "Good Hamlet! Dear Hamlet!" promptly interjects "Pretty Pol."

But Hamlet, who is so sensitive to suffering that he will go of his own impulse to any visitor in trouble and press close, lavishing all his shy caresses in the effort to console, need not fear that Polonius will usurp his place in my affection. It is all I have to give him and I shall not fail him there. I cannot give that fearful, only half-quieted heart the security it craves from

> "the thousand natural shocks
> That flesh is heir to."

There is no security on this whirring planet where pain is pain, and loss is loss, but where, for our deepest of consolation, though it involves our keenest of grief, love is always love.

"Keep me close," pleads Hamlet, and I promise: "While I can."