

A MISUNDERSTOOD DOG

By Bradley Gilman

I SIT, often, upon the parsonage porch, with my books and papers. I love to sit there, for its southerly exposure is suited to my thinned blood in these latter days. And then, as I read of the world's doings, and become troubled by the thought of sins and sinners, I raise my eyes to the old church, near at hand—my old church, mine to grow old beside, twined with ivy and with tender memories—I look up from the world's record of hate and lust and craft, and the dear old church softens my mood; and I say a prayer, not only in behalf of the oppressed, but of the oppressor also: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

From my quiet retreat on the vine-sheltered porch I have not only a good view of the hill road, our main thoroughfare, but I can also overlook the larger part of my garden. And often Michael, white-haired old Michael, can take directions from me, by a sign or two, without coming up the lawn to the porch.

Poor old Michael! There he is, now, coaxing the tendrils of a trumpet flower up over the stump of an old cherry-tree. The bent, decrepit figure of the man brings back the past to me. I recall, as if it were yesterday, a morning like this, twenty years ago, when I sat, as I do now, on the porch, and a man opened the garden-gate, hesitated, entered, and came shambling up the path. As he drew near I saw, by his faded, shapeless hat, his gray, collarless shirt, his torn and soiled coat, and his trousers worn and baggy, and fringed at the bottoms, that he was a tramp. With him was a dog, a brindled bull-dog, having a patch of white around one eye, with ears looking like pennants frayed out by many storms, and a short stump of a tail so animated that it seemed a thing of life, quite apart from the animal himself. The dog had a rough, savage air, which led me—although I love dogs most devotedly—to glance for reassurance at the open door behind me.

As the two soiled, disreputable wanderers came near, both recognized my pres-

ence, and both lost their saddened aspect, and hopefully smiled. The dog's smile was the more marked of the two, but it was a real smile—if one knows dogs—and quite restored my confidence. His mouth opened, his tongue lolled out, his ragged ears pointed forward like shattered interrogation points, he tossed his head back, and quickened, from a sober, and even dignified, walk, to a trot, which had a sad suggestion of forced gayety in it. Presently the man stood before me, hat in hand, and humbly addressed me.

"Only a little bread and coffee, this bright morning, Yer Riverence!"

Then he turned sharply upon the dog, who was snuffing at my knees: "Down, Satan! Set down thar!" And the dog obeyed.

I have many kinds of titles bestowed upon me by strange visitors. The book agents and insurance agents usually call me "Doctor," knowing the weaknesses and ambitions of the ministry. The forlorn people with letters of recommendation often say "Your Honor;" the Celtic portion of my visitors use the title "Yer Riverence;" and sometimes a German addresses me tersely as "Reverend." In this case it was "Yer Riverence."

I looked at the man and felt sure I had seen him before, for I recall faces easily; a minister must do that. As I caught his wandering glance it was as when one knocks and knocks at a door, and sees a window curtain flutter, and hears a subdued step in the hall, but gets no answer to his summons. I could look *at* his eyes, but could not look *into* them.

Now it was different with the dog. His soul came cordially out into his eyes, as into a portico, to bid me welcome; and as I glanced at him a grateful tremor began at his ragged eartips, spread over his rough, dirty body, and disappeared at the tip of his stiff, stumpy tail.

I looked at the man again, and asked, "My man, haven't I seen you here before?"

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He frowned for an instant. He was deciding whether I was fixed enough in my suspicion to maintain it.

Then he decided that I was; and, drawing nearer, he said, with a persuasive smile, and in a very confidential tone, "I'll tell yer, Yer Riverence; I was here only wanst before; three months ago, about; yer'll belave me, now, Yer Riverence, fer it's hiven's truth I'm tillin' yer; and yer'll not mind me comin' this mornin', for Satan and me is 'most starved."

Satan corroborated this speech—which I'm sure he understood—by a subdued whine and a most intelligent and pleading look into my face.

For a moment I was puzzled as to my duty. The fellow was plainly a shiftless vagabond. His habits of life were recorded not only on his garments but in his face. Yet he had thrown himself on my confidence and sympathy; and then—I must confess it—as I glanced at the dog, looking up trustfully into the face of his worthless master as a hungry soul might look up toward his God, the scene touched me; my heart softened, and for the dumb brute's sake I bade his master stay. I entered the house and brought out bread and meat and coffee.

Then the better side of his character showed itself; as I had expected, he shared this food with his dog. The hungry dependent stood with bright, eager eyes looking up at his master, and his long, red tongue flicked alternately out and in, at the sides of his mouth, as if he were sharpening it for instant use; and all the time little thrills and chills coursed down along his body like ripples on a lake.

"Yours?" I asked; "your dog?"

"You bet, Yer Riverence! begging your pardon for the word." Here one greasy finger shot upward in apology toward his rimless hat. "He's mine; all mine, every hair of him."

"I hope you're kind to him," I ventured; for I had my doubts as I detected the fellow's unstable character; I thought he was one of those lovers of dogs who would heap kindness on a pet in one tender mood, and then abuse him cruelly in a fit of temper.

"Yes, I'm—I'm kind to Satan;" and his vacillating glance rested with real tenderness on the dog. "That is—most of

the time; once in a while though, Yer Riverence, I lose me timper a bit, and thin—thin—I—I—well—Satan, we know all about it, boy, don't we? And we don't bear no ill-feeling, as between pals, do we?"

The faithful dog responded with violent tail-waggings, and with subdued little growls of affection, and the tramp broke off a large piece of bread and gave it to him.

I was now interested enough in the singular pair of friends to draw the man out; and his account of the dog—with my own interpretation of it—I have deemed myself justified in giving to the public.

As the man talked, clumsily mixing his food and his words, the fact became clearer and clearer to me that from the first Satan had been a greatly misunderstood dog.

To begin with, there was his evil name. That had been given him when a tiny puppy, merely because the words had figured on a lurid play bill, and had caught the eye of the hostler, his first owner.

Then his appearance was much against him; for his right eye was encircled by a patch of white hair, and contrasted sharply with the dark brindle color of the remainder of his body. Anybody who took pains to look at the eye itself—large, full, earnest, even pleading—could have read the animal's honest character at once; but most people noticed only the general evil effect of the white patch.

Moreover, an imperfect growth of the upper lip showed two of his white, glistening teeth; and they also gave the appearance of ill-temper; so that, although the puppy was actually the gentlest and most intelligent of his litter, his threatening appearance seemed to give reasons for his ominous name.

Satan was the largest and most active of his brothers and sisters; and as he always came off victor in their frolics, he was looked upon with approval by the idlers of the stable, and was considered as a promising young fighter.

Then, when he was about six months old, he had some difficulty with the cutting of his teeth; one or two of them did not come through the gums easily; and for a week or more he tried to help the operation by biting at everything he could get

into his mouth. This passing habit also told in favor of the young dog's supposedly ferocious tendencies; and, although poor Satan loved anybody who would give him a gentle touch of the hand, he was looked upon distrustfully; and in the opinion of the excellent judges around him he was destined for a successful career in the pit.

Presently there came a change in the dog's fortunes. His owner fell ill, and was sent to the hospital; and Satan, and all his brothers and sisters, were given away. They were not of the proper purity of breed to have any especial value—as fashions in dogs go—and were given to anybody who would take them. Satan was transferred to the ownership of an expressman, and by him was sold to a house-painter, who desired him as a playmate for his children. The enterprising expressman had prepared himself to praise the dog's fighting tendencies; but, finding that gentler qualities were demanded, he quickly assured the purchaser that the dog was extremely docile and of a most kindly temper, thus speaking truer words than he knew; and when the trade was completed he chuckled much at his shrewdness; and the recording angel, I doubt not, set down against him his words of truth as words of falsehood.

In his new home with the house-painter's family, honest, loving Satan was very happy for several months. In an hour he and the little ones learned about one another as well as though they had been friends for years. With the baby he was especially intimate; and the two had undoubtedly a language in common, and exchanged confidences of which older heads knew nothing.

If the children and their beloved playmate could have been left undisturbed, Satan would have got on without suffering under any misunderstandings; but the older and so-called "wiser" people of the family, influenced by the peculiar marking of his eye, and by his exposed teeth, shook their heads at his eager, animated ways, and suggested evil tendencies in his character. This judgment gained strength from a certain honest boldness of curiosity which the dog evinced toward all new things; and often this inquiring nature, joined with his forbidding appearance, gave him an air of courting danger

and conflict. For example, a cat was one day dropped upon the ground near him by a mischievous boy; Satan stared at the frightened, spitting creature, and walked confidently forward to learn more about the strange object; and then, as the cat excitedly ran away, he caught the excitement and ran blindly after her. This was at once set down as still clearer evidence of a deeply pugnacious character.

When Satan was eight or ten months old another unlucky incident served to deepen the current convictions as to his savage temper. The butcher's boy one day held a piece of meat down to him; and, as Satan tried to take it, the boy drew it quickly away. This was repeated several times; and then Satan, in a frantic leap after the coveted morsel, seized not only the piece of meat, but by accident seized the boy's finger with it, and the boy roared with surprise and pain and with rage against the dog.

The injury was very slight, indeed, but the boy told his employer that Satan had savagely bitten his finger. The employer told a customer to beware of that dog, for the beast had torn his servant boy's hand most savagely. The customer reported to several people that Satan was a very ferocious animal, who had attacked several people and had endangered their lives, and that he ought to be killed.

Thus the story spread rapidly, and gained in dreadful details at each step. And, through it all, poor, maligned Satan went on romping with his playmates, and exchanging confidences with the baby, who pulled his ears more and more vigorously each day, with her increasing strength.

The baby was Satan's favorite. She was not yet strong enough or heavy enough to cause him pain as she rolled upon him and stepped on his toes and pulled his tail. Then, too, she was not yet sufficiently ingenious to blow in his eyes and tie strings around his jaws. These were the pranks of the older children; but Satan was patient under it all, and hoped it was for his good somehow, he knew not quite in what way.

In due time the excitement about the butcher boy died out without bringing harm to Satan in body, but it gave him pain of heart to have threats hurled at him

by people who little knew how deeply he regretted the accident. He felt shut off somehow from the public sympathy ; he felt a coldness in the attitude of people about him ; he grew a little shy and reserved in manner, and this was promptly set down as surliness. So that the baby, to whom he now gave even more attention and devotion, was the only confidant he had, and with her he talked this matter over fully when they were alone ; and this was his great comfort.

One day Satan was washing the baby's face ; yes, washing her face ; he had often seen his mistress do it, and now he tried it himself. The baby was seated in the path outside the front gate, and was cooing and crowing and spluttering with delight during the process. To be sure, there was a little trace of molasses on the left cheek, and a flavor of butter down near the left corner of the mouth ; and these added temporary sensations of pleasure to Satan's constant, unswerving feelings of affection and devotion.

Just then there came by one of those women who know everything. She knew everything about homes, and children, and dogs, and horses, and the cattle upon the thousand hills ; and knew it always in an instant. As soon, therefore, as her omniscient eye fell upon the scene, she knew that this bloodthirsty animal was trying to eat the child alive ; and with a scream she swooped down upon them, to the great surprise and perplexity of Satan and the alarm and noisy resistance of the baby. She caught up the child in her arms, and the child filled the air with cries of protest ; these cries Satan understood to be an appeal to him for protection, and the next moment, with an angry growl, he had the woman's elbow in his strong jaws, and hung there, swinging from side to side like a pendulum.

This conduct on his part, you may be assured, did not result in any lessening of the din. The omniscient woman, in that brief moment, realized her limitations more completely than ever before in her life. She screamed in fear and desperation ; and only the timely appearance in the doorway of Satan's mistress saved her from fainting.

A sharp word from the doorway caused Satan to drop to the ground, with a feeling

of relief at being freed from the responsibility of the child's protection ; and the baby herself was soon on her mother's arm, and eager to be put down again with Satan, to continue their play, so rudely interrupted.

The omniscient woman recovered her breath and her voice, and declared violently against the ferocious dog who had attacked her, as she said—and as thousands of others, with as little ground of truth, have said—"without the slightest provocation." One or two of the neighbors heard the disturbance and listened to the charges made against Satan ; and here, again, the misunderstandings of the past served to support the accusations of the present ; and the result of it all was that poor Satan was voted a dangerous animal, and several were heard to intimate that he would be better killed or sent away.

This episode led the way to a great transition in the dog's life. The angry demands of the neighbors were yielded to, and Satan was thrust forth from his home ; he was given to a street huckster, and by him was tied to the tail of a cart, and dragged away ; away from his home, away from his playmates the children, and away from his bosom friend, the baby.

Only force could have done it ; and that would hardly have availed had it not been for the commands of his mistress, whose word had always been law to him. So, behind the cart he was tied, and a group of weeping children was left standing at the gate, and poor, loving, loyal Satan, himself weeping, I doubt not, trotted away in the gathering gloom of that eventful evening.

His new master took him to his home, in a neighboring town, and tied him in a shed, and fed him regularly for several days. This was done, as the man sagely explained to a friend, in order to gain the dog's affections ; but it gained nothing of Satan's affection. What the poor, lonely fellow needed, even more than food, was a soft, kind word or two, and a gentle pat on the head ; to that he would have responded with eagerness ; but he did not receive it, and he ate his pieces of bread and meat in solitude and sadness, and thought of his old home.

As much as possible he slept ; for in his dreams he romped again with the children,

and sometimes, as he awoke, he could feel the baby's hand on his head, and, looking up for one passing moment, vainly expected to see her chubby face at his side.

Here, under these new conditions, poor, unhappy Satan was continuously misunderstood. His listlessness and melancholy were taken by his master to mean surliness; and when, after being tied up a few days, he was set free, and made no attempt to find his old home, this was considered an evidence of his stupidity.

Little did his master know that he could have found the way back as easily as he could have crossed the road or leaped the stone wall. But he made no attempt; he recalled the stern command of his mistress; he knew, as well as did anybody, that he must give up his old life, and he was reconciling himself, as best he could, to the new one. But he did long so, sometimes, for the old faces and the old voices, that in his sadness you would have hardly recognized the active, eager, bright-eyed Satan of the old time.

Satan's master was somewhat disappointed in him. The dog did not show any signs of that ferocity which he had been led to expect; yet his appearance was savage enough to make him an excellent guardian of his master's house and property. And that was the irony of the situation, that the huckster's neighbors gave him a wide berth, and even admired, at a distance, his threatening aspect; while he, poor fellow, looked wistfully at them, and felt weary of life, he so much longed for sympathy and affection.

Satan's stay with his master was brief. The huckster, in a few weeks, sold out his business and left town; and since the dog had cost him nothing, and he had no affection for the animal, he left him behind, homeless and forsaken.

Satan was now without any human ties whatever; and to be without such helps to upright conduct is as dangerous for dogs as for men; at such times the steps downward to disreputable ways are very easily entered upon; vice beckons most persuasively when virtuous influences are absent; and a living, hoping, loving soul, whether in a man's body or in a dog's, must have companionship and sympathy as a safeguard.

So it came about that Satan made friends

of various degenerate specimens of doghood; or, rather, he allowed them to make friends of him; and together they foraged in alleys and backyards, and led a precarious existence in the lower streets of the town. Often he thought of his old home, with its merry group of playmates; and gladly and quickly would he have sped across the country to its shelter and its love, had he not recollected, with sadness and pain, the sharp words of dismissal which had sent him forth.

So he shut his great grief within his breast, and tried to find some new friend among the crowds of the street; but although each day he hoped for some passerby to give him a friendly word, yet each day the hope grew more dim. Harsh words and unkind looks were his portion; and as the cold weather came on food, even of the worst kind, became scarcer and scarcer, and poor Satan knew, for the first time in his life, what real, gnawing hunger was like.

One day he was searching among the refuse barrels and waste heaps of a vacant lot for some scrap of food. He was searching in desperation. Suddenly he caught sight of a few morsels of meat, as they were thrown out into the lot from the rear door of a restaurant; in an instant he leaped forward; in those morsels there was a respite from starvation for some poor four-footed creature. Satan sprang toward the food, seized it, and was about to carry it away when he heard a savage growl behind him, and turned, barely in time to avoid the spring of another larger dog, who also had set eyes of hungry intent on the coveted meal. Then came a louder and more threatening growl from the larger dog, as he recovered himself and made straight at Satan's throat. There was no time for reflection; Satan had no desire to fight, but here was an unjust attack. The scraps of meat belonged to him by all laws of prior seizure; yet this larger dog, trusting to his superior strength, was bent upon taking them from him. For a moment, only, Satan reflected and hesitated; he must have what belonged to him, if, indeed, he could keep it, which seemed unlikely.

The big, hungry dog again sprang forward, and Satan dropped his morsel and met him with open mouth. The greater

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weight of the would-be robber rolled Satan over upon his back ; but, by a lucky snap of his strong jaws, as he rolled, he seized the other dog firmly by the throat. There he hung. The big dog growled, and swept him from side to side over the ground, raising a cloud of dust ; and then, lifting him fairly from the earth, shook him savagely in the air ; but, all the time, Satan, by the instinct of self-preservation, more than by any definite plan of battle, held silently by his throat, and resolved that there he would stick.

Of course the noise and the sight of the struggle drew idle spectators, like flies, to the scene. Some of them expressed delight, and some horror ; but all showed profound interest in the proceedings. Satan had his eyes shut, and could not see them, but he heard them, and he hoped each minute that somebody would interfere. He dared not let go his grip, for he knew that the big dog had strength and weight enough to kill him, if it were once brought to bear fully upon him.

But the big dog was now the more frightened of the two ; and his growls had become subdued to a whine, and his efforts became less and less vigorous. Presently a big blacksmith mustered courage to seize Satan, and a stout wagoner ventured to clutch the other dog ; and as soon as Satan saw that his foe was likely to be held back he loosened his jaws and gladly retreated from the struggle.

The big dog was in no condition of mind or body to renew his attack, and slunk away ; Satan, hardly less frightened, yet pressed by hunger, at once bethought himself of the scraps of meat, and quickly took possession of them, his hunger soon banishing his fright. The crowd of idlers, some of whom had seen him before, were unanimous in his praise ; they had not the words to fully express their satisfaction at the "gameness" of "the little un." His feelings of fright and his instinct of desperate self-preservation they interpreted as an innate love of bloodthirsty strife ; and they one and all agreed that such pluck had not been seen in that town since the remarkable day when "Bill Reynolds's terrier choked the life out of Sam Baker's red setter."

This episode in Satan's life brought him into the ownership of a new master ; and

the new master was no other than the tramp who presented himself, with the dog beside him, at the parsonage porch. It happened in this wise :

After the conflict was over, most of the idlers lounged back to their haunts around the stables and saloons. But one of them went over near Satan, as he enjoyed his hardly earned meal, and talked to him in a friendlier tone than he had heard for many a day. It may be that the two glasses of whiskey which had very recently passed down the man's throat had something to do with this friendly expression ; but, whatever the cause, the kind words were very grateful to Satan. And he even paused, half-famished as he was, to return the friendly advances with a brief, spasmodic vibration of his tail.

When the food had been eaten, a slice of buttered bread from the rear pocket of his visitor's greasy frock-coat completed the mutual confidences ; and Satan licked the hand that patted him, and gave several snuffles and sighs of deep content, and felt that perhaps the world was not so cold and heartless as he had supposed.

The dog's history, from this point on, was told me by various police officers, and it runs as follows :

This man, Satan's next master, was drunken and disreputable enough to dampen the enthusiasm of even the most zealous "slum-worker." He was a tailor by trade, and had given up regular work long before, having learned (that most dangerous and demoralizing fact) that in this country a man can obtain bread without working for it. He had, withal, a certain attractive good-nature, which, with his ready tongue, made it especially easy for him to cajole thrifty householders out of the desired bread and coffee.

So the two faced the world together ; and whatever food the tailor got by his persuasive ways he shared with his dog ; and the two became devoted friends. Satan was at first puzzled by the long periods of rest and profound sleep in which his master indulged, on occasions, at the most unexpected times and in the most uncomfortable corners of public parks and alleys ; indeed, he never fully understood the reason for them ; but he learned to stand guard at such times over the prostrate form ; and, as the police told

me, woe to the man—brass buttons or no brass buttons—who then tried to lay hand on the drunken tailor.

Thus weeks and months passed by, and Satan's life was not an unhappy one. He grew more and more dirty and unkempt, but the dog had what he most longed for, affection. The one redeeming virtue in the disreputable tailor was that he really was fond of Satan. Other better-kept dogs looked scornfully at him, but he only glanced up confidently at his master, and trotted along with great content in his breast.

When the tailor was sober he was kindly ; and when he was quite filled with liquor he was soon stupid and helpless. It was when he had drank a little only, and desired more, that he was inconsiderate and cross. At such times he was inclined to speak sharply to his faithful companion, and often tried to urge him into quarrels with other dogs ; but he urged in vain—Satan had only good-will toward both man and beast. He could not understand why he should attack any creature who had not attacked him. Thus the tailor was somewhat puzzled, and was considerably disappointed in him ; for he had witnessed the dog's remarkable prowess, and felt sure that he was a wonderful fighter.

Late in the afternoon of the day when the two had stood in the parsonage porch, a great thirst for liquor came over the man ; and the one glass of whiskey which he was able to beg from an old crony only whetted his appetite and made him cross. He spoke sharply to Satan, and once even tried to kick him.

Then an evil combination of circumstances gathered about the two companions. The owner of a bar-room where the thirsty tailor was lounging, hoping for a "treat," had recently bought a dog ; and he offered to bet Satan's master that his new dog could whip Satan in a fair fight.

The tailor declared, in the high hope of unlimited drinks, that he could not ; and several of the bystanders supported his declaration, and dropped sundry remarks in praise of Satan's prowess. The result was that an agreement was then and there made to set the dogs at each other, and have a trial of their respective merits.

When the new dog was brought out he

proved to be nearly a third larger than Satan, and much heavier, and the scars on his breast and shoulders showed that he was no stranger to the dog-pit. The tailor was just enough excited by the whiskey already within him, and stimulated by the hope of the larger quantity which he hoped to add to it, to be blind to the impending danger.

As for Satan, as soon as he saw the other dog, he wagged his stump of a tail in the friendliest possible way, and would have entered at once upon a frolic ; but a restraining hand held him, and the new dog uttered a forbidding growl. After a few more drinks the crowd adjourned to a yard in the rear of an empty house, and disposed themselves on barrels and boxes and on the fence. Then the dogs were brought near each other, poor Satan wondering what it all meant, and looking for an explanation.

A practised hand now pushed the animals roughly up against each other, and although Satan only took this to be an accident, and hoped it would not be repeated, the trained pit-dog knew it, of old, as the signal for conflict, and broke from the hand that held him, and flew at his antagonist.

Now it must not be understood that Satan was a coward, for he was not ; and when this ferocious animal sprang at him, great as the odds were against him, he defended himself. He was not as heavy as the pit dog, but he was quicker ; and like a flash he leaped aside, and, as the other passed him, he seized him by the throat.

The pit-dog, thus impeded in his leap, rolled headlong upon the ground, and Satan fell with him. At once from the barrels and boxes and the fence went up a chorus of yells at this masterly defence. All expressed great confidence in Satan's powers, heavy as the odds were against him.

The next instant Satan felt the powerful jaws of his enemy shut into the side of his neck. His own hold prevented those jaws from quite reaching under his throat, but the strong, sharp teeth brought pain, and blood flowed from both dogs.

For a few moments there was a pause. On the part of the trained pit-dog this was only a feint ; on Satan's part it was in the hope that this was the end of the matter,

and that now kind human hands would stop the savage struggle. But the half-drunken tailor only shouted to his dog, urging him on ; and no help came.

Suddenly the pit-dog let go his grip, and by his greater strength bent his head forward and seized poor Satan's right paw in his strong jaws. Instantly there was heard a cracking sound. The bone was broken like a pipe-stem. That was the method of warfare to which he had been trained by savage human instructors.

Satan felt the horrible pain shoot through his whole body, and his own slenderer jaws shut more desperately on his foe's tough throat. But what could the poor fellow do, thus maimed and weakened ! He could only hold on, in a frantic, hopeless way, while his drunken master loudly cursed him, and declared that he would yet conquer.

But not so. He was not a fighter, either by nature or training ; all his reputation for ferocity was not justified by his instincts or by his past actions. And while the pit-dog, hardy, savage, relentless, felt only irritation at the grip upon his throat, Satan's strength and courage were fast ebbing.

There was another violent struggle, confused and blood-curdling, and then the pit-dog tore himself from Satan's weakened grip, his blood flowing freely, but his strength unimpaired, and his savage nature roused to fury. One quick movement, and he had Satan by the throat and shook him like a rat.

A deathly silence fell on the crowd ; those who were at all sober saw that the smaller dog was doomed. The drunken tailor fairly foamed, in his obstinate wrath at his unhappy dog. His drunken madness swallowed up the affection which he really had for his four-footed companion. Poor, desperate, dying Satan looked pleadingly, piteously at him, but that look of entreaty met no response. The brute instincts of his master had supplanted the human sympathies.

Then there was a sickening scene as the maddened pit-dog shook his helpless antagonist, and set his jaws more firmly in the unresisting throat. Deeper and deeper he thrust his glistening teeth, now dyed red with the blood of his victim, until finally there came a great gush of the red stream of life, and he crouched like a tiger

over the quivering body, and the struggle was ended.

Poor Satan, misunderstood through all his life, would be misunderstood no longer.

Then the crowd of idle, brutal loafers, following the instincts which always govern such natures, deserted the scene, and in a shambling, shamefaced way, straggled, in twos and threes, back to the saloons and stables.

The barkeeper, with great difficulty, pulled his maddened animal away from the unresisting body ; and the tailor, now deserted, and partially sobered by the dreadful scene, stood fixed in a stupid, frightened stare. He stood thus several minutes, as if expecting the inanimate form to rise and come toward him, as of old. Then he spoke, weakly, hesitatingly : "Satan ! Satan ! come—here !"

But there was no response. Faithful Satan gave no sign of recognition ; the stumpy tail and the ragged ears, always so expressive of the owner's hopes and fears and sympathies, now gave no token of life and intelligence.

The wretched tailor started forward ; he leaned over his faithful companion's body ; he gazed into the half-closed eyes, but no soulful, eloquent glance, as of old, now met him. He laid his trembling hand on the discolored body, and it grew colder and colder under his touch.

Then, for the first time, the truth seemed to penetrate into his drink-obscured mind. The full extent of his loss came over his brutish nature. He groaned aloud ; he looked about him, but his careless, selfish companions were gone ; he knew that he was alone in the world ; his one faithful friend was dead.

Then he took off his coat, and laid the lifeless body upon it ; and, gathering the disordered bundle into his arms, he walked—with weak, trembling steps, though not now with the gait of a drunken man—straight over to the parsonage ; and there on the porch I met him ; I met them both, amid the shadows of evening, as I had met them in the sunshine of the morning.

The poor, unhappy man seemed to trust me, as if confident of my sympathy ; and, as his eye met mine, the stolid, fierce expression left his face, and great tears rolled down his cheeks ; with a groan he laid his burden at my feet.

I was moved, deeply moved. I know something about men and a good deal about dogs; and I knew that these two had been loving, devoted friends; more truly sympathetic than are many a man and wife. Never was a loving response lacking from this faithful dumb companion. The very quality which a man values most in the wife of his bosom, un-failing love, always leaped out and up from this poor creature to his master.

I laid my hand on the man's shoulder, and said, tenderly, "My man, you have lost a dear friend. Tell me about it! Come in and sit here!" And then, as he hesitated, I caught his feeling, and I added, "Certainly, bring in his poor body! We won't leave it lying there alone."

So the broken-hearted man came in, and laid his burden beside a chair, and, seating himself, confided his troubles to me—though I was the younger of the two—as a child might confide in its father.

When the sad story was told, with sobs and tears, I had never a chiding word to add; the man's grief was great; and together we gave the poor, torn body burial, peace, and rest, under the shade of a cherry-tree, at the end of the garden.

Then I was able to talk more quietly with the poor, broken-hearted fellow; I tried to turn the current of his feelings into other channels; but he constantly reverted to his great sorrow. After a moment or two of deep, silent reflection he suddenly exclaimed, with touching eagerness, "Does dogs have sows, Yer Riverence?"

I assured him that they had, and the thought seemed to give him comfort; then, after another pause, "An' bees there dogs in hiven, Yer Riverence? Good dogs, av coorse, I mane."

"Yes, Michael, I certainly believe that there are."

"Bliss Gard! bliss Gard! and the howly mither av Gard!" he ejaculated, fervently.

However, the sense of "things seen and temporal" was strong upon him; it is strong upon all of us, far too strong; and he could not divest himself of the feeling that his faithful friend Satan, was somewhere there in the ground, soul with body.

So I understood and sympathized when he presently asked, with a pitiful repression of eagerness that was very touching, if I had not some job of work about the place which he could undertake. Accordingly I made some work for him, and he did it faithfully. And afterward I set him about some important changes in the flower-beds; and the result—well, we shall never know the full results of any of our actions until the Great Day—but the result at the present time is that Michael, with never a relapse, with never a sign of regret for "the road," still potters about the grounds and my dear old church; and, each year, he renews the plants and vines upon the little mound beside the now mouldering trunk of the cherry-tree.

Sometimes Michael and I talk over the past; though the true-hearted, single-minded old man never speaks with any directness of the sad episode which brought us together; but from casual allusions dropped by him I am sure that the years have done for him, what they should do for us all: they have cleared away many mistakes and false fancies; and I know, with entire certainty, that poor, dear Satan is no longer "a misunderstood dog."

THE RHINE GOLD

PRELUDE

Deep . . . dark . . .
Dark . . . deep . . .
Still, they sleep . . .
Silent sleep . . .
Under the Earth the waters sleep,
Still in the womb of the world they keep
Night and silence and slumber deep ;
Slumber and silence, night and gloom,
Naught stirs yet in the wrought world's womb,
Nothing is weaving, still is the loom.
Black are the waters' depths and still in a rest unstirred ;
Sightless and mindless, void ; unseen, unspoke, unheard,
In the beginning, void ; unsaid as yet the Word.
Water primeval, air and earth,
Naught that stirs hath yet had birth;
The Norns are silent ; and Erda, Earth,
Like a child unborn sleeps and is still,
Lapped in waters ; and the Will,
The Will of the World is night and nil.
Darkly still . . .
Silence keep . . .
Still and deep . . .
The waters sleep.

Still . . . deep . . .
Waters still . . .
World and Will . . .
Night and Nil.
Deep in the heart of the Earth they shine,—
Shineth the flood of the yellow Rhine—
Shineth a cup of golden wine !
GOLD, RHINE-GOLD, deep and old,
Deepest in depth the gloried Gold
Flares, in the flood the Rhine hath rolled
Deepest and darkest of all, and the waters thrill and turn,
Yearn at the wand of Will ; waver and glow and burn
Ruby-red, as wine poured deep in a golden urn ;
Golden floods from a ruby's glow,
Radiant red the Rhine deeps flow,
Lapped in night, the treasure's show,
Whelmed in purple depths unseen,
Heaps the hoard of the golden sheen,
Watched in waters crystalline.
Deep in Rhine . . .
Unseen, untold . . .
Treasures old . . .
Wakes the Gold.