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LADIES' DOGS, AS COMPANIONS:

ALSO

A GUIDE TO THEIR MANAGEMENT IN HEALTH
AND DISEASE;

WITH

*MANY STORIES, HUMOROUS AND PATHETIC,
PAINTED FROM THE LIFE.*

BY

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COMPANIONS FOR A SUMMER DAY

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LADIES' DOGS.

INTRODUCTION.



IT is just three years ago, at the time I write, and in this same pleasant month of June, that I first met Maude McKenzie, down in one of the flowery lanes of bonnie Berkshire. Surely more than sixteen was that little maiden, and fresh and beautiful as the gowans her feet brushed the dew from, as she tripped lightly along. But there was a half-frightened look in her eye as it met mine, which for a moment I could not account for. Frightened she surely need not have been, for trotting along at her side was a trusty friend indeed. Tall as a mastiff was this noble Newfoundland, black as wing of raven, the blackness just relieved by the red ribbon of a tongue that peeped from his mouth, and by the rows of alabaster teeth, that he flashed in the sunlight, every time he cast a

glance of love and pride upwards at the sweet young face of his mistress. But here, reader, was the cause of her dread. I too had a dog of the self-same breed, Bob to wit; but in consideration of his boundingly impetuous habits, usually known by the name of Hurricane Bob.

I defy any one, however, to say there is a single atom of vice in Hurricane Bob's disposition; only, given any large black dog of his own size, and Bob would fight, Irish-like, for the *fun* of fighting.

So on this occasion.

"Dear me, now," said Hurricane Bob soliloquizingly, but fixing his eyes on the other Newfoundland, "I should like to know whether that dog or I am the taller. I wonder if my good master would mind me running across, to measure shoulders with him?"

"I should mind it very much indeed, Robert," I said. I always call the dog Robert when talking seriously to him. It seems more impressive, you know, than Bob.

"You needn't feel the slightest alarm, miss," I continued, addressing the young lady, who was kneeling on the ground with both arms thrown around her favourite's great neck. "I have got my dog securely by the collar. But what a lovely animal you have there!"

I frankly confess, I threw in the last sentence for

the sake of prolonging the picture for a moment—the kneeling maiden and the beautiful dog. Admiration of one's dog never fails to lead to conversation.

The girl's face brightened in a moment, and the clouds of fear were dispelled.

"I am so glad," she said, "you admire him; but every one loves poor Juniper."

"Juniper!" I said. "What a strange name!"

"Protection, you know," she explained, looking a little surprised, as it were, to meet any person not *au fait* in the language of flowers.

We met many times after that, Maude and I and the dogs, and had many a pleasant and friendly chat together. Even Hurricane Bob and Juniper learned to behave socially one to the other, and would trot peaceably enough side by side, or romp together on the grass. Maude hardly ever went anywhere without Juniper, and on more than one occasion he followed her to church, where it was admitted by every one who saw him that he behaved quite like a Christian.

In course of time, and that a very short time too, Maude died, cut down in the flower of her youth by the scourge of our land, phthisis. It was affecting enough in all conscience to see poor Juniper quietly following the funeral. There was some mystery about the matter, that his canine mind could not

fathom; only he knew it was his duty to watch and follow his mistress; and when the coffin was lowered, and the sods arranged, it was with the greatest difficulty the dog could be removed from the churchyard. Juniper died within a fortnight afterwards, of grief, they said.

But I never see a young girl with a large dog as her companion, without thinking about poor Maude McKenzie.

A somewhat sombre opening this, you will say, for a book on dogs. Admitted. I do but tell the little story, for the purpose of apologising for the introduction into a book of ladies' pets, of so large a dog as the Newfoundland; but I consider this breed *par excellence* far better suited than any other I know, to be a lady's companion; and this for many reasons. The dog is exceedingly fond of the fair sex, as well as of children. He is gentle and affectionate towards those he takes under his protection. He is a faithful guard, a good light porter, and last but not least, a dog of very great beauty.

Next in importance as a lady's guard of honour, ranks, I think, the Scottish Highland Collie, the king of the canine race. I need no apology for introducing him. He is a dog who can speak for himself, and is equally at home in shepherd's hut or queen's boudoir. Indeed, her Gracious Majesty was one of the very first to render these celebrated dogs

fashionable in good society, having adopted one of the breed as her first canine favourite.

I also beg leave, in these pages, to introduce the Dachshund to ladies' notice. He is really a sporting dog, I grant; but every one who knows the winning and affectionate little fellow, knows, too, that he is excellently well adapted for being the companion of the gentler sex.

My chapters on the common-sense treatment of dogs, both in health and disease, are, I humbly hope, calculated to do good. I am one of those who believe that if dogs are properly fed, housed, and cared for, they will never fall sick. The old-fashioned proverb, "Prevention is better than cure," holds wonderfully true as regards the canine race.

A few of the chapters and stories have already appeared in the columns of the *Live Stock Journal*. Their appearance in book form will, I trust, afford to many a few hours' profitable and probably amusing reading; and better than even this, benefit my friend THE DOG.

