

**MY DOG PLATO**

His Adventures and Impressions.

BY

M. H. CORNWALL LEGH

AUTHOR OF

“HOW DICK AND MOLLY WENT ROUND THE WORLD”

ETC. ETC.

EDWARD ARNOLD

LONDONNEW YORK

37 bedford Street      70 fifth avenue

## INTRODUCTION

When I wanted to have a biography of my dog Plato, it occurred to me that I could not do better than ask him to write it himself. In fact, there are parts of his life—the times he was at the dog show, and at Oxford, and in Southampton—which he never would tell me anything about; nor did he ever repeat to me his conversations with other dogs and cats, but he says he does not mind putting them into a book. I can vouch for the absolute truth of all the parts of his account which have come within my own personal experience.

He has been careful to be accurate to the smallest detail, except that he has, at my request, altered the names of the people he describes. His dog and cat friends have told him they do not object to appearing in his work by their own real names.

PLATO'S MISTRESS.

## CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	2
CHAPTER I WHEN I WAS A PUPPY .....	4
CHAPTER II EARLY DOGHOOD .....	8
CHAPTER III PEOPLE: THOSE I LIKE AND THOSE I DON'T .....	16
CHAPTER IV MY EXPERIENCE OF LIFE IN A PALACE .....	22
CHAPTER V CATS I HAVE MET .....	29
CHAPTER VI OXFORD AND HOW I LIKED IT .....	38
CHAPTER VII DOGS I HAVE MET .....	44
CHAPTER VIII THE GREAT ADVENTURE OF MY LIFE .....	53
CHAPTER IX THE END .....	58

A

MY DOG PLATO  
CHAPTER I  
WHEN I WAS A PUPPY

My name is Plato. I am a very beautiful dog. I am also remarkably clever, and thoroughly gentle, and perfectly obedient.

I know all this because I have so often heard my mistress tell people so.

They think I am not listening, when I lie quite still with my eyes shut and my nose between my paws, but I hear every word.

I am a golden collie, one of the old original Scotch family, far more uncommon and more valuable than the black-and-tan collies some people admire so much ; that is another thing I have often heard my mistress say, and her friends always seem very much impressed.

I do not remember much about my early childhood. I was one of a large family, and we were carefully brought up by our mother. She was a prize dog, and she often used to tell us how proud she felt when the judges came round at the dog shows to which she was sent, and awarded her a medal or a “ First Prize.” She also told us long stories about our grand parents, and our great-grandparents, and our great-great-grandparents, and said what very aristocratic dogs they were, real ladies and gentle men, and told us that we must behave as they had done, and never act in a dishonourable way, or tell an untruth, or associate with mean, common dogs, or fight with anyone much beneath our size.

But I had never known what very superior dogs we were till one day, when I was about ten months old, a gentleman came to see us, and we heard our owner telling him all about our qualities and our pedigree.

I had never known that our owner, who was often very rough with us, and never flattered us in the least, thought that we were of any value at all. But now I learnt what was his real opinion!

This was that we were the very finest family of collies in the whole of Great Britain, that every one of us was certain to win as many prizes as our mother, that the temper and disposition of each one of us—yes, even of Bruce, who had the day before bitten the stable boy, and the day before that stolen a leg of mutton off the kitchen table—was simply perfect, and that we were all practically worth our weight in gold.

When the gentleman picked me out as the one he liked best, our owner told him he evidently understood dogs, for I was worth fully twice as much as any of the others, and my nature was so gentle that he considered me cut out for a lady’s dog.

Who was the lady, I wondered ? And would the gentleman, who said he wanted to buy one or other of us, think I was worth paying twice as much for as Bruce or Gordon or Jeanie ?

I heard nothing more about it, and several weeks went by, when one day our owner came into the yard with the stable-boy, who had just recovered from Bruce’s bite.

“E’s decided he’ll ’ave the red one,” was what our owner was saying. “ See if we’ve got a ’amper large enough.”

I had only just time to say good-bye to my mother, when I was seized and squeezed into a horrid, narrow little place, with some straw at the bottom of it, and had a cover pressed down on top of my head. Then it was lifted up and thumped down again, and then, rattle, rattle, rattle, till at last it ended with the thing being taken up and set down again with another thump. The next rattling about

was much worse, and lasted a great deal longer. I cried and moaned, but nobody heard me or took the slightest notice.

I never was so miserable in my whole life as that day, except once, on an occasion I will tell you about later. You cannot imagine how horribly dark and cramped and stuffy it was, for I have heard that children are not sent about in hampers. I don't know why, for I am sure they could not like it less than I did, or be more horribly frightened the whole time.

However, everything comes to an end in time, and that nightmare of a journey did. I was quite still at last, and left so for some time. Then I was lifted from somewhere to some where, and I could feel people doing something to my lid. Then that was raised, and out I jumped into the fresh air and the light, and found the gentleman I had seen before had taken hold of my chain.

He said a few kind words to me, and then led me a little way down the platform to where a young lady was standing, and, giving my chain over into her hands, he said, "Allow me to introduce to you—Plato!"

The young lady's delight at seeing me, and admiration of all my beauties, pleased me very much. There was an older lady standing by, who did not seem quite so delighted. She looked at me as if she thought I was very large, and said to my new mistress, "I never gave my consent for you to have a dog."

My mistress made all sorts of promises for my good behaviour, which I wished she hadn't, for, having been brought up as a dog of honour, I felt bound to try and carry them out.

My grandmistress—so I learnt to call the elder lady—looked on me less suspiciously when she found, after I was brought into the house, that I knew what I must do when I was told to "Lie down," and had some idea of what was meant by a "corner."

And here I must say what a horrid invention I think corners are. In the whole course of my long life I have never learnt to like them, especially the one particular corner that is marked out in a room for me. I never can help feeling offended when I am told to go and lie in it; and if I do not actually grumble aloud as I go into the corner, which I very often do, I always make a point of heaving a very long, deep sigh, which ought to melt my mistresses' hearts, but I am sorry to say often only makes them laugh.

Sometimes my grandmistress tells me I ought to be very thankful to have such a nice comfortable corner to go into, and that if I saw the pariah dogs of Constantinople, who have no homes, or friends, or meals, or rugs to lie upon, I should learn to appreciate my blessings.

I always shut my eyes up tight and go very sound asleep when she begins to talk like that.

To return to my first day. I had to show very often how obedient I was in the way of lying down—which my young mistress always pointed out with great pride. For, of course, being a young, active dog, with an inquiring mind, I did not stay lying down for many minutes at a time. There were so many things I wanted to look into, and then I was panting for a walk.

Later on in the day I had one, and oh, what a joy it was to race round and round, getting as much exercise as could possibly be got out of every moment I was out!

When bedtime came, I was given a rug to lie on, and put into a room by myself; and as I had had a good dinner, I was expected to be quite contented.

But when I found myself all alone in the dark, I began to think about my mother and brothers and sisters, and to feel very sad indeed. In fact, I began to cry, not very loud, but loud enough for my mistress, who I believe was listening not very far off, to see if I was lying quiet, to hear me.