



THE QUEEN'S PET DOGS.

Man's most faithful friend, the dog, is specially dear to our Royal House. From Queen Victoria to her youngest grandchild, each member of the Royal Family had a favourite dog or two, and the Queen's collection was most complete and comprehensive. Wherever Queen Victoria went, her special pets accompanied her, whether in her own country or abroad, and deep was the sorrow felt when one of the old favourites passed away. It was only the favourite few, however, who were actually the royal companions, the majority being royally housed in the fine kennels in the Home Park, Windsor. These kennels were quite a model establishment, and it was one of Her Majesty's great delights to visit them with her grandchildren. The Queen knew every dog by name, and remembered their characteristics. Her Majesty was particularly fond of collies, spitz, and fox-terriers, and there were probably more collies than any other breed in the royal kennels.

Queen Alexandra is as great a lover of dogs as Queen Victoria was, and the Sandringham kennels are second to none. Every morning, when the Queen is staying at her Norfolk home, she goes round the kennels with two baskets of bread and biscuits, feeding each dog separately. Her Majesty has a curious influence over the dogs, for the most intractable animal yields to her voice and caress. A visit to the kennels is one of the amusements for the guests at Sandringham, the King and Queen showing their visitors not only their living favourites, but the handsome marble memorials to departed canine pets. Perhaps the most famous of the Queen's dogs is the magnificent Russian wolf-hound or Barzoi, "Alexis," who has carried all before him at many shows.

Prettiest of all these dogs, however, is the Tibet spaniel, "Little Billee," a fascinating tiny ivory-white creature with brindle markings and lovely appealing eyes. Directly "Little Billee" was taken out of his basket on his first arrival, he

ran straight to the Queen, and put up his forepaws to entreat him to take him up. "Little Billee" was taken to his mistress' heart at once, and from that time slept on a cushion at the foot of her bed, and was generally found in the daytime curled up in a fold of her dress.

WHAT A TRACT DID.

A child a penny gave,
With which a tract was bought;
That tract a heathen chief
Unto the Saviour brought.
A little church was built,
Men turned from idols old,
Till fifteen hundred souls
Were gathered in the fold.

If every little hand
Shall sow the gospel seed,
And every little heart
Shall pray for those in need;
If every little child
Shall give to God his mite,
Soon shall the heathen come
To walk in Christ, the Light.

—*The Child's Gem.*

PLAYING STAGE-COACH.

"All wanting the same place makes a great deal of trouble in this world," said mamma, thoughtfully. "Shall I tell you a little story about it—something I know is true?"

"O yes, do!" cried the children.

"It is a very sad story, but I will tell it to you," she went on, and the next time you are tempted to be selfish, stop and think of it. Once, long ago, there were four children playing stage-coach, just as you have been doing now, and, just like you, they all wanted the first place. Instead of playing on a log, however, they were in the spreading branches of the willow tree.

"'I want to drive,' said Lucy, getting in the driver's seat.

"'No, let me drive,' and Harry climbed up beside her. 'Let me sit there.'

"'But Lucy did not move.

"'Let me sit there,' repeated Harry, giving her a slight push and crowding his way onto the same branch where she sat. 'You must let me drive.'

"A moment more, a sudden crash, and they were on the ground. The branch had broken.

"Harry was on his feet instantly, trying to raise his sister, but there was a sharp cry of pain, then she lay very still. Mother and father came running out of the house and gently lifted the little fainting form, from which the arm hung limp and broken. There was sorrow and crying, but it was too late; nothing could turn aside the weeks of suffering and pain that must be borne before the little girl could take her place again among the

other children. I think they all learned a lesson of loving unselfishness in those weary days, each trying who could bring the most brightness and happiness into the dreary hours. I was that little girl and I learned to appreciate little kindnesses as I had never done before. It was then that I learned something else, too—something I want you all to remember," and mamma looked at the little group. "It is 'Even Christ pleased not himself.'"

THE FAIRY NETS OF THE SPIDER.

John Burroughs, in his "Autumn Tides," thus discourses about the spiders in the fall:

"Looking athwart the fields under the sinking sun, the ground appears covered with a shining veil of gossamer. A fairy net, invisible at mid-day, rests upon the stubble and upon the spears of grass, covering acres in extent—the work of innumerable spiders. . . . At the same time, stretching from the tops and branches of trees, or from the top of a stake in the fence, may be seen the cables of the flying spider—a fairy bridge from the visible to the invisible."

Another writer thus defends the spider:

"Strange as many people may think it, the spider is really a very useful creature. We owe to it the destruction of numerous insects that would inflict upon us the most serious injury. . . . Even as it is, and in spite of innumerable spiders, as well as birds, farmers sometimes lose largely by the damage inflicted upon their crops by particular kinds of small insects. . . . The web of the common garden spider is a very beautiful structure, being composed of silken threads arranged like the spokes of a wheel, crossed at intervals by spiral filaments. . . . These silken threads are in reality composed of numerous threads twisted together in a kind of cable by the spinnerets of the spider."

