

## A QUIET SUNDAY

"Come ye apart and rest awhile;"  
 The Master spoke the words; and light  
 Came to us when the hush of night  
 Yielded to mourning's hopeful smile  
 And we arose and took our way  
 Down through the restful Sabbath day

We laid aside our weight of care,  
 For if God gives a holiday  
 Why should grim sorrow with us stay  
 And steal the calmness from our prayer?  
 For one day all should be forgot  
 But the great love that fails us not

And all regrets, and every fear  
 Of gathering storms that yet might break,  
 And thought that darkened hues might take  
 Were all as naught, for God came near  
 And walked and talked with us that day,  
 Until we prayed the hours would stay

Even the unfamiliar things  
 Of that still Sabbath taught us more  
 Of Him than we had known before;  
 And glad we buds on buoyant wings,  
 And colored flower and spreading tree,  
 Told us how great His love must be

For where the Plain stretched fair and green  
 Was strange Stonehenge in solitude,  
 And nearer, where old Sarum stood,  
 The stately Minster spire was seen,  
 And these memorials of the past  
 Said to our hearts, "God's love will last."

Nor needed we the tongues of men,  
 It seemed God's house was everywhere,  
 And every thought became a prayer,  
 And earth was nearer Heaven then,  
 While, as the babe on mother's breast,  
 So God's tired children found their rest.

We thank him for that quiet day,  
 And for the joy that made us strong,  
 And for the restful time of song,  
 And all the peace that blessed our way;  
 Now though we turn to work again  
 We know His love shall aye remain.

MARIANNE FARNINGHAM

## Our Story.

## "ONLY A DOG."

## CHAPTER I.

Among all the lonely villages which are to be found nestling here and there amid the green meadows and cornfields of England, not one could be more lonely than Hollowshope, whose vicar was about to bring home a wife from a large family in London. It lay in a hollow among hills, as if it had been dropped there from the skies, its scattered houses standing apart from one another with varying distances between them. The church, a low, small, simple old edifice, with no pretensions to architectural beauty, stood quite alone, with a quiet churchyard around it, where the dead lay in closer companionship than had been their lot in life. The vicarage, instead of being its nearest neighbor, had wandered off two or three fields away and rested on the low of a low hill, from which it looked down on the moss-grown roof of its natural consist and head. The hills alone clustered and crowded together, one behind the other, with soft rounded outlines lifting the clear horizon high up into the air far above the level of the eye; so that to gaze up into the blue depths of the sky you had to raise your head as if you had been dwelling in one of the narrow streets of the great city where the vicar's wife had been born. Hollowshope was so stationary a village that, even in these times of speculation and money-getting, no one had spirit enough, to set up either a shop or a tavern in its quiet lanes. There was not so much as a cottage window with a few common articles for sale in it, or a sign over any door, "Licensed to sell tea and tobacco." Those who needed a row of pins or an ounce of tea must tramp to Sutton, a very small market-town five miles away. And tramping to Sutton meant a long, hot, weary climb over a rough road for half an hour or more, then across a stretch of table-land consisting of moor and bog,

where the heather was rich purple in the summer, but where the snows drifted into deep and treacherous pitfalls in the winter; and after this another long, steep, and rough descent into the valley where the little town lay. Naturally there was a good deal of borrowing and lending in Hollowshope, and an unusually familiar acquaintance with one another's private family arrangements, from the vicarage to the smallest cottage in the furthest limits of the parish.

Their vicar's second marriage had given rise to a great deal of excitement, which reached its height on the day he brought his new wife home. It was said they had been into foreign parts, and Jock had gone with them. It was even rumored that Jock had stood next to the bridegroom in the London church where the marriage had been celebrated, and none of the village doubted it. Mr. Churchill had never been seen without him outside his church walls, and every man, woman and child loved the beautiful shepherd's dog, dainty and silken haired, fleet of foot, and sweet-tempered beyond words. It was quite right that Jock should make one at the parson's wedding, for had he not lain at the foot of the bed when his first young wife died, a few months after he came to Hollowshope, she and her new-born child passing away in one brief afternoon? Since then he had had no near home companion except Jock, who had come with the young wife from her north-country home. Jock surely had a right to be thought of when his master married again.

Jock had proved himself the very best of travelling companions, even amidst the perplexities of foreign travel. Nelly Churchill delighted her husband by her praise of him. And now the vicar's dog-cart, which had met them at the little railway station at Sutton, was just turning the corner of the hill from which the hollow of their parish could be seen. Latimer Churchill and his man-servant alighted, for the road was rough and steep, but the new wife kept her seat. The joyous barking of Jock at the sight of his old home echoed from hill to hill, and was answered by cheer after cheer from the villagers below. The two tinkling bells in the low, square tower rang out their merriest, and a few daring youths fired off guns into the air. Here and there across the deep lanes where the banks alone were as high as one's head, with tall hedgerows growing on their summit, were hung garlands of flowers, and over the churchyard gate was a white flag with the time-honoured motto, "Welcome Home," worked in laurel leaves upon it. There were endless shouts of "Hurrah!" and not the least hearty was the cry, "Hurrah for Jock!" A dog that had travelled in foreign parts was a marvel, and no one liked him to pass without a pat or a word of welcome.

"I never was so happy in my life," said Nelly, as she stepped over the threshold of her new home. "You did not tell me half how beautiful it is!"

Which was the happiest, Latimer Churchill, his young wife, or Jock, it would be difficult to say. Yet it was so that in the midst of all his new, deep happiness the vicar could not help stealing away from his wife's side, when night had fallen and all was still, into the quiet moonlight, which was flooding the valley and casting the dark shadows of the upright head-stones in the churchyard across the silent graves. Jock stealthily, as if he knew his master's purpose, had crept out after him, and they two paused together at the foot of a marble cross under the chancel window. He and Jock had visited this spot thousands of times, never once omitting to pass it when there was divine worship held in the church close by; and here Jock would stretch himself beside it, outside the chancel window, and hearing from time to time his master's voice within, until the service was ended, and he came out again to walk with Jock back to the desolate home. It was deso-

late no longer, his chosen companion and wife was there, and yet he could not neglect the lonely grave on this first night of his return to it.

It was quite plain that Jock had no fault to find with the change at the vicarage. He was large-hearted and could take in many objects of secondary love, his devotion and worship being reserved for his master. His memory was full of loving recollection of every servant or guest who had once dwelt under the vicarage roof. He seemed never to forget a face or a voice. Mrs. Churchill was proud of him, and after her fashion was fond of him. Her love had always pride for its foundation. She was extravagantly proud of her husband, of his reputation as a naturalist, his good family, and his good looks, of his popularity in his country parish, and even of the very godliness and devoutness with which he fulfilled his daily life and the duties of his office. The humble little village and lowly church and vicarage she was not proud of; but a change was sure to come. The bishop could not leave a man like Latimer Churchill to waste his powers in an out-of-the-way country parish.

Yet she was almost perfectly happy for a while; and so were Latimer and Jock. She was a good walker, like all Londoners who accustom themselves to go about the streets on foot. The late summer days and the autumn mornings were deliciously fine, and she was able to ramble about for hours on the hills and uplands, with her husband botanizing and Jock coursing, fleet as a greyhound, among the faded ferns and the broken tufts of gorse. In London she had often drawn pictures of the country life she would lead with Latimer, and now she was charmed to realize her dreams. To have Jock lying at her feet, with his beautiful, half-human eyes fastened upon her face, and her husband lingering beside her, with the clear, blue sky above them, and no sound or sight of common work-a-day life breaking in upon them, seemed to her the perfection of earthly happiness.

The first faint cloud upon her sky, no bigger than a man's hand, arose when she first grew aware of those faithful visits her husband and Jock paid to the little grave under the chancel window. Neither of them could forget the young girl, Latimer's wife when he had been himself only a young priest of four and twenty entering upon his life's career; and still at times his thoughts went back to those by-gone days with that vague, slight mournfulness which "resemble sorrow only as the mist resembles rain." Nelly was ashamed of her pain and could not speak of it; but none the less there was a pain, no deeper perhaps than a pin-prick, when her husband, even with her hand upon his arm, would pause wistfully for an instant as he passed the marble cross on his way to the vestry, and Jock would stretch himself at the foot of it, with those beautiful eyes of his fastened pensively upon it. No doubt in Jock's faithful memory the young face and happy voice of his little mistress were yet living; and the great mystery which had laid her there, out of sight and hearing, perplexed him still. But it was an ache and a pain to Nelly, that there should be any cherished thing in common between her husband and Jock in which she could have no share.

This was the tiny rift in the lute, which could henceforth breathe no perfect harmony. How could she put her pain into words? Even to her own heart so subtle and imperceptible it was, she could not give a shape to the haunting, vexing shadow. The little marble cross grew faintly displeasing to her; it could be seen from one of the windows of her husband's study—a pure white object against the gray old wall of the church; and it was always the first thing her eyes fell upon when she looked out upon the lonely landscape. By and by it grew to fill the whole landscape for her; and the words of a verse chiseled upon one side of the pedestal rang through her brain for

hours together. She caught herself repeating them as she went about the house, or sat alone at her needle-work:

"Her fleeting soul to heaven she gave,  
 Then slept the slumber of the grave;  
 Nor mourned once at God's decree,  
 The smile passed from her pallid face;  
 So dies, nor leaves behind a trace,  
 The wild birds' carol 'mid the trees."

The singing of the birds never failed to bring back these last words to her mind, vexing and chafing her. Once more the serpent had entered into Paradise.

## CHAPTER II.

I believe it is Bacon who says that "Man is the god of the dog."  
 For years Jock had been his master's companion, following his footsteps into every cottage and outlying farmstead in the wide parish, lying on the hearthrug in his study whilst he thought out the sermons he preached from his humble pulpit, and playing many a frolic with him on the wild hillside where they were free from the criticism of any human spectator. Latimer's love for his dog was that peculiar blending of tenderness with careful government which is called forth by a creature that worships you, can see no fault or flaw in you, accepts your judgments as final, and your punishments as merited. He had grown accustomed to talking to Jock as he would have done to an intelligent child, and many of his moods Jock could sympathize with better than a human being would have done. When his young wife was dying Jock had watched in her sick-room and by her death-bed as incessantly as he had done himself; and it was the dumb creature's deep distress that had most fully responded to his own. Latimer did not curiously inquire whether he loved his dog better than his human fellow-creatures: the love was different. It was not the love of an equal, but that of a superior being looking down with unmeasured tenderness upon a creature at his feet.

In the long winter days, when the snow lay deep in the lanes, and the outlying dwelling-places were difficult to reach, Nelly was obliged to stay at home while her husband and Jock left her for hours together. The heat of the country is very still in winter, and Nelly, used to all the stir and movement of the greatest city in the world, felt there was something appalling in this utter stillness; it left her to brood upon herself, and the silently growing jealousy creeping in upon her found time to root itself in her nature. It could not work any ill to the little grave under the chancel-window, but it could upon Jock, who would come in from his long pattering in the snow after his master, weary and foot-sore, but as happy as in the bright summer days, looking forward to nothing else than lying on the hearth in the drawing-room before the fire, taking a sleepy satisfaction in the sound of their voices as they read or talked together. Nelly banished him from the drawing-room, but she could not get him exiled from the study; and as time went on the study became distasteful to her, partly on his account and partly because of the little cross that could be seen from its window.

Does sin stop with ourselves, or does it descend as an evil influence upon the lower animals which we associate closely with our own habit and lives? Does ill-temper in the master not make the dog snappish and uncertain? Does not the general tone of moral life in a house operate for good or evil on every brain and heart within the circle of its sway? Jock was no longer the free and happy creature he had been. Hitherto he had met with no dislike anywhere in the parish, which constituted his whole world, and he began to pine. Doors that had once been open to him were now shut; and Nelly's voice spoke to him in sharp tones. The change perplexed him; it awoko in him a feeling of being in fault. He was no longer so fleet-footed or light-hearted as he had been; and if his master was going out he would linger in his quiet