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Stories of Our Pets.

FAITHFUL DUCHESS.

(Augusta Hancock, in 'Sunday Reading for the Young.')

Some months ago, in a northern town, there lived a family who possessed a beautiful dog of which they made a great pet.

Unfortunately, as time passed by, the dog's temper became very uncertain, and, as there were several children in the house, Mr. Smith determined to find a home for 'Duchess' some-

them of the loss of 'Duchess' while the ship was in the harbor at Swansea; she had disappeared entirely, the captain said, and though steps had been taken to find her again, no traces could be found, and they feared that she must have been either stolen or lost in the crowd on the quays.

A fortnight passed by, and one evening Mr. Smith was returning home from business when he was surprised to find a large black dog lying on his doorstep; and still more was he astonished when the creature rose, wagged its tail, and greeted him with every demonstration of affection and joy. He tried to

long miles, over hill and dale, from Swansea to arrive at her own old home again in safety. Was it wonderful that 'Duchess' was sent away again, and still remains, tenderly cared for, and loved more than ever, by her friends? It was even said that her temper had improved with the change of air, at any rate 'Duchess' was never seen to snap or bite again.

The Sod Church.

(E. L. Vincent, in the 'American Messenger.')

The heart of the missionary was restless and full of anxiety as he stepped from the train at the little station which was to be his home. As far as the eye could reach a dead level stretched away across the country. What a change from the hilly land of his other days! How lonely it made him feel!

'Can you tell me where the church is?' he asked a lad standing near.

'The church? Oh, yes, sir. You follow this lane right out till you come there. It's two miles.'

Two miles! Well, he could walk. It would rest his mind to do something; and with his travelling bag in hand he courageously set out.

Again he stopped to inquire, for no sign of a spire pointing skyward met his gaze. He wanted to be sure he was on the right road.

Yes; he would soon come to it they said. The road was so straight that he could not be lost; so on he went.

A small structure came into view, but how strange it looked! Grey, and so rough! What could it be?

As he drew near the sound of voices fell on his ears from within the queer building. He would look in. Stepping to the door he peered into the half darkness. Two boys down on their knees were pounding the naked ground floor with heavy mallets, making it smooth and firm to stand upon. A young girl was pinning papers on a table in place of a spread. She looked up and smiled when the minister's form came between her and the light outside.

'Can you tell me where I may find the church?' he asked. 'I have walked out here thinking all the time I would come to it, but I fear I am on the wrong road.'

'This is the church, sir,' one of the boys said, coming toward him. 'We're getting all ready for the meeting to-morrow. We expect the minister to-night.'

'Well,' he said, stepping inside, 'I'm the minister; and this—this is the church!'

'Yes, sir. Don't you think it's a nice one?'

His eyes wandered around the dry sods, piled one above another to make the sides of the building.

'It's the very nicest one anywhere in this country. And you're the minister?'

The boy slyly looked up at him. He put his satchel down and reached out his hand. Something in the boy's tone gave him a needed inspiration. If this was to be his field of labor he would begin bravely.

'Yes; I'm the minister, and I want to help you, if you will tell me how.' And soon he was holding the corners of the paper while Annie pinned them neatly on the rough ta-



DUCHESS.

where else. Accordingly, he spoke to some friends, and arranged with a captain, whose ship was to sail that evening, that he should take away the dog with him. The night came, and poor 'Duchess' was conveyed on board and left there, while on shore there was great sorrow among the children to find that their playmate had gone from them for ever.

They received news that the ship had touched at 'Swansea,' and, shortly afterwards, a letter came from the captain, to inform

drive it away, but all in vain! It remained on the step, licking his hand, and looking up into his face with a pair of earnest, brown eyes, that he felt sure could only belong to 'Duchess.'

When the door was opened, and the dog brought into the light, its identity was proved without a doubt. Weary, footsore, and dreadfully thin, it was, indeed, Mr. Smith's faithful dog, who had travelled unaided and unguided, save by unerring instinct, all the