

A DOG OF FLANDERS

NELLO and Patrasche were left all alone in the world.

They were friends in a friendship closer than brotherhood. Nello was a little Ardennois,¹ — Patrasche was a big Fleming.² They were both of the same age by length of years, yet one was still young, and the other was already old. They had dwelt together almost all their days; both were orphaned and destitute, and owed their lives to the same hand. It had been the beginning of the tie between them, their first bond of sympathy; and it had strengthened day by day, and had grown with their growth, firm and indissoluble, until they loved one another very greatly.

Their home was a little hut on the edge of a little village, — a Flemish village a league from Antwerp, set amidst flat breadths of pasture and corn-lands, with long lines of poplars and of alders bending in the breeze on the edge of the great canal which ran through it. It had about a score of houses and homesteads, with shutters of bright green or sky-blue, and roofs rose-red or black and white, and walls white-washed until they shone in the sun like snow. In the centre of the village stood a windmill, placed on a

¹ **Ardennois.** Ardennes is a province of France, lying along the Belgian frontier.

² **Fleming.** Flanders was a very ancient kingdom of Europe. The greater part of the old kingdom is now included in Belgium.