

## Sheep Husbandry.

### The Scotch Colley Sheep Dog.

"He was a lean, faithful dog,  
As Terriers should be dyke,  
He, in nest, so he, in the place,  
Ay get him from in the place,  
His breast was white, his tangle black,  
We could see at a glance,  
His gravelly tail, with upward curl,  
Hung over his hunches with a swirl."

—BRUCE.

From time immemorial the Dog has been found the friend and companion of man. Among the various special objects for which he has been trained, none perhaps are more interesting or useful than the service which he renders the shepherd and drover in the management of flocks and herds. Different kinds of dogs, however, are employed for these purposes in different countries, varying in their physical and social characters. In A life's regions they approach to the Mastiff type, where greater strength is required to enable them to encounter not only wolves and other powerful animals of prey, but also human enemies.

In the Pyrenees, Hungary, and parts of Germany, where wolves abound, breeds of Shepherd Dogs prevail that very much resemble those destructive animals in appearance, so much so, indeed, that it is sometimes no easy task to distinguish correctly between them. Before sheep husbandry became of so much importance as it now is in the mountainous parts of Scotland, the dogs employed in the tending of sheep had a close affinity to the Terrier; and naturalists are of opinion that the most approved shepherds' dogs of Northern Europe have been descended from the wolf.

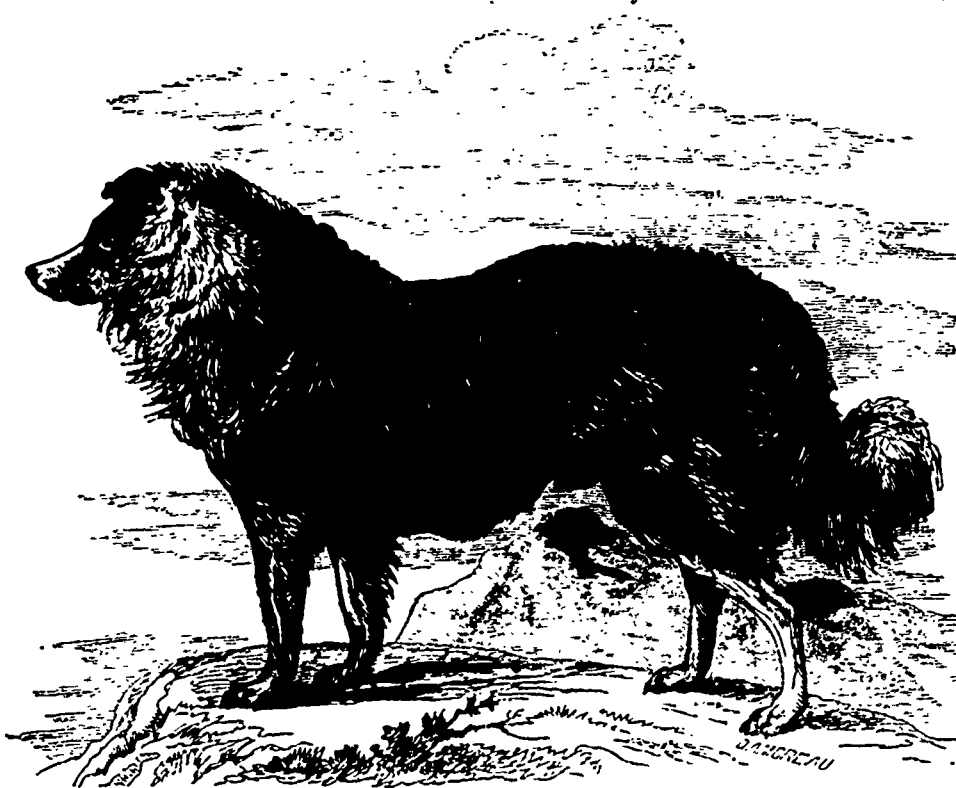
"If we shall place the older shepherd's dog, of the South of Scotland, termed a Colley beside a Esquimaux dog, we shall discover little difference between them in their essential characters, and still less between the Esquimaux dog and the shepherd's dog of Ireland. The dogs of this class have a certain likeness to one another, which may be ascribed, independently of a common origin, to their being employed in the same pursuits, and treated nearly in the same manner. They are of small, or medium size, have the muzzle narrow, the ears sub-erect, the hair long and coarse, and the tail bushy. When these dogs are inured, from generation to generation, to the tendence of flocks, they acquire the habits proper to this service; they become devoted, as it were, to the shepherd and his flock, and exhibit, in the discharge of their peculiar functions, a high degree of sagacity, patience, and fidelity.

"It is common for naturalists to exalt the shepherd's dog, with respect to his natural endowments, beyond all other races of dogs. But the shepherd's dog, though wonderfully sagacious in every thing that relates to his peculiar services, does not appear to merit, with respect to intelligence, the highest place among dogs. He is inferior to the barbet and its varieties in his aptitude to receive instruction; and in particular qualities, he falls short of others. Thus, in vigilance, he is not equal to the mastiff; in docility, he is inferior to the spaniel; and in courage he cannot be compared to the little terrier of the same countries. His habits vary with the education he receives. When his province is to supply the absence of enclosures, and protect the vineyards and cultiva-

ted crops, he becomes vigilant, keeping his eye upon the flock, so that they may not stray into the forbidden grounds, and gently turning them back when they pass their allotted limits. This is the peculiar duty of the shepherd's dog in most parts of France, which has given rise to those charming descriptions of the habits of this animal, which the poets and naturalists of the country have given us. It is interesting to observe these docile creatures watching their little flocks, obeying every sign of the shepherd, and slowly pacing round the little patches of pasture, on which the animals are confined. In countries, again, where the flocks are large, and suffered to spread over great tracts of ground, as in the mountainous parts of England and Scotland, the same delicacy of management is not necessary or practicable. The dogs, in this case, are taught to run swiftly to distant parts, to head the flock, to turn it to either hand, or bring it back to the shepherd. In the British Islands, the shepherd's dogs present considerable diversities of form and habits. Those of the Southern counties of downs are mostly a peculiar breed, with shaggy furs, pricked ears, and generally with short or rudimentary tails. They are generally less ten-

The sagacity and docility of the Colley, when well bred and trained, are sometimes truly wonderful. Though he has a fine and sharp muzzle, his scent is so delicate as to place him on an equality, in this respect, with most spaniels. By careful training his habit of observation, and the carrying out of the instructions of his master, seem to bring him within the domain of reason. We have a vivid and very pleasing recollection of an illustrative fact that occurred some years since, while making the ascent of Ben Lomond, in the Highlands of Scotland, accompanied by a shepherd. When we had got about a third of the way up the mountain, the shepherd directed his dog, a well bred and thorough trained animal, to collect a flock of black faced sheep, about three miles off, and bring them to a spot a little below, that we might on our descent take them to the homestead on the margin of the lake. The sagacious animal faithfully carried out his instructions, and had his flock on the spot two hours, at least, before we returned. The fact is shepherding among the mountains, without the assistance of these dogs, would be next to an impossibility. One dog, in many instances, is more serviceable than half a dozen men.

Mr. James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, living in his early days among the sheep and their quadruped attendants, and an accurate observer of nature, as well as an exquisite poet, gives some anecdotes of the Colley (the Highland term for sheep-dog), with which the reader will not be displeased "My dog Sirrah," says he, in a letter to the editor of Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, "was, beyond all comparison, the best dog I ever saw. He had a somewhat surly and unsocial temper, disdaining all flattery, and refusing to be caressed; but his attention to my commands and interest will never again be equalled by any of the canine race. When I first saw him, a drover was leading him with a rope. He was both lean and hungry, and far from being a beautiful animal; for he was almost black, and had a grim face, striped



der towards their charge than the dogs of the cultivated parts of France and Germany. In the countries of enclosures, the English sheep dogs are of every sort, and have rarely the characteristics distinctive of a true breed. In the mountainous parts of the North of England and South of Scotland, the dogs of this class have acquired a more uniform set of characters, and so have become a breed or race, the individuals resembling one another; and they excel all the others in the faculties and habits proper to their condition. They are termed Colleys, probably from the Celtic Coillean or Cuillean, signifying a little dog or whelp. This kind of dog is placed more in habitual communication with his master than most others. He inhabits the same cabin, and becomes, as it were, a member of the household. He contracts most of the simplicity of habits and manners distinctive of those with whom he associates. He is homely in his demeanour, indifferent to the caresses of strangers, whom he rather repulses than courts, and seemingly sedulous only in the discharge of his proper duties. He attaches himself to his immediate master; and frequently, when transferred to a stranger, pines, and yields an unwilling service. The race is frequently crossed with other breeds, but, for the most part, those are the most useful and trusty which retain the conformation of the older Colleys."—(Low.)

with dark brown. I thought I perceived a sort of sullen intelligence in his countenance, notwithstanding his dejected and forlorn appearance, and I bought him. He was scarcely a year old, and knew so little of herding that he had never turned a sheep in his life; but, as soon as he discovered that it was his duty to do so, and that it obliged me, I can never forget with what anxiety and eagerness he learned his different evolutions; and when I once made him understand a direction, he never forgot or mistook it."

On one night, a large flock of lambs that were under the Ettrick Shepherd's care, frightened by something, scampered away in three different directions across the hills, in spite of all that he could do to keep them together. "Sirrah," said the shepherd, "they're a' awa!"

It was too dark for the dog and his master to see each other at any considerable distance, but Sirrah understood him, and set off after the fugitives. The night passed on, and Hogg and his assistant traversed every neighbouring hill in anxious but fruitless search for the lambs; but he could hear nothing of them nor of the dog, and he was returning to his master with the doleful intelligence that he had lost all his lambs. "On our way home, however," says he, "we discovered a lot of lambs at the bottom of a deep ravine