



### DOG-IN-THE-MANGER FOLKS.

**W**E should fancy that dog in the picture above is not blessed with a very good temper.

Certainly he is not a very amiable person, and is treating with scant courtesy those patient-faced cows who are waiting for their supper of hay, upon which, however, his irritable majesty sits. Bad temper is enough to put up with, but when it is joined with a spirit of selfishness it is sure to make its possessor miserable and everybody else. Who would care to call that dog his friend, when the wretched creature is unable to eat the hay itself, and yet will not let the poor cows enjoy it? Let us hope that the master thereof soon appeared upon the scene with a suitable stick, and made way for the inoffensive beasts to have their meal undisturbed by the cur.

But it is not only four-legged animals who are ill-natured; there are, we fear, a good lot of folks who, while not actually sitting grunting in a manger, are showing just the same evil spirit towards their neighbours. They have got all they want—nay, more, they have something which would make others happy, but is no good to themselves, but as to giving it away or letting other people enjoy it too, this never enters into their heads; they have money and plenty to spare, and all their wants are supplied, but the poor hungry people who look up to them for food, and the little children who run about the streets in all weathers ill clothed, have no effect upon their hearts. These people who are so unkind, although they walk on two legs and wear clothes, while human creatures, are little better than dogs in the manger.

Please notice that selfish folks are never happy, for he who would have a light heart must have an open hand. The Bible says, "the generous soul shall live," and this means not only length of days, but usefulness and honour.

Now let us ask God to save us from the spirit of the dog in the manger, and grant us His grace to be loving and kind towards everybody. Perhaps we know some good people who set us a capital example in this respect, but we had better turn to the Gospels, and there we shall find our perfect copy in Him who went about doing good. The tender-hearted Saviour was ever ready to bless and comfort those around Him, and rather than keep back from them what He might have given only of His abundance, He taught us self-sacrifice, and gave Himself altogether for our sakes to live and die.

Ah! dear reader, let us be loving one toward another, in brotherly love preferring our neighbour, doing our best to serve rather than be waited upon, and so fulfilling the law of Christ. When we come to die—and die we must one day—we shall look back and ask ourselves, "Is anybody the better for my life?" Then what a joy it will be to answer one's own heart: "Thank God, I have, by His grace, done my best to make others happy, and tried thus to walk in the steps of my blessed Lord." This will smooth our pillow and help to lighten that dark valley, through which the Lord Jesus will lead us in safety, and by whose grace and love we would do all things.

*Jesse Page.*