
THE SHADOW FALLS

"Well, then, he did, Mister—the little sneak."

"Now, are you sure? You said that you were discussing the overly rich."

Matt nodded his head in the affirmative.

"Yes, well, might he not have said aristocrat?" Then Arthur spelled the word: "A-r-i-s-t-o-c-r-a-t, aristocrat. Think again, Matt. Isn't that the word?"

"By jiminy! I believe it is," Matt cried, dropping his spade. "I feel kind o' sorry now for young Storms. I should not ha' struck him."

"It will do him no harm. Besides, a 'rusty cat' and aristocrat sound so much alike the mistake could have been made quite easily."

Thereupon the two laughed good-naturedly over the misunderstanding, while, in his heart, Arthur gloried over the sworn fidelity of this trusty son of Adam.

Just then Noddles, Muriel's pet spaniel, appeared, wagging his tail in delight.

Arthur bent over and stroked the sides of the pretty canine.

"See, Matt, how he speaks to us with his short tail," declared Arthur.

"Ah, he's a fine dog," said Matt, "all animation. How quiet-like he does seem to speak! His tail bein' rather stumpy, I sup-