

[Written for the Canadian Illustrated News.]

ANTIGONE.

If Homer ne'er had sung; if Socrates Had never lived in Virtue's cause to die; If the wild chorus of the circling seas Had never roared back poor Sisyphus' sigh; If Sparta had not with her parent blood Traced on all time the name "Theropyia;" If Greece writhed through the surging flood Of Persian pride had not arisen free; If nought of great or wise or brave or good Had proved thee, Hellas, what thou wast to be; Save that thou didst create "Antigone"— Thou still hadst in the van of nations stood. Fall'n are thy noble temples, but above Them all still stands thy shrine of Woman's Love.

JOHN READE.

THE NEWFOUNDLAND DOG.

(By our Newfoundland Correspondent.)

Should any one have the happiness to possess a true Newfoundland dog, let him cherish the noble creature as one of his best treasures. Gold should not induce him to part with such an embodiment of unswerving fidelity, rare intelligence and undying love. The moral qualities of this high-couraged dog render him invaluable as the companion and attached friend of man. Robert Burns, in one of his admirable letters, says "man is the god of the dog." When we see a noble Newfoundland dog, with his deep muzzle, broad chest, robust form and grave intelligent aspect, how reverently and affectionately he regards his master,—how he watches for the approving word, the encouraging caress, and is thrown into raptures of delight even by the cheering tones of the voice, and how he gives up his whole faculties and powers to the service of his master, not from the hope of reward or the dread of punishment, but from pure gratitude and friendship, in the fullness and freedom of unjudging love, then we will admit that Burns' opinion is no rhetorical exaggeration but simple truth. The generous creature seems to find his highest happiness in fulfilling and even anticipating the wishes of those whom he serves. It is impossible not to return such self-forgetting affection as his. Like the old Douglas family, his motto is "tender and true." He never wounds the hand that has caressed and cherished him; never betrays a trust; even neglect and ill-usage can scarcely damp the ardour of his affection. In prosperity and poverty and misfortune he is still the same—"faithful unto death." Human friendships are fickle and changeable as the wind, and too often we have to say:

"What is friendship but a name,
A charm that lulls to sleep?
A shade that follows wealth or fame,
But leaves the wretch to weep."

But the friendship of a noble Newfoundland dog swerves not, and often clings to a master who is by far the more ignoble of the two. He guards his master's property and the members of his household, no matter what perils he may have to encounter; listens for his footsteps; mourns his absence, and greets his return with glowing delight.

Most visitors, on arriving in Newfoundland, make a point of inquiring, at once, for the noble dogs who have made the name of the island more widely known than even its celebrated codfish. They naturally expect to find, in the cradle of the race, the purest and finest specimens; and anticipate getting possession of some youthful specimen to become the pet and guardian of their households. Great is their disappointment when their eyes rest on the wretched, degenerate representatives of the once noble breed that roam the streets of the capital. Abject in aspect, cowardly and thievish in habits, starved and ill-treated, they bear the same relation to the true race that modern Greeks bear to the grand, heroic Greeks of Homer. True, there are still some traces of departed greatness. In almost all, you can trace the well-known intelligent-looking head, the large pendulous ears, and even the form of the tail has not materially altered. But "his living Greece no more." This miserable, mongrel race, haunting the butcher's stall, with dishonest intents, howling, and flinging from the smallest boy who "heaves a rock" at the starving cur, are a melancholy proof how low a once noble doghood may fall, through ill-treatment and inattention to preserving purity of blood. A large number of them are owned by the fishermen, who employ them during winter in hauling fuel from the woods. These unfortunates are often treated most unmercifully,—beaten and kicked savagely by the lowest class of the population,—ill fed and worked to the condition of skeletons. In summer, they prowl around the fishing stages, living on the offal of fish. Many of them have reverted partially to the condition of their progenitors, the wolves. At the dead of night they form themselves into packs and start on the illicit prowl, in search of the farmer's sheep or smaller cattle. No fence is sufficiently strong to resist the teeth and claws of these powerful brutes. They have been known to force a strong door from its hinges; and where the fastenings are too strong for their efforts, they will set to work and tunnel a passage underneath the foundation, and emerge in the midst of the terrified flock of sheep within, not one of whom is found alive in the morning. It is remarkable that they seldom eat the flesh, but only drink the blood of their victims. The destruction of sheep by these wolves in dogs' clothing is such that, in many large districts, the rearing of sheep has been abandoned, to the great injury of the people. In the neighbourhood of St. John's, farmers have the greatest difficulty in guarding their sheep from the attacks of dogs, and the utmost vigilance often fails. I am aware of one instance in which a farmer, at different times, has lost sixty sheep in this way. Recently the Legislature passed an Act imposing a dog-tax, and granting compensation, out of the fund thus realized, to such as may lose "sheep, cattle or horses" by dogs. The results, so far, are anything but satisfactory. The innocent pay for the damage caused by the guilty, who own the dogs but evade the tax. One of our ablest magistrates proposes that the colony should set aside a good round sum for the purchase of the whole guilty race of sheep-stealers; that a dog-guillotine should be erected, and each criminal decapitated, without trial by judge or jury, as soon as purchased. It is to be feared such an arrangement would raise the price of dog's flesh immensely and would hold out an inducement for the secret propagation of the condemned breed in order to sell them to Government. I fear there is nothing for it but leave the matter to time, "the

great rectifier of all wrongs," and, meantime, enforce the existing law as well as possible. Advancing civilization will "improve these dogs off the face of all creation."

Whence came the race of Newfoundland dogs that are now known by that name, and specially valued? These handsome creatures, big as a jackass and hairy as a bear, are not indigenous to this island. Far finer specimens of them may be met with in Britain, America, or Canada than here; and no doubt they are a product of civilization, and have been brought to their present perfection by good feeding, kind treatment, and much care in preserving the blood pure. We have here a few fine specimens of the race. I number among my most esteemed acquaintances some half a dozen of these, which it is a pleasure to look at. The best of them are entirely black, with the exception of a small white star on the breast or chest, and very strong and muscular. Formerly there were here a few dog-fanciers, who bred this race for purposes of sale, and made a living by the trade; but I believe they have disappeared. The fine dog we presented to the Prince of Wales when he visited us, and which he valued so highly, was supplied by one of the now-extinct race of dog-fanciers. We named him "Cabot," after the great seaman who discovered the island—a mode of complimenting the memory of the great departed which may seem questionable, but which has been largely acted on in the case of Caesar and other warriors and statesmen. We consider the Labrador dog the best of the species. I suspect he is a descendant of the Esquimaux dog. Whether the aborigines of this island possessed dogs from which have come the celebrated race is a doubtful matter.

Old settlers tell us that the ancient genuine breed consisted of a dog about twenty-six inches high, with black ticked body, gray muzzle, and gray or white-stockinged legs, with "dew-claws" behind. When one of this rare breed can be found, he proves to be the very best. His retrieving capabilities are wonderful. He will dive and raise a seal weighing some four hundred weight, and then drag it to the shore; and the same dog will retrieve geese and ducks' eggs without injuring them. These are the progenitors of those Newfoundland dogs of whose aquatic propensities and powers we read so often, and who have so often rescued human beings, in the most gallant manner, from a watery grave. Their sagacity and fidelity cannot be equalled. Their gentleness towards and love of children is wonderful. How delicately chivalrous they are in their conduct towards ladies may be gathered from the following anecdote related by Jesse in his *Gleanings*.—A gentleman had a remarkably fine Newfoundland dog, so innately gallant and polite that unless ordered to remain at home, he invariably, unbidden, preceded his master's wife and sisters when they walked abroad, if they were unattended by a gentleman. He compelled every person he met, by a significant look or growl, to make way for them; but when a gentleman accompanied them he always walked behind. When with him, by night or by day, they were safe, for his courage was equal to his sagacity, and on the slightest signal from them of alarm, he was ready to give battle. Who would be ashamed to reckon such a gallant chivalrous dog among his "poor relations?"

The retrieving proclivities of the Newfoundland dog occasionally take a curious development, as the following anecdote, taken from *Jakes' Excursions in Newfoundland*, will show:—This dog caught his own fish. He sat on a projecting rock, beneath a fish stake, or stage where the fish are laid to dry, watching the water, which had a depth of six or eight feet, and the bottom of which was white with fish bones. On throwing a piece of cod into the water, three or four heavy, clumsy-looking fish, called in Newfoundland "sculpins," with great heads and mouths, and many spines about them, and generally about a foot long, would swim in to catch it. These he would "set" attentively, and the moment one turned his broadside to him he darted down like a fish-hawk, and seldom came up without a fish in his mouth. As he caught them he carried them regularly to a place a few yards off, where he laid them down, and they told us that in the summer he would sometimes make a pile of fifty or sixty a day just at that place. He never attempted to eat them, but seemed to be fishing purely for his own amusement. I watched him for above two hours; and when the fish did not come, I observed he once or twice put his right foot in the water, and paddled it about. This foot was white; and Harvey said he did it to "tell" or entice the fish; but whether it was for that specific reason, or merely a motion of impatience, I could not exactly decide. The whole proceeding struck me as remarkable, more especially as they said he had never been taught anything of the kind."

A FEW FAMILIAR QUOTATIONS ON BOOKS.

- Mankind are the creatures of books.—*Leish Hunt*.
Except a living man there is nothing more wonderful than a good book.—*Charles Kingsley*.
Books are men of higher stature, and the only men who speak aloud for future times to hear.—*Mrs. E. B. Browning*.
Books well chosen neither dull the appetite, nor strain the memory; but refresh the inclination, strengthen the powers, and improve under experiments.—*Collier*.
Books are the immortality of speech.—*Wilmott*.
Books are true friends that will neither flatter nor dissemble.—*Bacon*.
Lose no time in the perusal of mean and unprofitable books.—*Ascham*.
Titles and Mottoes to books are like escutcheons in the hands of a King. The wise sometimes condescend to accept of them; but none but a fool would imagine them of any real importance.—*Goldsmith*.
Books are the true levellers.—*Channing*.
Some people use books like lords, knowing only their titles, they brag of them as intimate acquaintances.—*Anon*.
Books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them, to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are.—*Milton*.
All government of action is to be gotten by knowledge, and knowledge but by the gathering of many knowledges, which is reading of books.—*Sir P. Sidney*.
Every great book is in action, and every action is a book.—*Luther*.

The late Lord Lytton's last novel of the "Kenelm Chillingly" was to have appeared on the 27th ult.

Miscellaneous.

The restoration of the Palais Royal is to be recommenced immediately.

It is rumoured that Dr. Lushington's secret about Lord Byron has not died with him, and will be made public before long.

A burglar who was lately sentenced, at the Maidstone Assize, to seven years' penal servitude, offered to toss the bench whether it should be fourteen years or nothing.

A subscription opened in Germany early last year for a statue in honour of Gen. Von Moltke, has just closed, and the total amount has been found to be 6,511 francs.

An enterprising Aberdonian left last week for Egypt, where he hopes to be able to arrange for a five years' lease of the pyramids, and then to charge for exhibiting them.

Rabbits' fur is by a new invention woven with wool and cotton in the manufacture of textile fabrics, and an important industry seems likely to grow out of the experiment.

Among the objects with which the Shah of Persia will visit London (the *Financier* says) a lion is understood to be included, whether for railway or other purposes is not known.

At Yokohama an enterprising trader recently imported 22 rabbits, which the Japanese eagerly bought up at enormous prices. The 22 creatures realized upwards of \$1,100.

M. J. B. Weber, the Director of the Botanic Garden at Dijon, considers the potato disease to be quite analogous to the mildew of the vine, and believes that it may be successfully combated in the same manner—i. e., by sulphur dusting.

In the debate on the marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill in the House of Lords on Friday, Earl Beauchamp said that a petition had been presented from Protestant Dissenters in Dundee in favour of a man being allowed to have more wives than one!

Gastronomers will be glad to learn that pigeons can be nurtured to the fatness and delicacy of ortolans by feeding them with wheat steeped in cod-liver oil. Those who have partaken of pigeons thus fattened say that it is the pleasantest way of taking cod-liver oil yet tried by them.

About two years since a company was formed in France to recover the treasure supposed to have been lost in the Spanish galleons sunk in Vigo Bay in 1702. The expedition has just returned unsuccessful, and the diving, &c., apparatus are the sole vestiges left of the company's capital.

The sea-serpent has turned up again—this time in the Bay of Biscay. Its head is described as like that of a hippocampus, and its length is reckoned at about twenty-five feet. A large devil fish was in close attendance when last seen. He was supposed to be one of the serpent's first cousins in the maternal line.

Man has not yet exhausted his ingenuity in making animals work for him, and the Australian papers speak of a convict who has put a kangaroo to work. A machine is put in motion by the animal. It works at about half-power, and turns a grinding-stone, chaff-cutter, bean mill, turnip-cutter, and a washing machine, and all at the same time. The contrivance also lifts water separately for irrigating the garden.

M. Raoul Duval, a noisy member of the Right in the French Assembly, has composed an epitaph on M. Thiers, which, to say the least, is very pointed. It is as follows:—

Here lies Adolphe Thiers,
President of the French Republic,
He gloried the First Empire,
Was the justification of the Second,
And prepared the Third."

Rattling has long been a favourite amusement of the Parisians, but the authorities of the Jardin d'Acclimatation have discovered a novel "sport" which may in time become highly popular, namely, combats between vipers and a newly imported bird—the Secretary. The bird is placed in a cage surrounded with glass, and the reptiles are subsequently admitted. At first the viper tries to find an outlet to its prison, but on seeing the bird draws itself up, hisses, and strives to strike its opponent with its tongue. The Secretary quietly waits until the snake is quite close, and then dashes at it with his bill, generally cutting the antagonist in two, and then becoming engaged, mimes the reptile into innumerable morsels.

Here is Mr. Emerson's opinion of the British patron saint, which will rather startle the good people who have a romantic opinion of that mystical personage—George of Cappadocia, born at Epiphania, in Cilicia, was a low parasite, who got a lucrative contract to supply the army with bacon. A rogue and an informer, he got rich, and was forced to run from justice. He saved his money, embraced Ananism, collected a library, and got promoted by a faction to the episcopal throne of Alexandria. When Julian came, A.D. 361, George was dragged to prison. The prison was burst open by the mob, and George was lynched, as he deserved. And this precious knave became, in good time, Saint George of England—patron of chivalry, emblem of victory and civility, and the pride of the best blood of the modern world!

Although M. Gustave Courbet has received his full measure of abuse for pulling down the Vendôme column, there is one person at least who owes him a debt of gratitude for something. Five years ago an Englishman made a bet of £2,000 with a fellow countryman that he would throw himself from the top of the column, and, thanks to a parachute he had invented, reach the ground unharmed. Both men, however, were suddenly called to Australia on business, and the trial was put off. A few days ago they returned, and the parachute inventor announced himself ready to fulfil his wager. His friend asserted that the column being pulled down, the bet was void, but the other declared that he had made no stipulation as to the height of the column, and since the Communists had been obliging enough to leave nothing but the pedestal, he would jump from that. Of course he won his wager easily, but even his parachute did not save him from receiving a bruise or two.

The last publication of the British death-rate and its causes is curious reading. One man died from the bite of a cat; and two more from the bites respectively of a ferret and an alligator. Another was stung to death by bees. A man and a boy died of falling from velocity sleds, and an old lady was killed by injuries inflicted by that agreeable machine. The swallowing of a shell, a screw, and a cherry-stone put a period to the lives of three infants, while two died of putting one a stone, the other a ball, into the ear. Swallowing bones sent three people out of the world, swallowing coins finished two, and swallowing a pin quickly pricked on grim death for one. A scratch from a thorn killed a woman of middle age; improper medicine poisoned eight people, and improper food five. Four hundred and forty-four young children were smothered by bed-clothes; and 200 persons during the year lost their lives in railway accidents. The proportion of suicides to every million of the population is about seventy—the deaths by hanging, the knife and drowning being most numerous. Heart disease the year's record shows to be increasing—a state of things which is said by eminent physicians to be caused by the greater wear and tear of business and the increased mental activity of the age.