



## CHAPTER III.

“ *A*S the real work of life had now to commence, our education was forthwith taken in hand. We had once heard our master say when showing us to a friend: ‘You’ll see these pups will take after the old dog, and turn out real clippers!’ We guessed this meant praise, and the first time we had a chance we vowed we’d deserve it.

“Coming as we did from a family of professional sheep dogs, Bob and I laughed at the idea of there being any particular art in driving sheep about, anything, in fact, that we did not know already without teaching. At our first attempt we found ourselves wofully deceived. Instead of watching and copying mother’s manoeuvres, when our master, trusting to her to guide us, rashly ordered us to bring the flock up to him, we rushed straight into the middle of them, and, in spite of all her attempts to counteract our errors, we drove twenty of them into a swampy creek, and scattered the rest to the four points of the compass. Master whistled and shouted till he was hoarse, but what pup was likely to listen to him with such fun afoot?

“After this he gave me to Master Tom, and Bob to the head shepherd, to be properly broken in, and I remember every detail of the process. Runholders and their shepherds rarely allow for the different dispositions of their dogs when they are breaking them. Now, for example, I was naturally inclined to be timid and nervous, thrashing always had an injurious effect on me. I am convinced they would have made a far better dog of me by sparing the rod, though, mind you, I firmly believe in it for dogs like Bob; but I was handed over to Master Tom who was a perfect terror at it. Why, one day when he hadn’t a stick handy, he caught me by the hind legs and banged me against a fence till I was stunned! And wasn’t he a dead shot with a stone! Then there was Bob who would undoubtedly have been the better for lashings of it, he was given to that soft-hearted Sandy, who hardly ever touched him with a stick, and couldn’t hit a haystack at ten yards with a lump of shingle. That isn’t what I call doing dogs justice, it took all the heart out of me; but it didn’t seem to hurt Bob much. He certainly turned out a clipper, everyone allowed that; but I did not! I failed to acquire the