

on your back. I thought I knew what trouble meant before they tied me up to a boundary, but, bless you, I knew nothing at all about it. All my previous experiences were as nought compared to the gloomy horrors of this solitary monotonous existence; the gnawing hunger, the parching thirst, the excessive heat in summer, the biting cold in winter, the weary, weary tramp four or five feet to the end of the chain, and four or five feet back again, the cramp, the rheumatic pains, and the chronic cough, which have never left me since that horrible flood, and, worse than all, the awful solitude! The only wonder is that I yet survive!"

"But have they not a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in this country! Surely they will get to hear how you are treated, and life will yet be made more endurable to you," I interposed.

"Don't you believe it! I am told they have quite enough to do about towns arresting every unfortunate driver whose horse happens to be rubbed a little raw with the harness, or any poor boy who is caught carrying a fowl head downwards, the way they were meant to be carried, or why would they know how to curl their necks up so comfortably? A few boundary dogs starved to death, or worse still, nearly so; or a flock of sheep left in the yards for four or five days without food or water on a sheep run, are matters which rarely come under their notice; or if they do, they are dismissed with the remark—'Mere routine of station work, can't be avoided.' No; we shall never get help from man, we don't for a mo-

ment expect it; but there must—I am convinced there must be—something better further on!—It cannot—cannot possibly be—as you men affirm—that to the Hereafter—for us dogs—there is no—admittance!"

His voice had sunk by degrees into a weak, husky, faltering whisper. It ceased, there was the sound of a deep-drawn, sobbing sigh, a slight scuffle, a rattle of the rusty chain, and the poor old Fence Dog had gone to see for himself. . . . What he saw, I know not.

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I rubbed my eyes, rose to my feet, saddled my horse, and rode on my way, pondering over many things.

Was this a dream that I had dreamt in the course of an afternoon nap?

Not all of it—if any! For there lay the poor old dog stone dead before my eyes!

When next I passed that way, a younger dog, with a much louder bark, had taken the poor old fellow's place, but he had little interest for me. The kennel had received some trifling repairs, and there were now no flies around it. They had remained true to their old friend, as a loud buzzing, and a pestilential odour arising from behind a thick bunch of spear grass, proved conclusively. Closer scrutiny was unnecessary and inadvisable.

Poor old Tweed! even honourable burial was denied you!

Had I the wherewithal to dig a grave in this shingly, sun-baked earth, you should lay no longer thus sweltering in the scorching sun. But it cannot hurt you now!

(THE END.)

