

"Git a red-'ot poker." It takes some time to make a poker red hot.

"Throw some water over him."

"Bite 'is tail."

"Bite yer grandmother," replies an ostler contemptuously. "I know this dorg, an' no bitin' will make 'im quit 'is 'old. Is any one of you game to 'old the St. Bernard while I chokes off the bull?"

A costermonger came forward and held the big dog by his collar, while the ostler gripped Mars' throat with both hands till he was forced to gasp for breath, when his huge adversary, only too glad to escape, tore away down the street.

"'Ere, let me take 'im 'ome, sir," says my new friend, taking the chain out of my hand. "Never lead a bulldog with a long chain. "'Old 'im up short, like this."

Mars seemed to know that he had to deal with a man who would stand no nonsense, for he walked by his side like a poodle till we reached Jiff's gate where I dismissed my guardian angel with half-a-crown.

What artful hypocrites dogs can be! While I was recounting to Jiff the misdeeds of his pet, the animal looked at us with an air of meek martyrdom as much as to say, "I know that I am being maligned, but I'll bear it like a Christian," and I felt that I ought to be ashamed of myself for bearing false witness against my neighbour.

Jiff listened to my recital with the philosophic calm with which we bear the misfortunes of others.

"My dear Paget, I'm awfully sorry, but he really didn't mean any harm. He's a young dog you see, and it was only his play. But I'm the one to blame. I ought to have cautioned you to lead him with a short chain."

Why, oh, why, does knowledge always come to us when it is too late to be of any use?

Then he fell a-fondling the culprit in the idiotic way which characterises the fond mother of spoilt children and the owners of spoilt dogs.

"Was he a naughty boy? And did he go tripping old ladies up, and mauling poor

St. Bernards, and hitting his dear friend on the nose?" And the catiff writhed and wriggled and wagged his tail with the air of one who had suffered much injustice, but was now being consoled.

These endearments over, Jiff looked up and noticed the scowl with which I regarded him.

"Never mind, old fellow. Let's have a pipe and a little fizz to pull you round after all you've gone through; and after dinner, choose your model, and I'll engage to keep him still."

He was as good as his word. He had only to hold up his finger to the Count, and that noble ceased swaying backwards and forwards, and stood like a statue. The same with the others, even down to the mercurial General, and so I got some very good studies.

In the evening, my irrepressible host showed me the portraits of all the prize dogs that had ever lived, and gave me the pedigree of each. I think that the intense mental effort required to follow these must have been the cause of my longing for an early turn in.

A young lady novelist would say that I "retired to rest at an early hour." I prefer to say, as being more truthful, that I went to bed, but not to rest. Mars and his misdeeds haunted me. I wondered if the ridiculous scrapes into which he had led me would get me into the papers. And so the weary hours wore on till the old church clock struck twelve.

"'Tis now the very witching hour of night.

When churchyards yawn, and graves give up their dead."

I quoted to myself. And then, as I said the words, I heard the clanking of a chain and heavy footsteps ascending the stairs.

My heart stood still as I listened. "One, two, three, four! Clank! Clank! Nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!" I tried to call out, but my tongue clave to the roof of my mouth, and I could only utter a faint croak.

The footsteps stopped at my door. Then came a heavy thud against it. I am not