

## THE DEAR ANIMALS.

The other day seeing some children standing quietly before the railings round a green space in London, I went to see what held their attention and found a very worried looking cat mothering five puppies. Poor pussy, no wonder she looked worried, one puppy is bad, or good, enough, but five! I have never known a cat mother a puppy, though I am told it is not uncommon. I have known several dogs mother kittens. One dog I knew mourned for several days when his doggie mate died. In vain he was taken for walks and invited to play ball, he would not be comforted. One day he left his home before breakfast and did not return until late at night. He came back with a kitten and made it plain to everyone that kitty must have some food, and only after kitty had been fed would he eat his supper, then he took kitty to his bed, curled himself round her and went to sleep, they are now great friends and very happy. Animals are very human; they must have someone, or something to love. A little dog I had always took his teddy bear to bed with him and slept with his head against teddy's. And talking of animals being like humans, reminds me of an old man I knew. We were watching some lambs, one stood on a small hill, the others clustered around him, and when he stamped his foot they all raced to another hill and back again, my companion said, "You watch blackface, he cheats every time." "Cheats," I said, "surely animals don't cheat." "Oh yes, they do, all animals be very human and they'll cheat just like a human, animals be very human they be." He was right, blackface cheated every time, instead of going round the hill he cut across the front of it and so got back first. I wonder if his conscience troubled him, or if he thought himself a very fine fellow. We had a dog once who was troubled with a conscience, occasionally he would stand in a corner with his head and tail drooping. The first time I saw him in a corner, I said, "Is Jack saying his prayers, or trying to think where he buried his last bone?" "Neither," I was told, "he thinks he has done something wrong and is doing penance, one to three minutes is the limit, then he will be quite happy again; he has paid the penalty." We never found out what was troubling his doggie conscience. One day he tried to kill a dog who stole a stick that had been thrown into a pond for him to retrieve and would have succeeded if two men had not prevented him. He did not stand in the corner for that; true he had not killed the dog and probably if he had he would have thought it justifiable dogicide.

### A Cat Crosses the Road.

I always think it is amazing that animals can express their emotions so well, I do not mean by voice. A dog is, I suppose, a master of that art, he knows if you are in trouble and will show his sympathy, and can show his love better than any other animal. He can also ask for sympathy and make you understand, 99 times out of 100, what is troubling him. Cats are not so good; of course there are exceptions, and all cats can and do show anxiety. A short time ago I watched a cat who was trying to cross a very busy crossroad. I was waiting to cross too from the opposite side so could not help her. Several times she tried to cross but had to dash back looking, if possible, more scared. All at once she brightened up, head and tail became erect for no reason that I could see, the traffic was still as great. Then out of a garden came a lovely lady and her escort, pussy put herself between them and crossed the road in triumph. How did she know they were going the way she wanted to go? and how did she know that the traffic would slow down to allow a very high-up officer and his lady to cross the road?

### Snip goes to Church.

I think most animals have good memories, dogs certainly have. I stayed with a friend once who had a fox-terrier. Snip went everywhere with me, even to church, although I tried to slip in while he was fetching a bit of stick I had thrown for him. Two years later I went to see my friend again and had an overwhelming welcome from Snip—silly name for a nice dog.

### Jack's Good Memory.

Our Jack had a wonderful memory. We went for a long country walk with him one day and about 4 p.m. we thought we would like a cup-o'-tea. There were two cottages in sight, so we went to one and asked if we could be directed to the nearest tea place. "The nearest is four miles from here, but if you like I'll make you a cup of tea." We did like, and we had a very good tea. A year later we were rambling in the same district and tried to remember which path led to the two cottages. Jack had no doubts about it, but went on, we followed. He pushed open the gate and lay down in front of the arbour where we had tea a year before.

### The Cow Comes Home.

There are many stories of cats and dogs finding their way home. How? No one could tell. Last year I heard of a cow which had been sold, she was taken away by her new owner in a cart. Next morning she was standing at the gate of her old home, bellowing to be let in. She had walked six miles during the night to come back to her calf. How had she found her way? Once when we were on holiday in Surrey we were discussing our programme for the day. After much talk we decided to go to the hamlet called Friday Street. Jack was apparently asleep during the discussion. When we were ready to start Jack was missing, so very sadly we had to go without him. We went part of the way by bus, and all the way to the bus we looked for Jack. We found him at the head of the queue waiting for the bus, and looking very anxiously for us. He always kept count of us and if we straggled came back to look for the last one. It is easy for a dog to keep count of the people he owns, and who think they own him. I once stayed with friends who kept geese. All day they were in a field, returning at night in single file, every few yards the leader looked round to see if they were all there, if any were missing it gave orders and one went back to find the lost, and not until they were all there did they go on. Could that leader count, or did it know them as separate birds as a teacher will know each child in a class of 20 or 30? But then, children are different, no two being alike excepting some cases of twins. Geese are all exactly alike to me, anyway.

MARY HARVEY.

### THE PUNCTUAL VISITOR.

A little bird, "down under" in Australia, has been setting an example in punctuality to other hospital visitors. Three times a day, for eight weeks, this sparrow has flown into Ward 21 at Sydney's Coast Hospital for crumbs from a certain patient. It arrives at 7.30 a.m., 11.15 a.m., and 4 p.m. Though there are some 30 patients in the room it always flies straight to the same bedside. It used to visit the previous occupant of that bed and the nurses declare that it is sure to come to see the next one!

Though I am far from denying that to this day the counsels of Divine Goodness regarding dumb creatures are, for us, involved in deep obscurity, yet we see, nevertheless, that Scripture foretells for them a "glorious liberty," and we are assured that the compassion of Heaven, to which we owe so much, will not be wanting to them.—*Keble.*

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