

Leslie Madeline

Minnie's Pet Dog



Madeline Leslie

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TO MY YOUNG FRIEND, HENRY FOWLE DURANT, JR

These Little Volumes

ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

**BY THE AUTHOR, IN THE EARNEST HOPE THAT THEY MAY
INCREASE IN HIM THAT LOVE OF NATURE AND OF RURAL LIFE
WHICH HAS EVER EXERTED SO SALUTARY AN INFLUENCE IN
THE FORMATION OF THE CHARACTERS OF THE WISE AND GOOD**

CHAPTER I. TINEY AND LEO

I have given an account of Minnie's pet parrot, and of Minnie's pet cat. In this volume I shall give the reader an account of her pet dog, Tiney, with anecdotes of other dogs.

Tiney was a spaniel. He had long, pendent ears, black, expressive eyes, a short, well-rounded mouth, and long, silky hair. He was an affectionate little fellow, who attached himself to every body in the house. He was on the most friendly terms with Fidelle, often eating sociably with her from the same plate. In summer, when Minnie liked to play on the lawn, Tiney might be seen running here and there in obedience to his young mistress, picking up a ball or stick, and bringing it to her in his teeth.

If the truth must be told, Tiney was a dog that loved his own ease. In the winter he liked to lie on the hearth rug in front of the glowing fire, one eye partly open, to be sure that Fidelle, who was fond of playing with his tail, committed no indignities with it.

Sometimes Minnie used to get out of patience with him for being so sleepy; but her mother told her it was in consequence of his eating so heartily, and taking no more exercise; and then the little girl would drag him off out of doors, often sadly against his will, and entice him into a frolic.

It was curious to see Tiney with Leo. The spaniel held the great dog in awe, and never but once was known to go to the stable to see him.

The circumstances that led to this visit were very curious, and I must relate them.

When Tiney first saw Leo, he was only a puppy, and I suppose was frightened at the sight of so large a dog. He began to bark at him with all his might. Mr. Lee wished to have them become friends; but this did not appear so easy, for Leo, after looking disdainfully at the pup, walked away with great dignity.

After this, whenever Tiney saw him, he began to bark, or rather to growl; but Leo never took the least notice of him.

Tiney, however, was fond of running to the gate to see what dogs were passing by. In this way, he formed many acquaintances, and some very bad ones.

An express-man used to pass the house two or three times a week, and was always accompanied by a large mastiff, a savage-looking dog, with a deep bass voice.

One day, when the express-man's wagon was going by, Tiney began to jump up before the horses' mouths and bark. The man spoke to the mastiff, who at once flew at the spaniel, and shook him thoroughly.

Tiney cried out piteously, and walked back to the house a sadder if not a wiser dog.

But he did not forget. On the day when the express-man passed again, he paid the visit, I have mentioned, to Leo, and in some way made him understand that he wanted to engage his services.

Leo agreed to revenge the insult that had been offered the little fellow. When the mastiff came by, they were ready for him. Tiney did the barking, while his defender caught the mastiff, and whipped him severely.

Leo and Tiney then returned to the house together, when the spaniel showed his gratitude by running back and forth before his friend, and giving several short barks. But what was most remarkable was the fact, that after this they returned to their old footing, Leo never condescending to take any notice of his smaller companion, and Tiney giving an occasional growl when he saw him approach.

When Minnie was in her eighth year, her parents went on a journey into a distant state, and she accompanied them; but though she pleaded to take Tiney with her, it was not allowed.

The next summer preparations were made for another journey, and there was much conversation about it in the family circle.

One morning, when they were discussing the time of their being absent, Mrs. Lee noticed that Tiney appeared very uneasy. He jumped repeatedly into her lap, and from that to the floor, rubbing his sides against her feet.

"What can Tiney want?" she said aloud. "I'm sure he is trying to make me understand something."

"O, I wish he could go!" cried Minnie. "You know how sad he was when we were gone before."

The spaniel, on hearing these words, gave a joyful bark, moving his tail back and forth in an excited manner, and then looked wishfully in her face.

"He seems to understand what we say," the lady went on, glancing with some surprise at her husband.

"I have no doubt of it," he answered, smiling. "Here, Tiney! here, sir!"

The dog obeyed.

"Do you know, Tiney," he asked, "that we are going away?"

No reply.

"Would you like to go with us in the carriage?"

Tiney gave a short, quick bark.

"I'm afraid that would not do," added the gentleman, shaking his head. "I fear you would be too much trouble."

No more was said, and the dog went across the room, his tail hanging between his legs, and remained quietly on the corner of the sofa. They noticed that he watched every movement closely, and that, if Minnie left the room, he seemed uneasy till she returned.

"It is very strange that he can understand," remarked Mrs. Lee. "See, he is not asleep, though he pretends to be; he is listening to what we say."

Minnie laughed aloud. "It is too funny!" she exclaimed.

"I have heard of many cases," remarked her father, "where it was evident that dogs understood well certain words uttered in their presence."

"O, father," urged Minnie, "do please tell them to me."

He looked at his watch, and then began: —

"A gentleman by the name of Taylor was once travelling in Spain. He arrived early one evening at a village inn, and sat down before a stove to dry his boots. Close by him was a dog, which watched him very attentively.

"What can you give me for supper?" the gentleman inquired of the hostess.

"Some eggs," was the reply.

"No; they are too mawkish."

"A rabbit?"

"That is too indigestible."

"The attention of the dog seemed to become more and more directed to the conversation.

"Some ham?" the woman added.

"No," said Mr. Taylor; "that would make me too thirsty."

"Some pigeons?"

"The dog here stood up.

"No; there is no nourishment in them."

"A fowl?" said the hostess, on which the dog started hastily out of the room.

"What is the matter with your dog?" asked the gentleman, noticing a smile on the woman's face.

"O, nothing at all," was her reply; "he only wishes to escape his work. He is anxious to know what you decide upon; for if you say a fowl, he is sure he will have to turn the spit."

Both Mrs. Lee and Minnie laughed heartily at this anecdote.

"That story reminds me of Dr. Kane's old dog Grim," said Mrs. Lee. "He was a curious old fellow."

“O, will you please tell me about it, mamma?” cried Minnie.

“Yes, my dear. He was very aged; his teeth, almost gone; and his limbs, once so nimble, now covered with warts and ringbones.

“In the intense cold of the arctic regions Grim suffered much, and at last, by a system of patient watching at the door of the deck-house, together with a curious wag of his tail, pleading for admittance, he was allowed a place in the warm room, and used Dr. Kane’s seal-skin coat as a bed for weeks together.

“Somehow or other, when the dogs were being harnessed into their sledges for a journey, old Grim was sure to be missing; and one time, when he was detected hiding in a barrel, to avoid the labor of drawing the sledge, he began to limp badly, as if he were very lame.

“‘Poor fellow,’ said one of the men, ‘he must be left at home.’

“Strange to say, he was lame ever after, except when the team was off from the ship.

“Run and get the book about animals, on the third shelf in the library,” said Mr. Lee, “and I will read you a story.”

Minnie flew to obey him, and Tiney, wagging his tail, slowly followed, but came back presently, and resumed his place on the sofa.

CHAPTER II.

BOSE AND THE WIG

"Here," said Mr. Lee, "is an account Mr. Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, gives of his dog Hector.

"I am sure," he says, "that the dog comprehends a good deal that is said in the family; and that his attention and impatience become manifest whenever any thing is said about either him, the sheep, or the cat.

"One evening I said to my mother, 'I am going to Bowerhope for a fortnight; but I shall not take Hector with me, for he is constantly quarrelling with the other dogs, or breeding some kind of an uproar.'

"My mother answered me, promptly, 'I am glad of it; I like best to have him at home.'

"Nothing more was said on the subject. The next morning was rainy, and I did not start till after breakfast. When I was ready, I ordered a servant to shut Hector up for a few hours, that he might not follow me. The servant presently reported that the dog was nowhere to be found.

"When I reached St. Mary's Lock, I found the river so swollen, I had to get across in a boat; and yet, when I arrived at Bowerhope, I found Hector, very wet, sitting on a knoll, impatiently awaiting me."

"In Bath, England, there were at one time a large number of dogs employed in cooking-houses, to turn the spits used in roasting fowls. These animals were fond of following the crowd on the Sabbath, and collecting together, during divine service, in the Abbey Church.

"On one occasion, the clergyman happened to use the word 'spit,' which reminded the dogs of their neglected duties, and, seized with remorse, they all ran home in a hurry."

"Why, father," cried Minnie, much astonished, "I should not think the people would let so many dogs go to church."

"Perhaps they could not prevent it," he answered, laughing. "Dogs are often fond of accompanying their owners to church. I remember Leo tried it several times when I first bought him. He seemed to understand perfectly well when Sunday came, and, as he knew I did not approve of his intruding, he would run off and creep into the pew without leave."

"And did he keep still, father?"

"Yes; I never knew him to make much noise, except as he occasionally turned himself over, but I was in constant fear of his doing so, and determined to break up the habit.

"Early one Sabbath morning, before the ringing of the first bell for church, I went out to the stable to tell John to shut him up before he took out the carriage. He said he had not seen him for an hour or more. When I alighted at the door of the church, there was Leo, waiting to follow me up the aisle.

"The next week I thought I would be in season, and had Leo shut up on Saturday. He cried incessantly, when the bells rang on Sunday; but I told John not to let him out until after our return from the evening service.

"When Saturday came again, Leo took the precaution to be off, and enjoyed a whole day of church going, coming in and scratching at the door of the pew to gain my attention.

"I felt almost guilty, when I reflected on his desire to keep the Sabbath. I think he came to know which was the sermon and which the prayer, for during the latter he invariably stood up. It was only by persevering effort that I convinced him his church-going propensity could not be allowed. But now, though you know he often accompanies me when I ride on horseback, and follows the carriage when we all go, he never attempts to do so on the Sabbath."

"I remember," said Mrs. Lee, "when I was a young girl, visiting a lady who had a beautiful spaniel, of whom she made a great pet. When she went out to ride, Doll expected to go with her

as a matter of course; and if the weather was cold, the dog was wrapped in embroidered blankets, like a baby.

“One Sabbath day we were preparing to go to church, and I wondered whether Doll would go too; or, if not, how she would bear the disappointment.

“To my astonishment the spaniel, though she whined a little, made no effort to accompany us by running here and there, as usual, and uttering short, joyful barks. She sat at the window gazing earnestly after us, but making no attempt to follow.

“‘She knows well enough,’ said the lady, ‘that she must not go to church, though I cannot imagine how she tells when Sunday comes.’

“There’s a curious story,” remarked Mr. Lee, “often told of a number of dogs in a village in Bohemia. These animals, including a large mastiff, belonging to a nobleman in the place, had a practice of going regularly to church.

“This at last excited the attention of the town authorities, and at a meeting of the court, a magistrate, who presided, said in a loud, decided tone, —

“‘No dogs shall be allowed in church; let me not see one of them in future!’”

“The mastiff was present, and seemed to listen with attention. Nor without effect; for on the ensuing Sunday he rose early, and ran round the village, barking at all the dogs. He then took his station near the door of the church; and when a dog came up, unmindful of his prohibition, he instantly killed him. Ever after he took on him this post of sentinel before the church, but not once was he known to enter it.”

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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