

ONE OF THE FAMILY.

BY

TERTIUM QUID.

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ONE OF THE FAMILY.

My wife and I are married.

So much for a beginning to my story, which some folks say is the hardest part to write. When, how, or where we were married, or how long after I asked, "Will you?" and she willed, is not the question, for that has nothing to do with my story, which is not about either of us, but another member of our family.

I always had a fondness for pets, and an especial one for dogs and horses, so as soon as we had a home of our own,

a search was begun for a member of the canine race.

I had read "Rab and his friends," and immediately as a result, became rab-id for just such another, but all my inquiries for a mastiff proved in vain, notwithstanding the assertions of everybody who had a dog for sale, from a King Charles to a St. Bernard, that their particular dog was full blood mastiff, and nothing else.

Finally, I had to accept the fact that such a dog was not to be found, and I must fain content myself with a Newfoundland.

At this point, one of my friends informed me that he had a pup as was a pup, brought directly from Newfoundland, whose progenitors were a noble pair weighing a hundred weight apiece

or more, and that as he had no time to devote to his education would give him to me.

Of course I accepted him, unsight, unseen, but when that same evening there was deposited in my yard, an animated door-rug, broad as it was long, high as it was broad, a lumpy, dumpy dough ball of a dog, with a mysterious gait as though his hind legs were determined to do all the walking, imparting thereby a sort of sideway, shamblly motion not easily described, with hair unkempt, uncombed; but when I say such a dog was deposited in my yard could it be expected that I should at once take him into my affections? If it could, all that I can say is, you didn't see the dog.

However, there he was, his former

owner thanked and gone, leaving me to speculate upon what accidental death he should die, and querying as to how much strychnine it would take to cure him of looking so disagreeable.

Next I wondered if there was any one else who would like a present of a fine pup, thinking that if they did, I knew an individual whose name it was Quid, that had one to give away dog cheap.

He spent that night in the cellar, and demonstrated very conclusively his entire unfitness for any better abode and his dissatisfaction with it, keeping us awake at least a month, that blessed night. Here let me suggest to any one seeking among herbs and barks for a soporific, that whatever virtue in that direction they may find,

if they wish to lie down to sleep in peace, my advice would not be to try dog bark, for in my experience it aggravates the disease, ditto the patient, double ditto the im-patient.

Day dawned at last, as likewise did our dog, who wobbled against my legs, exhibiting such a fund of affection that it flopped all over, and one would have had a heart of stone, yea two hearts of stone to have been able to repulse his demonstrations, or resist the appeal made for just one spark of love.

Well, he continued to grow fat and into our affections, and came to be considered one of the family, exhibiting such a degree of affection and frolic, that it was impossible not to love him in return.

One day, when I reached home, An-

nie (that's the wife I married), called me to the window, and pointing to something dangling from the clothes-line, asked me to see what Bruce had been doing, and if you will believe it, gentle reader, that promising pup had so effectually done up one of my new shirts, that nothing remained but the collar, bosom and half of one sleeve carefully pinned to the line. Whether he did it thinking it would save Miss Case (who then presided over our kitchen as queen of flapjacks), the trouble of starching and ironing, or that he did not approve of the style of the garment I cannot say, but feeling that it was a matter of great importance that I should not be left shirtless, and that he should be taught to let our linen severely alone, he was dragged ignomin-

iously to the spot, and Solomon's seal impressed upon his tender frame with such happy results, that never since that eventful day has he intentionally done a penny's worth of mischief.

Charlie our eldest boy, was about four months old, and Bruce (although they are not supposed to be twins,) was of the same immature age, but old enough to receive a portion of the liberal education which I decided to bestow upon him.

He was soon broken to harness, and for many months drew his baby master in his little carriage, with a care and gentleness "never equalled and seldom excelled." Without reins or guiding-string, he would thread his way through crowded streets, carefully avoiding contact with boxes, posts and boot legs,

looking out keenly for passing teams, bestowing small notice on other dogs, passing along the even tenor of his way, without ever meeting, during two or three years of active service, any disaster, save once, when in defending himself from the assaults of a quarrelsome cur, he tipped the boy out, more to his indignation than his hurt.

He acquired skill in opening and shutting doors, and even succeeded many times in turning glass or porcelain knobs, and manifested such a degree of docility and intelligence that he soon became widely known and admired. His next lesson was to fetch and carry, and he shortly learned to carry parcels, umbrellas, canes, vials, pails of milk, baskets of eggs and such, with a faithfulness and tenderness won-

derful to behold; moreover, he was taught in one short hour to bring the fire wood from the shed, which he did stick by stick, until bidden to stop.

He showed his sagacity in looking out for any purchases which I happened to make, at once seizing them, lest he should be sent back after them, which people were very apt to request that he should do, that they might see the performance, and finally it became almost impossible for me to leave or lose anything, so watchful was he to secure my purchases.

I remember that on one occasion, I allowed him to carry some window-shades which I was returning to our friend Marrett's, and laying them on the counter, I paid for some other articles, whistled for him, and left for my

place of business, but when I had passed the corner of Exchange street, he was not to be seen.

Surmising where he might be found, I retraced my steps and as I opened the door, down the stairs he came with full five hundred dollar's worth of clerks after him to recover a roll of paper, which he had in his mouth.

It appeared that a moment after we left the store, master Bruce, fearing no doubt, that he was to be sent back, rushed up the stairs, sprung upon the counter, seized the shades and was making off with them, but was intercepted and obliged to release his hold, whereupon determined not to leave without an equivalent, he took the roll of paper aforesaid, in lieu.

At another time, I returned a shawl

which my wife had taken home for my inspection, laying it on the counter, but Bruce sat with eager eyes watching the bundle, and upon my whistling to him, leaped up and secured the shawl.

Several times when caught in the rain, I have secured a place of shelter, and sent him for an umbrella, which he always brought, one time fairly taking it away from one of the children in front of the house. In the meantime, we moved to another house, which stood next a provision store, or the store stood next the house, (any one curious about the matter may determine which of these statements is correct by viewing the premises, 9 and 11 Gray street,) and it became often very convenient to send Bruce with a pail or basket after any article wanted, and

by and by, he was given cents, with which to make purchases on his own account.

One day, he went into the shop without a cent, and the wife of the proprietor bestowed one upon him, which he immediately took behind the counter to her husband, signifying by exhibiting his cent, wagging his tail, and other demonstrations, that he was ready for a trade. Mr. G. thinking that as he really furnished the cent, Bruce should be satisfied with one cake, (he had always received two,) threw it down and ordered him to drop his cent, but Bruce had not studied arithmetic in vain, and even when spoken sternly to, refused to make the dicker, but stood wagging his tail, until it occurred to Mr. G. that possibly the dog knew that he was en-

titled to two cakes, and upon throwing another to him, presto! down came the cent, and away went Bruce perfectly satisfied. After this, it often occurred that one young man living in the neighborhood, and who had the honor of his acquaintance, got bets out of other young men not so fortunate, that if a cent was given him, he would go to the store for round cakes, nor leave without two.

On one occasion, two were placed on the floor, and as he dropped his cent, one was taken up, but Bruce knew a thing or two as well as white folks, for he succeeded in securing both cent and cake, and after eating the latter, returned with the cent ready for another trade. At one time, he was guilty of a piece of meanness such as Fagin

recommended to Noah Claypole, and which he denominated the "kinchin lay," (see *Oliver Twist*), and which I mention not to open afresh the wounds inflicted on his self-respect, but with the earnest hope that other puppies, who read, may be deterred from indulging in so reprehensible an action.

Eddie, one of our boys who was at that time I think, about three years of age, had a cent given him which he was rolling on the sidewalk, when Bruce came along, and regardless of the voice of conscience, confiscated, or appropriated it to invest in cakes. But the depths of meanness remains to be told, and as Eddie expressed it with tears in his eyes, "Bwuce tole my cent, and bwoght two wound cakes, and wouldn't give me one." He never repeated the

offence, partly owing to the fact that the children had too much sense to expose their cents to his cupidity again, and partly, let us hope, because upon calm reflection, he learned to realize that it was an act worthy only of a vile cur, and unworthy of any one bearing the noble name of Bruce.

A brother of the writer lived in the neighborhood, with whom it was customary to exchange newspapers, and Bruce became the carrier. He also learned the names of many different articles, so that it was possible to send him "up stairs, down stairs, in my lady's chamber" for boots, hats, hammer, basket, etc., etc., and he rarely failed to bring the right article, although sometimes in his haste to return and receive the praise and caresses usually

bestowed upon him, he would take the wrong one. Proud enough he was to be of service, and with tail curled tightly up, he marched along pleased to make himself useful, and I have often wished that I could see the boy or girl half as willing to do little acts of kindness as was Bruce; but then you can't expect every child to be such a puppy as he was.

I have spoken of him as one of the family, nor is it to be wondered at, since the children, when wee little things, used to address him thus—"who you looking for Bruce; for father?" "Well, he's down cellar," or in the yard, as the case may be—and so he is one of the family.

For fifteen years, he has been one of us, but alas, old age has overtaken him,

likewise fleas, likewise rheumatism, and now blindness!

His old enemies, the rats, run over, and around his venerable nose with impunity; the midnight thief can enter the yard, without a remonstrance from the voice which once would have sounded the alarm; and swill boys plunder and peculate, regardless of him who once was the terror of their class. The eye once full of intelligence is dimmed; the limbs so supple and so strong are stiff—his race is almost finished.

Under everybody's feet, between everybody's legs, is poor old Bruce, and hither and thither he goes, punching his head against chairs and table legs, or whatever is in his path—he strays away from his home, and has to be

sought after and led back, and even his oldest and best friends find it impossible when in his presence to imagine that it is Patchouly, they inhale. The edict has gone forth that he must die, and it has been going forth for many a day, but still he lives, for though chloroform may let him gently down to death, his master cannot find it in his heart to slay him.

One more anecdote, and then farewell. For the first time after the great fire, he dragged himself one Sunday, down town, in blissful ignorance of the changes which had taken place, and passing down Exchange street, missed his master. The familiar bank where he had so often gone in former days was destroyed, and naught remained but melancholy piles of broken bricks ; no

familiar spot was there, accordingly he wended his way down the street, to where a brother of the writer had his temporary place of business, and had hung out his sign, "Quid, Broker." Quietly, he laid him down at the door, watching until his master doth appear.

"Yah now, Mister Quid, do you s'pose that dog read that ere sign?" asked Jim, the hostler, when I told him the story.

Certain it is, that he never was there before or since—but "yah, do you s'pose that dog read that ere sign?" Quien sabe?

ADDENDA.

As many persons have never had the pleasure of an acquaintance with "One of the Family," a brief description of his personal appearance, &c., may be of interest to them.

His parental ancestor was a dog, and his mother was a dog-gess, both of them residents of the island of Newfoundland, and Bruce was their son in a direct line of ancestry. His color was brindle and white, hair straight, tail beautifully curled, and he was pro-

nounced by good judges to be as finely formed a dog as ever barked. His weight was about seventy-five pounds.

As a watch dog he was very faithful, and readily detected a strange footstep in the yard or about the premises.

In manners he was a gentleman, never chasing cows or other animals, and so seldom lifting up his voice that one of my opposite neighbors inquired one day if he could bark, as he had lived in the neighborhood a half dozen years without ever hearing him—indeed there was some reason to believe that when on his way from Newfoundland that "his bark was on the sea," and neglected to arrive when he did.

However, he could bark loudly enough, and was the first to give the alarm when burglars attempted to

break into the store next adjoining, to which allusion has been made.

He has always been a well behaved dog, and had no enemies, and even in passing by Gorham's Corner, where formerly several men kept fighting dogs, their masters took especial pains to prevent their attacking him.

For a dog of his weight he was very heavy, but possessed an activity rarely seen in so large a dog, and was very successful in killing rats, against whom he waged a relentless warfare.

His appetite was good, but never led him into appropriating what did not belong to him, save in one instance previously mentioned. He rarely staid out late o' nights, and was never known to be intoxicated, as many puppies with only half the number of legs were

known to be, and was a moral, worthy member of society. He was a splendid water dog, swimming faster than any dog I ever saw, and would undoubtedly have saved ever so many lives, had he had an opportunity.

I omitted to mention that boys would sometimes give him their school books to carry for them, but if they did were compelled to come to me in order to recover their property, as he knew how to hold on strong.

Two accomplishments he could not acquire, although I took some pains to teach him. One was to drive a horse, and the other to wipe his feet on the door mat when they were muddy, although for several years he would wait patiently at the door when wet or

dirty, not venturing to enter unless invited.

In conclusion I would only add that everything narrated of him is strictly true, and that it is far more probable that I have omitted some of his acts rather than overstated them. T. Q.