

## FOR SALE OR EXCHANGE.

## FARMS.

**WYNDHAM DISTRICT.**—270 Acres Freehold in this famous locality for £13 per acre. Good grass, well fenced, watered and subdivided. Five-roomed house, 5-stall stable, with loft, large woolshed, 6-stall cowbyre, sheep yards, etc. This is the cheapest farm offering in Southland to-day. Terms may be arranged.

**LOOK AT THIS**—395 acres near Woodlands; 45 acres turnips, 100 acres young grass, balance older pasture. This land has been limed and is in great heart. Well watered, fenced, and subdivided. Six-roomed house, stable, cowbyre with milking plant, etc. Price £20. Terms could be arranged.

Here is something good—Five-roomed house; bathroom, washhouse, gas. In good order; situated alongside first section of tram. A cheap home at £550. Terms could be arranged.

If you wish to buy or sell a house or a farm consult me.

**F. H. TUCKER,**

LAND AGENT.

**GILCHRIST'S  
COUGH ELIXIR.**

2/6. Posted 3/-

**FOR COUGHS, COLDS, INFLUENZA  
COLDS, WHOOPING COUGH, Etc.  
W. G. Gilchrist,**

**PRESCRIPTION CHEMIST,  
GRAND PHARMACY,  
DEE ST., INVERCARGILL.**

**DINNER SETS!  
DINNER SETS!  
DINNER SETS!**

Direct from England's famous  
Potteries. . . . .

Just Landed the Finest Selection  
of

**DINNER SETS**

See in this City for many years.

Beautiful Designs in all all sizes.  
Prices from £2 19s 6d up to £14.

**NOBLE'S**

DEE STREET, INVERCARGILL.

TIME

AND

TIDE

WAIT FOR NO ONE.

**SO HURRY UP AND SEND YOUR**

**—CHRISTMAS GREETINGS—**

to friends abroad.

I have just opened the right thing in  
**CHRISTMAS CARDS** with local views.

Also—

**BOOKS OF VIEWS** at 1/6, 2/- and 4/-.

**T. HIDE'S.**

TAY STREET.

## A STORY FOR DOG LOVERS.

# The Outcast.

When with expedition born of long practice the circus struck tents and filed off in the dawn light, a supernumerary member of its complement in the shape of a lurcher was left behind. She was no great loss, except to the stableman, her owner. Her qualities were peculiar and not outwardly apparent. The shamelessness of her ancestry cried aloud to the skies and evoked jeers, but from it she had inherited two sterling points, speed and intelligence, and that was why her master, who had a natural eye for these things, acquired her. It was assumed among the circus folk that she had been stolen. Without assenting too readily to that, it may be said that a farmer in his cups lost an animal just becoming really useful to him, and that the stableman obtained a companion for his poaching expeditions who grew to be invaluable.

The lurcher took to her new life, and her new master, readily. Like a shadow, never wholly with him, never absent from him, she drifted along about him in an aloof sort of way until some signal called her up for action. It was that habit of hers that contributed to their severance. That night the show was ending a two days' stay at an up-dale market town, and before the performance closed the stableman slipped away to soothe a chronic thirst. His going was furtive, and like a furtive wraith she slid behind him. As they crossed the open market place, fitfully lit by naphtha lamps, she nicked a piece of meat from one of the stalls, and thereafter, drifted along on the edge of the half lights and shadows until she saw the swinging inner door of an inn close upon her master. For herself, an empty stable in the inn yard seemed to await her, and she settled down there to enjoy her meal.

A rising wind, eddying and blustering about the yard, clashed to the upper and lower halves of the stable door, imprisoning her. She was in no wise dismayed. Like with a travelling circus-menagerie's one full of surprises and the unexpected, and she had learned to await the comings and goings of her master in all circumstances, and to await in silence. He had taught her that, and because of her aptitude, the pair were villainously clever poachers. But when the unexpected happened it was beyond all precedent: he forgot her. It may be that he was to be excused, for the inn people had speeded the departure of their guest more urgently than courteously. At the same time, the animal was guilty of what lawyers would term contributory negligence, for, under the influence of a meal unusually good and plentiful, and a warm bed of straw, she had slept, slept even through that emphatic leave-taking. She did not put in appearance when the bacon was fizzling over the morning fires, and when it dawned upon him that he had lost her, he was explosive and unapproachable.

It was daylight when the lurcher awoke, for there were reasons other than plentiful food and a warm bed why she slept so soundly. Of late she had begun to tire easily. Langour was growing upon her. She was less active, and she ran low on the ground when she ran at all, and a snooze in what comfort she could get it was her delight these days. When daylight awoke her, she stretched herself, yawned, then was on her feet padding about examining her surroundings. There was nothing to interest her, she did not find a scent that brought more than a twitch to her ears, and after a brief, half-restless pacing, with longing sniffs at the crack between the threshold and the door bottom, she returned to the straw and snoozed again. The hours passed. She was wide awake and alert now. Things were happening in the yard. There were passing footsteps that she did not know, and they brought up her hair, bristling. Iron-shod hooves clattered on the cobblestones of the yard, wheels rattled and rumbled. But no one came to the stable, and she did not betray her presence. Sooner or later—it was the outstanding article of her creed—master would appear, and she awaited his pleasure. Nevertheless she was growing restless, angry, for there were inward physical urges. Hunger assailed her, and thirst, which was worse, was beginning to torment her. Yet she was silent.

The carter who opened the door was startled at the sight of the smoke-grey form which met him and slid between his legs. He lost his head and his temper and did foolish things. Even as she slid through his legs—they were badly warped

and that was why her action made him lose his temper—he slammed the door to again in vain and belated effort to stop her, then lashed at her with his whip. Instantly he was conscious of his folly. The lurcher was no coward. She feared no man and recognised but one devil, her master. Moreover, she shared the red raw rations of the ancient beasts that comprised the menagerie portion of the show, and had a temper in keeping with her evil looks when once aroused. As the whip cut her flank she turned, silently but very business-like, and at the sight of her the man went backwards over the closed lower half of the door with a celerity that amazed him when he was sufficiently cool to think about it. He was just in time, for her teeth clashed within half an inch of his flying heels. When he picked himself up on the inner side, bruised, furious, but wholesomely afraid, the yard was empty.

She was no farther away than the market place, casting about for traces. An up-dale wind was blowing, and presently she nosed something familiar, the trail of which brought her to the deserted field and the litter left by the departed show. She followed her nose on to the high road, but there lost the scent. It was noon now, and a hot day. The road was a trunk highway. Since early morning it had been thronged with motor cars heading the coast at the further end, and they churned up the dust, sterilised the scent of the show with their still more pungent exhaust fumes, and had kept going a low-lying current of air that had effectually dissipated all traces of that procession in the dawn light.

But of these things the lurcher knew nothing. What assailed her now, in addition to hunger and thirst, was fear, fear that she had lost her master. It shook her, gave desperation to her efforts. Up and down long stretches of the road she cast, all her craft going into it, tongue lolling, sides heaving, her thirst a fierce torment now. Constantly the swift speeding cars harassed her and harried her. Her temper was in rags now as, with ever increasing difficulty, for she was tiring, she dodged them. One car nearly got her as it shot round a sharp bend. The mudguard scored her flank, and the blow, the soreness, the terror of her escape, fired her to savagery. Foam dribbled from her jaws, her eyes were red and swollen, she growled as she ran, heavily and lumbering to and fro. A stray pedestrian, coming upon her, climbed the fence and made swift for the riverside path, assuring himself that it would be cooler and more pleasant there than on the hot highway. Besides, he wasn't in a great hurry. But the dog neither saw nor heard him. She was strung up to an acute pitch now, a danger, a terror to look upon, her sanity trembling fearfully in the balance. It was then that another car hurried round the bend, and the man at the wheel, startled at the sight of the salivorous, swollen-eyed beast turning round and round in the middle of the road and growling at nothing, tried to run her down. Her blind, maddened burst for safety carried her headlong through the fence and across two fields before the effort expired and left her exhausted under a hedge. When she recovered breath and some sanity she scented water. A minute later she was knee deep in the river, lapping eagerly.

For a while she rested, the fiercest of her pangs eased, but only to make room for the play of the pangs of hunger. They smote her insistently, bitingly, and presently, winding a faint but appetising odour, she was on her feet, her nostrils working. The trail of it took her across the stepping stones and up the fell side. She drifted furtively into the farm yard, which was damatory and proclaimed her unease, and is moreover the way of poacher dogs, whereas the honest working farm dogs makes bluff and breezy entrance. It brought her under that type of suspicion that acts first and thinks afterwards, wherefore, she retired before a volley of sticks, stones and emphatic language. Her unwelcome was obvious and one stone, rebounding from the cobblestones and smiting her painfully in the side, emphasised it. She had wisdom if of an evil kind, and she vanished, but she went with teeth bared and with the rims of her eyes glowing red. Again she had to rest, for her side pained her. Later she climbed the fell side further, slantwise, and found another farm. From this also she had to flee. Upwards again, tired in every limb now, her eyes bloodshot, foam flecks on her coat, in her heart a black

rage, loping, limping, snapping, and snarling.

That was how she came upon still another farm, perched remote under the very summit of the fell. It was her ill-luck that the farmer himself should be standing in the porch as she slid into view between the gate posts. "Lord ha' mercy," he cried in amazement, "Way w' thou," and he waved his hands. She came to a pause, forefeet out, teeth bared, snarling. "Lord ha' mercy," cried the farmer again, "it's a mad dog." "Lord help us." And also he reached for his gun lying on the porch seat. Stranger dogs are at no time welcome on these hill tops where moor and fell pastures meet and where range thousands of sheep. Still less welcome are they, nay, they invite trouble, when they slide into sight with furtive feet, jaws white and wet, foam on the coats and with wild eyes and bared teeth.

The lurcher sensed trouble, just in time. The shot harmless though it was, sped her harder up to the very top of the fell. She strained and was spent. She sobbed, she growled, snapped furiously at the air as she ran. She was a thing of the wild now, a scourge, an outcast.

The wide, lone moors swallowed her up. Her coming was no secret. Winged things, with sharp eyes and sharp claws, things with thin, sinuous bodies and furtive of feet soon knew of her presence and watched her from afar. And they had grown accustomed to her, accepted her as part of the scheme of things before ever it dawned upon man's slower-working intelligence that there was a new-comer. It is true that keeper Duke had half suspected something because of the manner of the other inhabitants of the moor, and once he thought he saw something working its way through the heather, but the distance was great, too far, to be sure of a shot. It was Shuttleworth Binns who saw her first—Shut, for short, was his name among his fellows on the dale. He was crossing the edge of the moor on his way to inspect some cattle, young stock he had put out on Withill, and as he went he lamented the loss of his old dog. Shut had a rare understanding of doggy nature, and he missed her sadly. There was also a practical side to it. It was coming dipping time shortly, when there would have to be a thorough round-up of the sheep scattered along the wide moor top, and at this work man is helpless without his dog. As yet, Shut had been unable to get one to replace old Nell—he could have had a pup, but that was, and would be for some time, useless as a worker, and he disliked having to rely wholly on the other farmers in the co-operative sweep of the moors.

He was turning it over in his slow way when he became aware of a sudden agitation among the grey blobs in the distance, grey blobs that represented sheep, his sheep. From the way they ran, stopped, ran again, and because of the ordered converging movement of them, it was clear that a dog was at work. Shut was hot with anger at the instant. Someone was dogging his sheep, and to have one's sheep driven about the moor by another man's dog is a matter that, more than any other, breeds ill-will between the fell land farmers. Shut looked round for the owner of the dog, ready to let loose white-hot opinions. There was no one in sight, and, listening, he could hear no whistling, none of those signals by which a sheep dog is worked. He was only the more suspicious. With heavy craft he crept behind a pile of millstone grit, sure that if he waited he would see the offender. But still there was no whistling, no shouting, no figure appeared moving across the moor.

Yes, there was a momentary glimpse of one, and it brought Shut, amazed, to his feet. A slim, smoke-grey form sprang across a little patch of green moss where the moor ran to boginess, and was lost in the heather again. It was a stranger dog, he saw that at a glance; there was no farmer in the dale had a lurcher that colour. And he was aware, too, very soon, that it knew how to work sheep. For they were on the move again, and Shut, keenly alive now, his anger now turned to curiosity, noted that never once was the converging flock over-driven. It was the quiet, persuasive effort that kept the whole going and preventing the bolting of the stragglers, that only dogs with aptitude and well-trained, acquire.

It was then a rare thing seized him, an impulse. Jumping on to a rock, he tucked his stick under his arm, thrust his fingers into the black cavern of his beard, and whistled. It was a short, sharp command, and instantly the sheep stopped, and that told him the dog had answered to his call. Again he whistled, a long, shrill call that rose and then fell in steady cadence. Moved by some unseen agency the sheep, already breaking away at the edges of the flock, gathered together again, wheeled about and broke towards him. He guided them with calls, flute-like, sweet, quick, commanding, all in turn, and easily and gently the fleeces were

worked towards where he stood. Presently they were halted in front of him, whilst in the rear was a smoke-grey lurcher, panting, ears cocked, her bright eyes on him, every muscle at tension ready to dart off at the next command. Shut was moved to rough praise. "By gum," he cried, "but thou's a rare dog, an' all. I've takin' thee home."

But for once his dog craft was submerged by his eagerness. He was too impetuous, too impatient to possess. Stepping down, he moved towards the animal, using all his arts to entice it to him. For a moment it seemed as if she was about to respond. Her ears pricked, her tail wagged, and then, as he made one quick move, thinking the victory won, her tail drooped, her hackles rose, her lifted upper lip discovered a range of white teeth. She snarled, turned and vanished. "Dang thee," cried Shut hotly, moved more than he knew at his failure, "but I'll hev thee yet."

He kept his counsel, aware that any one of his fellows would be glad to have a dog of such quality, and steadily ranged the moor and the fell sides in the hope of coming across her again. It took him three days to find her, and then it was to be filled with black rage and disappointment. For he saw her down in the bottom of High Gill, the narrow, deep cleft in the limestone rock that drove up into the moor, and she was feeding off the carcass of a sheep. In the hot anger and shock of the discovery Shut forgot that the sheep might have tumbled over the edge of the cliff—the one thought possessing him being that the dog was a sheep-worrier. For that crime there is but one law in the fell land, a law stern and unbending—death, the sentence to be executed as speedily as may be. He had not his gun with him, but uprooting a piece of limestone the size of his head, he poised it a second, then dropped it. It missed the animal, but rebounding, crashed on to her paw.

"I hev thee, anyhow," he cried with angry exultation, yet sore that so fine a worker should have broken the great law. He made his way down to the entrance to the gill, intent on finishing off his work, and traced her by blood stains and by her passage through the rough grass, to a small cave at the foot of an overhanging shelf. His approach was greeted with menacing growls, and with something else that brought a swift feeling of shame.

"Nah, lass," he said, soothingly, addressing the dark hole of the cave. "I hadn't thought o' that. Poor owd lass. What didn't thou let us know for? Come on then, sitha."

He spoke coaxingly, cracked his fingers, whistled softly, did all he could to ingratiate himself with the dog, and presently, in spite of warning growls from within, a sprawling puppy, its eyes only just opened, wriggled into sight. Shut spoke it fairly, softly. The little thing wagged a wisp of a tail, wriggled nearer, gave a dozen and one signs of pleasure, with little red tongue licked his hand.

He knew too much to over-fondle it. It was the mother he must win, and it cheered him, as he passed down the Gill again to make certain preparations, to note being at close quarters now that the dead sheep was a victim to a fall, and not to a dog. Presently he was back. He was carrying a flat shallow dish which he filled with clear spring water, and with his stick carefully pushed into the cave. He soon had the satisfaction of hearing the mother lapping. A little bit of meat followed, a dainty cooked ball that no dog could resist. That also was accepted. And all the while he talked to her, soothingly, caressingly, yet masterfully, so that presently she limped forth. Gently he stroked her ears and her head, all the while continuing to talk to her. She suffered him, reluctantly at first, but finally she looked up at him, and there was a pleading in her limpid eyes.

He understood. "Nah, then, we'll have a look at it." He took the injured foot, bathed it, treated it with liniment, bandaged it. And all the while the puppy sprawled about him and tried to get at his hand to lick it. "Poor owd lass," he said, as he bound up the injury. "To think it wor me 'at hit thee. An' a dead sheep, an' all. Howsumever, we'll soon have thee right again."

He took her in his arms—she licked his face trustfully as he raised her—took also the one surviving member of her family of five, and carried her off to where his trap awaited him, with a deep, cosy bed of straw.

"That's a reight soart o' dog thou's gotten, Shut," said his neighbour Ibbotson, as the big drive on the moors halted for a snack. "Wheer didst thou come across her? She limps a bit, like, doesn't she?"

"Aye, a bit," answered Shut, evading the major question. "Foot's a bit sore, but she'll soon be reight after a bit of a rest."