



HIS book has been a surprise to the many people who have known its author as a prominent politician and that political rarity, a Virginia Republican, as well as a successful lawyer and an entertaining after-dinner speaker. It is in this way another proof of the many-sidedness of human nature and character, for it reveals Mr. Wise not only as a keen and devoted sportsman and a true lover of nature, but a most appreciative student and friend of man's friend—the dog. The work, of course, in its plan as well as to some extent in its contents, recalls that wonderfully successful volume "Black Beauty," the autobiography of a horse, for Mr. Wise not only makes his favorite setter dog Diomed the hero of his book, but makes him tell the story of his own life. Of the popularity of the book an interesting example is found in the statement that twenty or thirty Senators and members of Congress have been reading it, while the advance subscriptions for it from individuals numbered over 1,200.

This dog's life, which began on April 22, 1883, in Richmond, Va., and which lasted until July 30, 1895, was spent for the most part in the stubble fields, swamps, and along the rivers and on the mountains of Virginia, varied by occasional trips to the prairies of Minnesota and Dakota, in the mountains of North Carolina, the rice fields of South Carolina and Georgia, the swamps of Florida, and the prairies of Texas. Mr. Wise's obituary of his departed canine friend best sums up his qualities and evidences the affection of his master:

"This was an English setter dog—only a dog, but many a human being passes from the world without the friends, without the mourning, and without the genuine worth of my beloved old friend and companion. Diomed stood first among all his companions. It made no difference whether the game was turkeys, prairie chickens, grouse, quail, woodcock, or snipe; it made no difference whether the man behind him was master or stranger, he hunted from daylight up to daylight down, from day to day, from week to week, ceaseless and untiring in his quest and joyous in his work. The same tribute was paid to him by every man who ever worked him. Even last Fall, when he was too old and weak to spring in and out of the wagon, all that he asked was to be put down and lifted back. Once upon the earth, there was still left the tireless swinging stride which, in the course of a long lifetime, brought to bag birds numbered by the thousands. How shall I write your epitaph, my noble, trusted, trustful, loving friend? Let it be thus: 'Here lies as true and unselfish a friend as ever man had. One without fear, yet who never sought a quarrel in his life or lost a battle once begun. A sportsman ever ready, day or night, to go with the earliest and return with the latest. A born gentleman, who, with all the blood of all the Howards in his veins, proved his pedigree by his performance, and stood only on his individual worth. An intelligence and a heart worthy to possess a soul. An example of how a dog may live and die, teaching lessons in the highest qualities to man.'"

The author prefaces his book with an

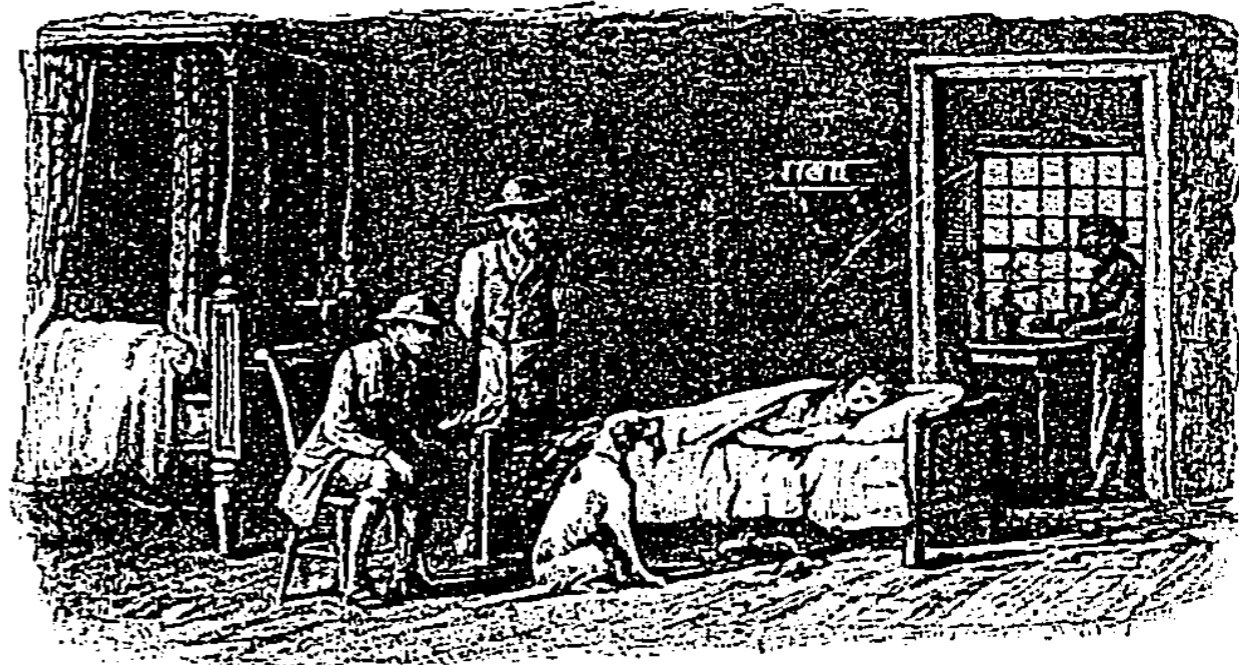
himself. He says the book is chiefly intended to reach old boys who are too old to shoot, or who can no longer steal the time for sport, and have to do their shooting in their heads nowadays, for the boys and girls who are coming on, and for a class of other people who sigh for novelty. We must also indorse his tribute to the artist, Mr. Chapman, who made the illustrations, and who Mr. Wise says "has delighted me by the way he caught the spirit of my pastime and who has expressed the thoughts I was trying for better in the pictures than I could in writing."

A probably unconscious but salient feature of the book is its distinctive American atmosphere and flavor, and this alone will make it attractive to sportsmen of other lands who have never hunted in this country. No more intelligent, vivid, and appreciative word pictures of rail and quail shooting in Virginia, of prairie chicken and duck shooting in the West, of a fox hunt in the South, and of snipe shooting in the Florida bottoms have been painted. The sportsman who has ever hunted in those places will appreciate these stories. Excellent also are the word pictures of life in old Virginia, of the affectionate and devoted old negro servants and their natural love for the hunt and chase, of such famous old places and houses as Pampatike and its master, Col. Carter; of Westover and Snowden, and of the old towns of Williamsburg and Jamestown.

But the book must be read to be understood or appreciated. Space will only permit the telling of two or three of its most characteristic stories. Here is Diomed's description of his first quail hunt in Virginia: "It was a beautiful October morning. The air was keen, the sun shone brightly, the

maples and the hickory filled the landscape with crimson and gold. Through the laden orchards and the brown stubble we took our course. On the fresh breeze came at last that exhilarating effluvia in search of which the best and happiest hours of my life have been spent. First faint, then stronger, and a moment later so intense that every fibre of my frame was filled with quivering excitement. In dashing circles, then with shortening steps, then with gradually freezing creep, I followed

where this scent led me—out of the open stubble into the yellow sedge—and just as I reached a pretty bunch of pink deer berries by a little green pine bush I felt myself become rigid in every muscle, and stood, with fore foot half uplifted, eyes protruding, body crouching, in the presence of my first covey of the gamest little bird on earth, the 'Bob White.' Even to this day I can recall the anxious, earnest look of my mute companion as he drew near to me and stopped, that I might fully understand my duty to



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hold my point till I was ordered on. I knew that well enough. It seemed an eternity before he advanced. The birds had been sunning and dusting themselves near the little pine. They now saw me, ran together with a low twittering sound, and as Mr. Turner stepped forward up they went with a whirr. At the sound of the gun a bird fell. I rushed toward it—

found it only wing tipped—chased it under a tuft of broom sedge—rooted it out—and, seizing it in my mouth, trotted back to Mr. Turner. It would be hard to decide which of us felt the greatest sense of triumph in that supreme moment. To me came the full realization of those joys so often pictured to me in my puppyhood by mother; to him the exultant feeling that he had a pupil worthy of his patience and his care."

Following is a picture of a Virginia character, Col. Carter of Pampatike, as Diomed paints it:

"The most striking figure which greeted us was Col. Carter. Of medium height and rather slender build, his clear-cut military features were lit by an eye with an expression which could pass from that of the eagle to that of the gazelle, as occasion demanded. About his grizzled moustache and pointed beard played a smile of genuine welcome, and in his whole bearing was visible the quiet dignity and simplicity of a country gentleman, owing, as his father had before him, everything about him, and accustomed to command. At his side, her ample proportions surmounted by a face still beautiful as a Madonna, stood the mistress of Pampatike, with her two blooming daughters and a son. Behind these was a handsome man, the youngest son of Robert E. Lee, bearing his immortal name, and not unlike him. Besides the immediate family, a young tutor and half a dozen schoolboys, ranging from twelve to fifteen years of age, were grouped about them.

"Col. 'Tom' Carter of Pampatike, as he is caressingly called by the thousands who know, honor, and love him, is a direct lineal descendant of that John Carter of Corotoman, who came to Virginia in 1649, who was the trusted friend of Lord Fairfax,

and whose descendants are more numerous to-day in the Old Dominion than those of any other two men who ever begot or begot upon her soil. As a boy, Tom was sent to Virginia's Military Institute and took his degree there, little dreaming how soon his military knowledge would be needed. With the death of the old folks came his inheritance of Pam-

pattike; who so fitting to be its mistress as beautiful and beloved Sue Roy, of Gloucester? It has been said of her that she was so good and kind and true as well as beautiful that even her many rejected lovers bore her no grudge in their disappointment, and still remained her warm admirers. At old Pampatike the last generation of the Carters built their nest, and amid peace and love and plenty began to rear another brood of the old stock, when war burst upon them. The Carters were Whigs to the last man. Responsibility for war lay not at their doors, for they were Federalists and Union men.

"But when it came in spite of them, they considered their first allegiance was due to Virginia, and so willingly that not a regiment of Virginia troops that marched away to her defense was without her full quota of the Carters. Why should it not be so? Were they not bone of her bone and flesh

of her flesh? And besides, were they not cousins of Robert E. Lee? That was enough. 'Blood is thicker than water' is the Carter rallying cry; whoever strikes a Carter has the family to fight. So at it they went hammer and tongs, and reluctant as they had been to begin, they continued fighting, such as them as were not killed, until their cousin Robert advised them that it was madness to prolong the struggle. Tom went out as Captain of a battery. Wounded and promoted several times, he was Colonel when the surrender at Appomattox came. His gallantry was as widely recognized as that of any officer of Lee's army."

Then follows a good description of the bravery of Mrs. Carter during the trying time of the war, of the shooting of a Union scout on the porch of Pampatike, and how, when the combatants had withdrawn, Mrs. Carter called her servants, ordered a grave prepared, read over the dead soldier the Episcopal burial service, and laid him in his grave, and then resumed the ordinary routine of the farm as if no war were in progress. The war ended and Col. Carter impoverished, he sought employment in active life, and the lady of the house after a few years of struggle closed the doors of Pampatike and left to join her husband in a neighboring city. The fall of Pampatike is symbolical of that of many another old Virginia house. Farewell, old place, says Diomed, "another of the few remaining lights of the olden time have gone out. Yet a few years more and not a single light of the olden days will gimmer in Virginia, for the old folks, with no one to replace them,

are fast falling to sleep."

The story of "Diomed" is a healthy story. It is filled with the odor of the woodlands, with the salt breath of the sea over brown marshes, with the tender tints of twilight and the flush of the dawn. It is musical with the whirr of wings, with the call of the snipe, with the whistle of the quail, and with the cooing of the wild swan. It is a story of nature, and he or she who reads it alike will come closer to nature through this faithful canine interpreter, who has been made the mouthpiece of a healthy soul and mind.



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apology—one that is needless, for his expressed fear that he may be considered a trifle by this evidence of idleness in the life of a busy man—namely, the revelation that he is a sportsman and a friend of animals—is groundless. Human nature cannot be so censorious as this, and, notwithstanding the fact which Mr. Wise recalls that a distinguished New Hampshire Judge lost an appointment to the Supreme Court of the United States because through a long opinion in the case of a mink killed out of season he gained the title of the "mink Judge," he need not fear that any man or woman who reads his book aright and who has any touch of sentiment or love of nature in his or her composition would or could condemn him for it.

On the contrary, in honoring the life and memory of Diomed, Mr. Wise has honored

*DIOMED. The Life, Travels, and Observations of a Dog. By John Sergeant Wise. Illustrated by J. Linton Chapman. Svo. London, Boston, and New York: Lamson, Wolfe & Co. \$2.



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