

## THE WIDE AWAKE

AUGUST, 1889.

### "BIN."

**B**IN" was not his name at all, and that was why he was called so, such being the reason for most nicknames, for if it had been his name there would have been no fun in calling him by it. Like every well-born dog however, he had a real name too of course, which did duty on state occasions when he was formally presented to visitors, or in less auspicious moments, when having sinned in some way against the unwritten yet stern code of dog-morals, he was in disgrace and was called up for a flogging. But "Bin" was his name for rollicking, every-day use, and stood good in his mind for a biscuit, or a bit of cake, or a game of play, or a pat on the head. He liked to be called "Bin" therefore, and whenever he heard the name was careful to wag his tail in the most encouraging manner; while as for his real name, though it had descended to him in a direct line from a most distinguished and spoilt great-grandfather, he evidently esteemed it as little as if it possessed no genealogical significance whatever. Indeed he did not care a rap of his tail for the fact that he was a dog with a pedigree, and he held even his nearest ancestors in so little reverence that he would dispute a dinner with them any day, and as the merest puppy had been known to snatch away a beautiful bone from under his aristocratic mother's long and astonished nose at the very moment that she was laying her dignified paws upon it. To tell the truth, he thought all this fine talk about his birth rather a farce.

But beauty is a different affair. That, on the face of it, is certainly a personal matter, and "Bin," it must be confessed, plumed himself not a little on his looks, revealing in every movement that as dogs went he considered himself really of a very superior make. To be sure the unlearned observer, coming upon him unexpectedly around a street corner could not but be struck almost whimsically by the length of his body, united as it was to such short and crooked legs; but then he was of such a pretty

golden-brown color, and his skin was so soft and satiny, and his head with its fine nose and long velvet ears and great bright eyes was so really beautiful, that one cheerfully accepted the rest of him for sake of them, and in the end got so fond of him as almost to come to think his body beautiful too.

But the very best thing about "Bin" was his temper. He was the gentlest and sweetest dog in the world, and though he barked one nearly deaf when he got excited and did not think, yet he would not bite one for worlds—no, not even for a mutton chop with the meat on it. He was full of frolic, and had as much bounce in him as if he were lined with india rubber; and if occasionally he gave way to a temporary fit of sulks, that was only to prove the human side of him, and was positively the worst that could be said of him. All told, he was a dear, affectionate, lovable little fellow, with the prettiest and politest manners, always running to meet a newcomer with a wag of welcome, and disarming even dog-haters by his winning little ways. But he was not in the least a show dog, and possessed no tricks of any kind. Not but what he was bright enough to learn if he chose, but he simply didn't choose. A happy life he led. His bed was the softest of fleecy furs that lulled one to sleep only to touch it, and all his days were Saturdays, so that his waking time was one continuous playtime, broken only by refreshing naps in which he either dreamed of the play that was just done, or of the play about to begin.

It does not seem as if there could be very much scope for usefulness or heroism in so thoughtless and merry a little life, yet "Bin" filled an important niche in his world, proving that no one need be enrolled upon the pages of history to be a hero at some point of his life, and that a life that looks commonplace on the outside may be full of gracious and praiseworthy deeds nevertheless.

Of course to see "Bin," no one would have guessed that he had anything high-minded

about him, for in spite of his noble head he had not altogether the look of greatness, being so unmistakably bow-legged. People are not so ready as they should be perhaps to look for heroes among bow-legs. Who would ever have thought that "Bin" could teach a lesson to any human being?

But he did, and this was how it was.

"Bin" had a small mistress whom he adored, and who loved him very dearly. Her hair was nearly the color of his—brown, with a bright light through it, only hers was much longer, and waved loosely about her pretty face and neck, hanging thickly over her forehead like a silken curtain. Everybody loved Dorothy, if only for that gentle and tender heart of hers that looked out so softly from her sweet eyes. So it was no wonder that "Bin" loved her as he did.

Now this dear little Dorothy had a cousin who was as unlike her as a nettle is unlike a rose, and who lived just across the street, so that the two children were together almost all the time. This other little girl was called Trix, and a naughty, teasing, elfish little thing she was, with a thin dark face and long black tossing hair and eyes that never were still a moment, so that one wondered if she shut them even when she went to sleep—that is if she ever did go to sleep, for she was just the kind of child that one could fancy as never going to bed at all, but as slipping out of the window in the dusk, and dancing and whispering and laughing under her breath out among the shadows and the moonbeams all the night long when everything else was quiet, like the restless, mocking, elusive, aggravating little mortal that she was. She was a malicious little creature too. She was always doing something to annoy somebody if she could, and as nothing annoyed Dorothy more than to see "Bin" teased, Trix was forever inventing some new way to torment him. Indeed Trix was the one sole thorn in "Bin's" blissful life, and the only person whom it taxed his dog-politeness to treat civilly. As a rule, so innately good were his manners, he greeted her courteously whenever he first saw her of a morning, although he made no further pretense of liking her, and after that one dutiful and conscientious little wag of his tail in salutation took no more notice of her than he could possibly help; and sometimes, so far had his dislike of her gone, he even pretended that he did not see her come in, and

thought that the noise of the opening door was rats, and made believe in the most bare-faced manner that he did not know she was there at all till Dorothy called him to account for his rudeness.

But how could any well-educated dog like a child who never had a caress or a kind word for him (let alone a morsel of sugar), and who could not see him without immediately inventing some unworthy device wherewith to disturb the serenity of his existence? When she was doing nothing worse, she was either sticking sharp-pointed twigs or straws down his ears beyond any allowable point, or presenting an atrocious and preternaturally strong vinaigrette to his unsuspecting nose, or offering him what bore all the outward signs of a good and lawful cream-puff, but whose inward composition, only discoverable when too late, proved to be an unholy mixture of mustard and cayenne pepper, or the very hottest and most biting kind of horse-radish. Or she would stand before him with a genuine and honest cake in her stingy little hand—the very kind of sweet-cake most to his taste—making believe offer him every mouthful as she broke it off, yet always ending by eating it herself and never giving him so much as a crumb. "Bin" could not stand that. It lowered her inestimably in his eyes. For all his faults, among which there was perhaps just a suspicion of greed, he felt in his inmost soul that dog as he was he would not have been so greedy as Trix, and that had he had all the bones he wanted and to spare, as Trix certainly had, he would surely have behaved more becomingly in the matter of sharing his superfluities. And Trix would pinch him too on the sly, or haul him toward her by the tail (which he felt to be the most degrading manner of locomotion possible), or dig her sharp little shoe into him suddenly, when she had just put him off his guard by mentioning that there were biscuits under a newspaper near by on the floor (where, by the way, there never were any), seeming to know by instinct the points where the toe or the heel would hurt most, and then she would laugh at him and call him "Baby" and other humiliating names when he shrank away. Altogether she was a most unreliable and unpleasant accession to the playground, and he did heartily wish she would go away and leave Dorothy and him alone.

Dorothy used almost to wish so too, for Trix tried her patience to the very utmost. And

there came a day when at last she could positively bear no more. Trix had been teasing poor "Bin" the entire afternoon through without a moment's cessation, finding every instant something worse and more irritating and more unbearable yet to do to him, until all of a sudden Dorothy's temper gave way completely, and to Trix's unbounded amazement the little girl turned round upon her in a perfect storm of passion. Trix was dreadfully taken aback. It was as if a flower in one's hand had suddenly blazed forth lightning.

"You wicked, wicked Trix!" Dorothy cried, panting with anger and excitement, her eyes flashing with indignant light and her soft cheeks burning as she caught "Bin" up in her arms and held him close for protection. "Leave my 'Bin' alone. You shall not touch him again."

Trix only gave a mocking little laugh, and danced about poor angry little Dorothy, making snatches at "Bin" with tiny harmful fingers.

"Go away! Go away!" cried Dorothy, hugging her pet closer and twisting herself aside from the provoking Trix. "You shall never, never play with him again!"

"I don't want to play with him," Trix retorted, snapping her fingers at him and hitting him every time just on the point of his nose, no matter what way he turned his head. "I don't want to play with such an ugly old Crooked Legs. You may keep him all to yourself and welcome! Crooked Legs! Crooked Legs! Ugly old Crooked Legs! He's a horrid, hideous, ugly little Crooked Legs! That's just what he is. So there!"

Little Dorothy grew white about the lips.

"You may call my beautiful 'Bin' what names you like, Trix," she said, trembling all over like a lily in a gust of wind. "He doesn't care what you call him. He hates you and I hate you too. I wish you would go away forever and never, never come near either of us again!"

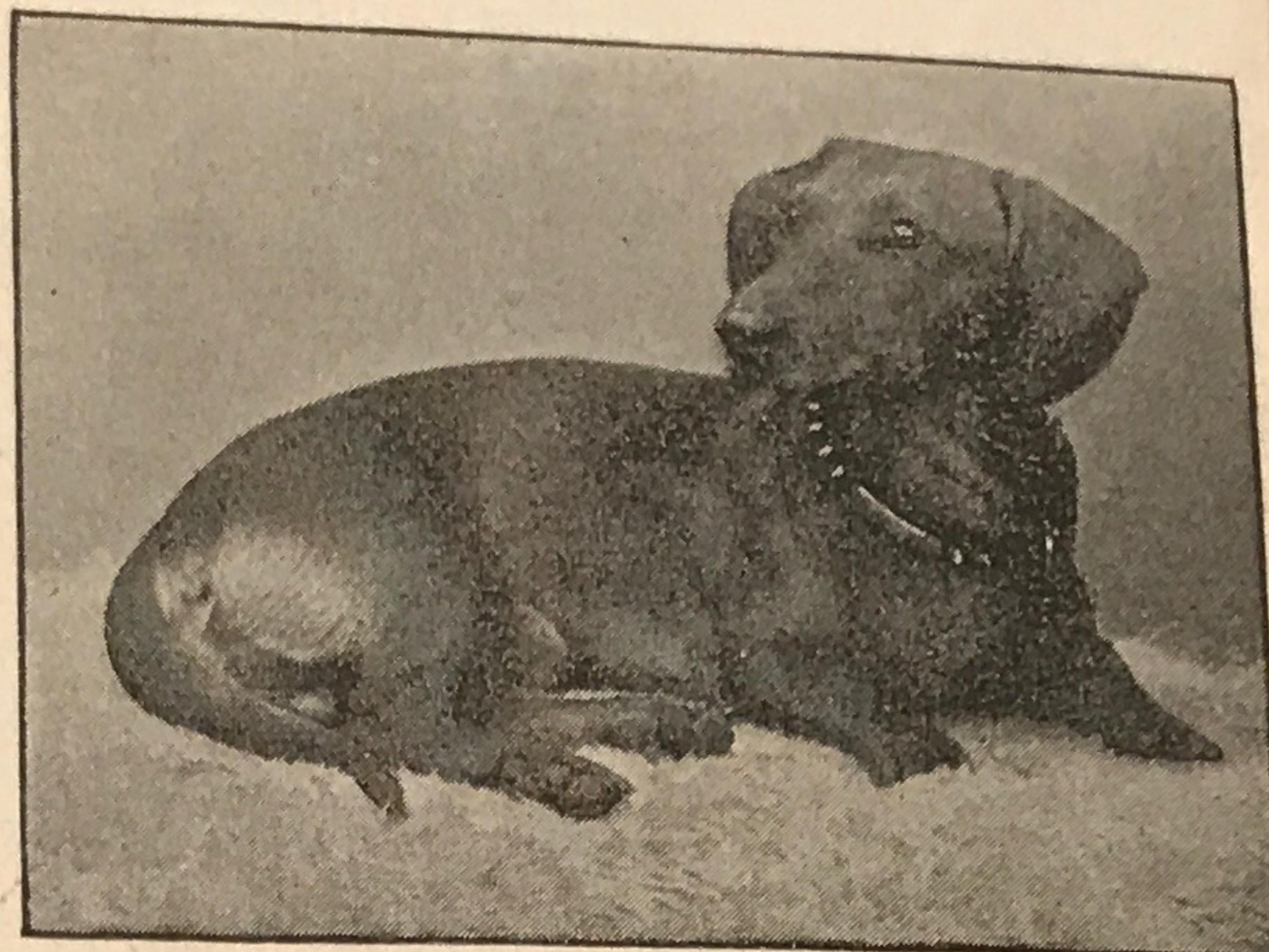
"I am going away," laughed Trix. "I am going away with mamma in the train this very night. I am going ever so far away, and if you aren't nice to me now maybe I'll never come back again."

"I just wish you wouldn't!" Dorothy exclaimed fervently. "I don't want ever to see you any more so long as I live."

"Well, then, say good-by forever," said Trix, half laughing, half in earnest, coming nearer and pouting out her provoking red lips as if for a kiss.

But Dorothy shook her head.

"No, I'll not kiss you, Trix," she said, frowning at her to keep back the tears that were brimming over in her pretty eyes. "I can't



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kiss anybody that I don't love, and I don't love you any more. I never will love you again."

Trix grew more and more serious. She had not meant to push the quarrel to such a tremendous point as this.

"Oh! but you will love me just a little now that I am going away, won't you?" she asked coaxingly, looking hard at Dorothy, and coming nearer and nearer with a series of small jumps. "You can't let me go away without even a good-by kiss, you know, Dorothy. People can't say good-by—it isn't any good-by at all without a kiss."

"Then it has just got to be this time," Dorothy replied stubbornly, "for I shall not kiss you, and 'Bin' won't kiss you either. His feelings are very much hurt, and you don't deserve to be kissed ever again."

"O, Dorothy, please, dear Dorothy!" Trix said pleadingly. She had quite dropped all her teasing ways, and stood there on one foot holding her other foot in her hand and looking at her cousin almost humbly, her odd little face working and twitching spasmodically.

"I won't," Dorothy answered with soft but changeless determination, "I won't, and you can't make me."

Trix looked at Dorothy a moment more, and then came nearer with a final hop that landed her very close and on both feet.

"Won't you forgive me before I go, Dorothy darling? Please? Won't you forgive me and be friends again?" she asked, so gently and shyly that it scarcely seemed bold little Trix at all.

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"No, no; I won't; I can't," Dorothy answered, with a heavy sigh that sounded like the finish to all things. "It isn't just what you have done to-day, but you have always been naughty to 'Bin,' and 'Bin' never did anything to deserve it, and so I can't forgive you. It is all your own fault. You have been too bad. I can't."

Trix stood stock-still an instant in utter bewilderment, twisting her thin little fingers together all sorts of ways. In the whole history of their friendship there had never come a moment like this between them before. Trix was always offending, and Dorothy was always forgiving. The "seventy times seven" of forgiveness enjoined by Scripture was a mere circumstance to the number of times that Trix had been pardoned and taken back to Dorothy's faithful little heart. Why was it so hard then for Dorothy to forgive just this one time more? But there were no signs of relenting in her set little face now, and Trix suddenly turned and fled down the garden path, but only to fling herself on the grass a few yards off and hide her face in her hands and begin to sob as if her heart were breaking. For all that she had teased Dorothy so shamefully, deep in her wayward soul she loved her gentle little cousin beyond anything in the world, and she could not part with her like this.

But Dorothy had been too deeply aggrieved to forgive easily, and though she saw Trix crying so passionately she did not care, nor would she move a single step toward her.

"Trix deserves to feel so sorry," Dorothy thought, with that severity which comes of all unloving justice. "I am glad she is unhappy. She ought to be punished for the wicked way she has always treated 'Bin.'" And she hugged the dog closer with affectionate arms, to make amends to him for what he had had to suffer.

But "Bin's" ready pity was all roused in a moment at sight of the naughty little girl's distress. He could not bear to see any one cry. It must be something terrible to cry. He instantly forgave and forgot all the injuries she had ever done him to the remotest past, and was seized with an overwhelming desire to reach her and comfort her. He struggled to free himself from Dorothy's clinging hold, and scrambling down to the ground he flew to the weeping child and putting his two crooked little front paws on her shoulders, began licking her hands, her face, her neck — any spot that his

eager little red tongue could find out — wagging his tail sympathetically all the time. It was exactly as if he were saying to her, "Don't cry, dear Trix; I am so sorry for you; I forgive you; I love you. There! Don't cry, don't cry, dear Trix."

Dorothy's resentment could scarcely stand out against this. If "Bin" could forgive Trix — "Bin," who had been the one sinned against and whose pardon Trix had not asked at all — could not Dorothy forgive Trix too? She held off just a moment more undecidedly, when "Bin" looked up at her over Trix's shoulder, with his ears cocked up beseechingly, and gave a little low whine as much as to say: "Why don't you come and help? I can't make Trix stop. Poor Trix, dear Trix."

Dorothy could not resist that final appeal from "Bin." The stubborn feeling at her heart all melted away to nothing as by magic, and running to Trix she threw herself down beside her and folded her tight in her arms with a loving cry of perfect reconciliation.

"Trix darling, I take it all back — everythng that I said," she whispered. "I do forgive you. We both forgive you — 'Bin' and I. We both love you. 'Bin' and I will both love you always. Dear Trix! dear Trix!"

And then Trix lifted her head and laughed through her wet lashes and tumbled elfin locks, and kissed Dorothy back with all her heart, and "Bin" lay stretched out on the grass nearby in his prettiest attitude (though really he did not seem to be thinking a bit about himself just then), watching the two little girls intently and wagging his kind little tail so hard for satisfaction that it knocked a thistledown all to pieces and filled the air with delicate floating white bits of nothingness. What a beautiful world it was! "Bin" thought. What a pity any strife of any sort or any lack of bones for any one should ever come into it to spoil it! Why could not it always be all peace and happiness as now?

The two little cousins sat long with their arms twined fondly around each other's necks, and talked and laughed together, and when they parted, Trix kissed "Bin" on the top of his brown plush head, and said he was the prettiest dog she had ever seen in all her life, and she wouldn't have his dear crooked little funny legs changed for anything, they were so cunning and gave him such an original look, not like any ordinary dog at all. Dorothy turned back to

the house when at last Trix had gone, with a sweeter smile on her soft lips than any one had ever seen there before. It is good indeed to be at peace with those one loves.

So the night passed, and only the next morning little Dorothy came flying out into the garden again, where "Bin" was having a beautiful game of ball all by himself. But at sight of her he let his ball roll away unheeded and stood as if carved in stone. What in the world could have happened to little Dorothy? Was it possible there was trouble again in the world? So soon again as this? For Dorothy's sweet face was white with horror and stained with tears, and she was sobbing convulsively as she ran. When she saw "Bin" she caught him up in her arms and sat down on the grass with him and bent close over him, rocking back and forth.

"O, 'Bin,' 'Bin'!" she sobbed out, "Trix is dead! Trix was killed last night on that horrible railroad! We shall never, never see Trix again! That was really good-by forever yesterday though we did not know it. And but for you, 'Bin,' we should have parted then in anger. O, my little 'Bin' darling, how can I ever thank you enough for what you did? But for you I should not have forgiven Trix. And

O, 'Bin'! if she had gone away so — if I had not kissed her before she went and made it up with her, I could never have forgiven myself now that she is dead — never, never, never! I could never have forgotten it, all my life long. It is hard enough now only to remember that we ever could have had a quarrel, but it would have been harder yet if I could not remember too that we had made it up and loved each other again and kissed when we said good-by. O, my dear, dear little Trix! I am so glad we were friends again and that we loved each other so dearly when we kissed good-by!"

Poor "Bin" was touched to the very depths of his sensitive heart at his little mistress's grief. He crept close to her, and whined, and licked her pretty face again and again all over — her forehead, her nose, her chin, her ears. But he could not say whether or not he understood, or whether he knew that because of the generous, forgiving spirit he had shown, the one whom he loved best on earth had been saved from a life-long remorse. Dear little "Bin"! Let us hope he knew, for it must have made him very glad.

*Grace Denio Litchfield.*

## The Independent

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### WHAT THE ROSES SAID.

BY GRACE DENIO LITCHFIELD.

A WAN little maiden lay with closed eyes upon her pillows in the sick-room; all was very still, and the roses in the vase by the bedside had it quite to themselves.

"You are crowding me very uncomfortably," said a great, glowing red rose, spreading out its rich petals with a gush of impatient fragrance. "You are rubbing all the velvet off my dress!"

"Oh, please pardon me," begged the little pale rose, that had pressed so near, shrinking humbly back as it spoke amid its leaves. "I only put up my lips to kiss that pretty sunbeam. I love sunbeams."

"It is not worth while blooming to

meet it. Ah, there is no sun here like one that I have known! Such a fiery, glorious sun, shining hour after hour up there in the empty blue sky all for my sake, and throwing down passionate golden kisses to me that set the green leaves of the trees all a-tremble with envy as they fell athwart the branches! Never had rose such a lover before."

"Oh, tell me, tell me!" cried the little pale rose, lifting its sweet head, eagerly. "I never had a lover yet, tho many a zephyr has told me that I am fair, and a great butterfly once brushed me caressingly with its wing."

"Butterflies and zephyrs. Inconstancy and deceit," answered the red rose, crushingly.

"Do not say that!" pleaded a fair white rose, turning up its passionless holy face. "All zephyrs do not deceive."