

(editor's note: This paper was transcribed from a handwritten cursive copy with various difficulties. For a perfect rendition, the reader might wish to consult the original, itself a copy, in the volume entitled Literary Club Papers 2, 1886 – 1887 June 5, '86 to May 21, '87)

A Visit to the Country

He told the Ananias Club, that the only defect in his picture, Swapping Lies, was that the true friend of man and home for fleas was missing. But he had studied dogs only in the abstract! He intended taking a composite picture, if he could find a lens to fit Rex; he would thus lay a ground work for the ideal dog. At all events he would study from nature: the two studies he had made were unsatisfactory. Joe stole the pug, and the other, yes: he would tell the story. The judge and he, had gone into the country to spend the Sabbath; they sat late sympathizing with their newly married friend. The cigars, Welsh rarebit, etc. were good. He had to put the judge to bed. Before retiring, he went out I stood at the window; gazing over the vast grounds, looking so peaceful and romantic in the soft moonlight. Summer houses, graveled walks, trellis, vines etc. I know not how long I slept, but the ominous rumble of thunder awakened me suddenly. I looked out, the moon was shining as brightly as before, a wave of fear followed by a billow of perspiration swept over me as I located the rumble in my bed. Now an awful pause, and the murmur increased to a roar then came a sudden desire for muscular motion and my knees sought my chin with such force that it made my teeth rattle. T'was no use. Exercise in bed did not fill the bill. I knew I must get into the open air or I would die. In a moment I was upon the steps and now for the first time the full comfort of a country home dawned upon me. I wanted to go some place, and here were any number of little white houses, to the right of me, to the left of me, in front of me, a gallant 600. So many places to canvas from, t'was a positive agony, but a suspicious roar bade me choose shelter quickly. I trod that graveled path with a dignified step, occasionally mincing a string halted horse stopping now and then to hold my breath, while I drank in the scene. "But the dog" cried the long-suffering group.

Just so; here is where he came upon the scene. My second canine model was a magnificent brute, Gus – larger than Rex, he was too close for me to study him to advantage. So we had a race: I reached the house first; no door of course, I made thrice trips around that house trying to see the dog's tale, before I learned that smoke houses didn't need much of a door. By the way I am writing a paper for the club, on "Evidences of civilization." Be sure you hear it: although my position on the ridge pole was uncomfortable it was offset by the ease with which I could now study his dogship, in fact had I been invited to all the other little white houses, I would have said "no, thank you," I have made other arrangements" – he made so much noise in trying to get on intimacy terms (sic) with me that he woke up the house. Host, Hostess, lady friend, Judge, Cook guns etc. came out and removed my model. Being a much bigger man than the host, his clothes would not fit me and the Judge had but one suit, so I took the early morning train for home. These visits to the country are healthy and refreshing, I am going again – when I get old.

Lawrence Carr

Budget
Wald editor

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