

bound he was up the steps and had rung the bell. It was opened a moment later, and a perfect vision met our delighted Percival's eyes in the person of May Douglas. She was dressed in a gown of some dark red cloth, with coat and jaunty tam-o'-shanter to match, and these, together with her dark beauty, made a picture which to our astonished Percival was enchanting. He stood silently looking at her, until, at last, she said,—

“Well, Percy, aren't you ever going to start?”

“Oh, yes,” he answered, as though suddenly awakened from a deep sleep. “Are you ready?”

“All but my gloves, and I'll soon have them on.”

And some few minutes later they were off down the street in a cloud of flying snow. But, unnoticed by either of them, Nero, Dr. Douglas's great Newfoundland, had followed them, and it was not until they had cleared the outskirts of the town that Percy observed the faithful animal, trotting along patiently in the rear.

“What shall I do with him?” asked Percival, looking to Miss Douglas for answer. “Let him come along?”

“No, perhaps we had better not,” she replied. “Send him home.”

But to all of Percival's commands the dog turned a deaf ear and absolutely refused to move. Percy turned to Miss Douglas with an appealing glance.

“You oughtn't to speak so harshly to him,” she advised. Then, turning to the dog, she pointed back the road over which they had just come. “Go home, Nero,” she commanded in a firm, gentle tone.

With one glance at his fair mistress, the dog turned and trotted slowly back toward the glimmering lights of the town.

Miss Douglas turned to Percival with a gesture of triumph.

“There,” she cried, smiling bewitchingly at our hero, “see how easily that was done.”

“Oh, that's nothing wonderful,” calmly observed Percival. “You could command me, and I should obey as promptly and willingly as Nero, and you know it.”

“Now, Percival,” interrupted Miss Douglas, “I thought we had agreed to call a truce on that matter.”

“No, never, until it is settled” asserted he, emphatically.