Eden

Such is Life

TOM COLLINS

THE CLASSIC AUSTRALIAN NOVEL

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TOM COLLINS

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FOREWORD

In 1897 A. G. Stephens, then editor of the Red Page of the *Bulletin*, read the manuscript of *Such is Life*, and wrote to its author that it was "fitted to become an Australian classic, or semi-classic". Although he judged that it would not find "a quick sale, or an extensive sale", Stephens was sure that the book would in time establish itself with the Australian reading public. He has been proved right.

Such is Life was first published as a volume in the Bulletin Library under the editorship of A. G. Stephens in 1903, but by the time Joseph Furphy died, nine years later, only about 1100 of an edition of 2000 copies had been sold. In 1917 the remaining copies were issued by the Specialty Press, with a preface by Vance Palmer, who was responsible for an abridged edition twenty years later. It was not until 1944 that *Such is Life* was reprinted in full, this time by Angus and Robertson. Today it is more widely read and appreciated than ever before; and its status as one of the principal achievements of our fiction seems secure.

J. F. Archibald, the founder of the *Bulletin*, used to encourage contributors by saying that every man could write one book at least. *Such is Life* is Joseph Furphy's book; and as such it is a triumph of character. The circumstances under which Furphy wrote *Such is Life* reveal his extraordinary self-reliance and dedication. He was middle-aged, working full time in an iron-foundry in a country town, unknown in literary circles, and with few friends to share his interests. *Such is Life* was his first attempt at a sustained literary work, and it occupied his leisure for some years. That he wrote a novel in these circumstances would be in itself worthy of note: that he wrote a novel of such real distinction and significance is a measure of how remarkable a man he was.

In a letter to Archibald, asking for advice on how to get his book published, Furphy described his work in a sentence that is often quoted:

> I have just finished writing a full-sized novel: title, *Such is Life*; scene, Riverina and Northern Vic; temper, democratic; bias, offensively Australian.

Thus succinctly Furphy characterized his own outlook—and that of the *Bulletin* itself. But his comment does not even hint at the literary characteristics which give the novel its enduring interest. Behind *Such is Life* lay not only years of experience in the Australian bush and a whole-hearted commitment to values that the *Bulletin* championed, but also a fascination with the nature of fiction. In his sense of literary tradition and his conscious pursuit of originality, Furphy had no real counterpart among the bush writers whose outlook he shared.

Joseph Furphy was born of Irish parents on 26th September 1843 at Yering on the upper Yarra to the north-east of Melbourne. As a youth he worked at various country occupations, and "for a couple of years cultivated the art of living on half-a-crown a week on worn-out goldfields". When he married at the age of twenty-three he turned to farming, and for several years worked a selection in the Lake Cooper district of central Victoria. Finding it impossible to make a living on the selection, he took different jobs, eventually setting up as a bullock-driver. About 1877 he moved his wife and children to Hay in New South Wales, and for the next seven years he followed "the adventurous and profane occupation" of bullock-driving in the Riverina. When his livelihood disappeared as a result of drought and disease among his bullocks, he went to work in his brother's foundry in the Victorian town of Shepparton. Here he lived for twenty years, leaving in 1904 to join his sons, who had established a foundry at Fremantle in Western Australia. He died suddenly on 13th September 1912.

It was not until he settled in Shepparton that Furphy could think seriously about being a writer. With regular hours of work he was free to follow his intellectual interests in a way that had never been possible before. As a child in a home where learning was held in the greatest respect, his earliest reading had been the Bible and Shakespeare; as a bullocky, travelling alone much of the time, he had carried his pocket Shakespeare with him for reading at night in the light of the camp-fire. All his life Furphy was educating himself, and in Shepparton there was a mechanics' institute near at hand to supply him with books. But he was not content merely to be a student. Stimulated by the *Bulletin*, which invited its readers to write about what they knew at first hand, he began writing verses and short prose pieces.

According to his own account, Furphy only gradually conceived the idea of making a full-scale novel out of his bush experiences. He started with the intention of writing a "yarn"; one "motif" suggested

another, and he saw the possibility of shaping his yarns to compose a single work which would express his sense of what life was like. Out of the initial impulse to reminisce came a complex work of fiction cast in the form of a bushman's reminiscences. The intricate artistry of *Such is Life* is governed by a deeply serious purpose: to suggest the very texture of life as Furphy had experienced it. His concern with the nature of reality is implicit in the title, and is made explicit in the comments of the narrator. From Collins's opening "defence" of his turning to authorship to his final words, affirming his faith in life while acknowledging its absurdity, *Such is Life* is intended to make the reader think about Life, "that ageless enigma, the true solution of which forms our all-embracing and only responsibility". It is a novel which is meant to be re-read.

Furphy does not appear in *Such is Life* in his own person. We are asked to believe that the novel is the faithful record of certain days in the life of a philosophical bushman, a former bullocky and government official who is now unemployed. Furphy used the pen-name of "Tom Collins" for his *Bulletin* contributions, but in writing *Such is Life* he developed Tom Collins as a character whose traits, especially his habits of thought, are part of the comic strategy of the narrative. In many ways Collins is an exaggerated, ironic self-portrait, in which Furphy regards humorously—and not too severely—the vanity of the "learned bushman". Tom Collins is a role that Furphy assumes, turning his irony against himself. In the course of *Such is Life* Furphy's relationship to his narrator varies, and the reader needs to be alert to the variations in the tone of the prose which indicate the shifts in the relationship. Tom Collins is the exponent of Furphy's nationalistic sentiment, his Christian Socialist beliefs, and his strong sense of injustice; but Collins is equally the fallible narrator, over-confident of his ability to interpret events and people, and bemused by his own theories. Collins's assertion at the beginning of the novel of his reliability as a chronicler is, at one level, borne out by his narrative: he faithfully provides the evidence of his own inadequacy as an interpreter. Collins's failure to realize the true identity of Nosey Alf and to understand the boundary rider's strangely unmasculine reactions to the story Collins tells of Alf Morris is the central demonstration of the limitations of his understanding, but it is not the only one. It would spoil the novel for the new reader to explain here how carefully Furphy planted the clues that enable us to see the truth that Collins misses. As a reader grasps the relationships, the patterns of cause and effect which elude the cock-sure and loquacious narrator,

he will come to recognize the cunning of the book's construction, and, more significantly, to feel the ironic truth of Collins's claim that his expansion of diary entries "will afford to the observant reader a fair picture of Life, as that engaging problem has presented itself to me". It is only when one sees the gap between what Collins comprehends and what is there to be comprehended that one appreciates the careful phrasing of Collins's claim.

In the design of *Such is Life* Furphy was, of course, making a serious point about human short-sightedness and human attempts to find a pattern in the flux of life. Ostentatiously Collins criticizes the conventions of the "novelist" and the "romancer", and declares that he does not have a predetermined story to tell, as he is taking a random sample of days from his life. The changes in method (in chapters II and VII) serve to reinforce the impression that the narrative is unplanned, while at the same time making more credible the links between the different chapters. The total effect of Furphy's hidden network of cause and effect is to suggest the unpredictability of life. Tom Collins's continual musings on the "Order of Things" naturally turn our attention to the surprising way in which things happen in the novel. The life which Furphy presents in *Such is Life* does not fall into the neat patterns of conventional fiction, nor does it exemplify the working out of any discernible moral principle in the universe.

Furphy wrote of a way of life in which (as he knew from personal experience) chance played a large part. The viewpoint of the novel is that of the nomadic traveller with no settled home. Most of the action in *Such is Life* is set out of doors, which is the true home of the bullockies. In this setting, a trivial decision may have momentous consequences for others, as when Collins, out of a sense of bush manners, decides not to speak to the sundowner near Rory's hut. Human relationships tend to be fragmentary, transitory, a matter of chance meetings. Tom Collins, like most of the bullockies, is a man on his own, without wife or family. The emphasis in the novel falls on the patchwork web of circumstance rather than on the exploration of character and motive. Perhaps the major disappointment of *Such is Life* is that the most elaborate of the hidden plots—the "romance" of Molly Cooper—turns out to be so conventional in its human elements. The art lies in the concealment of the plot, in having Collins tell the story—actually affect the outcome—without realizing it. Furphy's limitations as a novelist tend to show up when he attempts to deal directly with emotional experiences, as in the scene in Nosey

Alf's hut. His touch is surest when he shows the bushman relaxing, yarning around the camp-fire, as in Chapters I and V.

It was part of Furphy's intention to identify Australian characteristics, and in writing of the bullockies—the bush people he knew best—his imaginative sympathies were most deeply engaged. Not all the characters have the same degree of reality. Furphy had a liking for types, as must be immediately obvious to the reader of Chapter IV in which Tom Collins confronts the boundary riders of different nationalities; and here his art seems laboured. There are others—Willoughby, Folkestone, and Mrs Beaudesart come to mind—who are less characters than caricatures of attitudes that Furphy wishes to ridicule. But when his energies are concentrated on showing the bushmen as they really are, there is no Australian writer who surpasses Furphy—not even Lawson.

The most fully drawn character in *Such is Life* is of course Tom Collins, whose exuberant and kindly personality colours the whole work. He is a bushman, but his vision transcends the bush scene. Whether or not we enjoy his philosophizing and his learned allusions, they have a real function in pointing up the underlying concerns of the novel and in enlarging the perspective in which bush life is viewed. Tom Collins often plays the clown, relishing the comedy of life even when, as in Chapter III, it involves the "naked truth" about himself; but he is also a clear-eyed and humane observer of the harsher facts of living. "Such is life" is his characteristic response to experience: he accepts life as it comes with a kind of ironical stoicism. It is an attitude that many Australians will recognize as part of themselves.

Such is Life is not without its faults. Furphy sometimes misjudged his effects—in places the plotting is so intricate that it is hard for the reader to follow; the stylistic humour, notably the joke about swear-words, tends to be overdone; and the digressions of Tom Collins do not always seem artistically justified. Such flaws must be in some measure due to Furphy's inexperience as a writer and his isolation during his years of authorship. The wonder is that they are not more serious.

Its earliest readers took *Such is Life* at its face value as the memoirs of a rather idiosyncratic bushman. In our time the book has come to be seen as an original and vital work of the imagination. The passing of time is not likely to dim our admiration of Furphy's quite heroic dedication to literature or lessen our enjoyment of the "fair picture of Life" that he created.

JOHN BARNES

INTRODUCTION

CONTRARY to usage, these memoirs are published, not "in compliance with the entreaties of friends," but in direct opposition thereto. It has been pointed out to me that the prizes of civilization—Municipal dignity, Churchwardenship, the Honorary Bench, and so forth—do not wait upon avowed comradeship with people who can by no management of hyperbole be called respectable. But there is a grim, fakeer-like pleasure in any renunciation of desirable things, when the line of least resistance leads in a contrary direction; and, in my own case, the impulse of reminiscence, fatally governed by an inveterate truthfulness, is wayward enough to overbear all hope of local pre-eminence, as well as all sense of literary propriety. Hence these pages.

TOM COLLINS

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CHAPTER I

UNEMPLOYED at last!

. . . . . .

Scientifically, such a contingency can never have befallen of itself. According to one theory of the Universe, the momentum of Original Impress has been tending toward this far-off, divine event ever since a scrap of fire-mist flew from the solar centre to form our planet. Not this event alone, of course; but every occurrence, past and present, from the fall of captured Troy to the fall of a captured insect. According to another theory, I hold an independent diploma as one of the architects of our Social System, with a commission to use my own judgment, and take my own risks, like any other unit of humanity. This theory, unlike the first, entails frequent hitches and cross-purposes; and to some malign operation of these I should owe my present holiday.

Orthodoxly, we are reduced to one assumption: namely, that my indomitable old Adversary has suddenly called to mind Dr. Watts's friendly hint respecting the easy enlistment of idle hands.

Good. If either of the two first hypotheses be correct, my enforced furlough tacitly conveys the responsibility of extending a ray of information, however narrow and feeble, across the path of such fellow-pilgrims as have led lives more sedentary than my own—particularly as I have enough money to frank myself in a frugal way for some weeks, as well as to purchase the few requisites of authorship.

If, on the other hand, my supposed safeguard of drudgery has been cut off at the meter by that amusingly short-sighted old Conspirator, it will be only fair to notify him that his age and experience, even his captivating habits and well-known hospitality, will be treated with scorn, rather than respect, in the paragraphs which he virtually forces me to write; and he is hereby invited to view his own feather on the fatal dart.

Whilst a peculiar defect—which I scarcely like to call an oversight in mental construction—shuts me out from the flowery path-

way of the romancer, a co-ordinate requital endows me, I trust, with the more sterling, if less ornamental qualities of the chronicler. This fairly equitable compensation embraces, I have been told, three distinct attributes: an intuition which reads men like sign-boards; a limpid veracity; and a memory which habitually stereotypes all impressions except those relating to personal injuries.

Submitting, then, to the constitutional interdict already glanced at, and availing myself of the implied license to utilise that homely talent of which I am the bailee, I purpose taking certain entries from my diary, and amplifying these to the minutest detail of occurrence or conversation. This will afford to the observant reader a fair picture of Life, as that engaging problem has presented itself to me.

Twenty-two consecutive editions of *Letts's Pocket Diary*, with one week in each opening, lie on the table before me; all filled up, and in a decent state of preservation. I think I shall undertake the annotation of a week's record. A man might, if he were of a fearful heart, stagger in this attempt; but I shut my eyes, and take up one of the little volumes. It proves to be the edition of 1883. Again I shut my eyes while I open the book at random. It is the week beginning with Sunday, the 9th of September.

SUN. SEPT. 9. Thomp. Coop. &c. 10-Mile Pines. Cleo. Duff. Selec.

The fore part of the day was altogether devoid of interest or event. Overhead, the sun blazing wastefully and thanklessly through a rarefied atmosphere; underfoot, the hot, black clay, thirsting for spring rain, and bare except for inedible roley-poleys, coarse tussocks, and the woody stubble of close-eaten salt-bush; between sky and earth, a solitary wayfarer, wisely lapt in philosophic torpor. Ten yards behind the grey saddle-horse follows a black pack-horse, lightly loaded; and three yards behind the pack-horse ambles listlessly a tall, slate-coloured kangaroo dog, furnished with the usual poison muzzle—a light wire basket, worn after the manner of a nose-bag.

Mile after mile we go at a good walk, till the dark boundary of the scrub country disappears northward in the glassy haze, and in front, southward, the level black-soil plains of Riverina Proper mark a straight sky-line, broken here and there by a monumental clump or pine-ridge. And away beyond the horizon, southward still, the geodesic curve carries that monotony across the zone of salt-bush, myall, and swamp box; across the Lachlan and Murrumbidgee, and on to the Victorian border—say, two hundred and fifty miles.

Just about mid-day, the station track I was following intersected and joined the stock route; and against the background of a pine-ridge, a mile ahead, I saw some wool-teams. When I overtook them, they had stopped for dinner among the trees. One of the party was an intimate friend of mine, and three others were acquaintances; so, without any of the ceremony which prevails in more refined circles, I hooked Fancy's rein on a pine branch, pulled the pack-saddle off Bunyip, and sat down with the rest, to screen the tea through my teeth and flick the diligent little operatives out of the cold mutton with the point of my pocket-knife.

There were five bullock-teams altogether: Thompson's twenty; Cooper's eighteen; Dixon's eighteen; and Price's two teams of fourteen each. Three of the wagons, in accordance with a fashion of the day, bore names painted along the board inside the guard irons. Thompson's was the *Wanderer*; Cooper's, the *Hawkesbury*; and Dixon's, the *Wombat*. All were platform wagons, except Cooper's, which was the Sydney-side pattern.

To avoid the vulgarity of ushering this company into the presence of the punctilious reader without even the ceremony of a Bedouin introduction—(This is my friend, N or M; if he steals anything, I will be responsible for it): a form of introduction, by the way, too sweeping in its suretyship for prudent men to use in Riverina—I shall describe the group, severally, with such succinctness as may be compatible with my somewhat discursive style.

Steve Thompson was a Victorian. He was scarcely a typical bullock driver, since fifteen years of that occupation had not brutalised his temper, nor ensanguined his vocabulary, nor frayed the terminal 'g' from his participles. I knew him well, for we had been partners in dogflesh and colleagues in larceny when we were, as poets feign, nearer to heaven than in maturer life. And, wide as Riverina is, we often encountered fortuitously, and were always glad to fraternise. Physically, Thompson was tall and lazy, as bullock drivers ought to be.

Cooper was an entire stranger to me, but as he stoutly contended that Hay and Deniliquin were in Port Phillip, I inferred him to be a citizen of the mother colony. Four months before, he had happened to strike the very first consignment of goods delivered at Nyngan by rail, for the Western country. He had chanced seven tons of this, for Kenilworth; had there met Thompson, delivering salt from Hay; and now the two, freighted with Kenilworth wool, were making the trip to Hay together. Kenilworth was on the commercial divide, having a choice of two evils—the long, uninviting

track southward to the Murrumbidgee, and the badly watered route eastward to the Bogan. This was Cooper's first experience of Riverina, and he swore in no apprentice style that it would be his last. A correlative proof of the honest fellow's Eastern extraction lay in the fact that he was three inches taller, three stone heavier, and thirty degrees lazier, than Thompson.

I had known Dixon for many years. He was a magnificent specimen of crude humanity; strong, lithe, graceful, and not too big—just such a man as your novelist would picture as the nurse-swapped offspring of some rotund or rickety aristocrat. But being, for my own part, as I plainly stated at the outset, incapable of such romancing, I must register Dixon as one whose ignoble blood had crept through scoundrels since the Flood. Though, when you come to look at it leisurely, this would n't interfere with aristocratic, or even regal, descent—rather the reverse.

Old Price had carted goods from Melbourne to Bendigo in '52; a hundred miles, for £100 per ton. He had had two teams at that time, and, being a man of prudence and sagacity, had two teams still, and was able to pay his way. I had known him since I was about the height of this table; he was Old Price then; he is Old Price still; and he will probably be Old Price when my head is dredged with the white flour of a blameless life, and I am pottering about with a stick, hating young fellows, and making myself generally disagreeable. Price's second team was driven by his son Mosey, a tight little fellow, whose body was about five-and-twenty, but whose head, according to the ancient adage, had worn out many a good pair of shoulders.

Willoughby, who was travelling loose with Thompson and Cooper, was a whaler. Not owing to any inherent incapacity, for he had taken his B.A. at an English university, and was, notwithstanding his rags and dirt, a remarkably fine-looking man; bearing a striking resemblance to Dixon, even in features. But as the wives of Napoleon's generals could never learn to walk on a carpet, so the aimless popinjay of adult age can never learn to take a man's place among rough-and-ready workers. Even in spite of Willoughby's personal resemblance to Dixon, there was a suggestion of latent physical force and leathery durability in the bullock driver, altogether lacking in the whaler, and equiponderated only by a certain air of refinement. How could it be otherwise? Willoughby, of course, had no horse—in fact, like Bassanio, all the wealth he had ran in his veins; he was a gentleman. Well for the world if all representatives of his Order were as harmless, as inex-

pensive, and as unobtrusive as this poor fellow, now situated like that most capricious poet, honest Ovid, among the Goths.

One generally feels a sort of diffidence in introducing one's self; but I may remark that I was at that time a Government official, of the ninth class; paid rather according to my grade than my merit, and not by any means in proportion to the loafing I had to do. Candidly, I was only a Deputy-Assistant-Sub-Inspector, but with the reversion of the Assistant-Sub-Inspectorship itself when it should please Atropos to snip the thread of my superior officer.

The repast being concluded, the drivers went into committee on the subject of grass—a vital question in '83, as you may remember.

"It 's this way," said Mosey imperatively, and deftly weaving into his address the thin red line of puissant adjective; "You dunno what you 're doin' when you 're foolin' with this run. She 's hair-trigger at the best o' times, an' she 's on full cock this year. Best watched station on the track. It 's risk whatever way you take it. We 're middlin' safe to be collared in the selection, an' we 're jist as safe to be collared in the ram-paddick. Choice between the divil an' the dam. An' there 's too big a township o' wagons together. Two 's enough, an' three 's a glutton, for sich a season as this."

"I think Cooper and I had better push on to the ram-paddock," suggested Thompson. "You three can work on the selection. Division of labour 's the secret of success, they say."

"Secret of England's greatness," mused Dixon. "I forgit what the (irrelevant expletive) that is."

"The true secret of England's greatness lies in her dependencies, Mr. Dixon," replied Willoughbly handsomely; and straightway the serene, appreciative expression of the bullock driver's face, rightly interpreted, showed that his mind was engaged in a Græco-Roman conflict with the polysyllable, the latter being uppermost.

"Well, no," said Mosey, replying to Thompson; "no use separatin' now; it 's on'y spreadin' the risk; we should 'a' separated yesterday. I would n't misdoubt the selection, on'y Cunningham told me the other day, Magomery's shiftin' somebody to live there. If that 's so, it 's up a tree, straight. The ram-paddick 's always a risk—too near the station."

"The hut on the selection was empty a week ago," I remarked. "I know it, for I camped there one night."

"Good grass?" inquired a chorus of voices.

"About the best I 've had this season."

"We 'll chance the selection," said Mosey decidedly. "Somebody can ride on ahead, an' see the coast clear. But they won't watch a

bit of a paddick in the thick o' the shearin', when there 's nobody livin' in it."

"Squatters hed orter fine grass f'r wool teams, an' glad o' the chance," observed Price, with unprintable emphasis.

"Lot of sense in that remark," commented Mosey, with a similar potency of adjective.

"Well, this is about the last place God made," growled Cooper, the crimson thread of kinship running conspicuously through his observation, notwithstanding its narrow provinciality.

"Roll up, Port Phillipers! the Sydney man 's goin' to strike a match!" retorted Mosey. "I wonder what fetched a feller like you on-to bad startin'-ground. I swear we did n't want no lessons."

Cooper was too lazy to reply; and we smoked dreamily, while my kangaroo dog silently abstracted a boiled leg of mutton from Price's tucker-box, and carried it out of sight. By-and-by, all eyes converged on a shapeless streak which had moved into sight in the restless, glassy glitter of the plain, about a mile away.

"Warrigal Alf going out on the lower track," remarked Thompson, at length. "He was coming behind Baxter and Donovan yesterday, but he stopped opposite the station, talking to Montgomery and Martin, and the other fellows lost the run of him. I wonder where he camped last night? He ought to be able to tell us where the safest grass is, considering he 's had a load in from the station. But to tell you the truth, I 'm in favour of the ram-paddock. If we 're caught there, we 'll most likely only get insulted—and we can stand a lot of that—but if we 're caught in the selection, it 's about seven years. Then we can make the Lignum Swamp to-morrow from the ram-paddock, and we can't make it from the selection. So I think we better be moving; it 'll be dark enough before we unyoke. I 've worked on that ram-paddock so often that I seem to have a sort of title to it."

"But there 's lots o' changes since you was here last," said Mosey. "Magomery he 's beginnin' to think he 's got a sort o' title to the ram-paddick now, considerin' it 's all purchased. Tell you what I 'll do; I 'll slip over in two minits on Valiparaiser, an' consult with Alf. Me an' him 's as thick as thieves."

"I 'll go with you, Mosey," said I. "I 've got some messages for him. Keep an eye on my dog, Steve."

Mosey untied the fine upstanding grey horse from the rear of his wagon; I hitched Bunyip to a tree, and mounted Fancy, and we cantered away together across the plain; the ponderous empty wagon—Sydney-side pattern—with eight bullocks in yoke and

twelve travelling loose, coming more clearly into detail through the vibrating translucence of the lower atmosphere. Alf did n't deign to stop. I noticed a sinister smile on his sad, stern face as Mosey gaily accosted him.

"An' how 's the world usin' you, Alf? Got red o' Pilot, I notice. Ever see sich a suck-in? Best at a distance, ain't he? Tell you what I come over for, Alf: They say things is middlin' hot here on Runnymede; an' we 're in a (sheol) of a (adjective) st—nk about what to do with our frames to-night. Our wagons is over there on the other track, among the pines. Where did you stop las' night? Your carrion 's as full as ticks."

"I had them in the selection; took them out this morning after they lay down."

"Good shot!"

"Why, I don't see how it concerns you."

"The selection 's reasonable safe—ain't it?"

"Please yourself about that."

"Is the ram-paddick safe?"

"No."

"Is there enough water in the tank at the selection?"

"How do I know? There was enough for me."

"I say, Alf," said I: "Styles, of Karowra, told me to let you know, if possible, that you were right about the boring rods; and he'll settle with you any time you call. Also there's a letter for you at Lochleven Station. Two items."

"I 'm very much obliged to you for your trouble, Collins," replied Alf, with a shade less of moroseness in his tone.

"Well, take care o' yourself, ole son; you ain't always got me to look after you," said Mosey pleasantly; and we turned our horses and rode away. "Evil-natured beggar, that," he continued. "He 's floggin' the cat now, 'cos he laid us on to the selection in spite of his self. If that feller don't go to the bottomless for his disagreeableness, there 's somethin' radic'ly wrong about Providence. I 'm a great believer in Providence, myself, Tom; an' what 's more, I try to live up to my (adj.) religion. I 'm sure *I* don't want to see any pore (fellow) chained up in fire an' brimstone for millions o' millions o' years, an' a worm tormentin' him besides; but I don't see what the (adj. sheol) else they can do with Alf. Awful to think of it." Mosey sighed piously, then resumed. "Grand dog you got since I seen you last. Found the (animal), I s'pose?"

"No, Mosey. Bought him fair."

"Jist so, jist so. You ought to give him to me. He 's bound to