

The Prodigal.

(Albert Carswell, in 'National Temperance Advocate.')

Mr. and Mrs. Johnston were sitting down to breakfast in their pretty east room. Mrs. Johnston had just poured out the coffee, when she turned to her husband and asked:

'Is the temperance act to be voted on here, Henry, dear?'

'Yes, dear,' answered Mr. Johnston impatiently; 'but I don't think it will succeed. I don't believe in this legislating people temperate. It looks too much like compulsion.'

Mrs. Johnston sighed and thought of her favorite son, far off in the Canadian North-West, whose actions had cost her so much pain.

Mr. Johnston was not a drinking man himself, but he had not identified himself with the temperance people, and had a curious notion of liberty in the matter. Before breakfast was over the mail arrived, and among the letters was one that made Mr. Johnston start and hastily open the envelope.

Mrs. Johnston had noticed her husband's movement and waited for him to inform her of anything that had occurred, and Mr. Johnston read her a letter from their absent boy. He was doing well; had settled down to work; was a total abstainer—for, in fact, he could not get anything to drink—and was trying to live a Christian. He ended by sending his love to his father and mother, and begged his father if there was a temperance law submitted to vote for it; it would do good to many poor fellows, as it had done good to him, out in the West, where the government allowed no liquor to be sold.

There were tears in Mrs. Johnston's eyes, but she wisely said nothing, and Mr. Johnston was also silent.

'Well, well,' he murmured, after a while, to himself; 'it is strange. I never thought the law would make a man sober; but it seems it will, and I'll vote for it.' And he did.

Anhinga the Snakebird.

Down in Central Florida, by a lagoon which empties into an inland lake, is the home of Anhinga. He wears a coat of glossy black with greenish reflections, and trimmed with silvery trappings. He would not be tall were it not for his long, slim neck. From the point of his bill to the tip of his tail he measures almost a yard. His toes are connected with webs, which are of great service to him, as he is one of the most accomplished swimmers among all the feathered tribes. His wings are long, and he usually beats them rapidly in flight. He moves swiftly through the air, and with evident ease when once well under way, but seems to experience some difficulty in rising suddenly from the water.

He obtains his food under water, which he secures by diving and swimming beneath the surface. His sharp-pointed bill is finely serrated, which enables him the better to retain his hold upon whatever he may seize.

In winter, when he has abundant leisure, he daily visits the small fresh-water lakes which are so plentiful in the high pine regions of the interior of the 'Land of Flowers.' In the spring, when there are nestlings to care for he remains closer at home. His favorite perch is on a stick or stump which projects a few inches above the water. Here he sits motionless for hours, intently watching what passes beneath. When a desirable fish or frog comes in sight he dashes into the water with almost lightning rapidity. After a dip he usually resumes his low seat, and, spreading his wings to dry in

the sun, holds them extended for an hour at a time.

Anhinga is not a song-bird. The only sound he is known to produce is a warning croak uttered at the approach of an intruder. When alarmed, he often drops into the water, and remains out of sight for a long time, probably reappearing on the surface far away. At other times he takes wing and pretends to fly away to another lake; after disappearing behind the tops of the tall pines, he turns about and quietly reappears on his favorite lake at some other point. When uncertain as to whether there is danger or not, he often alights upon the top of a tall dead pine, and craning his long neck, carefully surveys the object of his fears. Or he cautiously slips into the water, and swimming near the cause of his suspicions, reconnoitres by slowly raising his head above the surface until the full length of his neck is exposed, while the remainder of his body is still concealed. One who has seen his narrow head and thin neck in this position readily understands why he is called the 'snake-bird.' When assured that there are no evil intentions, he can be observed at very short range.

He rarely, if ever, swims on the water after the manner of ducks and geese, but is wonderfully swift and adept beneath the waves. He often flies across the lake just above the surface, and again sails about high in air, as is the habit of a hawk. Sometimes, as to show his contempt for an observer of his habits, or possibly to exhibit his familiarity with the element, he dashes into the lake near by, and, swaying rapidly from side to side, churns the water almost white with foam.

His mate is similar in appearance, save that her neck is of a dark brown color. Their nest is built upon a shrub or low tree inclining over the water, and consists mainly of sticks, and is lined with moss. The eggs are bluish white, with a chalky deposit, and are three or four in number. These birds have been seen as far north as the Ohio river, but their usual range is throughout tropical and subtropical America.—The Rev. J. M. Keck, in Pittsburg 'Christian Advocate.'

Terry's Visit.

(Katharine B. Foot, in 'Our Animal Friends.')

Terry was one of the most enticing little dogs that ever lived, and one of the most intelligent; and besides all of his charming qualities he was a dog of very high degree indeed, a dachshund of blood and breeding not to be excelled in all London.

He was seldom ill or out of sorts, but once he stepped on a bit of broken glass and cut his foot when he was out walking with his mistress; the paw swelled up, and he evidently suffered so much with it that his master took him to the most skilled dog doctor in all London.

After looking at it very carefully the doctor said that he must lance it, or that Terry would surely have blood poisoning and might die. So it was lanced, and he bore it like the hero that he was, and when it was all over and the pain of the cutting was relieved he licked the hand that had hurt him. He seemed to understand that it had been done for his good, and so it proved, for in a little while Terry was quite well again.

About two years later Terry appeared out of his basket one morning with a badly swollen face, which he would not allow anyone to touch, and he ran away and hid if anyone came near him. So it went on for two days. He could not eat and did not seem to sleep, and then one morning at breakfast time Terry

could not be found anywhere. The servants had not seen him since the night before, and his master and mistress were sadly distressed. After looking everywhere, they were just about to advertise and offer a reward, when his mistress walked into the drawing-room and there lay Terry—the lost one—peacefully asleep on her best sofa. 'Terry—Terry—where did you come from?' his mistress said, scarcely able to believe her eyes—and as soon as his name was spoken down he jumped and ran to her, wagging his tail and seeming so pleased to see her. 'Where have you been, Terry?' she said, but he only wagged his tail harder than ever.

'Why,' she said looking him over, 'the swelling in his face is almost gone, he must be better;' and it surely was so, for he eat such a dinner, and then went to sleep again—in his basket that time.

'Now, wasn't Terry clever,' said his mistress, 'he just ran away and hid until he felt better and then he came out again.'

'That shows,' said his master, 'that the old theory that animals hide away in a wild state when they are in pain is true. The old instinct holds good after years and years of education.'

About a week afterward, when Terry was out walking with his master, the doctor to whom he had been taken when he had the swollen foot met them.

'Ah!' said he to Terry's master, 'I see that your little dog is all right since I took his tooth out.'

'Tooth? What tooth? I know nothing about it—when did you take it out?'

'A few days ago. I am not sure of the day now; I can find it in my note-book, though. Didn't you send him to me?' asked the doctor, puzzled in his turn.

'No, we missed him one day,' and he named the day; 'it was about a week ago, and he suddenly appeared again in the drawing-room.'

'Strange,' said the doctor. 'One morning last week when my man opened the front door Terry stood there as if waiting to come in. It was early in the morning when the door was first opened, and as soon as he got in the house he ran directly to my office, jumped up into my chair, and there I found him when I came down. I supposed that your man brought him to me.'

'I saw that he was in pain, and examined his mouth, and took out a tooth that had made all the trouble. I kept him until I was ready to go out in the afternoon, and as no one came for him, which I thought rather strange, I left him at the door. When I went home my man told me that the dog had been at the door when he opened it, and I meant to have sent you word about it and ask an explanation, but I forgot it.'

Terry's master whistled softly. 'Well! That explains his mysterious disappearance, and if Terry isn't the very cleverest dog in all England I am mistaken. He must have remembered how you helped him before, and just took matters into his own hands, or, rather, into his brains, and went to you to be taken care of. It is the most astonishing thing that I ever heard of.'

'Yes,' said the doctor, 'and he looked at me so beseechingly when I went into the room, and seemed very grateful when I took the tooth out, for first he licked my hands, and then he jumped all over me.'

'I remember now,' said the master, 'that I said to my wife the very evening he disappeared, when he was lying in his basket in the room, that I should have to take him to you the next morning, if he was no better then. He must have heard what I said and gone himself. I suppose he slipped out early