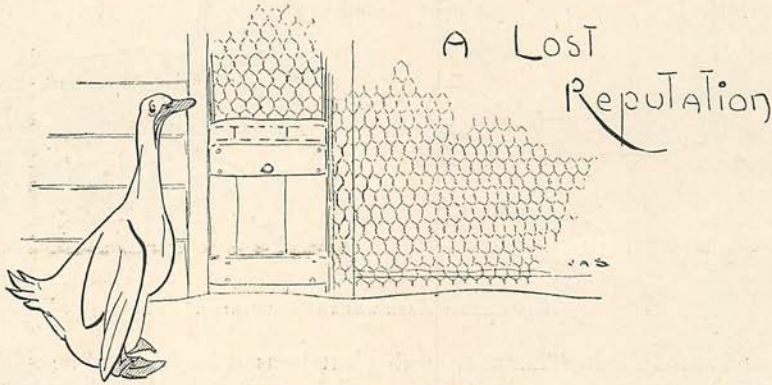


Animal Actualities.

NOTE.—Under this title we intend printing a series of perfectly authentic anecdotes of animal life, illustrated by Mr. J. A. Shepherd, an artist long a favourite with readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE. We shall be glad to receive similar anecdotes, fully authenticated by names of witnesses, for use in future numbers. While the stories themselves will be matters of fact, it must be understood that the artist will treat the subjects with freedom and fancy, more with a view to an amusing commentary than to a mere representation of the occurrences.

I.

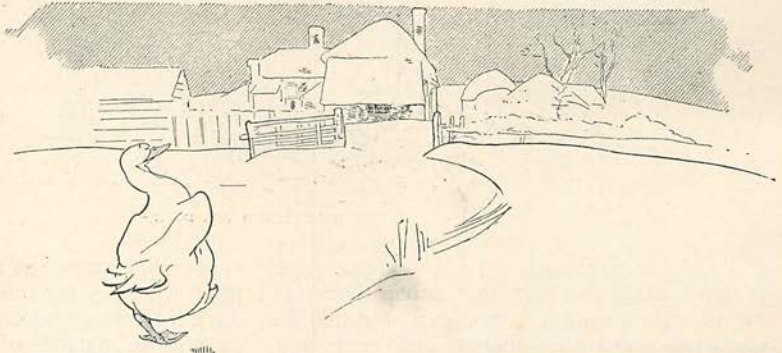


“SHE FOUND HERSELF SHUT OUT—

IT is altogether old-fashioned and out-of-date to talk nowadays of animals a little below us in the zoological scale as being actuated solely by “instinct.” This sort of thing is become mere ignorant prejudice. Let anybody fair-mindedly watch the proceedings of a moderately clever dog for one day, and then deny that dog intelligence if he can. Put the dog face to face with some circumstance, or some combination of circumstances, such as neither he nor any of his progenitors could possibly have encountered. He may not do the wisest thing on the whole, but, then, would an average human being do the wisest thing in a like case? Of course not. But whatever the dog does will be suggested by a natural train of thought, and often by a train of thought of amazing

acuteness. Here is no opportunity for the operation of inherited experience, no chance for the work of mere blind “instinct.” Anybody, by the exercise of a moment’s thought, can recall a dozen such cases to his own memory, and probably not cases occurring to dogs only, but to other animals of all degrees. We expect to present our readers with many instances of the sort.

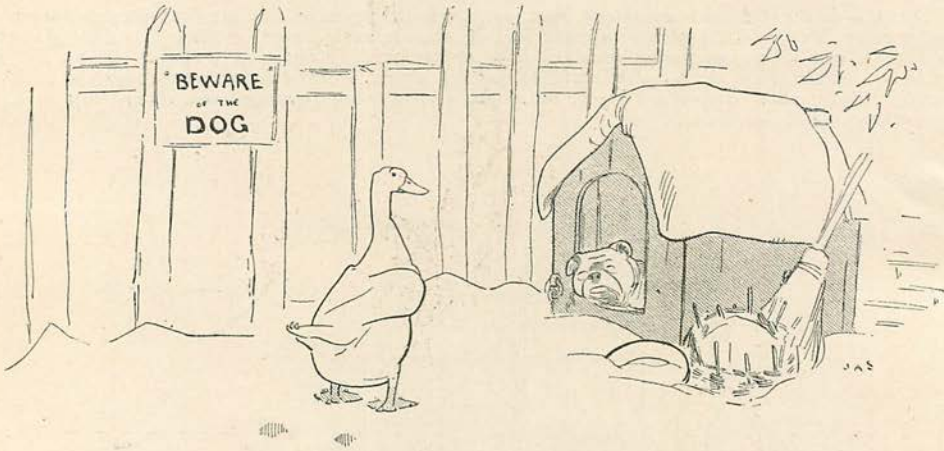
First we offer a case rather of audacity than of intelligence, but of a very odd audacity. It occurred in the winter of the year 1894, in



—IN A COLD AND SNOWY WORLD.”

Shire Hall Lane, Hendon, on the premises of Mrs. Rowcliffe. Now, in Mrs. Rowcliffe's farmyard abode a dog of terrible reputation. His savage and formidable character was famous, not only in the farm, but in the

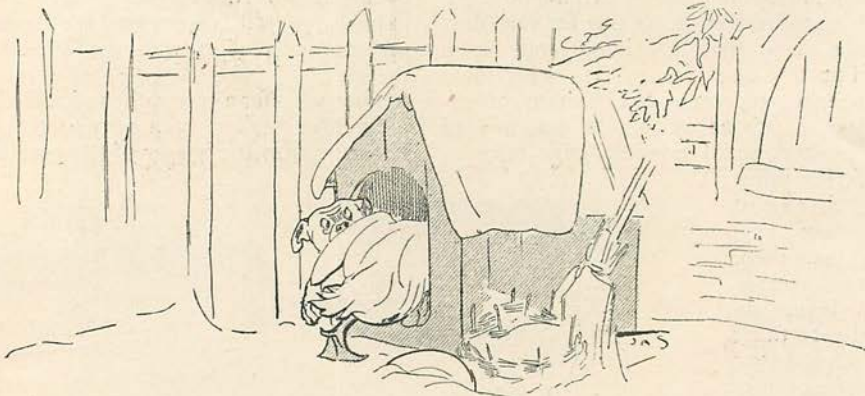
thereabout as to the exact number of little boys and girls per week devoured by way of diversifying his diet. The dog himself understood the state of affairs, and abated no whit of his arrogance. Plainly, the world (of these



"THE SNUGGEST PLACE WAS THE DOG-KENNEL."

neighbourhood round about. Tramps avoided Mrs. Rowcliffe's dog, and left chalk hieroglyphics on posts, warning tramps who might come after to avoid the jaws of this terrible quadruped, and to keep outside the radius of the chain that confined him. "Peware of the dog!" stared in large letters from a board hard by the kennel, and visitors to the farmyard sidled by with a laborious air

(parts) was at his feet, and he was monarch of all he surveyed. But there was a duck in that farmyard wholly indifferent to the general terror—she never thought about it, in fact. She was an adventurous and happy-go-lucky sort of duck, always ready to make the best of what luck came along, and never backward to seize her share of the good things—and a little extra on occasion.



"IN FLOUNDERED THE DUCK—"

of indifference, though on the extreme edge of the path, and *not* that edge that was nearest the kennel. So this formidable Cerberus ruled the district, and horrifying legends went among the extreme youth

Now, it chanced at the close of a cold day, when the snow lay thick everywhere, that this duck lagged away from the returning flock, perhaps in pursuit of some pleasant snack that it would have been foolish for a duck of

business instincts to make too widely known. Anyhow, the other ducks got safely home, the pen was shut, and this particular duck, our heroine, straggling in alone after closing hours, found herself shut out in a cold and

was so altogether beyond his experience as to dissipate his strategy, or whether the sheer audacity of the thing induced temporary paralysis is not determined; but certain it is that the farm-hands entering in the



—AND OUT FLOUNDERED THE TERROR.”

snowy world. Never mind—she made no fuss, but waddled calmly off round the farmyard to find the best shelter she could. Plainly the snuggest place was the dog-kennel. Certainly the dog was in it, and snoring, but that didn't matter—he'd have to find a place somewhere else. So in floundered the

morning found the dog shivering and crouching outside his kennel, and the duck squatting comfortably within—within the kennel, that is to say, and not within the digestive apparatus of the Terror, as everybody would have expected.

That dog's reputation was ruined. Small



“THE FARM-HANDS FOUND HIM SHIVERING OUTSIDE.”

duck, and out floundered the Terror of Shire Hall Lane, with his tail between his legs.

Whether the cold had affected the Terror's nerves, whether the attack of a quacking biped

boys openly flouted him, and tramps chalked a different figure on gate-posts, meaning that any tramp in want of a useless, harmless dog might steal one at the place indicated. The duck left the kennel when she thought it time



"A RUINED REPUTATION."

to go and see what was for breakfast, and thereafter used the pen with the others. But though the dog got his quarters again, he never recovered his reputation. He is a ruined, bankrupt Terror.

Of the ultimate fate of the duck there is

no record. Probably it was the ultimate fate of most ducks—a twisted neck, and the rest all gravy and green peas. Though, indeed, one would almost expect this indomitable bird to arise and kick the green peas off the plate.



II.

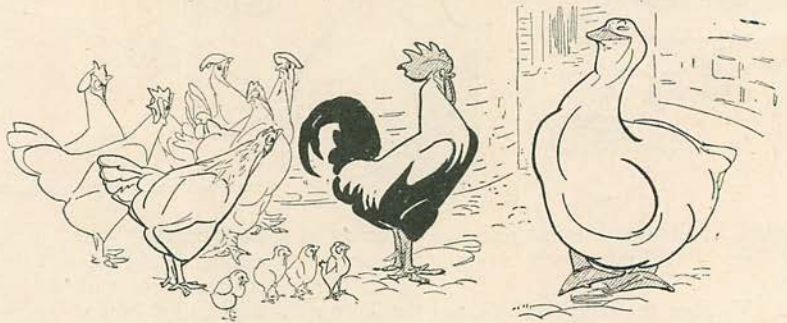
An Undesirable Attachment.



THREE years ago "The Cricketers" at Addington, in Surrey, was the scene of a sad tragedy of love at first sight, unrequited and, indeed, jeered at. Mrs. Ovenden was the

landlady of "The Cricketers" at that time—a charming old lady, who died, alas! early in the present year—and "The Cricketers" faced Addington Palace, the Archbishop of Canterbury's residence.

A small farmyard was attached to the inn, well populated with the usual sorts of birds. Mrs. Ovenden made an addition to these by the purchase of a few geese—one a particularly fat one. Now, all was happy in that



"SHE CONCEIVED A VIOLENT ATTACHMENT FOR THE COCK."