

On Show

DOGS.

Illustrated by
J. A. Shepherd

II.



THE brown gentleman was still talking, when I heard an uncommon clucking at my elbow — a very uncommon

clucking. I looked round, but only an old white hen was there, gaping wearily. As it gaped, wider and wider, I perceived that the head was growing fast, as it needs must, to accommodate the yawn. More, the yawn was becoming tenanted by a red tongue and a double row of teeth. I turned to draw the brown man's attention to this extraordinary phenomenon, when I was startled by a sudden loud bark. I looked again at the white hen, and now distinctly saw it was a terrier.

"This evolutionary breeding of yours operates uncommonly quickly sometimes," I

remarked to my guide. "Look at that old white hen now!"

"What hen?" asked the brown person, contemptuously; "there are no hens here!"

"But among the other poultry ——" I began, timidly, when he interrupted me.

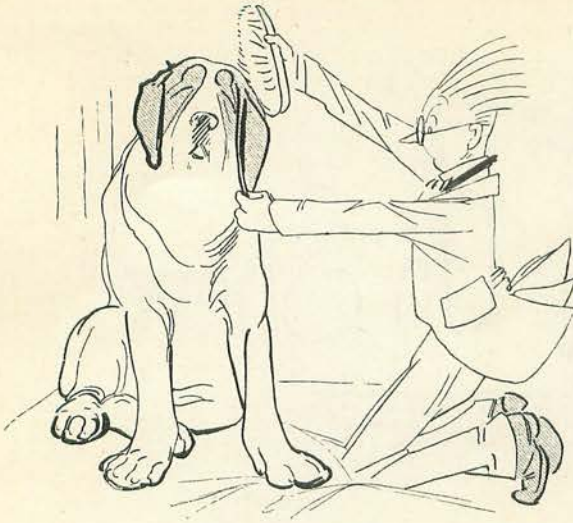
"Poultry?" he demanded, with awful asperity; "what business has poultry at a dog show? There is no poultry!"

The brown man terrified me so much, and the Egyptian coffee-pot that formed his head-dress shook so threateningly and steamed so much at the lid, that I resolved to accept all he said unquestioningly, and by all means to avoid ruffling his temper. Indeed, now that I looked about me I found that he was right. I might have known it by the noise. Why does a dog at a show bark more in five minutes than he



J. A. S.

"PASSING THE DOCTOR."



"CALLED."

does in five days in the seclusion of his native back-yard? Perhaps it is because he knows it is a show, and takes it to be his duty to attract all the attention he possibly can; especially as they are always the smallest dogs that bark the most. Certainly I might have known it by the noise. What had I been thinking of all this time? There they were, from the St. Bernard and the Great Dane, with their occasional rumbling bay, to the tiny toy terrier, with his unceasing yap. Had I been merely dreaming about poultry?

"Yes!" yelled the brown

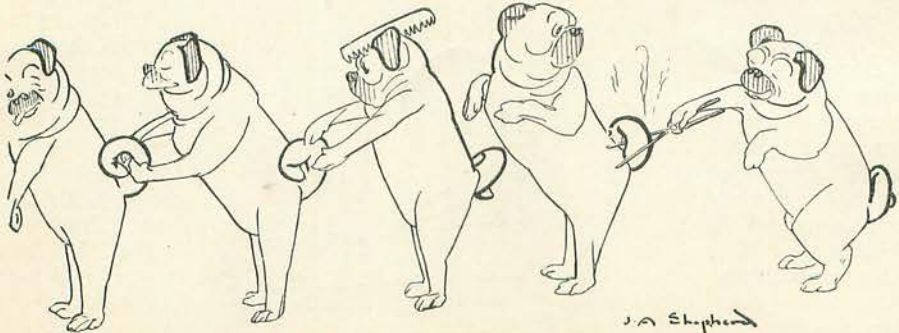


"PRELIMINARY TOILET."

gentleman in my ear, though, indeed, I had only been thinking, and how he managed to know—

"They've just been passing the doctor," he said, in a less startling tone of voice. "Come and look round," he went on. "Our system of evolutionary breeding is just as active with dogs as with other animals, but once we evolve animal nature as high as the dog, the dog seems to show a certain reluctance to get as human as one might wish. The fact is, dogs rather despise mere men and women, and the fuss made over them in such a place as this is enough to account for it. The people who are showing all these dogs are not their masters—they are simply their lackeys, valets,

cooks, hair-dressers, shampooers, and bottle-washers. The St. Bernards will be going into the ring in a moment. See that anxious exhibitor there, with his dog and his brush? Is it a wonder that that dog—quite self-possessed himself—despises his fussy valet? That dog is bored, and the bored naturally always feels superior to the bore. Better breed up the animals' natural aptitude for the use of combs and curling-tongs. Then you will work up from the canine into the lady's-maid, the barber, and other higher forms of animal life. The dogs will understand their position, and they won't object



"ONE GOOD CURL DESERVES ANOTHER."



"THE BOOZER."

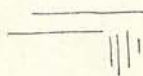
every show, and if they don't soon breed an extra pair of legs in the middle, he'll wear himself in half against the ground. The dachshund is a procession by himself already, and I am anxiously watching for his



to take human shape. Just now the mistake is in making them fancy they're fully evolved already, and all the world are their slaves. In fact, so much do some dogs despise the human form, that they gratify their natural impulse to evolve into something, by reverting to comparatively low zoological forms—such as the sausage. Some do it involuntarily, as you may have heard, and by aid of the usual sausage machinery. But this is not legitimate evolution, and in reality the dogs don't like it, though the pork butcher's customers may. The example of legitimate degeneration into the sausage is afforded by the dachshund. He is getting a longer sausage

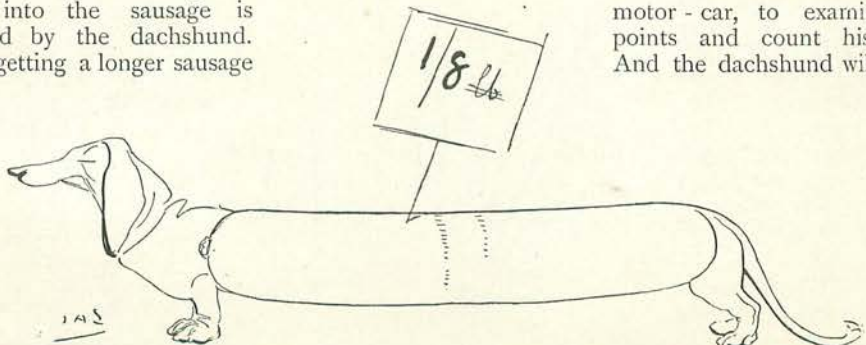


"CHOW-CHOW."



"FOREIGN COMPETITION."

first police prosecution for obstructing the traffic by trying to turn round. It's certain to come sooner or later. If the police *don't* interfere, continual reinforcements of the sausage blood will repeatedly necessitate importations of the centipede strain to keep the sagging parts of the pageant from dragging in the mud; and in the end, the judge will have to run up and down beside the dachshund in a motor-car, to examine his points and count his legs. And the dachshund will have



"DEVOLUTION."

to be rolled up in a coil before he can be put into his kennel, like a cable; and anybody who takes a dachshund out visiting, will be apt to find, on finally hauling him indoors, hand over hand, that considerable lengths of the valuable *cortège* have been left behind, by reason of doors slamming half an hour or so after he had left; with many other surprising advantages too numerous to mention."

We stopped before a discontented-looking bulldog. "Yah, you're talking about evolution, ain't you?" asked the bulldog, sulkily. "I thought so; but I've done my little bit of evolving, I have. Who's going to evolve with all this foreign competition goin' on? Why, the show's like a menagerie. What with yer dachshunds and yer chow-chows and yergeneral Germany-made Chinese cheap labour, what's a old-fashioned British workman like me to do, eh? Why, it's enough to break my jaw" (and he *had* jaws) "to read the blessed catalogue. There's Borzois, and Eskimos, and Schipperkes, and Danes, and Dingoes, and Mexicans, and Rampurs, and Japanese spaniels, and Sloughis, and Tibets, and Dogues de Bordeaux—they can't even spell 'dog' the right way now—and I don't know what else. And they are a pretty lot, too. That Mexican chap's as bald as a bullet all over, barring a patch like a dilapidated stove-brush



"SUCH A DAWG!"

attempt, and looked as contemptuous and dissatisfied as he could with the rest of his features.

"But, there," he went on, "it's just the same all round. Things ain't what they was.

Everything's going to the—to ruination nowadays. There's my young nephew, the bull-terrier. Well, I never did think very much of him, with his long face and his flashy ways; but he *did* have a bit of blood and spirit in him once; he *was* a sportsman, anyway. But now they molly-coddle him and won't crop his ears, so that they dangle about like a dead rabbit's; and he can't fight for fear of getting his ears damaged; and he can't rat, or the rat will lay hold of his ears and hang there. So, what's he good for, I should like to know? He's lost his character, and he's good for nothing—unless it is a

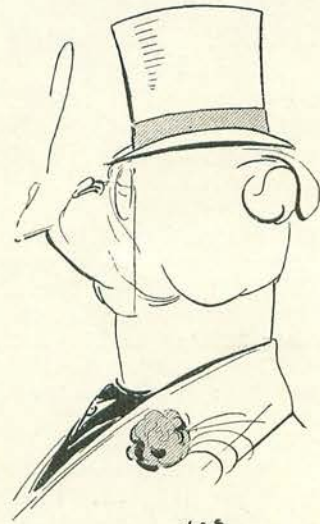


"REFORMED."



"ONCE ON A TIME."

you think she's got in that there blessed bag? Why, a beastly ribbony jacket, and two silver-mounted hair-brushes, and a three-bob tooth-brush, and two pairs o' wool boots—(I won't wear them, though, blowed if I will!)—and a white frilled pillow for me to lie on, and a blessed large bottle o' smelling salts in case I faint! Oh, it's just sickening!" and the bulldog curled himself up, and buried his nose and his sorrows under his paws.



"NOW!"

Sunday-school teacher for little girls. Gr-r-r-r! I'm sick of sich nonsense!"

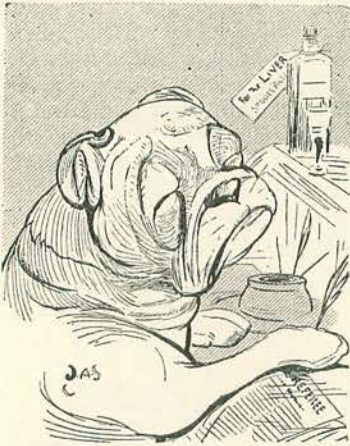
The bulldog looked at me with such fierce reproach, and pulled his lips so far back from his teeth, that I felt uneasy. "Yes," I hastened to agree, "it's shocking; I—I can't think what the police are about—not—not to—to write to the papers and expose it!"

"Oh, that's no good," the bulldog answered. "Look at me—they're trying to spoil me now! I never get a fight. Once I was a sporting character, and saw a bit of life. Now I belong to an old lady—fact! I'm getting quite a fashionable swell!" He jerked his head as he said it, with no appreciation of his rise in life. "Why, there's my old woman on the seat opposite," he said. "And what do

"He's a hard-shell Tory, out and out," the brown gentleman observed. "The bulldog has been the slowest of all our evolutionaries from the beginning. I don't know how long it is since he evolved from the ordinary toad, but you see how little he has got away from the type yet. Of course, the teeth took a long time to build up, and size was something, but these things are not nearly enough to



J.A. Stephens
"FROM THE TOAD."



"BARNEY BARNATO."

excuse his backwardness. But, then, what can you expect when the show prizes always go to the dog that looks most like a toad?"

The brown man strode before me and stopped at another bulldog. "Literary character," he observed. "His name's Barney Barnato, and he often furnishes copy

afflicts the owner. Look here—see these St. Bernards? They won't evolve—not a bit of it. They're too well satisfied with themselves as they are. See that chap who's just taken first prize—I knew him when he was a puppy. Think he'll acknowledge it? Not he. He's a first-prize-winning St. Bernard, and he knows it, and he wouldn't be seen talking



"WALKER!"



"DON'T KNOW YOU."

for the *Referee*. There are some who say he should be benched with the liver-spotted Dalmatians, or the Livermores, or the liver-marked spaniels; but that's their fun—in allusion to the marked liver or the more liver or the spotted liver, or whatever it is, which

to a reddy-brown person in a coffee-pot hat from the Egyptian Court of the Crystal Palace. Come on—he's a snob. The champion Dogue de Bordeaux isn't so uppish, though he is a distinguished bruiser, who has beaten the bear, the bull, the wolf, and probably the elephant too, in a surprisingly small number of rounds, for large steaks. But keep moving—the really distinguished character in this show is a bull-terrier; he hasn't won a prize, but he was once mentioned in the *Spectator*, which is better. This is the story. He was in the habit of going every morning to the newsagent's and bringing home a newspaper for his



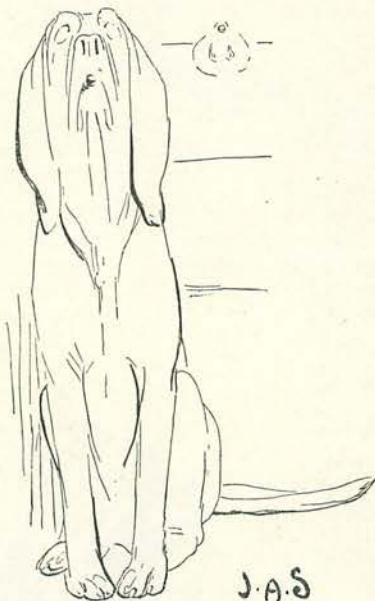
"A BRUISER."



J.A.S

"YOU ARE REQUESTED NOT TO HANDLE THE EXHIBITS."

master. Usually he bought a *Daily News*, but if none were left he would bring the *Chronicle*, understanding his master's political leanings. When he had safely delivered the paper he was rewarded with a penny, with which he proceeded to the baker's to buy a bun. Now, on the New Year's Day after the dog-tax was raised to 7s. 6d., the master was surprised by his dog bringing and presenting to him a number of halfpennies one after another. He kept fetching one at a time till there were sixty, and then he stopped. The amount explained all. Having learned the news of the forthcoming increase in the dog-tax from the *Daily News* as he carried

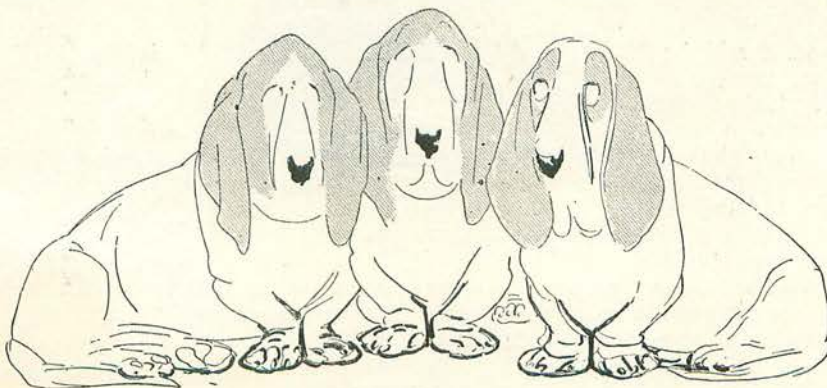


J.A.S

"SEATED ALL DAY BY THE ORGAN."

it home one morning, the faithful creature resolved to bear the additional expense itself. It was ascertained on inquiry at the baker's that on sixty successive mornings 'Trip' had insisted on being served with a stale bun at half-price instead of a new one, and had carefully secreted the change until the license fee next fell due. It's a beautiful lesson in gratitude, isn't it?"

There was an odd choke in the brown man's voice as he said it, which might have



J.A.S

"TRULY THANKFUL."

been a sob, though it was rather like a chuckle. "Ah!" I answered, "it is a beautiful lesson. I wonder what the master's name was?" The bull-terrier, hearing the question, shut one eye and protruded his tongue. "Walker!" he answered, and immediately curled himself in a corner.

"Yes," the brown man proceeded, "the gentleman's name was Walker, a distinguished representative of the Hookey-Walkers of the sea-coast near Birmingham. It's surprising what a number of sagacious dogs that family has bred, and they've all had honourable mention in the *Spectator*, too. I am thinking of breeding a few from them specially, to take duty in the dog-watches of the horse marines. It's just the sort of duty they'd shine in. See those?" my guide said, abruptly, pointing with his finger at a peculiarly repulsive and formidable row of bulldogs. "See them? Well, by Regulation 18, you are forbidden to untie them—remember that!"

I hadn't the smallest notion of infringing Regulation 18—it was the last regulation in the world I should dream of infringing in the case of those dogs, and I said so.

"Very well," said the brown man, "then don't, that's all. Let's make a bolt past the organ; it isn't being played, but the dogs hereabout can see it, and they're almost as weary and ill at ease as though it was in full thunder—they expect it every moment, and they'd be truly thankful if somebody blew it up—not with the usual

lever. Come, now, would you like another dog anecdote? The Irish water-spaniel's wonderfully faithful creature—the only dog



THE IRISH WATER-SPANIEL.

that weeps when his master leaves him at the show-bench. Nature has crowned him with a top-knot in honour of the fact—though I *have* heard of a top-knot never put on by Nature at all, but fixed in its place by a small business syndicate consisting of the owner and a glue-pot. It wasn't a permanent job, but it lasted long enough to land a prize safely and get home again without arousing impertinent curiosity. But that isn't the story I was going to tell you. The fact is, I've forgotten what the story was, but I remember there was one, because it came out in the

Spectator, in the hot weather, and caused such terrible accidents among flies, that the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to

Animals sent a deputation to the editor. You see, the story attracted a good deal of attention, and everybody read it. Consequently, the paper got left about a great deal doubled with the dog story outside; and it was observed that every time a bluebottle or other fly attempted to crawl over that page, it fell down and seriously injured itself; because the story was so very steep."



"EXHAUSTED."

With that Mr. Hookey-Walker's bull-terrier, who had been listening, broke into a paroxysm of jealous yelps and barks, that lasted till the faithful creature sank into its corner exhausted, though still coughing faintly.

(To be continued.)