

Animal Actualities.

NOTE.—These articles consist of 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. While the stories themselves are matters of fact, it must be understood that the artist treats the subject with freedom and fancy, more with a view to an amusing commentary than to a mere representation of the occurrence.

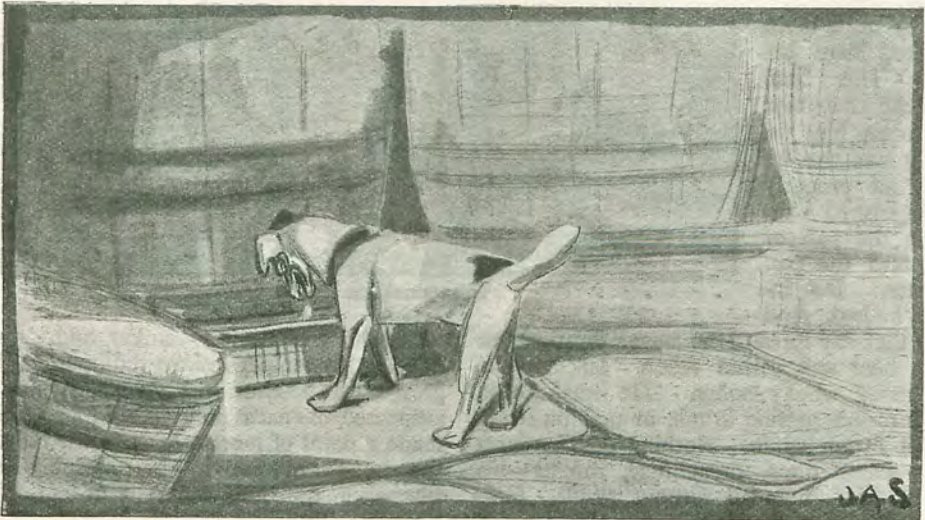


XIV.

GRIP was a very "sad dog"—is so now, in fact, unless, ere these lines appear in print, he has expired in the throes of delirium tremens, or encountered the death of the outcast drunkard on a bleak doorstep. He had good prospects, too, had Grip at one time, and might have turned out an ornament and an honour to the canine race, had it not been for his succumbing to the terrible temptation of drink. He was a fox-terrier of good birth—a dog of pedigree, in fact—and Ipswich was his birthplace. In the summer of 1894 he came to Bristol a puppy, innocent,

blinking, and wondering. In the winter of the same year he left the town a confirmed drunkard, the disgrace and the despair of his master and his friends.

His master was a pupil in the Ashton Gate Brewery, and as soon as Grip was a sufficiently grown dog he trotted at his master's heels on the way to business. From his first entry into the brewery his fall was instant and deplorable. Small vessels were placed under the great beer-vats, to collect leakage and overflow, and once, in a direful, fatal, thirsty moment, Grip took a drink out of one of those vessels. At once his fatal



GRIP'S TEMPTATION.



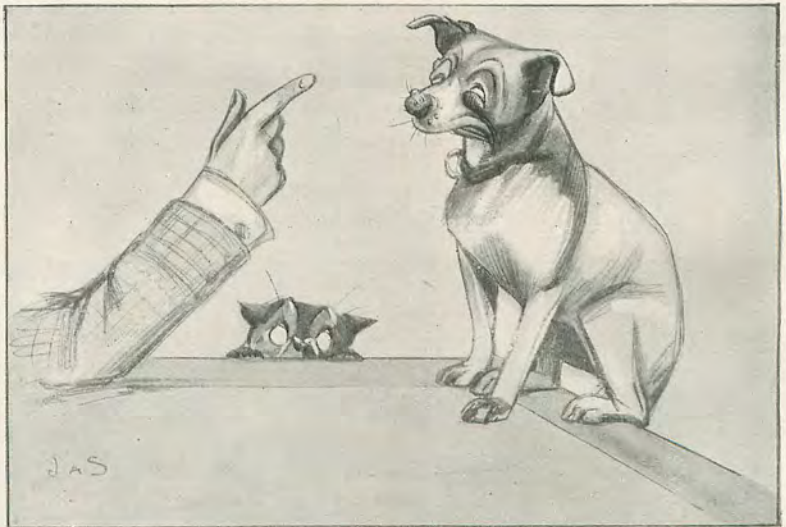
GOING HOME.

passion seized him, and that day Grip went home drunk.

It was very shocking, but his master felt that the slip might be excused. Plainly, he said, it was a mere vagary of puppyhood. The poor little chap had been thirsty, and had innocently drunk as much as possible of the only liquid available. In future it should be arranged that water be kept in the brewery for Grip's refreshment.

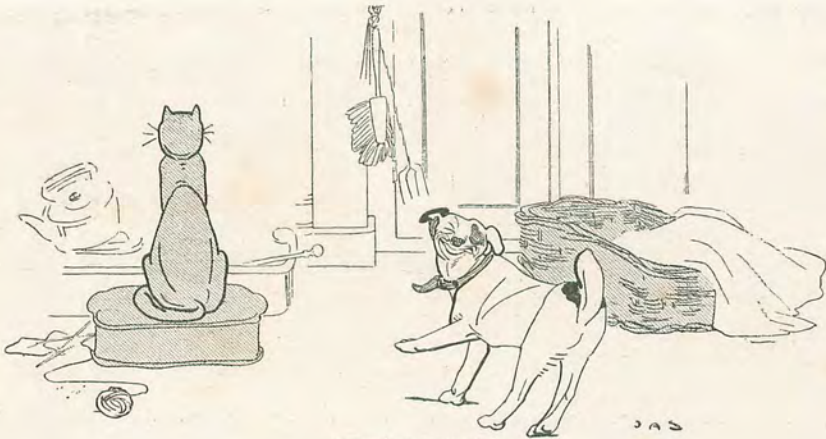
The water was provided accordingly, but to everybody's astonishment Grip came home drunk again the next day. His friends were more shocked than before. This time they did their best to excuse him on the ground that he had not properly distinguished between the pan of beer and the pan of water. But, indeed, he had. And from that day forward he never drank water when beer was within reach. In fact, he was never wholly sober. He was always either drunk, getting drunk, or making ready to get drunk again. Nothing could reform him—exhortations, preachings, threats—his master tried them all without result. Grip listened with a drunken leer and staggered

off to attempt another debauch, or to sleep off the effects of the last. Once, indeed, he did display some desire to forsake beer; that is to say, he found an occasion to exhibit his preference for whisky and water—most of it whisky. But here it was easy to cut off the supply, and Grip returned to the vat drippings.



EXHORTATIONS, PREACHINGS, THREATS.

Now as Grip grew a drunker and drunker dog, so his temper toward the household cat grew worse. Even in his sober days he had suspected the cat's honesty, and had always made a point of most ostentatiously counting the bones hidden in his sleeping-basket whenever the cat came in or out of the kitchen. But now he also regarded her as



WHERE'SH BASHKET?

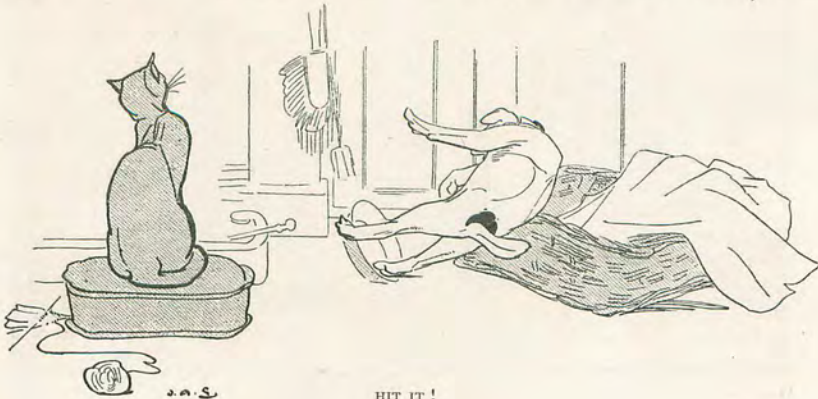
responsible in some degree for the difficulty he experienced in finding his basket, after a bout of beer-lees. Every day at noon Grip was brought home with more or less difficulty by his sorrowful and disgraced master, and arriving at his destination, he fell upon his dinner in a heap. Regaining his unsteady legs, he gobbled his food as quickly as possible, and was immediately seized by a desire for bed. The sleeping-basket was in the kitchen, and, having mistily found the kitchen stairs and tumbled down them, he tacked riotously this way and that about the kitchen, to the intense scandal of the totally abstaining cat,

until he brought up in the neighbourhood of his bed, and was confronted with the problem of getting into it. So innumerable were the bed-baskets that pranced before his beery eyes that he made many vain shots



SCANDAL OF THE CAT.

without encountering the real thing, and at this moment a maniac ambition to stand on his head would seize him. Perhaps he had a view of proving to the cook and the cat that he was not altogether so drunk as he



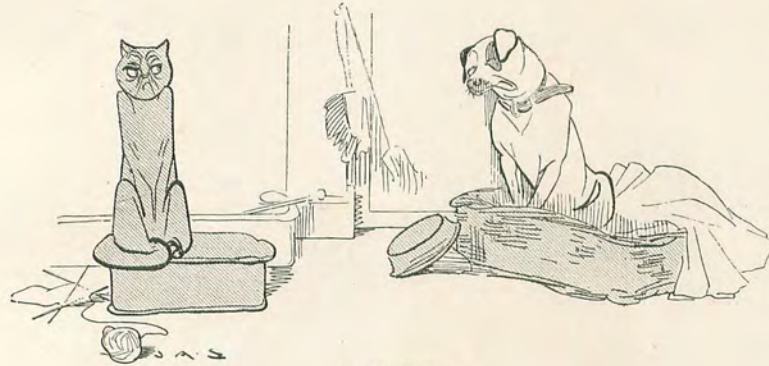
HIT IT!



REPOSE AT LAST.

looked ; but at any rate his failure was complete, sprawling, and ignominious. Having failed and having sprawled several times in succession, he became convinced that both

sober and wholly unrepentant, and set about preparations for another carouse. Forcible exclusion from the vat-house was tried, and this Grip would artfully



A BAD HEAD.

the cook and the cat were drunk—disgracefully drunk—and responsible between them for his inability to land within the basket. This spoilt his temper, as we have said.

Once entry was gained, however, the result was the same. Grip caught no rats, but he went home drunk. Till at last the attempt to reform Grip in Bristol was given up, and he was sorrowfully directed back to Ipswich, a ruined and a drunken dog.

In the end he would awake, partially



RETURNED !

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XV.

Misunderstood



THIS is an older story than most of our others. It dates back, indeed, to the year 1864, when the pet of a British regiment, stationed in Jamaica, was a baboon. He was a meditative and ex-

windows his dwelling was placed. He was tethered by a long, light chain, but even with this restraint he managed to get into a good deal of mischief. As, for instance, on one day, when he conceived himself insulted by a certain young officer, and instantly fell



HALF-STRANGLER.

tremely thoughtful baboon, and his habits and manners provided continual amusement for the officers, before whose mess-room

to pelting the mess-room windows with such terrific effect that his habitation was removed to a less commanding spot. Here his amuse-



DANDLED AND FONDLED—



THIS WAY—

ments still went on, however. Any living creature that ventured within his chain-radius was apt to have a busy minute or two, and the unhappy fowls, who often strayed within reach, were grabbed instantly, and sometimes

but he neither plucked it nor wrung its neck, but, instead, dandled and fondled it with such demonstrative affection that quite possibly the unfortunate cock would have preferred plucking. He squeezed it, he stroked



THAT WAY—

strangled, though he more often amused himself by plucking or half-plucking his unhappy prisoner before releasing it.

One fowl, however, he took a sudden and violent fancy for. He grabbed it, it is true,

it, rubbed it, nursed it, held it aloft and danced it, released it for a moment, and playfully hauled it back by the leg when it made for liberty. The bird did not in any way reciprocate his affection; in fact,

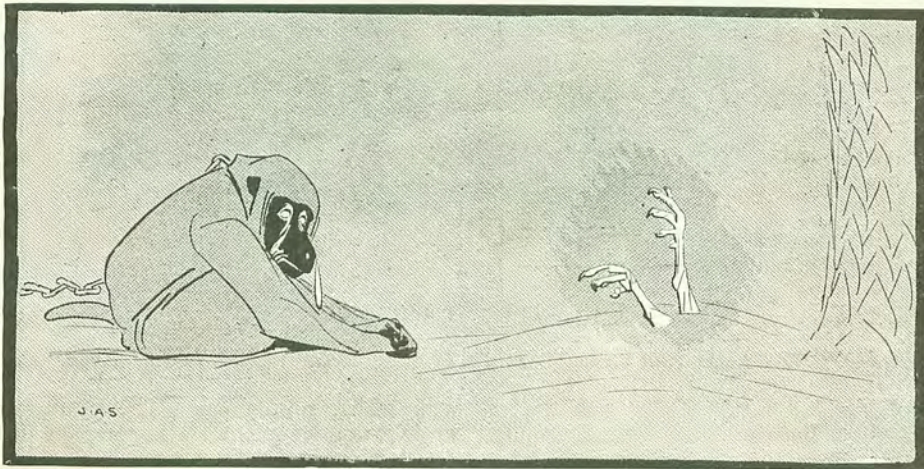


AND THE OTHER.



KILLED BY KINDNESS.

altogether misunderstood it. But the when he had secured a creature he could really
 baboon persevered, and held firmly on to love, it should die ere he could induce it



MOURNED.

his pet. He felt confident of winning it over by persistent kindness, and since his earlier demonstrations had proved unsuccessful, he renewed them with more vigour. He stroked it the other way, rubbed it more persistently, danced it more quickly, and squeezed it a good deal harder. But even these attentions failed to rouse its affection, and at last, in the midst of an extra-friendly hug, the perverse cock died, misunderstanding the devoted baboon to the last.

He was overwhelmed with grief. To think that at last,



A CANNIBAL SAVAGE.

fittingly to reciprocate his affection! It was very sad. He set about the last sad rites with every manifestation of sorrow. In solemn grief he buried his departed playmate at the foot of a tall tree, where the grass might grow and the birds sing over its grave. Then he sat him down before the grave and mourned; neglected all his usual amusements, and mourned sorely day by day for a fortnight. But at the end of that time he could bear his grief no longer; so he dug up his departed pet and ATE IT!

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XVI.



YEARS ago Mrs. Lipscomb had a dog—a bitch, to be exact—of Pomeranian breed, or something very near it, and of an original and eccentric sagacity. Its foremost personal characteristics, however, were an intense hatred of all cats—with an exception—and a constant industry in catching

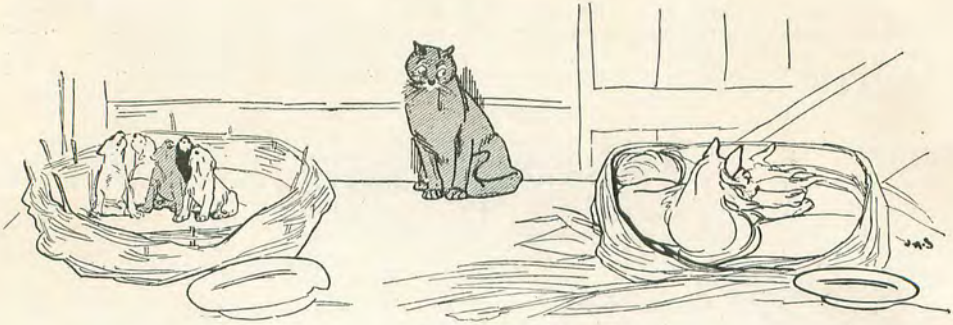
a regard testified to by more than one quaint proof. But these facts—Fan's hatred of cats as a species and her one exception—make the more curious her behaviour when first she became a mother, and revelled in a large basketful of pups and maternal pride. This was at Nutfield Marsh, near Redhill, where Mrs. Lipscomb was then living.



and exterminating the species. The exception was in favour of Mrs. Lipscomb's own cat, the housemate of Fan (the dog's name was Fan), and, although it was no doubt originally dictated by common prudence and fear of punishment, in time there grew up evidence of a real regard for the cat on Fan's part—

For a fortnight Fan's pride and delight received no check, and she frankly admitted herself the most important and triumphant creature in the world. Then a cloud came. First it took the shape of a comfortably padded basket, not far from that devoted to Fan and her family; then it developed into

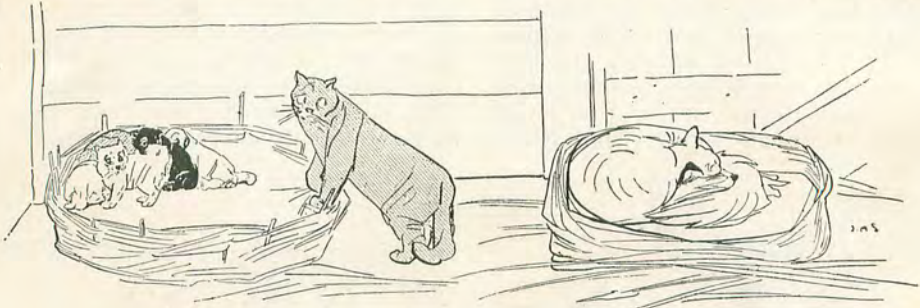




USURPED POSSESSION.

another family—the cat's! Yes, without a doubt, there was the cat with a litter of kittens, as fortunate as Fan herself, as proud and triumphant! Fan's feelings were hurt. This would never do. Should another creature—a mere cat, too—be allowed also to have a family? Never! Fan arose in virtuous indignation, and annexed the kittens

for their part, were well content, and sucked away hungrily, while the pups lamented unheeded. Till at last the poor cat gave up hope and turned her attention to Fan's basket. Here was a litter, of a sort, and a hungry one. She would make the best of a bad job. So she followed the example that Fan had set, climbed in among the puppies,

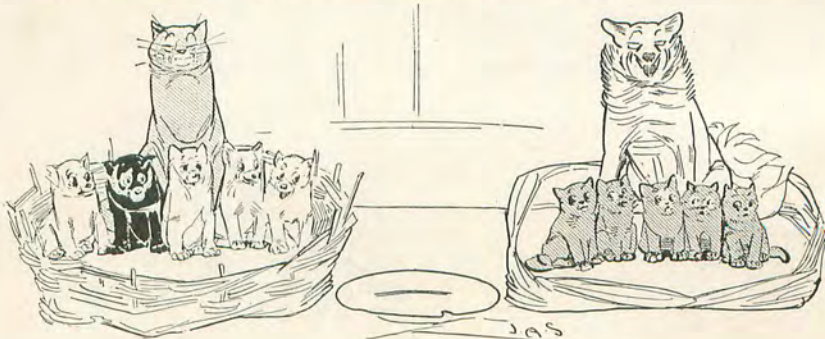


UNAVOIDABLE SOLUTION.

herself. She stalked across to that other basket, bundled her presumptuous rival out, and curled herself up to feed the kittens.

The cat stood for a while, wistful but timid, hoping for an opportunity to return to her charge. But, no. Fan had got the new litter, and she meant to keep it. The kittens,

and soon *their* clamour was quieted, and their noses buried in the cat's warm fur. And so it went till both pups and kittens could begin life for themselves. Fan turned out into the world a well-nurtured family of kittens, and the cat could point with proper pride to an excellently brought-up row of Pomeranian puppies.



MUTUAL SATISFACTION.