

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.

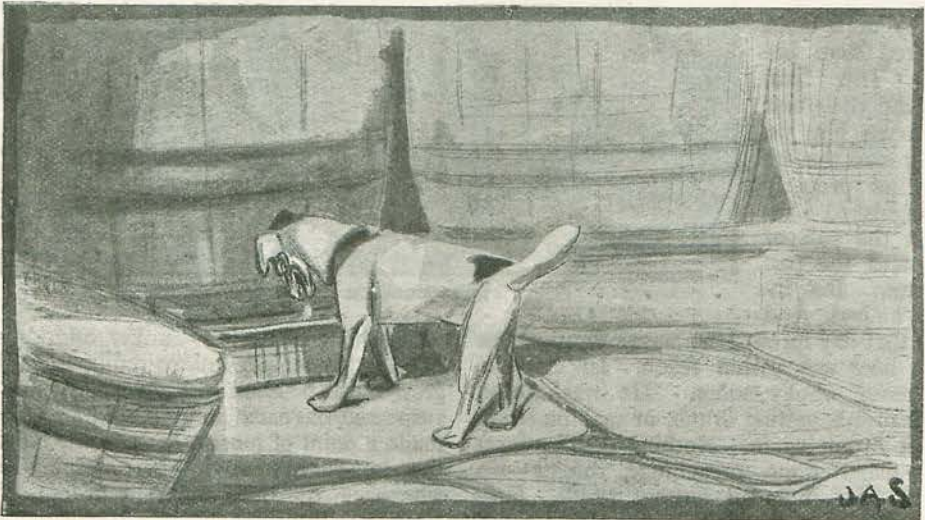


XIV.

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.



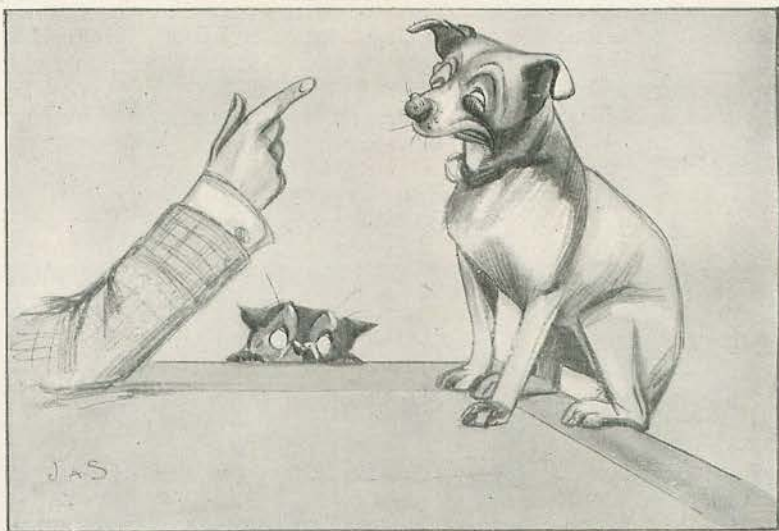
GOING HOME.

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.

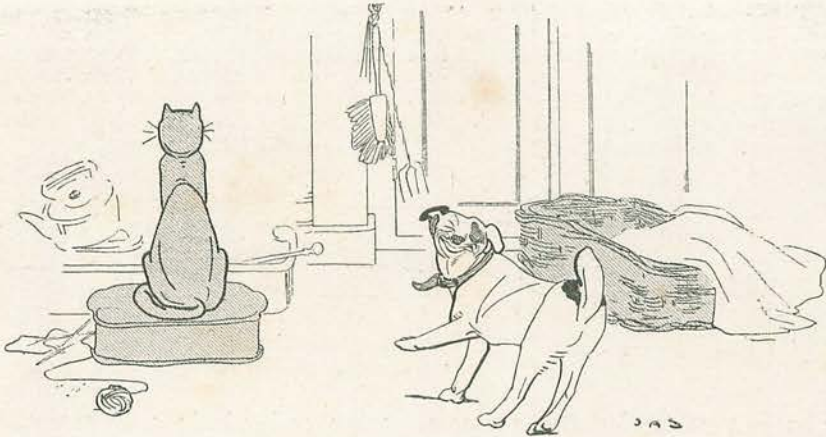
The water was provided accordingly, but to everybody's astonishment Grip came home drunk again the next day. His friends were more shocked than before. This time they did their best to excuse him on the ground that he had not properly distinguished between the pan of beer and the pan of water. But, indeed, 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.

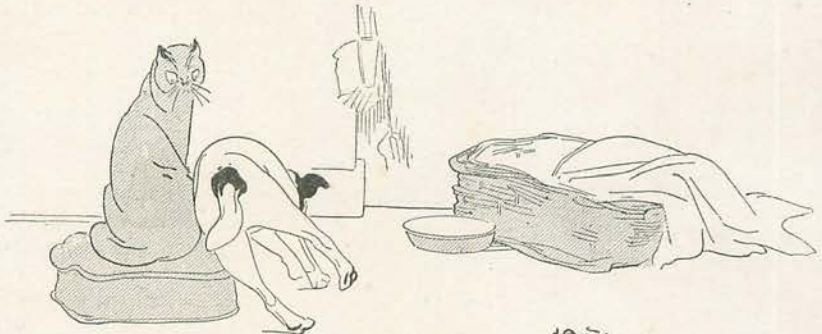
Now as Grip grew a drunker and drunker dog, so his temper toward the household cat grew worse. Even in his sober days he had suspected the cat's honesty, and had always made a point of most ostentatiously counting the bones hidden in his sleeping-basket whenever the cat came in or out of the kitchen.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



WHERE'SH BASHKET?

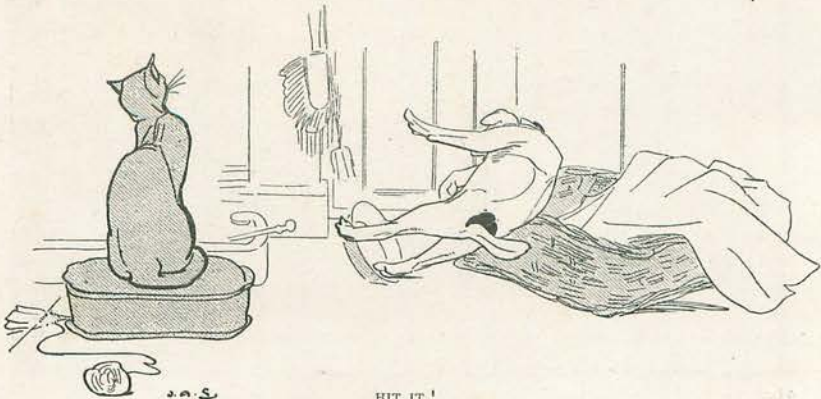
responsible in some degree for the difficulty he experienced in finding his basket, after a bout of beer-lees. Every day at noon Grip was brought home with more or less difficulty by his sorrowful and disgraced master, and arriving at his destination, he fell upon his dinner in a heap. Regaining his 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!

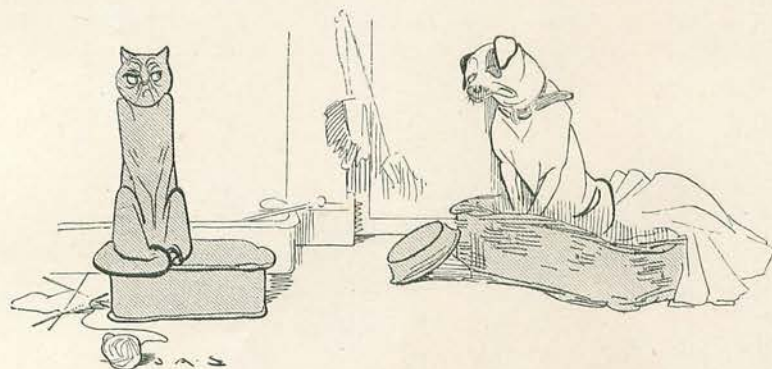


REPOSE AT LAST.

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

seek to circumvent by conveying to his master, or anybody else who could understand him, the information that numerous rats lurked among the barrels, which it was imperatively necessary for him to catch instantly. Once entry was gained, however, the result was the same. Grip caught no rats,

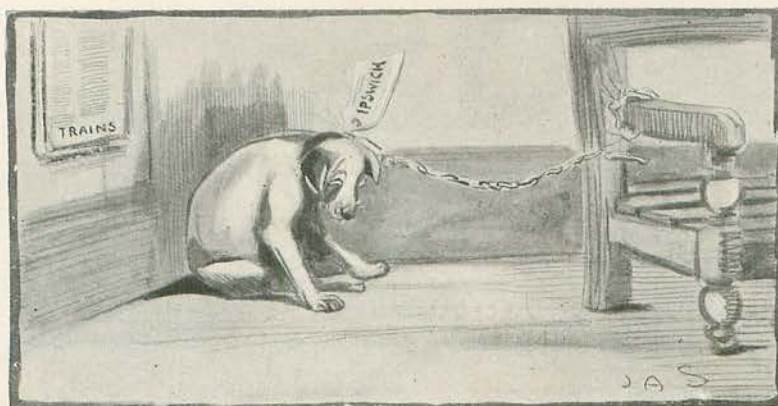


A BAD HEAD.

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.

In the end he would awake, partially

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.



RETURNED !