

## 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.

XVI.



**Y**EARS 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

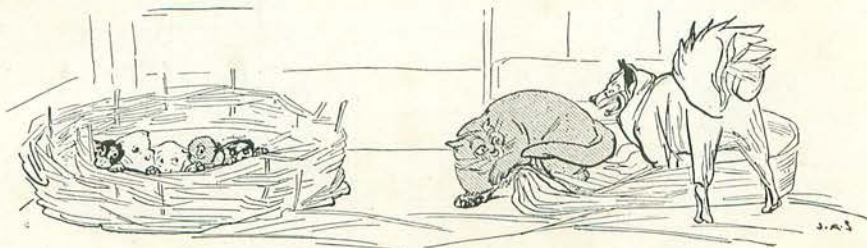
a regard testified to by more than one quaint proof. But these facts—Fan's hatred of cats as a species and her one exception—make the more curious her behaviour when first she became a mother, and revelled in a large basketful of pups and maternal pride. This was at Nutfield Marsh, near Redhill, where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



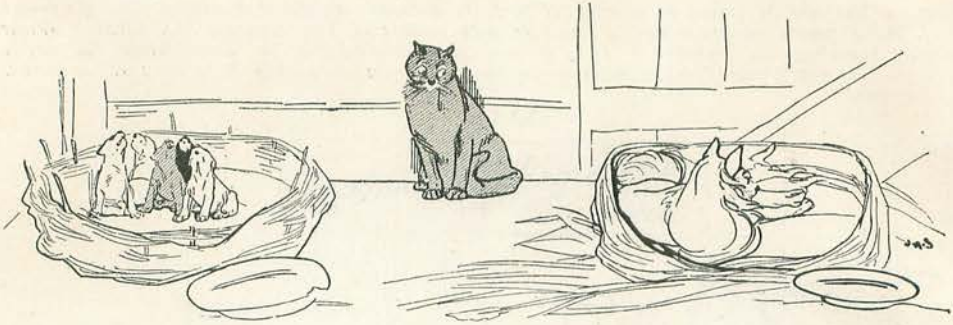
MATERNAL JEALOUSY.

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



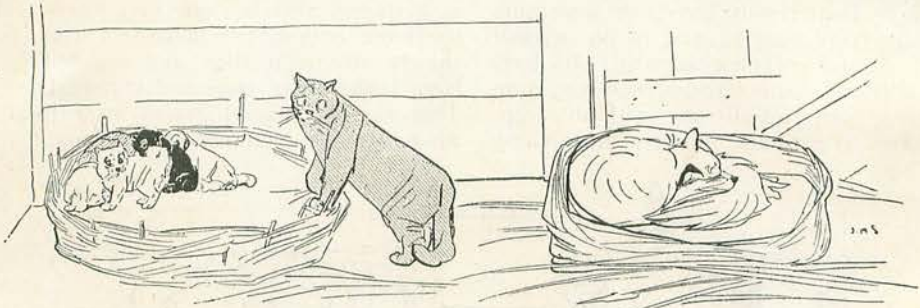
FORCIBLE EVICTION.



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,

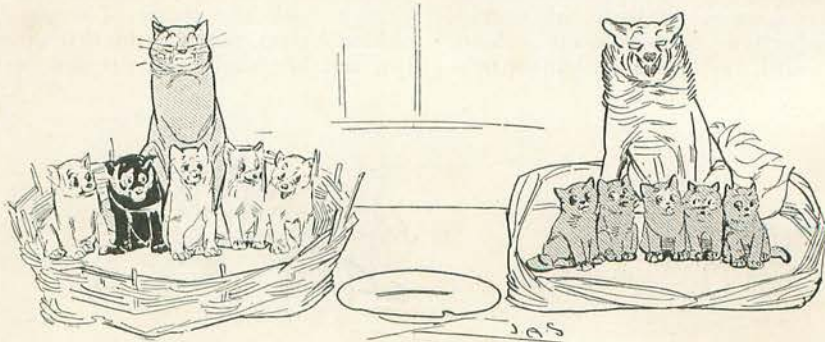


UNAVOIDABLE SOLUTION.

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.