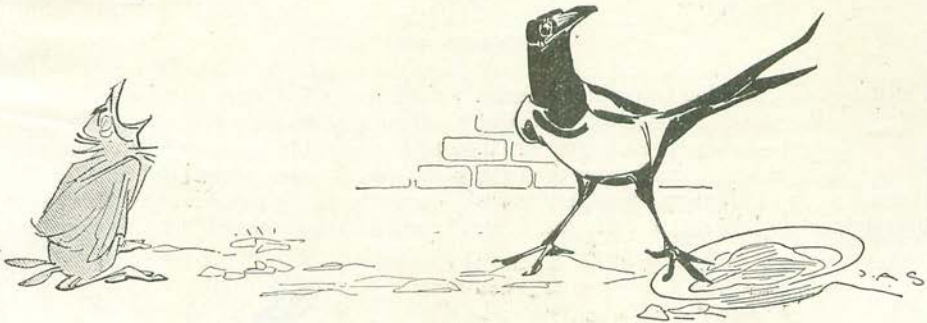


Animal Actualities.



THIS is a tale of the terrible consequences of lavish charity administered on economic principles. Let us hope that its recital may have some effect in improving the quality of the articles bought and sold "for charitable purposes." If it

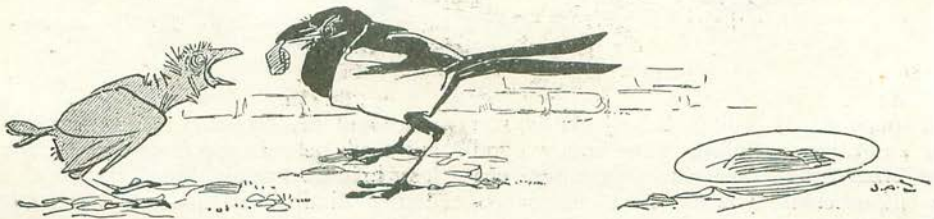
At Ripley Vicarage, in Surrey, a tame magpie was kept, as also were other pets. The magpie was amusing enough—or at least he seemed so to everybody who did not suffer by his exploits; but he was a sad plague. In common with most other living creatures about the place, a young hedgehog



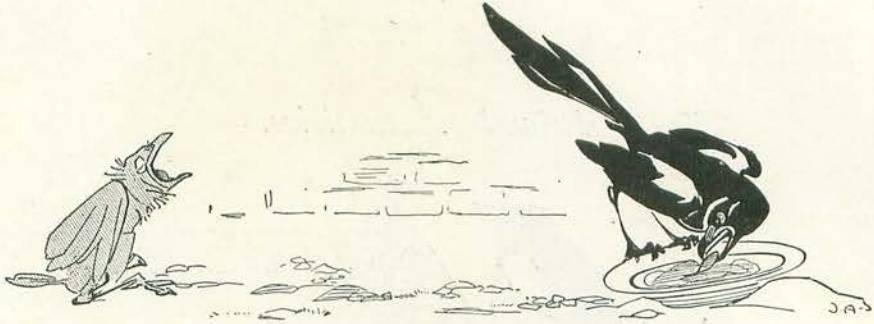
APPEAL.

have but a small effect in thickening the blankets—and the soup—the story will not have been told in vain.

suffered. This half-grown pet, though he picked up much of his living himself, enjoyed a grant in aid in the shape of a daily saucer



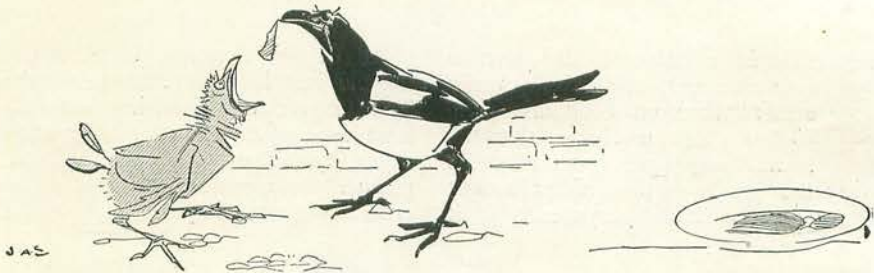
COMPASSION.



HERE'S—

of milk—a saucer of milk that irritated the jealous soul of Mag, who, although he could not drink it himself, took every possible means to keep the hedgehog from it, first by terrifying yells and dances, and then, when these failed, by snatching the hedgehog up

was altogether past appeasement. It would absorb ravenously twice its own bulk of food, and straightway yell for more. It insisted on being fed incessantly, and if the feeding ceased for a moment, it sat on its tail and screamed lamentably. Mag took pity on



A BIT MORE!

by the spines and flapping away with it across the garden. But once a pet arrived that Mag did not torment—he even took pity on it. It was a young jackdaw, fresh from the nest, and helpless, and hungry, and noisy, as young jackdaws always are. If you have

the never filled daw, and, after a little consideration, began to feed it from his own plate—possibly in the wild hope of moderating the noise. But the first gulp only encouraged the jackdaw, and those that succeeded strengthened and invigorated his



WHAT, MORE?

had much to do with a baby jackdaw, you will know how helpless, how hungry, and how maddeningly noisy such a creature can be, but otherwise you can have no conception. The hunger of this young jackdaw

voice and his digestion. Mag bustled back and forth between his plate and the motherless infant, growing more flustered as his dinner diminished, and at last becoming altogether frantic in his efforts to satisfy

the jackdaw's unholy cravings, and to stop that row. But his energy and his generosity availed nothing. No sooner had

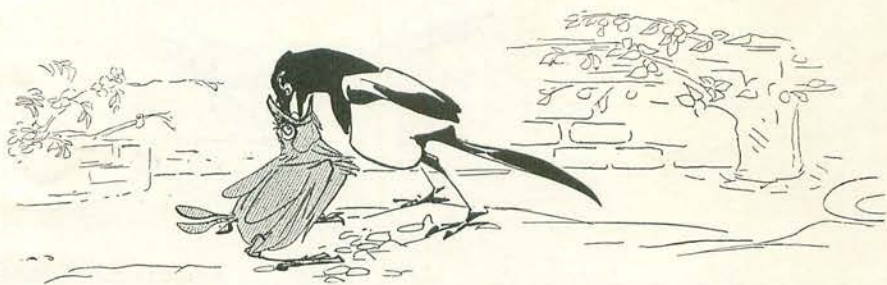
little good. The squawking went on just as ever, and the noisy jackdaw was quite as hungry now as in the beginning. There



WELL, HERE GOES!

he dropped a mouthful into that insatiable beak and turned to eat something himself, than a piercing squawk from the ravening infant startled him and brought him round

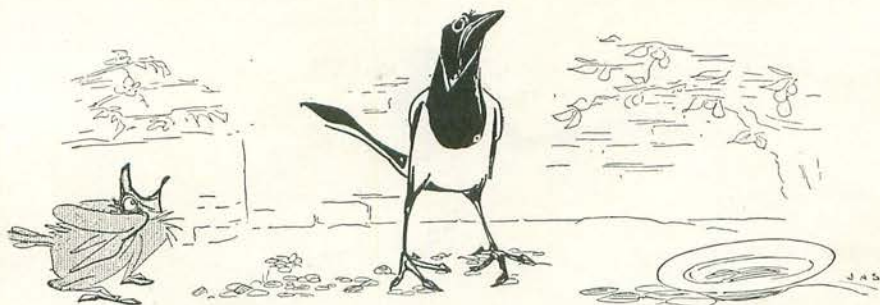
seemed to be no filling him up, and in the attempt a large quantity of very excellent food had been used which Mag could have done very well with himself. At the same



TRY SOMETHING ELSE.

again with another charitable donation. But this sort of thing could not go on for ever. Mag wanted *something* for himself, and when he had been all but totally deprived of two

time, it would scarcely do to leave off now. It would be uncharitable, to begin with, and Mag had resolved to be charitable in this one instance, and would not change his



HOW'S THAT?

or three meals he began to reflect. This sort of benevolence was all very well, but it was too expensive. More, it seemed to do very

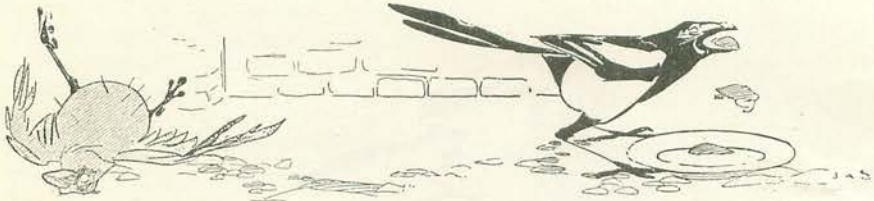
mind; moreover, the yelling was intolerable, and the creature *did* stop yelling while it swallowed, even if it began again the



HERE—MORE!

moment after. The way out of the difficulty was obviously to discover some cheaper form of almsgiving—to feed the jackdaw still, but with something Mag didn't want himself. Pebbles from the garden path would come cheap enough, and probably it didn't matter much what the orphan was filled up with, so long as he *was* filled up. So Mag instantly

snatching at the pebbles among the gravel and bestowing them on his *protégé* with a lavish beak. The orphan grew heavier and fuller and rounder as the pebbles increased, just as Mark Twain's jumping frog did with the small shot, but he was still hungry, and at last he sank to the ground and his toes turned skyward. He was satisfied at last. Then



NOW I'LL SEE ABOUT MYSELF!

set to work with little stones, dropping them down that ever-open throat as fast as he could gather them. Down they went, one after another, and plainly the orphan didn't know the difference, for he swallowed them just as eagerly as he had swallowed the meat. It was cheering to find the experiment so successful, and Mag pegged away zealously,

Mag, full of the pride and consciousness of virtue, hopped gaily away to a pleasant meal from his own plate, in peace and quietness. It is sad to record that, notwithstanding all this generosity and solicitude, the jackdaw died. Mag was very sorry, of course, but he felt that he had done his best, and the reflection consoled him.

