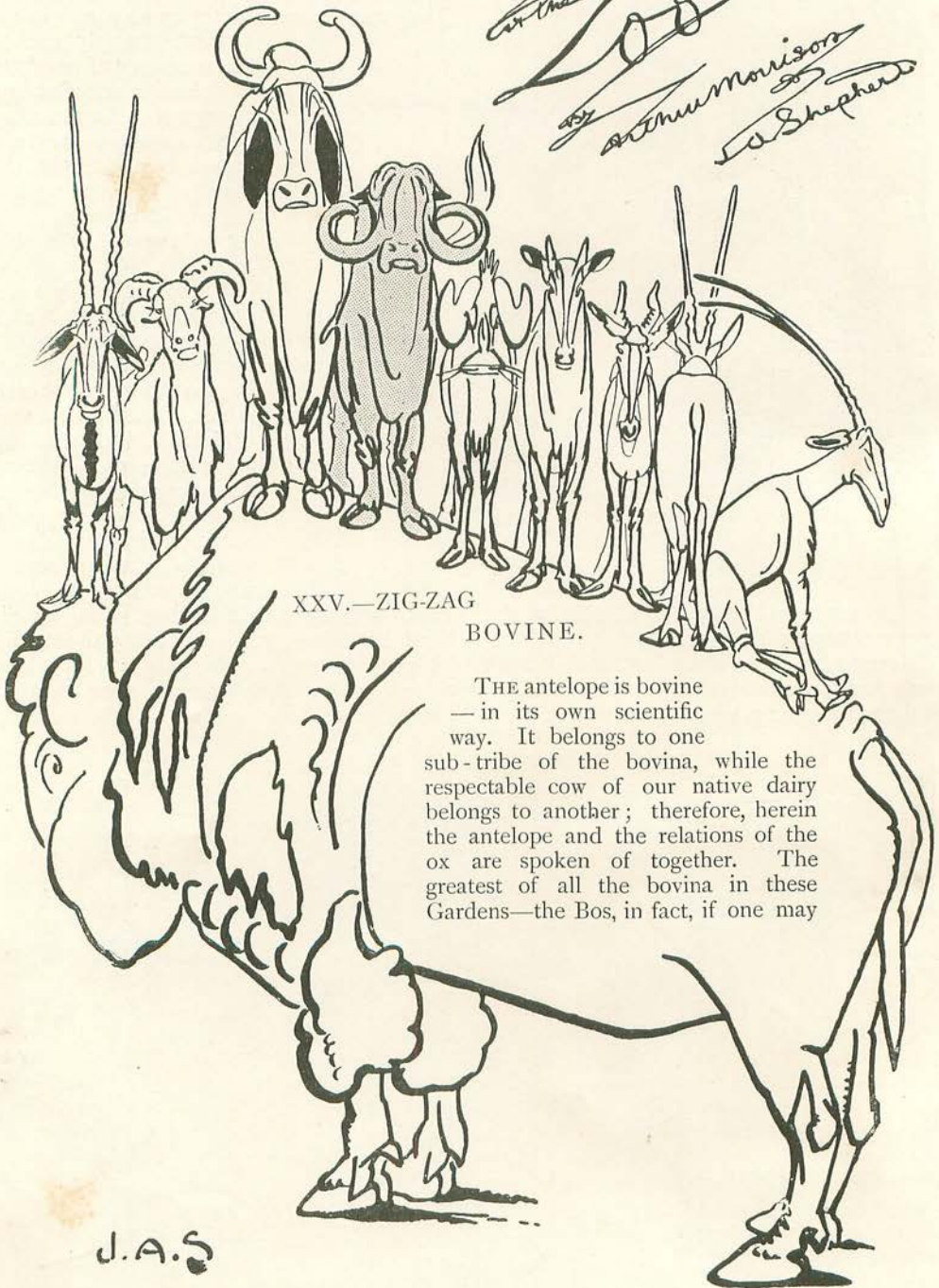


ZIG ZAG

at the Zoo

at the Museum
La Shepard

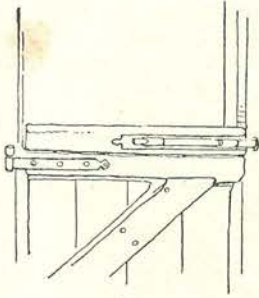


XXV.—ZIG-ZAG

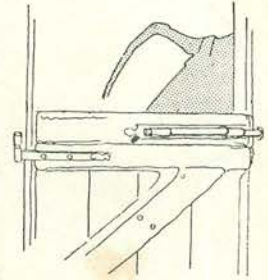
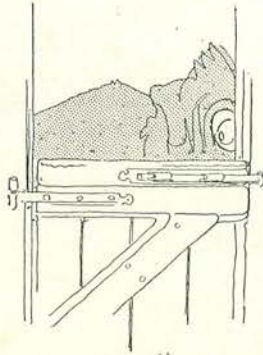
BOVINE.

THE antelope is bovine
 — in its own scientific
 way. It belongs to one
 sub-tribe of the bovina, while the
 respectable cow of our native dairy
 belongs to another; therefore, herein
 the antelope and the relations of the
 ox are spoken of together. The
 greatest of all the bovina in these
 Gardens—the Bos, in fact, if one may

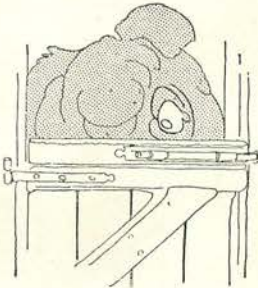
J.A.S.



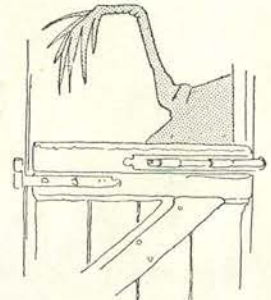
1.



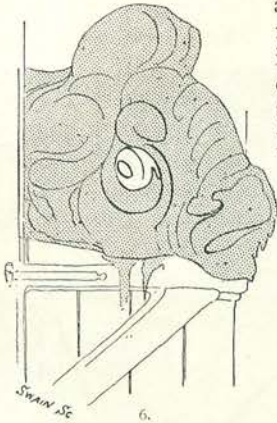
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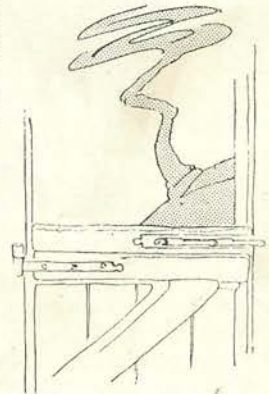
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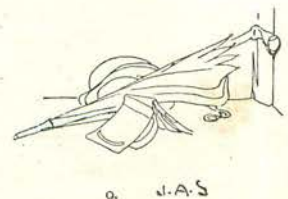
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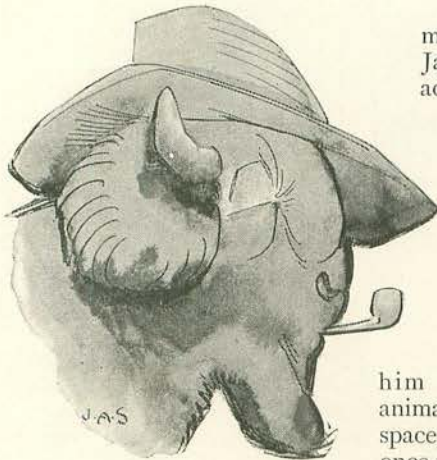


8.

make a Yankee-Latin pun—is Jack, the American bison. There is a deal of beef behind Jack's skin, and dear beef, for there will never again be seen such another bison as Jack, and he is worth a deal of money. The bison which once paved the prairies with many miles of beef is now all but extinct—soon will be.

Jack is not as friendly as he might be. I cannot claim to have slapped Jack on the back, as I have slapped many creatures that may seem wilder than any mere cattle. As a matter of sober truth, Jack is about the most dangerous brute in the place. In the course of the preparation of this paper he has been found a disconcerting animal to sketch—if the attempt be made from the door of his residence, while he takes his walks abroad in his front garden. For he has strong opinions in the matter of trespass, and turns them over in his mind as he stalks past, afterwards communicating them to

the trespasser by sundry glares of the eye, brandishings of the tail, sudden approaches of the spacious countenance, and threatening snorings; so that often the trespasser is fain to fall in with Jack's opinions suddenly, and get out without wasting time on ceremony or picking things up.



A SHAM BOHEMIAN.

for the other animal. Jack puts down his head, and in a very little while his companion will probably be found dead from overcrowding. The most fatal sort of overcrowding I know of is Jack's.



A SERIOUS PERSON.

but his constant attitude of readiness to deal with a question of overcrowding gives him an air of clerkly and impartial attention, ignominiously suggestive of the Civil Service. His shaggy head, though, inclines him more to the aspect of the sham Bohemian. Still, however his appearance may strike the individual fancy, there is no doubt possible of the fact that he is for ever absorbed in profound meditation. Mere questions of air-space and overcrowding, I am convinced, affect him with only a passing interest. In general he is pathetically brooding, with bowed head, over his nearly approaching extinction. Not that

Jack is not amiable, even to relations. It is all a matter of space. Among his other strong opinions Jack has one, especially strong, on the question of adequate breathing and exercise area for a healthy bull. Anything smaller than the space here at his disposal he regards as unhealthy for more than one animal, and is apt to maintain his opinion by indisputable demonstration. Place

him with another animal in a restricted space, and you will at once perceive that the arrangement is extremely unhealthy —

presence of Nell, his spouse, and a calf; but if either of these ventured into his private sanctum behind, she would be overcrowded to a pulp in five minutes.

Jack's outline—if you forget the tail—is grand,



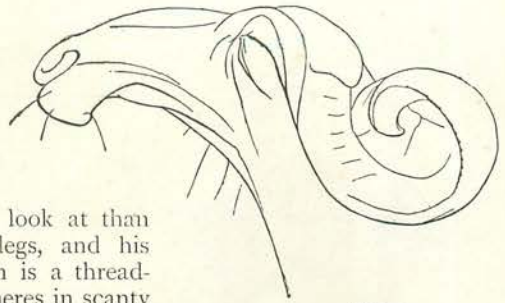
CLERKLY ATTENTION.



DOOMED.

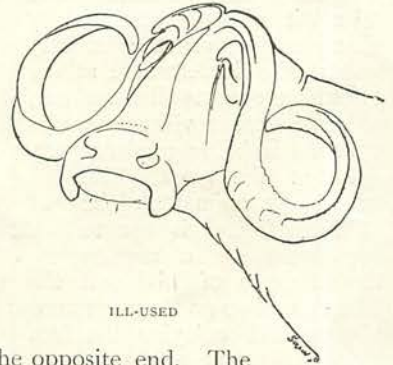
extinction is an unpleasant fate—for is it not a rare and envied dignity? But he laments that he will drag into nothingness with him the last fragments of the old joke about the Indian resolved on skinning the bison to make his wigwam, and the bison making the Indian's wig warm without waiting to be skinned.

Jack's fore-end is by far more imposing to look at than the rest of him. He has neat, well-bred legs, and his steely muscles fill his skin well; but that skin is a thread-bare piece of upholstery, and the nap only adheres in scanty patches. I would respectfully suggest to the authorities that a new skin for Jack (of good quality and permanent nap) be included in the next estimate for repairs. If, at the same time, the question of a new tail were considered, something would have been paid of the large debt of gratitude owing to the ox tribe for the many things—shoe-leather, horn coat-buttons, some part of what we buy for milk, ox-tail soup, beef-tea, and bull's-eyes—that it gives to suffering humanity. Jack really does want a new tail. He grew out of the present small fitting long ago, and now it presents a ludicrous want of balance

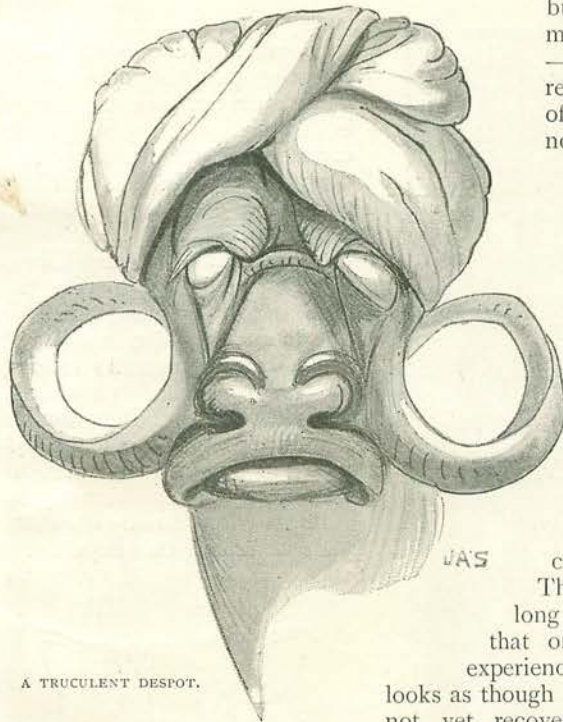


THE—

with the opposite end. The commonest pump is better off. The Indian buffalo, close by, is such a long-suffering and melancholy-looking cow that one immediately infers bad matrimonial experiences. She looks as though she had not yet recovered from the last



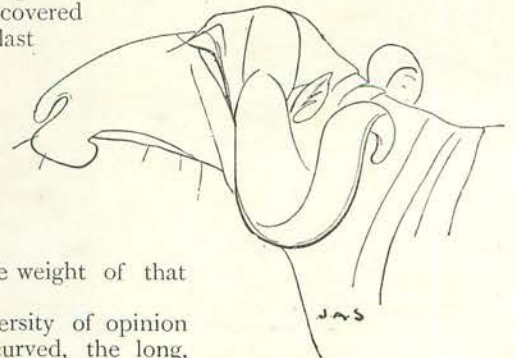
ILL-USED



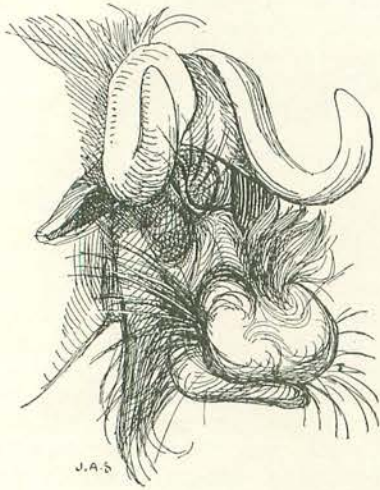
A TRUCULENT DESPOT.

connubial thrashing. Fortunately her husband is somewhere far away in Asia—and a truculent despot he probably is. For tearfully and mournfully as his ill-used spouse regards you, it would be inadvisable to tempt her too far in the matter of overcrowding. It is a sad and a pathetic face, but I shouldn't like it to hit me full-butt in the stomach with all the weight of that wealth of Bengalee cow-beef behind it.

Over in the antelope-house there is a diversity of opinion in the matter of horns. The straight, the curved, the long, the short, the regular, the barley-sugar, and the fork-lightning



WIFE.



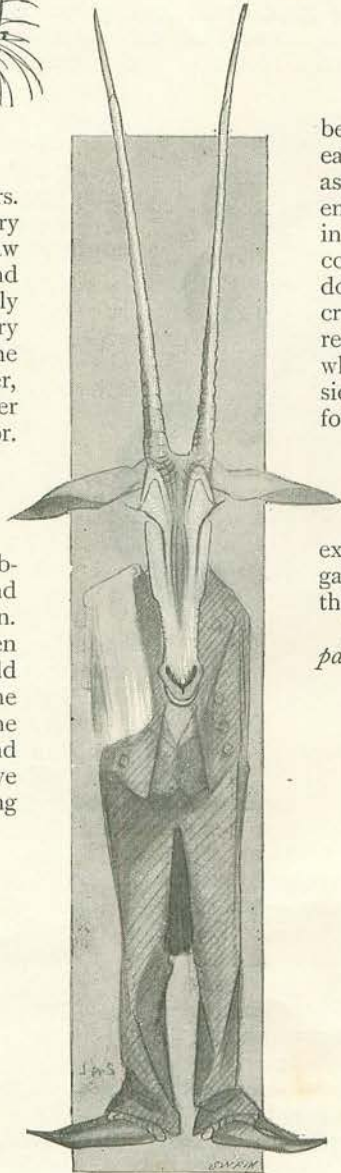
ANIMATED
JOKES—
THE GNU
HUMOUR.



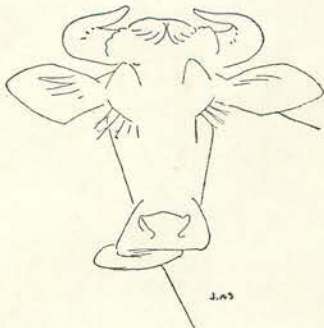
pattern—all have their wearers. And every antelope is very serious—no antelope ever saw a joke. They meditate and take life with the melancholy characteristic of the solitary waiter who is left here at the refreshment-rooms all the winter, to make strange visitors wonder what he is being punished for. All but the gnus. The gnu is an animated joke in himself, and is apt to be struck by a sudden remembrance of his own absurdity, and to go tearing round his paddock enjoying the fun. The gnu seems to have been built by way of using up odd scraps of material after the completion of the bull, the horse, and the donkey; and his fore-end and hind-end have an eternal air of never having

been properly introduced to each other, and of each loudly asserting that the other is an entire stranger, like two hatters in adjoining shops with "no connection with the shop next door." Still, the gnu is not a creature of even temper, in this respect resembling the nylghai, whose repartee to any ill-considered joke is apt to take the form of an awkward drive in the ribs. The nylghai is a well-groomed looking fellow, who perpetually chews the cud at double express speed, as though engaged in a perpetual match for the ruminating championship.

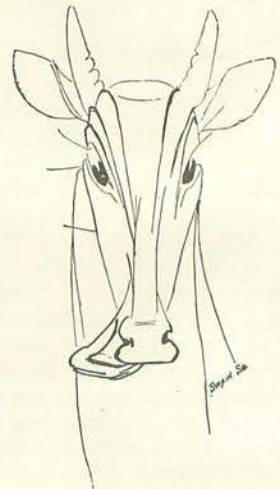
But the low-comedy merchant *par excellence* of this department



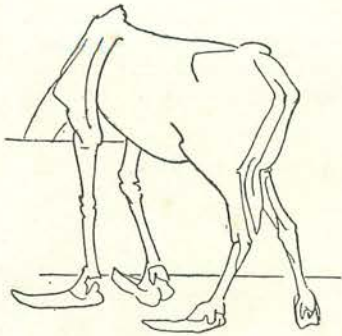
MELANCHOLY.



A MERE PLATER.

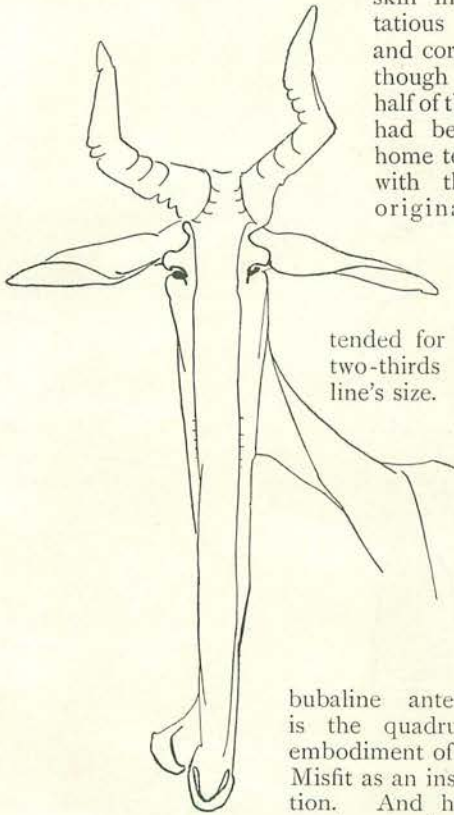


THE CUD CHAMPION.

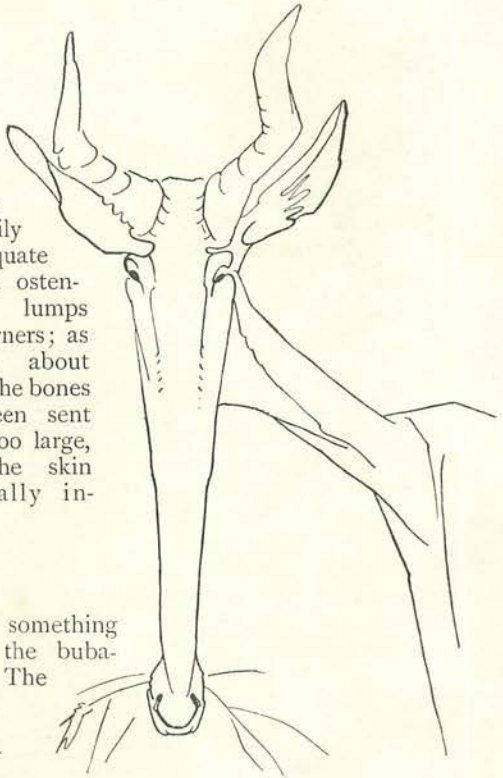


is the bubaline antelope. His hoofs spread out before his shins like the long boots of the dancing nigger, his horns are of the loudest thunder-and-lightning pattern, his ears are of the wildest donkey-design, his head is that of a cheap tack-hammer, and his nose—

but, there ; there is no describing that nose —it puts the ant-eater to shame. His bodily framework asserts itself through the inadequate skin in ostentatious lumps and corners; as though about half of the bones had been sent home too large, with the skin originally in-

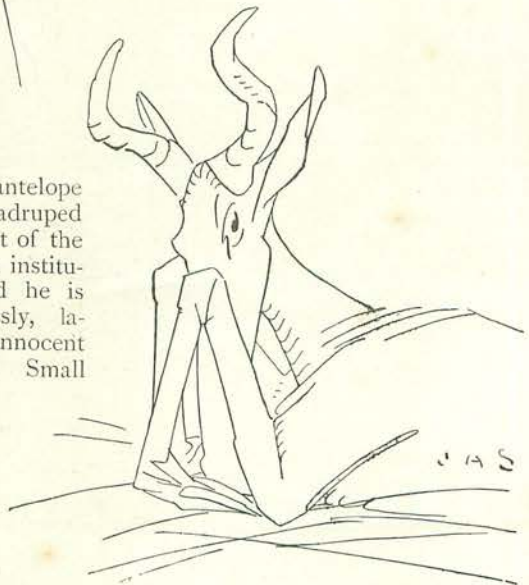


tended for something two-thirds the bubaline's size. The



bubaline antelope is the quadruped embodiment of the Misfit as an institution. And he is so hopelessly, lamentably innocent

and unconscious of his eccentricities! Small boys stand before his den and scream with laughter; the bubaline looks at them with a mild and grieved surprise. He has heard hundreds of visitors laugh like that, and could never understand why it was done. What can it be? Any animal with a sense of humour



would at least cover up that nose. Over in the house where once the giraffes lived, solemnly ruminates the stately zebu. The zebu is a grand piece of scenery, and looks as though it might carry with it some excellent cuts of beef. But it is not active, and only its ears betray the fact that the whole thing is not stuffed. And those ears

