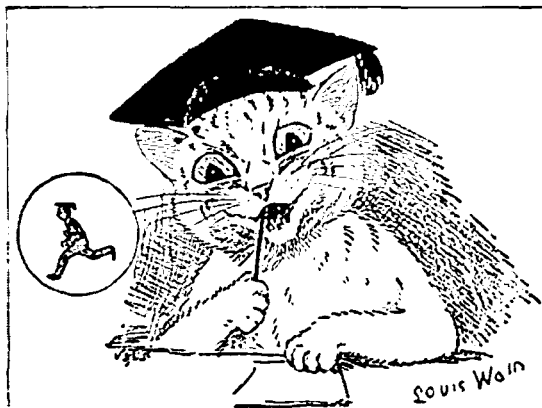


More Arrivals from Cat-Land.



The Schoolboy, ripe for mischief.

TOSSED BY A BLACK RHINOCEROS.

A Hunter's Desperate Dilemma.

"WHAT is the most dangerous kind of 'big game'?" said an old hunter. "Well, to my mind, nothing is more awkward to tackle than a rhinoceros. I remember I had rather a lively time with one in Africa some years ago."

It was evident that a yarn was at the back of this remark, and but little persuasion on the part of his audience was needed to induce him to narrate his adventure.

I was in the ivory trade at the time (he began)—that is, I was engaged in killing elephants for the sake of their tusks, an occupation as profitable as it is dangerous.

One day, while we were travelling slowly along under the hot sun, the men called my attention to a little bird that was flying about, which I soon saw was a honey-guide, or indicator, one of the most intelligent of all African birds.

It would fly up in front of us, steady itself in the air, and then dart off, fluttering its wings to try to get us to follow it.

For some time the men paid no attention, supposing that the honey-guide had merely, as usual, found a nest of honey, and wanted us to go and open it, and give it a share. But it became so excited that my head tracker said that perhaps the bird had found an elephant, and that we had better go where it wanted us to.

Finally I consented, and three of us started off on horseback, the little bird going on ahead, stopping every few moments to see if we were coming, and then flying on, taking us towards a dense wood.

As soon as we reached it, the bird plunged in, but since we were forced to remain outside, it quickly returned, and flew to an open path or lane, into which we went.

For at least three-quarters of a mile we followed our little guide over a country so rough that we often thought of going back. Indeed, I was about to suggest doing so, when one of my men held up his hand, upon which we all stopped.

For the last hundred yards we had been in the spoor or trail of some animal, or of many, and were evidently going down to a pool.

As we halted, we heard the chatter of the honey-bird just ahead, and we knew that we had reached the end of our quest.

Cocking my gun and dismounting, I gave my horse to my third man and started forward.

As a matter of precaution, I left the spoor and took to the bush. After walking slowly on for a few moments, I came suddenly across a sight that brought me to a dead stop. Fortunately, I was behind a large tree, for there, in the soft mud right in front of me lay a gigantic black rhinoceros—one of the most vicious of its kind.

My first thought was to go back and get one of the men, but as I deliberated, the great animal moved. This determined me, and aiming over a rest formed by a branch, I fired.

In an instant the stillness was broken by a perfect babel of sounds, composed of the cries of birds and other small creatures, above which I heard a snort, like that of a steam engine, as the enormous form of the rhinoceros rose from the black mud.

For a moment he stood looking about, then,

seeing the smoke, he lowered his head and dashed at me.

I had only just time to spring aside, when the vicious animal struck the tree behind which I had been standing, and so violent was the charge that the trunk completely gave way, falling on the other side. One of the branches just missed me, and, to avoid trouble, I fell flat in the grass and kept still, knowing this to be my only chance.

In a few moments the rhinoceros recovered himself, and stood breathing hard. Perhaps I might then have been able to settle him; but, unfortunately, my men, hearing the shot, and not knowing what was the matter, came riding up, and before they were aware, they were within thirty feet of the enraged brute.

I cried out in order to attract his attention, and hastily fired, but up went

when it did so, it repeatedly charged the prostrate animal.

While it was thus engaged, I sent two bullets into its lungs, and it died charging at the smoke of my gun, finally falling not ten feet from me.

Daring.

PAUL, the eccentric Czar of Russia, assassinated in 1801, was very particular as to his dress, and considered trifling matters as of supreme importance. This peculiarity was once taken advantage of by an officer of his guards, a major, to win a bet. The wildest joker in the army, as he was, wagered several hundred roubles that he would "tweak" the tail of the Emperor's wig on parade.

The very next day the Emperor happened to be present at early parade, and, as destiny ruled it, took a position for a moment immediately in front of the daring major. Breathless with excitement and terror, the officer's companions beheld that rash officer's right hand steal slowly from his side, rise to the level of the Czar's neck, and give the wig's hanging tail a most decided pull.

In an instant the Emperor's face, pale with fury, was turned upon the major's countenance, which, however, only reflected an expression of childlike innocence, mingled with the most deferential astonishment.

"Who dared to do that?" asked the enraged Czar, his eyes giving flashing evidence that his most dangerous mood was upon him.

"I did, your Majesty," said the major, who managed to preserve outwardly an unruffled calm, together with an expression of innocent surprise. "It was crooked, your Majesty," he added, in a confidential undertone. "I straightened it for fear the younger officers should see."

Paul's countenance cleared at once. He stared fixedly, however, at the major's innocent-looking face for some seconds. The officer admitted afterwards that this was the trying moment; but he had said to himself, "If I waver, I'm lost!" Then the Czar spoke, and spoke so that all might hear.

"I thank you, colonel," he said.

If ever a step in rank was gained by the purest effrontery, it was so acquired on this occasion, for the officer left the field, not only promoted to a coveted position in the guards, but richer by many hundred roubles as the result of his wager.

Scored.

LADSLAND (deferentially to boarder): "Mr. Smith, do you suppose that the first steamboat created much surprise among the fish when it was first launched?"

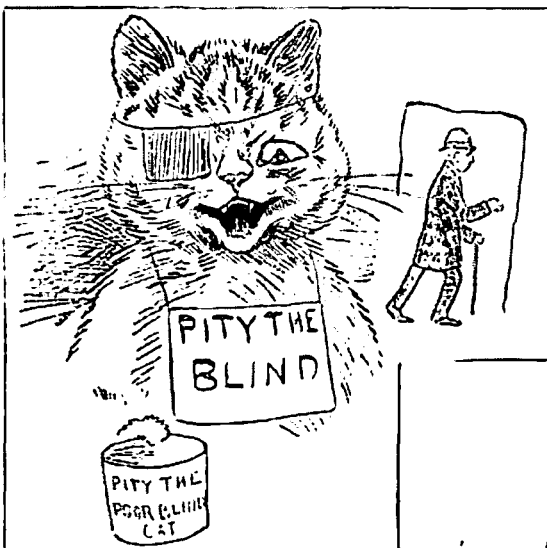
Smith (curiously): "I can't say whether it did or not."

"Oh, I thought from the way you eyed the fish before you that you might acquire some information on that point."

Smith (maliciously): "Very likely—very likely; but it's my opinion that this fish left its native element before steamboats were invented."



The Sailor, who keeps his sea-legs on dry land.



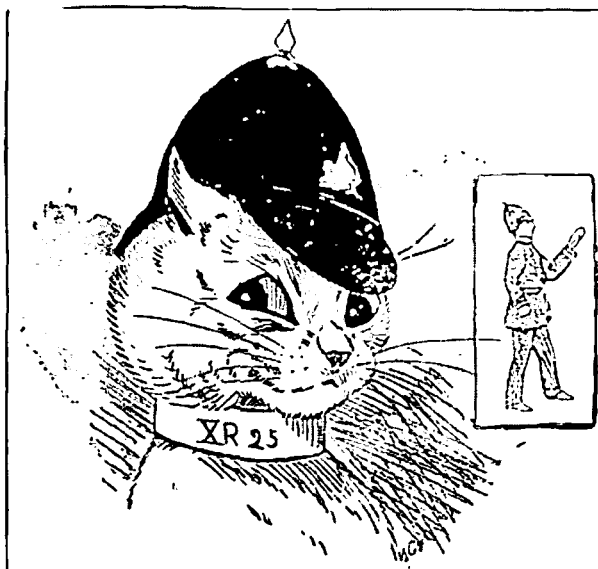
The Beggar, ever ready to accept charity.

his tail, and like a shot he dashed at one of the forces.

The poor native riding it made a desperate effort to turn; but just as he got the horse's head round, the horns of the rhinoceros entered its breast, and the next instant horse and rider were in the air. The rhinoceros had tossed them as a bull would a dog.

The man fell off upon its back, and, rolling away along the ground, succeeded in getting among the grass, while the horse was instantly killed.

For a few moments the rhinoceros could not withdraw its horns, but



The Policeman, always on the alert.

Chum, London

Wednesday 28 October 1896 issue 216