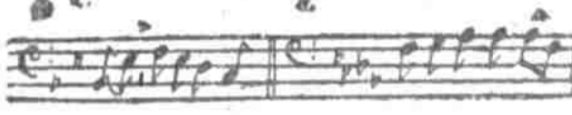


The Music of the Animal World

Voices Differ,
not Merely in
Expression, but
in Note



Some of a Donkey's Characteristic Utterances.



the same notes. The mooing of a cow set to a perfect fifth, forsooth! Why, the mooing of a cow is set to whatever notes suit that particular cow's fancy and voice.

A careful observer has noted the demand of a young cow to be let out to grass. It contains three notes—starts with a descent of a fifth and then rises one note. But does any one suppose that Goldsmith's "sober herd that loved to meet its young" expressed itself with any such engaging simplicity? Not at all!

Some of its remarks have been gathered up and noted for the benefit of the unbeliever. No two, thus recorded, said the same thing in the same way. As for a certain 2-year-old bull, his infrequent expression of his feelings displayed a truly masculine terseness and vigor.

That animals do say things, by the way, is beyond peradventure. It is no modern theory, first enunciated by Professor Garner, and applicable only to monkeys. As far back as 1800 there was published in Vienna a curious little book by G. E. Wetzel, called "A New Discovery of the Language of Animals, Founded upon Reason and Experience."

There had been others before it, but none of such elaborate, if unconvincing, seriousness. In it the author tried to prove that animals make themselves understood by a combination of sounds which constitutes the simplest written language. He actually published a sort of rudimentary dictionary of this language, and tried to translate into his native German dialogues of dogs, cats, chickens, etc., in illustration of his theories. He printed an animated conversation—composed of abrupt little cries—in which it is alleged some captive frogs were planning their escape. As he weakly admits, however, that some of them did escape, it is fair to conclude that he had not quite caught the drift of their conversation.

That animals do talk, or have some means of communication, at least with those of their own species, seems perfectly plausible. That any mere man has as yet mastered their language seems more than doubtful.

A young colt, for instance, had one word of greeting for his mother; another for a strange horse, and still another for his owner. And his remarks when he was alone out of doors, and a bit uneasy, were unmistakably different from any of the others. Possibly his mother and the other horse understood exactly what he said in each case. His owner only understood that he was not saying the same thing.

A grown horse is rather a silent animal. He rarely gives voice to his feelings. When he does, it must be confessed that he is rather partial to the chromatic scale. A horse's neighing, in four cases out of five, takes in part of that scale, and a good, generous, prolonged whinny will take in the whole of it.

It is not hard to see where the expression, "a horse laugh," comes from; for it certainly does sound like a hideous, harsh parody on humanity's laughter. Long ago the writer of the

Book of Job noticed the same thing, and said of the horse, "He saith among the trumpets 'Ha! Ha!' and smelleth the battle afar off."

But when one is hungry, horse or human, it is no laughing matter, no cause for wild paroxysms of mirth. The neigh of a mare for hay has been noted. It is short and sharp. She has apparently no time to dally with all the notes of the chromatic scale. Her demand for oats is a trifle more leisurely.

As for the donkey and his cousins, the ass and the mule, all three must, with due respect for the octave, be credited with most frequently using it. Sometimes, in fact, they make a sudden drop of two octaves. Occasionally, of course, they use some of the intermediate notes; but most frequently they give hideous vent to their feelings in "sonorous octaves, loud and shrill."

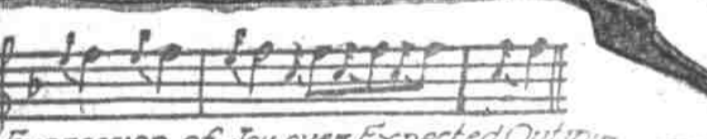
Several of their remarks have been noted and reduced to musical characters. One example is borrowed by Haydn, who does not seem to have confined his plagiarisms to the dog. Both the ass and the horse have been worked into his music with good effect.



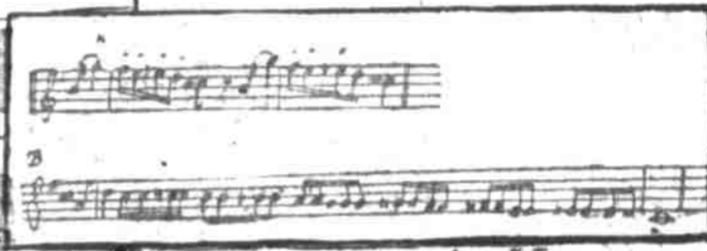
A Great Dog's Notes—A Haydn Bar.



Wine of the Canine Prisoner.



Expression of Joy over Expected Outcome.



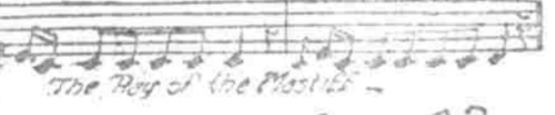
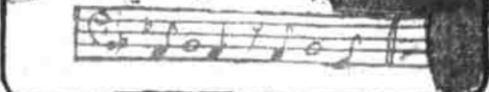
The Neigh of a Horse



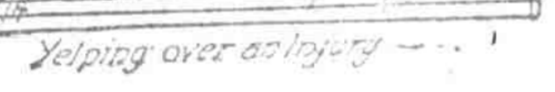
Plaint of Cow Anxious for a Meal.



A Young Bull's Solo.



The Roar of the Mastiff.



Yelping over an Injury.

The aboriginal dog—what little there is left of him—whines, growls or howls, but never barks. It is even recorded that Columbus, returning to America, found that certain dogs that he had left on a previous voyage had relapsed into a state of nature and forgotten how to bark.

Cats have three separate ways of audibly expressing their feelings, each one more expressive than the last. There is the purr of satisfied cathood—the song of thanksgiving. Is there any sound on earth more thoroughly expressive? The drowsy, sleek, warm, well-fed, blissful content of it is a thin—that mortals may envy, but need never hope to attain.

Yet it is almost entirely a matter of expression. The notes that puss uses to voice her soul's content are comparatively simple and few. By listening awhile, it will be found that she varies the intervals from firsts to fifths. Having rumbled along peacefully on one interval for a while, she will try the next for a change, and so on.

Her two expressions of dissatisfaction—her mew and her yowl—are far more complex. Her mew, if she manages it well, can be made to express almost as many things as a dog's bark. As an expression of plaintive reproach, it is probably unequalled in the world of sound. Her yowl, which is, after all, merely her mew at its strongest and most terrible, is a thing to shudder at.

To get out of doors among farm animals—probably when the "lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea"—no two do their lowing in exactly

THAT the music of the animal world is not confined to the feathered songster has been demonstrated by careful study. The elements of music have a wide range through the kingdom of beasts.

Recently a little paragraph like the following has been going the rounds of the newspapers, along with a lot of other little paragraphs, under some such head as "Odds and Ends," "Useless Information," "Pointless Paragraphs":

"According to a musical authority, the mooing of a cow is set to a perfect fifth, octave or tenth; the bark of a dog to a fourth or fifth; the neighing of a horse is a descent on the chromatic scale; while the donkey brays in a perfect octave. Yet it is thought in some quarters that the quality of a donkey's voice might be improved!"

Music lovers have not been inclined to place unlimited confidence in the statement; indeed, they have been politely incredulous.

As a matter of fact, careful investigators assert, the statement is all right as far as it goes. The only trouble is that it does not go far enough.

MANY animals, it is pointed out, are not so limited in the expression of their emotions as one might suppose.

Take the dog, for instance, as the most familiar example. Every one knows that different dogs have different barks; the true lover of dogs knows the voice of his own animals as surely as he knows the voice of some particular friend.

And even the same beast has as many different barks as he has emotions.

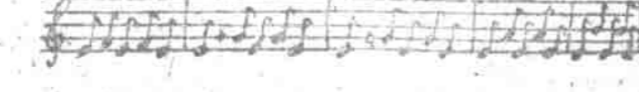
"The watchdog's voice that bays the whistling wind" is an entirely different one from that in which he greets his master's return, nor is its melancholy note to be mistaken for a moment for the frenzied excitement with which he tells of a stray cat passing just out of reach. These differ not merely in expression, but in note.

A dog's bark of delight when he understands that he is to be taken out, after hours of the confinement to which city dogs must submit, differs radically from the baying of a mastiff chained up back of the barn, and equally from the barking of a great dog introduced by Haydn into one of his quartets.

Barking proper is said to be an accomplishment peculiar to civilized dogs—an effort on their part to communicate with their masters.



How a Cat Purr.



Murmurings of a Colt.
(a) To a Strange Horse; (b) To its Mother; (c) To Owner; (d) Alone, Out of Doors.



Dinner Call of a Hungry Mare.
(a) For Hay; (b) For Oats.

