

INSTINCT OR REASON?

What a Nature Student Has Observed in Birds and Animals.

Along the hillsides where my home is placed crows assemble in vast numbers. Is it only instinct that leads them to set a sentinel on guard when they pull corn or maraud the birds' nests? Blackbirds do the same, and they have kept me on a merry chase—merry for them—just at church time, to get them out of my corn. But in Florida these same birds do not set a guard while hopping all over our gardens. Why? I think because they are catching bugs and know they will not offend us. Crows roost at a distance from their nests. Why? I think the reason is that they are afraid of endangering the limbs where the nests are placed.

Co-operative moral order sends the kingbird today to join the crow in fighting the deadly hawk, but another day I find him fighting the same crow that is stealing a young robin for his dinner. Why do the English sparrows not invade my acres at Clinton? They are all about me in vast numbers, just across the street, and they jabber in crowds quite within my hearing, yet hardly once or twice a year does a single sparrow show himself inside my line. If this is instinct, it is very recently acquired instinct, for I had a serious task in teaching them that it was unsafe to intrude.

Why do my bees refuse to allow one of my hired men to approach the hives? It cannot be instinct, although I confess I cannot trace out the logic involved. Why do two of my hens follow a cow hour after hour about the pasture? Not instinct, I am certain, but these two have discovered what the others have not, that the cow's motions stir up grasshoppers and crickets. After my father's death his dog led strangers into the house, holding their hands in his teeth, and he watched to see if harm was meant. Was that good logic or was it mere instinct?

During a warm summer shower I saw an anglerworm try to draw a stick into its hole, holding it by the middle. After a vain effort of this sort, it deliberately felt its way to the end of the stick and then drew it easily into the ground. Its dinner of soft bark was secured. Was this incipient reason? What instinct could have taught that logical process. Science published my notes on the subject at the time with approval. Personally, I do not believe that there is an entire absence of these logical processes from any part of living nature—not even from the ovoid cell in which life first appears. I am convinced that the universe is charged with reason and that instinct is only a byproduct of universal thought.—E. P. Powell in Independent.

Their Own Way.

Panama, like every other place, has its servant problem, and the plump girls from Jamaica appear to fall a considerable distance behind the standard desired by the American residents. There are plenty of them, but their quality leaves much to be desired.

They have their own ideas about things, and these are sure to be entirely contrary to yours. I heard of one who was so wedded to her hat, an old Panama, that she could not be separated from it, and her mistress had to submit to having her wait on the table with the hat dragged down over her left eye. Another boiled the beefsteak along with some fresh tomatoes and lettuce that had arrived with it on the steamer. This in Panama was a tragedy such as can hardly be appreciated by strangers. The possession of a steak is sufficient cause always for a dinner party, and a party had been arranged for this occasion, but it had to be called off.—Demerara Chronicle.

The Magic of Odd Numbers.

"Even in the matter of weighing groceries there seems a magic in odd numbers," said a housekeeper. "Most of the packages of salt, sugar, coffee and other commodities that grocers keep on hand to facilitate trade contain an odd number of pounds. If you are in a hurry and ask for a made up package of almost any kind of groceries, tradesmen can accommodate you with a one pound, three pound or a five pound package. But the chances are that if you want two pounds or four pounds of anything it will have to be weighed to order."—New York Times.

Tiger "Whiskers" as Poison.

In the recollections of a well known big game hunter in India it is stated that after skinning a tiger it is always necessary to guard its whiskers, as the natives have an unpleasant habit of cutting them up very small and mixing them with the curry of those they dislike. The finely divided bristles set up an irritant poison, the result of which often proves serious.—London Globe.

THE OFFICE RAILING.

Be Various Ways Set Forth by a Man Who Works Behind One.

"The office railing," said an office man, "is, to be sure, intended primarily to keep people out. It is a barrier at which people can be held up and made to wait if they are not wanted within, and many a man has stood there and waited and twiddled his thumbs and choked down his impatience waiting for somebody inside to tell him that he could come in or to send word to him that he was to go away, while all around within the men keep on at work serenely.

"But the office railing has another use besides that of keeping people out. It is a barrier the passing of which may easily be counted as an honor by those who are invited in.

"Let some customer come along by chance that way or to see the boss or some member of the firm, and does he have long to wait? Perhaps the member from his desk sees him as he comes along, and he's at the gate in a minute with hand outstretched and—

"Why, Mr. Stigby! How are you? Come right in!"

"And he fairly drags him in, he's so glad to see him, and he sets him down in a comfortable chair by his desk, while he himself forgets his own work and sits back in his own chair and smiles in his pleasure at meeting Mr. Stigby again, and then—

"How are things going in Mudville, Mr. Stigby? How does the outlook strike you at the present minute generally through the west? and so on and so on.

"And does this friendly reception and prompt admission to the owner's sanctum, this taking of him in behind the railing and asking his opinion of things, have a tendency to diminish the size of the bill of goods that Mr. Stigby buys?"

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Preached on His Knees.

The pulpit in the nave of Westminster abbey has a movable floor, which can be raised or lowered at pleasure to suit the height of the preacher. One day a very short man was expected to preach, and the pulpit floor was raised considerably. Being prevented by illness or some other cause, he was unable to fulfill his appointment and at the last moment a substitute had to be provided. The clergyman who obligingly undertook the office proved to be a man of lofty stature, of stature much above the average. On reaching the head of the pulpit staircase he saw, to his dismay, that the official in charge of the simple machinery had apparently not been informed of the change of preachers. The cleric was equal to the occasion. He scrambled on his knees and in that uncomfortable posture preached the sermon. No one in the vast congregation noticed the unusual position of the preacher.—London Telegraph.

Two Gifts to the Orchestra.

On one occasion when Von Bulow had to conduct an orchestral concert at which a piece written by an aristocratic amateur was to be performed the composer requested permission to direct a rehearsal and on obtaining it opened a parcel containing seventy pencils, which he handed to the members of the band, asking them to mark his intentions in their parts, as he would give them by word of mouth.

Hans von Bulow noted this matter of detail and left the hall. Presently he returned, also with a parcel, and on resuming his place at the desk gravely handed out seventy pieces of india rubber, with which the players were to erase the directions which the composer had given them.

A Bare Possibility.

In his diary, which is incorporated in the "Life and Letters of Sir Richard Claverhouse Jebb," the great Greek scholar recorded a flash of his own wit which is of a most appealing variety.

At a dinner at Cambridge, Sir Richard, then Mr. Jebb, took in a young woman, who got through the first course with little conversation. Suddenly she startled him by saying in the most unprovoked way while she was still dining with apparent good appetite:

"Professor Jebb, do you think women ever die of a broken heart?" "Perhaps other organs may have something to do with it," he professed in reply.

Books.

When I consider what some books have done for the world and what they are doing, how they keep up our hope, awaken new courage and faith, soothe pain, give an ideal life to those whose homes are hard and cold, bind together distant ages and foreign lands, create new worlds, beauty, bring down truths from heaven, give eternal blessings this gift.—James Freeman Clark

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CHAS. S. McCULLOCH, N. G. GRAFTON TYLER, Sec.

Rebekah Lodge No. 126.

MEETS Every 2nd and 4th Tuesdays. Practice night first Wednesday of the month. Social Evening the 3rd Saturday of the month. A cordial invitation extended to all members in good standing.

MINERVA LEWIN, N. G. CLARA GORTZ, Sec'y.

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DELPHI LODGE No. 64, Knights' of Pythias. Meets every Monday evening at Masonic hall. Visiting Knights invited to attend. H. M. MORRISON, C. C. B. N. HARRINGTON, K. of R. S.

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