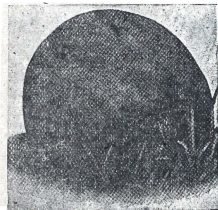


AMAZING INSTANCES OF ANIMAL BEHAVIOR



An Elephant's Football

IN EVERY living animal—even the simplest—we find some sort of a mind. Every animal seems to have thought out the things it does.

Think of the spider and its web. The web seems as well thought out and planned as any of our monuments or buildings. The spider builds as if it had studied stress and strain like an engineer. It makes one kind of road for itself, and another kind for its victims. The spider is a skillful engineer.

Go to the ants. Most people do not know of the wonderful things which these creatures will do. They will capture plant lice (aphides), make them prisoners, build galleries to keep them in, milk them, and protect their eggs to secure a continued supply. When new plant lice are born, the ants will carry them to the plants that they live on, and later take them back to prison.

And what shall we say of the harvest ant which has the marvellous power of collecting seeds and putting them down in its warm, moist nest where the seeds will naturally start to grow? When the seeds have grown enough so that sugar is formed, the harvest ant carries the sugar out to dry in the sunshine.

The bees, perhaps the first sanitarians in the world, have established a civiliza-

tion that excites our wonder. They toil and build and store up; they obey their laws and punish those who break them; they live and move and have their being impelled by a patriotism of the hive beyond the dreams of men.

There was in Pelorus sound, New Zealand, for twenty years a dolphin, protected by the government, that piloted ships through this dangerous strait. As a ship approached, the dolphin—named Pelorus Jack—would dart from his hiding place and swim ahead, going steadily until he reached a certain place at the end of the strait called French Pass, and there he disappeared. He never went beyond, but up to that point no human pilot was ever more reliable than he.

It is said that in South Africa a herd of wild buffalo, which used to feed in the daytime, changed their habit and fed only at night. It seems that they did this because a certain disease destroyed many of the herd. The tsetse fly, which carries the germs of that disease, does not fly by night. It is quite possible that these buffaloes acted as if they knew that the night flying insect brought to them the germs of death.

There are countless examples of amazing animal behavior. In Japan there are birds called cormorants which catch fish for their owners.

There was a crow which would carry a small clam ninety feet up in the air, and then drop it on a stone in order to break it open. That crow must have done some thinking.

The cheetah, one of the large animals

of the cat family living in India and Persia, catches deer for hunters. Why should this animal catch food for men and not keep the quarry for itself?

Captive elephants catch and train wild elephants. They will do these things for their employers as unflinchingly as men. Some of the actions of elephants are quite like those of human beings. A famous naturalist once came upon a band of young elephants playing. These youngsters were kicking a big, round stone (shown in the illustration on page 308) and pushing it around just like a group of schoolboys. Little elephants are playful and amuse themselves in many ingenious ways.

A tortoise in England would walk every morning to meet an old lady who fed it. We would hardly think of a tortoise as being intelligent, yet this particular animal seemed to have enough intelligence to know the hand which fed it.

A baby crocodile, just hatched out of its egg, will find its way instantly toward a stream. A large full-grown crocodile has been known to have an affection for a cat, and would show its friendship in different ways. At an alligator farm in California for many years there was an old tame alligator which would permit a child to sit on its back and have a ride. Another alligator at the same farm would climb a ladder and slide down a chute

into the water.

A snake has been known to jump with delight when its owner returned after an absence. We do not think of a snake as being particularly affectionate, but so-called "snake-charmers" tell us that this is true.

There are many instances of cats and dogs which have been friends, and showed their friendship for each other. Cats and birds, as well as cats and little chickens, are sometimes friendly.

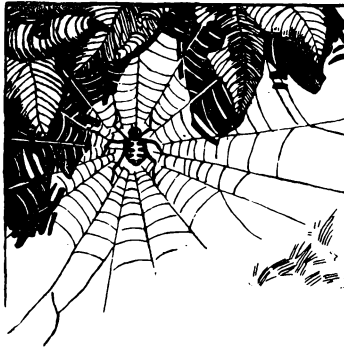
A frog, captured and taken away from the water, will go straight back to the water on being set free. What guides it back to its natural habitat? There was a frog which answered to its name when called. Perhaps it was a trained frog.

Fishes have been known to answer a bell when rung, and yet fishes are not considered to be very intelligent.

A bird, born in the temperate zone, will fly to a warmer zone when the cold winter arrives. How does a bird know it is warmer elsewhere?

A homing pigeon will fly back to its home, no matter how far away. It took a month for a pigeon to do this once, during which time it flew a thousand miles.

Some would call this instinct in animals; others would say it is intelligence. But whether it is intelligence or instinct, many instances of animal behavior are amazing.



The spider is a skillful engineer.