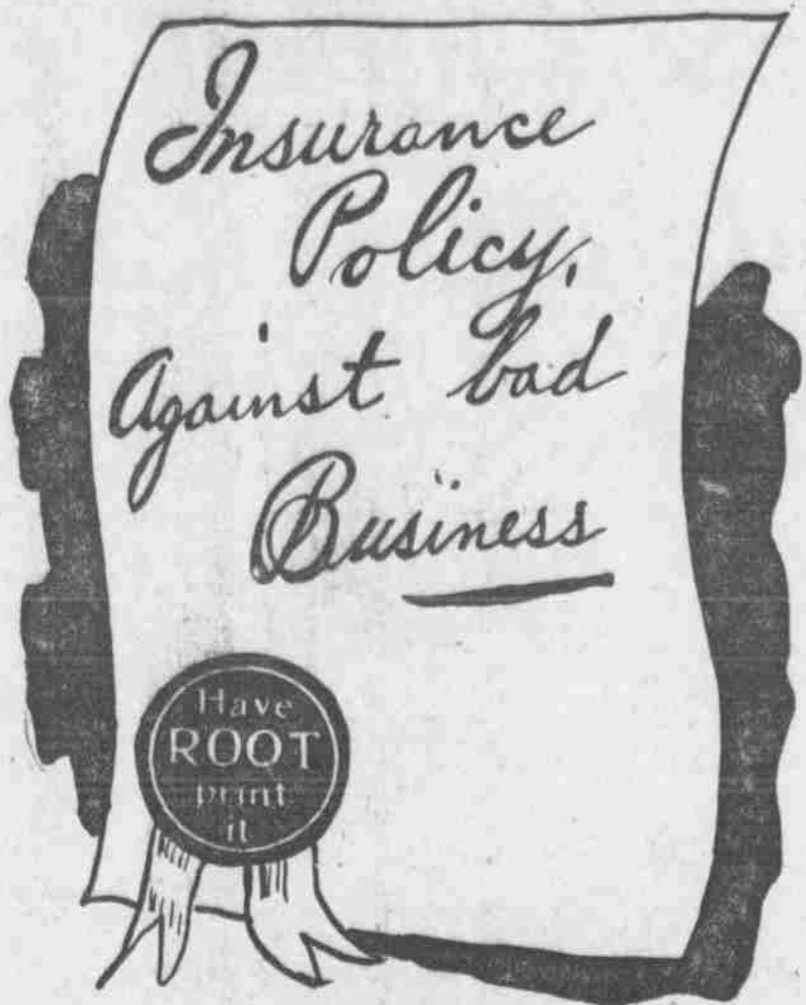


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ARE ANIMALS ABLE TO COUNT?

Experiences of Sportsmen in Many Parts of the World.

LIONS THAT KEEP TRACK OF THE DAYS

Power of Reckoning Time Shown by a Dog, an Elephant and a Crocodile—Counting by Moose and Salmon.

HULL, Canada, March 29.—Here are some stories told by sportsmen who happened to drift into a discussion of the question, Can animals count?

"You know I got my hound Oscar back again, didn't you?" said one. "Oh, yes, it was true enough about my losing him up the Gatineau."

"He never could pass by a fresh deer track and never knew when it was right to give up a hunt. I was up above the Beacomb bridge in the autumn of the year before last, and when the team came to bring down my duffle Oscar was away on a hunt."

"Last fall I went back to the same camp at about the same time in the beginning of October. Just one day earlier than last year, boss, the teamster said as he helped me put up the tent, long after dark."

"Next morning I was getting out with the satter to look up the partridges when all of a sudden Oscar, fat and frolicsome, was cawing about me. Curious, wasn't it?"

"You know that large farm near the old lumber depot? I came home that way. Well, we were just passing the house when Oscar leaped and went playing and jumping about a man in jeans near the door. I was starting off again with Oscar when the farmer roared out:

"Say, where be you a-taking that 'ere dog?"

"'Home,' said I. 'He's mine. Why?"

"'Only because he's been living along of me, for about a year until he lit out one morning three weeks ago.'"

"I made it all right with the farmer after a bit and showed him that the dog had not the slightest wish to remain with him, but had made a convenience of his hospitality until the time came for his owner to return. But it bothers me to know how Oscar figured it all out, to content himself at the farm house until the right day came to take that thirty-mile trip to meet me on the old camp ground."

Elephant Kept Count.

"Don't you think it possible that your dog kept track of the seasons or of the days?" said an Anglo-Indian. "Out in India there was an elephant battery stationed near my place."

"There was one elephant which had lost his regular mahout by death, and until a proper person could be obtained some of the underlings attended to him for month about. He was a grand old beast, having served through the mutiny, and was quite the pet of the battery."

"At last a cunning old Hindu gunner came on to attend to the elephant. It transpired afterward that from the beginning he cheated his charge out of part of his ration. He drew every day some seventy or seventy-five chupatties, or cakes made out of starch, a kind of crushed wheat, and kept half a dozen of them or so to sell to outsiders as a private graft."

"Old Chubdnah knew it at once and set up a fierce gossaming, for which in his ignorance a fool sergeant put him under discipline. After two or three days he kept quiet. Apparently he reasoned it out that the gunner would only be on for his four weeks, as the others had been, and it might be as well to put up with this thing for a bit."

"But on a Monday, when the man began

his second month, and had brought him his chupattie ration, old Chubdnah knocked him over with a sidelong blow of his trunk and then deliberately crushed him under foot. The other elephant tenders made no fuss about it as soon as a subordinate explained the mahout's treachery. Of course he could expect nothing else, they said, for certainly Chubdnah could count his cakes and keep track of the days as well as any other member of the battery."

"Poor old chap, he was court-martialed and punished on the same footing, too. It was six months' solitary confinement for him, prison fare, with hard labor piling teak logs, after regular work was done."

"He got to be as thin as a rake before it was over. The day after the six months expired the old fellow pulled up the pegs he was tethered to, smashed out of his jail, and stumped off gravely as possible down the lines to his regular quarters. A young, half grown elephant stood in his place, but it was only a minute's work for Chubdnah to pull him out and send him packing."

"Then some one brought it to light that sixteen years before the old rascol had been sent down for six months, and all the mahouts agreed that he must have remembered that fact and kept accurate count of the days until the same term had again expired. If an elephant can keep count that way, why not a dog?"

Moose Reckons Foreward.

"Of course, you know a moose can count," broke in the doctor. "If ever you travel on the track of a cute old bull, you will notice how he stops now and then, and looks back to take stock of his pursuers."

"After he has slaid up the party, he trots ahead as hard as he can go for a mile or so, and then takes a prodigious jump to one side down the wind. He may on a slope clear thirty feet. Then he doubles back a few hundred yards parallel with the track and lies down till the hunters have passed."

"There may be a dozen of them, but the

bull will never move horn or hair until he has seen every one of them go by. If one of them should drop out, he will preserve a watchful stillness until night comes."

"My old guide put me up to the trick and told me that an experienced halfbreed will get the moose as he nolisly rises to get away when the regular party has passed on."

"There were ten of us after moose at the Hibou one fall. We made a rule that for the sake of the guide and to keep ourselves from utter savagery we would not under any circumstances take out a gun on Sundays. We were there for eight weeks, and during the last three Sundays we sighted twenty-one moose loafing about."

"Occasionally we got on the tracks of moose on other days, but all we actually saw were the seven we killed. You know, the older guides always say that the moose keeps track of the Sundays and most of them have superstitious objections to hunting that day."

Salmon Know Sunday.

"The net salmon fishermen say the same thing about the salmon," remarked the old sportsman. "On the Labrador and around Gaspe way all nets at the mouths of rivers have to be lifted for the full day every Sunday."

"It is quite an article of faith down in those parts that the largest, most experienced salmon count the days and start on their summer jaunt up streams on Sundays. I have been taken several times and shown by these keen-eyed fellows the great fish lately coming into the river after sundown on Saturday night."

Muggers and Wash Day.

"You remind me of a shooting experience in the Congo Free State," said the military man. "I was stationed for secret observation service at a large native village on the banks of a considerable river. I had heard a good deal of the ravages of crocodiles among the young women and thought to occupy my leisure hours in killing the brute."

"So I prepared my express rifle, which used steel-tipped ammunition, and was setting out, when I was halted by one of the head men, who told me it would be no use going out that day, nor before Tuesday of the next week. Why Tuesday? I wondered."

"It turned out that every second Tuesday was cleaning up day, when every woman in the place turned out the family linen for a general wash. All the younger women slipped into the water up to the waist and began slapping the soiled and soaked articles against the projecting rocks, which is their way of knocking the dirt out of them. They kept complete silence during their operation."

"All of a sudden I saw one of the girls slip down into the current, screaming as she disappeared. The others began a hasty gathering up of the washing and ran toward the shore, where several little children were playing about."

"I wondered what it meant until I saw the forequarters of a great crocodile rise out of the water and seize one of the little ones. I had my big rifle at hand and ready, and when another, this time a gray, almost white, snout came up just behind one of the running young women I let him have it, and fortunately got a ball into his mouth, and I think into his brain. At any rate the ugly brute thrashed about a lot, but died at last in two feet of water, where we easily secured him."

"I found that from years uncounted the village had had its washing done every fifteenth day, and the crocodiles, or muggers, as my men used to call them, had learned to count up the days and come down stream for these occasions. Every time there was an alarm, and generally some devoured from the band of washing maidens. Still, no one dreamt of breaking

through the customs of the place so far as to change the time for the wash."

Lions and the Army.

"I remember that in Algiers they used to take a curious kind of advantage of the counting powers of the wild beasts," said the doctor, who saw service in foreign lands in his early years. "On the first day of every month a file of soldiers was sent with dispatches some seventy or eighty miles to where a detachment of troops was stationed."

"It was a nasty trip, through a broken wild country, anyway, and when I was there it was always under punishment for serious offenses who made it. A couple of black-maned lions had found out the date of the through mail and lay in wait for it."

"These creatures are supposed to prefer the flesh of Europeans to that of the natives. Possibly, however, it was the regularity of the supply which attracted this particular pair of handsome brutes."

"Of course, the command having gone forth from those in command, military propriety would not permit the date of the dispatch of mail carriers to be changed. So every month the lions leaped out, dragged down one criminal and his horse and sometimes, indeed, devoured both of the soldiers."

"Time and time again expert shots went out to beat up the murderous lions. But they never found them, nor did any one see them in that section, excepting on the first or second of the month, when the mail carriers had got well along on their trips."

"The authorities did not seem to worry

much about it, but kept on sentencing prisoners to take the fatal trip month after month. A freshly arrived young officer would sometimes object and volunteer to seek the road of the black-maned murderers. More than one was lost while acting as substitutes for the carriers, and the lions usually escaped through their cunning and agility."

"Once one of them was killed by a corporal who followed behind the two prisoners. But by the next month the survivor had found another mate and when I left the precious pair were adding a French soldier to each monthly ration with fair regularity."

"No one there ever doubted the reckoning power of the lions; in fact, I fancy that most animals, like the migratory birds, have a very fair idea of time and probably know much more about keeping count than we have any idea of."

Its Origin Unknown.

"What is the origin of the 'cock and bull' story? It is the despair of all those who seek to explain this fine old trusted slang of long ago which has managed to persist into present speech, just as we may imagine our present '23' will puzzle a later generation. Brewer, in his 'Phrase and Fable,' explains it as a corruption of a 'concocted and bully story.' Evidently recognizing that this is scarcely satisfactory, he presented his researches into bygone religions, dragged up Nergal from the Phoenicians in the representation of a rooster and from the Egyptian Osiris, typified by a bull. From all of which disquisitions it is as clear as may be that no one really knows anything about the story of a cock and a bull. The French have a precisely similar expression in *coq-a-lane*, and equally they do not know its origin."—New York Sun.

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STATE OF NEBRASKA, OFFICE OF Auditor of Public Accounts, Lincoln, Feb. 1, 1907.—It is hereby certified, that the Dubuque Fire and Marine Insurance Company of Dubuque, in the State of Iowa, has complied with the Insurance Law of this state, applicable to such companies, and is therefore authorized to continue the business of fire insurance in this state for the current year ending January 31, 1908.

Witness my hand and the seal of the auditor of public accounts the day and year first above written.

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