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Animal Intelligence

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PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
Iowa Academy of Sciences,
FOR
1887, 1888. 1889.

Papers Presented at the First Session.

The following papers were read but no abstract was furnished by their authors for publication: *Part II, p. 75*

“On a New Astatic Galvanometer with a Spiral Needle,” and one on the “Volumetric Determination of Lead, Barium and Sulphuric Acid,” both papers being by Dr. L. W. Andrews, of the Iowa State University.

“Artificial Propagation of the Pollen of Certain Grapes,” by Professor B. D. Halsted, of the Iowa Agricultural College at Ames.

The following abstracts were prepared by the respective authors who are severally to be held responsible for the opinions expressed:

ANIMAL INTELLIGENCE.

BY PROFESSOR H. W. PARKER.

(Abstract.)

So far as evolution is concerned, it really matters little at what point intelligence appears.

Intelligence proper includes the reasoning power as its chief and distinguishing characteristic. Facts regarded as proving a degree of this power in animals were reviewed in detail, and shown to be susceptible of a lower interpreta-

tion in harmony with the general phenomena of animal life. Some observations by the speaker were mentioned as illustrating the great principal that underlies the quasi-intelligence of brutes — marvellous keenness of senses along with no less wonderful quickness and retentiveness of association.

This, without the disturbing influence of reason, renders Darwin's theory of the building up of instincts a possible and credible solution. Spencer is right in classing these with reflex actions and referring, for example, the pursuit and capture of prey to the direct action of visual sensation or motor impulses. No line can be drawn except that we usually confine the word reflex to involuntary acts that immediately concern the integrity of the organism. Perception may or may not be present in either case.

The analogy between human and brute acts, which is sometimes so striking outwardly, is not valid psychologically,

1. Because instinct is unquestionably the ruling fact in animals. Besides there may be many latent or occasional instincts, or these may be simply modified by the force of circumstances in the outworking.

2. The exceptionality of the quasi-intelligent acts break in upon the analogy; and it is met by another analogy in the purely accidental character of some of man's seemingly wise deeds.

3. The superhuman senses and sense-associations of animals weaken the analogy, while accounting for much quasi-intelligence.

4. With such extraordinary senses, the frequent and gross blunders of brutes in perception should not occur on the theory of reason.

5. Animals low in the scale, including three sub-kingdoms, are not claimed to be intelligent; yet their acts, as given on good authority, offer as striking instances of seeming wisdom as in many of the higher divisions.

6. The quasi-reasoning of brutes is confined to specific lines of subsistence and defense, just where we may suppose their organism is endowed with all the activities needed.

7. It does not observably progress in the individual for life or in the species for ages. Such instances as new places of nest-building and increased wariness, are not of progressive mind; and this is not sustained by the facts used in favor of improvement or instinct by intelligence.

8. Rational mind, as we know it, begins in helpless ignorance and slowly comes to its powers by long trial and training.

9. The theory of rationality in brutes involves too high processes of thought in the simplest examples given.

10. There is no evidence in animals of a language of concepts — the necessity and accompaniment of reason in man.

11. The entire psychology of man is inseparable from his self-consciousness; and of such consciousness, which is the only kind we can really conceive, there is no evidence in brutes.

12. The analogy fails in the physical basis. The brain of even the highest ape is no better than a microcephalous idiot, in its volume. Below vertebrates, nothing has yet been proven to be homologous with the cerebrum, not even in ants. The best authorities show that the invertebrate brain, so-called, is shaped by the senses. It is a sensori-motor apparatus.

ANIMAL ÆSTHETICS.

BY PROF. H. W. PARKER.

(*Read by Title.*)

This is a review of all the material facts bearing on the appreciation of beauty by animals below man. The conclusion was that no such appreciation has been proven, and that it is excluded by the only theory of beauty that satisfies all demands.