

[For the REVIEW.]

Dumb Animals

We not unfrequently see, in periodical literature, notices of the intelligence of dogs, horses and elephants; and some of the cases are very remarkable. Such a notice appeared in the last number of the EDUCATIONAL REVIEW, selected from some other source. It has occurred to me that undue prominence is sometimes given to the actions of the animals mentioned, calculated to create an impression unfavorable to others. The animals specified may in the exhibition of their intelligence more nearly resemble man; hence perhaps in part at best the arrest of our attention and the excitation of our wonder. We marvel to see them act so much as we would in similar circumstances. Other animals have a different way of showing their intelligence; it may not be so demonstrative, but possibly it reveals intelligence quite as unmistakable and strikingly. Cats would not generally be ranked in this respect with the dog; and most persons probably would hold that they are not so affectionate; it has even been said and written that they may manifest an attachment to places and houses, but that they care little for the persons they live with. That this is an unfounded representation, I think could be readily proved, and I would like in behalf of the species to be allowed to give an example known to myself.

I once owned a pretty tabby cat, which was a great favorite in the family. The language of the prophet's parable of the pet lamb would almost apply to her and the treatment she received. Having occasion to change my residence for a distant part of the province, I left the cat in care of a friend and did not see her again for six months. In visiting my former home, puss was one of the first objects I sought and noticed, she did not recognize me at once, but in a few seconds either my appearance or the tones of my voice recalled the past and she purred to me with every sign of affection and delight. After a little she suddenly left me, thinking, as I supposed, that she had showed me sufficient attention. Such, however, was not the case, for she shortly returned with a mouse and laid it at my very feet. It required a good deal of persuasion to induce her to treat herself to this dainty morsel she had procured for me, but at last she yielded. Could she have displayed greater intelligence or affection if she had assumed the more demonstrative manner of a dog? And so will other animals.

Bees, whose sting is generally feared, become even fond of those who treat them with kindness. Mine are as glad to see me as any dog is to meet his master. They certainly are pleased when I go among their

hives and tell them of their pleasant useful labors. It is not pretended that they understand such words, but beyond question they rightly interpret the tone of voice in which they are addressed. Squirrels are proverbially timid and shy, but I have had them light on my shoulder as I passed beneath their native trees. All I ever did to gain their confidence was to occasionally throw them a handful of grain, as I visited their accustomed haunts, and to drive away the idle, wicked boys that were molesting them. The merry, pretty ways of squirrels are full of intelligence.

We limit the divine power and goodness when we speak of certain animals as alone manifesting extraordinary intelligence; it is our own ignorance which makes us so think of them, and our folly and loss as well. We might make dumb animals generally our friends by kind and sensible treatment, and thus add an element of happiness to life. The pleasure we give to our humble "fellow mortals," as Burns calls one of the class, comes back to ourselves, and is fraught with enjoyment more exquisite in proportion to man's higher order of faculties. The REVIEW is to be commended for its lessons leading to this result—lessons which teachers cannot value too highly.

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Waltham, June 12th, 1889.

The Bull in the Zodiac.

In continuation of the subject of the sign Taurus, touched upon in an editorial last week, the St. John EDUCATIONAL REVIEW continues:

"This would seem to indicate that over 2000 B. C. the elements of astronomy had been studied and formulated and even the same idea of nomenclature, in some points, made common to various peoples. It appears to us most probable that the bull must have been worshipped before he was placed in the sky. His position must have depended upon his popular estimation. Once enthroned in the sky, however, the bull's prestige would be in a fair way to be increased."

Assyriology—more valuable to the student of myths to-day than even Egyptology—leaves little question that the elements of astronomy were studied and formulated at a period of even greater antiquity than 2000 B. C. The bull was a very ancient representative of power and strength, and there is no doubt that Ezekiel's cherubims presented themselves to the prophet's mind in the shape of the Assyrian winged bull. It is, as the REVIEW has intimated, not improbable that the strength and grandeur of the bull may have prompted the idea of making it the first sign of the Zodiac. At all events, once there, it is certain that the constellation in which the sun stood at the vernal equinox dominated all religious myths for a period exceeding its actual duration in that sign. The Bible, as well as the Ninevah Library of Esarhaddon and the Assyrian Scriptures, indicate the full sway of bull worship long after the equinox had passed into Aries. But the old Greek myths, as well as the old Roman reverence for the "great twin brethren," Castor and Pollux, *vide* Macaulay's "Battle of Lake Regillus," plainly indicate the reminiscence of a yet older time when religion was dominated by the sign *Gemini*.—*Halifax Critic*.