

when the nightjar, for instance, is leaving Africa for England, it begins its homeward journey by going due north.

Now, it does not follow that any nightjar ever intentionally flew straight from Africa to England.

He may easily make a mistake and find himself in France. But France, being just as suitable to him, decides the question, and he may drop down in the woods near Paris.

In short, the homing instinct in migrating birds consists of their wonderful ability in detecting changes in climate and direction of the compass, for their "home" may cover a large area. The rest is all done by landmarks.

Most animals, such as the fox, the wolf and the rabbit find their way back to their lairs by a combination of sight, memory and smell. The fox could smell his way home if he was suddenly struck blind.

But there are extraordinary instances of cats, dogs and pigeons traveling over vast distances where it seems impossible for either sight or scent to be of much use. For instance, a terrier sent to a new home in Birmingham, returned on foot to its old master in High Wycombe, a distance of nearly 100 miles. And a collie sent from a town in Oxfordshire to Leeds turned up three or four days later in Oxfordshire, having "tramped" through four counties over a distance of 200 miles.

In all instances like these memory and sight are of hardly any use except in the immediate neighborhood of "home." Of what service can their sense of smell be either, when the track they traverse is new and strange?

It is the same with homing pigeons. And we are forced to conclude that some animals possess the sense of direction so highly developed that, no matter how or where they are taken, they are able to retrace their steps as though they had left trails behind them like the silk trail of a caterpillar.

The Little Goat's Trick

One day a very hungry wolf pounced down upon a little goat and was just about to make a meal of him when the goat cried out:

"Wait a minute! I have something to say!"

"What is it?" asked the wolf.

"If you will let me go and not eat me, as you intended to do," said the goat, "I'll tell you where there are more goats than you have teeth in your mouth."

"My, my," exclaimed the wolf, smacking his lips, "I'll agree to that."

"Well," declared the goat, "If you run up to the top of yonder mountain you'll see the goats on the other side, and I am sure there are more there than you could eat in a month."

So the wolf ran off up the side of the mountain, but the farther he ran the higher the mountain seemed, and it was a very long time before he reached the top, tired and footsore and out of breath and more hungry than he had been before.

And what do you think was the first thing he saw? A herd of goats. There must have been 200 of them. They were grazing peacefully on a broad plain on the other side of the mountain.

But what else do you suppose? Why, the other side of the mountain was perfectly straight up and down, just like the walls of this room, only as high as fifty houses placed on top of each other, and at the foot of this steep cliff was a broad river that was as swift as an ocean current. Then it was on the other side of this stream that the plain lay upon which the goats were feeding. It was impossible for the wolf to get to them. "That little goat has played me a trick," said the wolf sorrowfully.

Primal Acrostic

This acrostic contains eight words of five letters each. If the words are rightly guessed and written one below another, their initial letters will spell the name of a game much played by college boys in the fall. The cross words are: 1. Something we walk on. 2. A color. 3. A musical instrument. 4. Something attached to a lady's gown. 5. The condition of a cold, barren hillside. 6. Something belonging to a church. 7. A place where golf is played. 8. That which comes every morning.

Christmas Eve and Christmas Morning

One night when I was on my way to sleep
I heard the sleigh-bells jingling in the street;
I heard "Old Santa" walking
I heard him and Mother dear talking;
And there by my bureau the stocking they hung
And down on the sofa the toys they flung;
And then in a minute he put down the tree
Before you could even count one, two, three;
And there was a great big doll, yes there was,
And her hair was a great big fuzzy fuzz;
And there was a little doll-carriage, too,
Oh! everything nice for me to do;
And the tree was covered with balls and a horn
For that was the day that Christ was born;
The Christmas tree was shining white
For it was all full of candle light;
I had a beautiful painting-book
And I peered in every little nook.

—CLARISSA METCALF

(In Pinehurst, N. C., this story truly happened on December 25, 1909, when I was 5 1/4 years old).



WHAT STORY DOES THIS TELL?

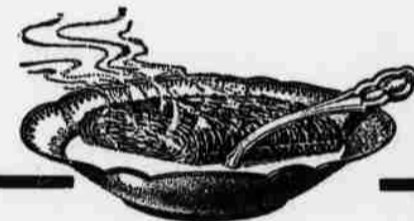
The GOODRICH METEOR

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Cam C. Walley

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