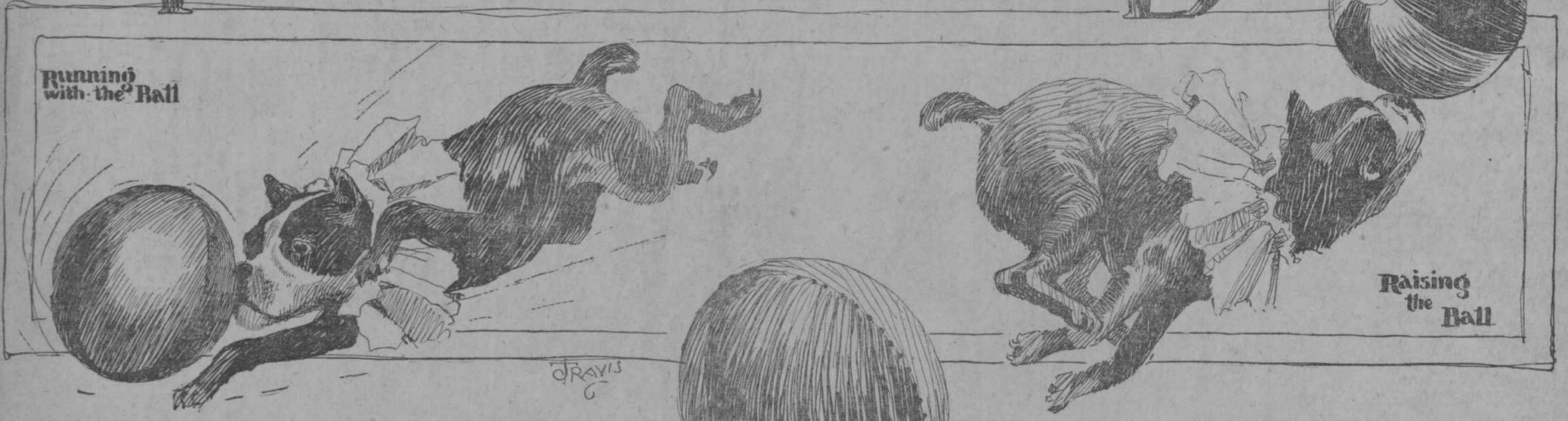


FOX THE FOOT-BALL DOG



A BRILLIANT DOG, STAR ARTIST OF THE WHOLE CIRCUS

SCIENCE EXPLAINS THE ORIGIN OF VARIOUS FEARS.

There is one artist in the circus who excites more enthusiasm than any of the others, and that is Fox, the dog who plays ball. This statement may wound the feelings of some of the human performers, but it is the absolute truth. They may console themselves with the reflection that his success is more the result of nature than of art, and that he is not a conscious rival. To do justice all round it should be said that his performance entirely overshadows that of his master, Mr. Cabannes.

Some people are too old and sophisticated to be pleased by the ordinary delights of the circus—the equestrian lady in pink tights, etc.—but Fox always brings a smile to the solemn face and stirs a little interest in the weary breast.

Fox is a French bulldog, a noble animal of a rare breed. He is the size of a large English bulldog and white and tan in color. He weighs about fifty pounds. His nose is less snub than that of his English cousin, and not at all wrinkled on top, and his lower jaw is not undershot. These are the most noticeable differences between the two species. A subtle, but yet an important distinction is that the French bulldog has a short tail with a round end, instead of a pointed one. A Frenchman would doubtless claim that the dog of France had more esprit than that of England, and in view of Fox's performance, there seems some ground for this claim. Acute intelligence has indeed never been claimed for the bulldog, but rather courage, devotion, honesty and other priceless moral qualities. These are probably shared by English and French bulldogs alike.

Fox does not pursue a regular cut and dried course around the amphitheatre. He zig-zags in all directions, and every time he does something as unexpected as amusing. If he happens to be passing a ring where a group of acrobats are at work he is pretty sure to butt his ball in among them and go after it. There he causes general confusion, and if an acrobat happens to be turning himself into a circle by bending backwards, he is lucky if Fox does not accidentally hit him in the stomach. No one gets angry, however, for Fox has a genial, whole-souled way with him that disarms resentment, in addition to which his physical qualities command great respect.

He seldom goes through a performance without paying a visit to the wooden structure, which is destined to become "a pyramid of palpitating horseflesh." He loves to get on top of this stand and give the ball a fresh start from that advantageous position. If he were on at the same time as the horses there would probably be an indecorous stampede.

In the amphitheatre of the Madison Square Garden Fox makes his appearance, attired simply in a large ruff worn around his neck. Twice daily he gives his performance. The first sight of him is now sufficient to make a large number of spectators laugh uproariously, just as a famous wit like Mark Twain has only to ask for a potato in order to send a whole table into convulsions.

It is obvious that Fox would make an ideal football player. If he could master the science of the game. He has the rare combination of weight, muscle and agility. The way in which he works the ball forward is admirable, and would send a coach into ecstasies. Then, suddenly, he sends it far away. This trick would undoubtedly secure many goals.

Fox often goes round the Garden five or six times, including incidental visits to each of the three rings. The amount of energy he expends is stupendous. He would undoubtedly go on until he was paralyzed by fatigue and would probably die.

Fox comes on, accompanied by his trainer and an assistant, dressed as clown. The trainer carries a football, upon which Fox fixes his attention with an eagerness and earnestness which are simply beyond description. It is the expression of his face at this moment which first gains for him the sympathy of the crowd. No lover gazes at his beloved more intently than Fox at the football.

Why does this dog's performance have such a peculiar fascination? There are many probable reasons. In the first place, he is a dog, and all normal people are fond of dogs. He works with such energy and enthusiasm that he communicates something of his own feelings to the spectators. He has what a dramatic critic would call an earnest and convincing manner. Then he invariably introduces a great element of surprise and novelty into his performance. He does not go through a carefully planned and thought-out act, like the human performers. Nobody knows when he is going to upset a ring full of acrobats or to toss his ball in among the spectators. Every motion which he makes is pleasing. When he jumps up to hit the ball with his nose he appears to be winking one eye at the people. As he runs along he takes a skip at every third or fourth step, a purely gratuitous piece of entertainment. He is, in fact, a great, if unmethodical, artist.

The trainer, Cabannes, throws the ball to Fox. He rises to meet it and, striking it with all the force of his muscular body and his butt-ended nose, sends it flying twenty feet into the air. This is the beginning of a most brilliant and bewildering performance.

Every time the ball comes within reach of him Fox strikes at it with his nose and sends it as far as he can. It is not easy to aim accurately when striking a ball with your nose, and often Fox sends it so far away that, with the most tremendous efforts, he cannot reach it before it touches the ground. Then he gets his nose under it and gets it up in the air again. Sometimes he keeps it off the ground for two or three minutes at a time.

Round and round the great amphitheatre he rushes, neglecting no section of the spectators, and giving all of them his best efforts with absolute impartiality and indefatigability. Everybody has an oppor-

tunity to hear the thud of his doughty nose as it strikes the leather ball. Cabannes and his companion run after Fox, trying to catch up with him, and taking advantage of every short cut in order to do so. When they get hold of the ball, which happens occasionally, one of them tosses it up in the air, and Fox gives it a particularly high toss and starts off on his chase again. The other night the men took fifteen minutes before they could catch him. That was one of the finest performances Fox ever gave.

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A SCIENTIFIC STUDY of fears has been carried on with tremendous labor and care by Professor G. Stanley Hall, of Clark University, Worcester, Mass. The results of his work up to the present are published by him in the American Journal of Psychology.

Some interesting deductions may be made from this list. In the first place, it is noticeable that boys acknowledge to a great many less fears than girls. Perhaps this is a result of masculine boastfulness. Forty-four girls fear the sight of blood as against fourteen boys. Two hundred and thirty boys fear thunder and lightning as against one hundred and fifty-five girls. In regard to water, height and shyness, boys are the more fearful.

The great object of this study is to throw light on the development and working of the human mind. The present tendency in psychological work is not to rely on laboratory experiments, but to put certain questions to persons and obtain answers based on their ordinary experience.

The following classes of fears show decline with advancing years: Meteors, clouds, blood, end of the world, being kidnapped, fairies, loss of orientation, shyness of strangers. While the following seem to increase: Thunder and lightning, reptiles, robbers, self-consciousness, machinery.

Professor Hall eventually tabulated 6,450 fears described by 1,707 persons. Many of the answers are intensely interesting, especially when they relate to the fears of childhood. Some of these, which have no apparent basis, Professor Hall is inclined to attribute to sensations inherited from earlier stages in the procession of evolution.

The number of persons who felt an impulse to throw themselves from high places was astonishing. Here is an example: "Girl, aged thirteen, at the top of a high building, was irresistibly impelled to squeeze between the bars of the railing to see if one could fall to the pavement; is sure she would have landed there if she had not been held, and describes it as an outside power forcing her against her will, as to very terrible and conquering her control."

It would appear that thunder storms are feared by most persons; that reptiles follow with strangers and darkness as close seconds, while fire, death, domestic animals, disease, wild animals, water, ghosts, insects, rats and mice, robbers, high winds, dream fears, cats and dogs, cyclones, solitude, drowning, birds, represent decreasing degrees of fearfulness.

The following case shows that this fear is not confined to the young and weak-minded: "A professor of psychology, aged fifty, was fearless of high places through his youth, but soon after college saw a servant fall from his room, four stories, helped bring him in, went for a doctor, but shoes cannot sleep in high rooms at a hotel; tried in vain to ascend Bunker Hill Monument as a discipline, but found the tension too great when half way up; could only get over the suspension bridge at Niagara eighteen years later by walking in the middle and grasping a carriage; the fear is rather more that the whole structure may collapse, but partly that he will lose control."

Altogether a list of 208 classes of objects feared was made up. The order quoted is not quite the same in different localities. It is curious to note that self-consciousness is dreaded by twenty-four boys in Cambridge, Mass., and does not figure at all in St. Paul or Trenton. In Cambridge alone the fear of thunder and lightning does not lead. In St. Paul sixty-seven fear cyclones, and only eight the end of the world, which has sixty-two victims in Trenton, where also forty-six fear being buried alive.

One girl, aged sixteen, has never sailed past the Palisades on the Hudson without fearing they would fall.

The St. Paul returns show an average of 4.81 fears for each person, those from Trenton 3.66, while the Cambridge (Mass.) boys report 2.28 each. Professor Hall takes this to indicate more interest in the work in St. Paul than in Cambridge. The St. Paul fears lead all others in intensity and objective realism; their quality is more primitive, and they have less variety. Here, however, we meet with fears of train robbers, having to sleep on the porch and starvation.

A boy aged sixteen says: "The horror of hell is you are always falling."

The following list shows how males and females compare in the matter of fears. It should be remembered that the great majority of these are children:

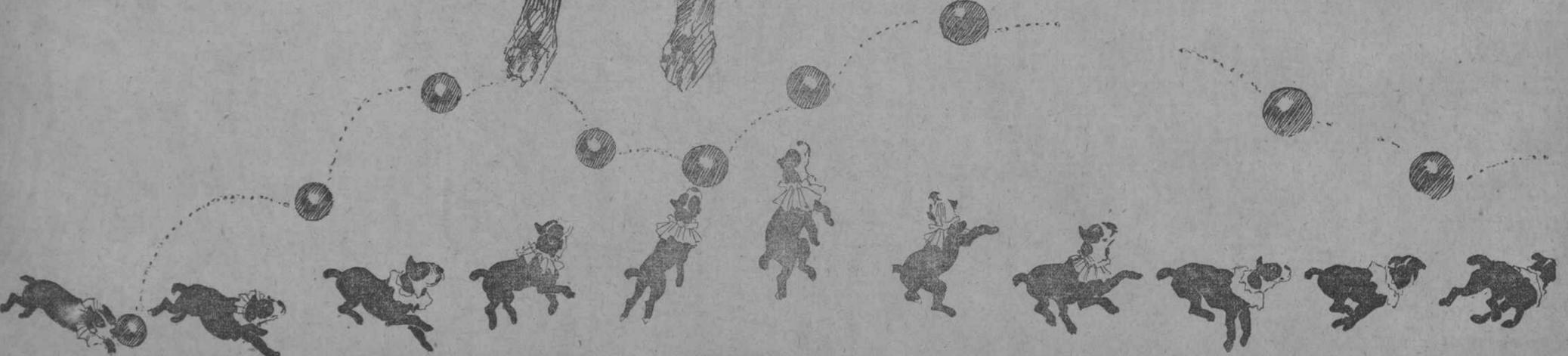
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	Females	Males
Thunder and lightning	230	155
Persons	190	129
Reptiles	180	123
Darkness	171	130
Death	162	73
Domestic animals	168	57
Rats and mice	75	13
Insects	74	52
Ghosts	72	44
Wind	61	75
End of world	53	11
Water	53	62
Robbers	48	32
Machinery	47	31
Blood	44	14
Heights	40	43
Self-consciousness	40	28
Noises	36	10
Burned alive	32	3
Imaginary things	29	23
Drowning	20	19
Clouds	15	4
Solitude	15	4
Plagues	14	2
Meteors	12	0
Shyness	8	0
Fairies	7	0
Ridicule	6	1

The fear of hovering so often felt in dreams is a relic of a time when man swam and floated and had no legs. There are traces of gill slits under our necks.

A large class of people are haunted, both awake and asleep, by fears of losing themselves. For instance, a girl aged seven says she "often woke up in terror and cried loudly because she could not think where she was, even whether she was in bed or not." Another, aged nineteen, sweats, feels faint and nauseated if she cannot instantly locate every door and window on waking nights. This fear is very common in both sexes, and in childhood and maturity. Dread of getting lost is often abnormally strong. This may be a relic of primitive life, when to wander far away from the tribe meant to lose it forever. On the other hand, many children show a propensity to run away, suggesting a survival of instinct inherited from a nomadic race.

The fear of closeness, called claustrophobia, is a curious one. A woman, aged thirty-six, writes that she hates all small rooms; must have windows, if not doors, open; can never enter a room if the key is on the outside; if she does so, must make a great effort to breathe.



Kinesiographic • Snapshots of Fox •