

KARUNA PRAYER



सत्त्वेषु मैत्री गुणिषु प्रमोदं,
क्लिष्टेषु जीवेषु कृपा परत्वं ।
माध्यस्थ भावं विपरीत वृत्तौ,
सदा ममात्मा विदधातु देव ।।



*Satveshu Maitri Gunishu Pramodam
Klishteshu Jeeveshu Kripa Paratvan
Madhyastha Bhavam Viparita Vritow
Sada Mamatma Vidadhatu Deva*

*May my soul always find fulfilment
In friendship towards all beings,
In reverence to all the virtuous,
Incompassion towards all suffering creatures,
And in remaining neutral towards those hostile to me.
This is my prayer.*

THE IMMORTAL SONG

Amity

May the sacred stream of amity
Flow forever in my heart
May the universe prosper,
Such is my cherished desire.

Appreciation

May my heart sing with ecstasy
At the sight of the virtuous.
And may my life be an offering
At their feet.

Compassion

May my heart bleed at the sight of
The wretched, the cruel, the poor;
And may tears of compassion
Flow from my eyes.

Equanimity

May I always be there to show the path
To the pathless wanderers of life;
Yet, if they should not hearken to me
May I bide in patience.

May the spirit of goodwill
Enter all our hearts.
May we all sing in chorus
The Immortal Song of human concord.

*- by Pujya Sri Chitrabhanuji,
Founder, Jain Meditation,
International Centre, New York,*

KARUNA INTERNATIONAL



1. We are a registered non-profit service Organisation promoting humane values of compassion, kindness, love and respect for ecology, environment, animal welfare and vegetarianism in the student community.
2. We promote Karuna Clubs in schools and colleges and supply literature and guide books to Educational Institutions free of charge.
3. We promote humane values by conducting regular programmes and activities in schools and colleges.
4. We publish a monthly newsletter and an Annual Souvenir in which reports of Karuna Club activities, photographs and articles of students and teachers are published.
5. We are recognised and supported by the Animal Welfare Board of India.
6. We organise an Annual Convention in which awards and prizes are given to outstanding Karuna Clubs, to teachers and to students based on their yearly performance.
7. We also conduct Teachers', Students' and Activists' Training Programmes on Humane Education.
8. We provide Exhibition material on Animal Welfare to schools on request.
9. We have 39 Karuna Kendras in different states of India.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE



Divine Life Society of South Africa published four volumes of Compassion Series under the titles :

1. Call of Compassion.
2. Compassion in Action
3. Compassion - the Crown of Life
4. Heart of Compassion.

These books contain delightful animal stories and fascinating notes on natural science. We received 25 sets of these volumes through Animal Welfare Board of India, Chennai and distributed them to a few schools that conducted a Teachers' Training Programme in Humane Education in Chennai. The schools liked them very much and requested that we bring out a small book containing selected stories from these four volumes and distribute them to teachers and students of all schools where Karuna Clubs are functioning. Hence this book has been compiled.

The purpose of this book is to inculcate reverence for life, and love and compassion for all living creatures in the hearts of all.

The saints of our country were exponents of the concept of **Sarvam Kalvidam Brahma** - the concept that the entire universe, with all its beings and creatures, is nothing but the form of the Almighty Lord. The saints of God and even psychologists rightly say that much of the cruelty and callousness exhibited by man today have their origin in his cruelty to the dumb creatures of God. Compassion, Mercy and Kindness are the fundamentals

of ethical life.

Animals, birds, insects and plants are closely linked with ecology. Their protection and preservation are therefore vital for the survival of the human race. Many exotic birds, animals, flowers and plants are on the endangered list.

To protect animals and plead for their rights goes hand in hand with our protection of nature. Since animals cannot plead for themselves, it is our duty to do so on their behalf. This is the principal aim of the publication of this small book.

The stories selected in this book suit both adults and children. They have been selected from authors both in the East and the West. Many of the stories are extremely touching and are sure to make one's heart vibrate with love and sympathy. There are humorous stories also.

We have also included sketches for every story. The sketches are made by Mr. Ramanujam (RAHNU), a famous artist.

Our special thanks are due to Swami Sahajanandaji Maharaj of Divine Life Society of South Africa, Durban who gave us permission to publish the book for distribution to schools & colleges.

We are very sure that these lovely stories will inspire many thousands of young students, who will imbibe the qualities of compassion to all living beings.

Kailashmull Dugar
President

Padam Tatia
Gen. Secretary

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CONTENTS

I. Karuna Prayer	
II. Karuna International	
III. Publisher's Note	
1. The Compassion of Buddha : <i>Sadhu Vaswani</i>	1
2. The Story of the Bullocks : <i>Visalakshi Johri</i>	4
3. The Price of Kindness : <i>Crystal Rogers</i>	7
4. The Change : <i>Ralph Waldo Trine</i>	12
5. King Sibi & The Dove : <i>N.C. Rangaswami</i>	14
6. In Search of a Friend : <i>Visalakshi Johri</i>	17
7. Daniel in the Lion's Den : <i>Pamela Wilson</i>	19
8. Bachan's Diwali : <i>Visalakshi Johri</i>	23
9. Dawn : <i>Crystal Rogers</i>	27
10. Faithful Bobby : <i>N.S. Rangaswamy</i>	33
11. The Rescue : <i>Visalakshi Johri</i>	35
12. A Sage's Compassion : " <i>Ramana Smriti</i> "	42
13. The Cruel Sport : <i>Visalakshi Johri</i>	44
14. Three Friends :	47
15. King Yudhisthira & The Dog : <i>N.C. Rangaswami</i>	52
16. Unusual Friendships : <i>Anonymous</i>	55
17. A Monkey Seeks justice : <i>F.H. Khisty</i>	58
18. Mouse Changes Man : <i>Muni Shri C. Sagarji</i>	61
19. Monkey's Motherly Care : " <i>Poona Herald</i> "	63
20. "Not So Dumb" : " <i>Animal World</i> "	67
21. Man's Best Friends : <i>D.R. Blackman</i>	71
23. The Squirrel & the Sparrow : <i>Dr. Michael W. Fox</i>	74
22. Vegetarianism	78

The Compassion of Buddha



LORD Buddha is in Rajgir and is one day taking a walk. He gazes at the beauty of the flowers of the field and says, “O trees and flowers of the field, how trustfully you turn your faces to the sun! And how trustfully the doves and nightingales take shelter in you! Alas! Man hurts the birds and slays the animals. The wisdom of man is drenched in blood.”

Just then a flock of goats and sheep pass by. The Buddha sees that the herdsman is driving the animals with difficulty.

“What is the matter?” asks the Buddha.

The herdsman says, “Sir, there is in the herd a limping lamb. He finds it difficult to keep pace with others in the herd.”

With great affection the Buddha takes the limping lamb on his shoulder.

Then the Buddha asks the herdsman, “Friend, where are you driving the herd to in the heat of the noonday sun?”

The herdsman replies, “I have been asked to give the king a hundred goats and sheep for sacrifice in the Yajna which takes place this evening.”

The Buddha slowly adds, “I, too, shall go with you.”

They enter the city, side by side, the herdsman and the Buddha. Meekly walks the Buddha with the lamb on his shoulder. They cross the bazaar. The buyers in the market stop a while to gaze at him and the women open their doors to see how gently and gracefully he walks, this great lover of peace.

He moves on. Many gaze at him again and again. Many know him not. They have but heard of him and say, “Behold the holy man who dwells on the hill.”

The Buddha reaches the place where preparations have been made for sacrifice in the Yajna. The man in charge is about to strike with a knife the lamb marked for sacrifice, when suddenly the Buddha exclaims, “Great king, let not the man strike. Take my life as a sacrifice, O king, and spare the lamb.”

The words move the heart of the king. He then asks the Buddha to speak to the people. A few words only does the Buddha speak on the occasion.

“O man, you can take life easily, but remember none of you can give life. So, have mercy, have compassion. Never forget that

compassion makes man noble and the world beautiful. Remember, too, that all living beings are linked together in friendship. Therefore, resolve that you will live on bloodless diet. Verily, gentleness is the crown of life!”

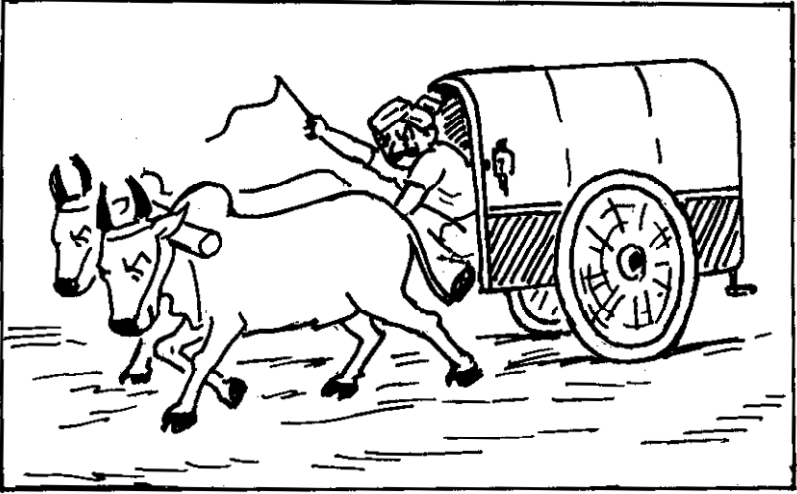
The next day, a decree is proclaimed by the king. The order goes forth that none shall henceforth kill for sacrifice or for private pleasure. For life is one, and the crown of life is mercy and compassion.

Amazing Animal Fact - 1



Sheep are frequently thought of as unintelligent animals. Despite these perceptions researchers reported them to be just below pigs and on par with cattle in IQ. Sheep can recognize individual human and ovine faces, and remember them for years. Sheep can also differentiate emotional states through facial characteristics.

The Story of the Bullocks



RAMU was taking his bullock-cart to the market. Over-head an aeroplane was circling about. It seemed to mock at the poor cart moving so slowly, drawn by two bullocks.

“Oh, you slow coaches!” shouted Ramu. “Look at that plane. How fast he goes! He needs no grass or fodder. I have to feed you, wash you and doctor you. Yet you don’t move fast enough.”

And he started to race his bullocks mercilessly up the rough path.

The next day the bullocks fell ill and the country doctor told Ramu that they were too tired and would not be able to work for a week.

Ramu wept bitterly on hearing the doctor. His vegetables would rot if they were not sold daily. From where would he get money for his family?

The doctor told him to push the cart himself and sell his goods. Ramu sighed, for there was nothing else he could do. He took up the loads, placed them on the cart and began to lift it slowly. It was very heavy indeed. Ramu could not push it up the road. He called out to his friend Kishen and asked for his help. Kishen said that he was too busy to come. So Ramu engaged a servant and they both managed to move the cart, but the speed was extremely slow. Ramu's face was covered with sweat and dust. He fretted and fumed. Overhead the aeroplane circled merrily.

Ramu said, "What is the use of that plane? It cannot go over the road. It cannot move my loads to the market"

Then he remembered how he had overworked and overloaded his two strong and faithful bullocks.

"God has punished me for my cruelty!" he cried.

Somehow the market was reached and the goods sold.

Ramu paid the servant and returned to his hut. Fearing to go to the shed lest he should see his bullocks dead, he silently sat in a corner. His daughter Leela was carrying some hay.

He asked, "Leela, where are you taking the hay?"

"To our bullocks, of course," said Leela. "Who else would eat hay?"

Ramu sprang up joyfully. "Give me the hay. I will feed them myself."

He went into the shed and found the two bullocks. For the first time he noticed how strong, beautiful and gentle they were. He stroked and massaged their legs and lovingly fed them. The doctor

then arrived with jaggery and medicines.

“Will they live?” Ramu asked anxiously.

The doctor only nodded and thrust the round balls of medicine down the throats of the bullocks.

He said, “Ramu, these faithful animals are our best friends. Without them we cannot live. If you foolishly treat them ill, you will be the loser.”

Ramu hung down his head in shame. After a few days, the bullocks were well enough to draw the cart. Ramu sang merrily as he saw the aeroplane. “Mock me as you will. I am no fool now. You are a butterfly, but my bullock-cart is a busy ant.”

From that day, Ramu never overloaded the cart or overworked his bullocks. He fed them well and they served him better than ever.

Amazing Animal Fact:2



On average, a dairy cow produces 90 glasses of milk daily, depending on genetics, feeding practices, and weather. The average cow has more than 40,000 jaw movements per day.

The Price of Kindness



KISHEN danced along the road from his home to High Street, full of excitement at the thought of what he was going to buy. His uncle, who had been staying at his home for a few days, had given him twenty rupees, and it was a long time since Kishen had had so much money to spend just on himself.

As he approached the shops, he turned over in his mind what he intended to buy—a box of marbles perhaps, bigger and better than those owned by his friend Prem, who lived just across the road. Or, there was the jack~knife with four blades, which he had seen in the window of the stationer's shop at the corner, the price of which had been recently reduced from forty rupees to ten rupees.

Just at the corner of a small street, old Habib Ali, the bird-seller, sat snoozing in the shade of an Acacia tree. A few yards away from him on the ground were four or five cages, all empty, except for the smallest, in which a lonely green parrot sat panting in the hot morning sun.

The cage was without food and water, and there was not an inch of shade into which the bird could screw his burning body. His tongue was hot and dry and his body ached from the numerous twists and turns he had made in his frantic attempts to escape. In doing so, he had broken a number of his tail feathers, and it was for this reason that he had still remained unsold when all his mates had found buyers.

Only three days before, he had been flying happily in the forest, calling cheerfully to his companions and without a trouble in the world. Since then his life had been a terrible nightmare, first trapped in a cruel net from which he had struggled in vain to

Amazing Animal Fact: 3



Flamingos often stand on one leg, the other leg tucked beneath the body. Recent research indicates that standing on one leg may allow the birds to conserve more body heat, given that they spend a significant amount of time wading in cold water. Flamingos may stamp their webbed feet in the mud to stir up food from the bottom.

escape, and later packed into a basket with other terrified, screaming parrots. Then, arriving at their journey's end, they were all pushed into tiny cages in which there was scarcely room for them to turn round.

Lying with glazed eyes at the bottom of the cage, the parrot had remained motionless for so long that an onlooker might have taken him for dead.

Suddenly the enquiring nose of a hungry stray dog awoke the bird to further terror. With fearful screams he beat his wings helplessly against the bars.

Just at that very moment Kishen came skipping round the corner, his money clutched in his hand.

It did not take more than a shout from the boy to send the dog quickly running off. Bending down gently, Kishen noticed the bird's bleeding wings and its look of utter misery and dejection.

"Why do you keep your bird in such a small cage?" he enquired of the bird-seller.

Habib Ali, having woken up, was now all smiles in preparation of serving a customer.

"This cage very strong; good quality," replied Habib Ali, amazed that someone should worry about something so unimportant as the size of the cage.

"You want to buy parrot? Good talker," he added very eagerly.

"How much?" asked Kishen, fingering his twenty rupees and

thinking what fun it would be to have a parrot of his own.

“Thirty rupees parrot; twenty rupees cage,” answered the bird vendor hopefully, wondering how much a boy of Kishen’s age was likely to have.

Kishen turned away with a sigh. It was too bad. He would love to have a parrot, and especially this one which looked so terribly unhappy.

“Wait, wait!” Habib Ali cried out, following Kishen now with the cage and the parrot in it held in front of him. “See, today I sell cheap, this my last bird. You take it-ten rupees parrot, ten rupees cage.”

For half a second Kishen wavered. A vision of marbles and jack-knife flashed before his eyes but was quickly banished.

“All right,” he said, and hurriedly held out the twenty *rupees* before Habib Ali could change his mind.

Very soon Kishen was showing his mother his purchase.

“I know the cage is too small,” he told her, “but I shall save all my pocket money and buy him a bigger one.”

His mother looked at him doubtfully.

“But, Kishen,” she said, “this is a wild bird. It was probably caught only a few days ago. Do you really want to keep a wild bird like a prisoner?”

“He will get tame, won’t he?” the boy said anxiously. “Do you mean it would be cruel to keep him?”

Just at that moment a few green parrots flew overhead, calling

to each other as they went. The caged parrot beat desperately on the bars of his prison and called back.

Kishen did not need his mother's answer anymore. Slowly and carefully he opened the door of the cage. Instantly the green feathers flashed out, and the bird was flying to join his companions, screaming joyfully as he flew.

Kishen's mother smiled, and suddenly Kishen found that he was smiling, too.

"I am glad he has gone," he said. "It must be awful in a cage. It is a pity about uncle's twenty rupees, though."

"I shouldn't be surprised," said his mother slowly, "if those twenty rupees have not given more happiness than any other twenty rupees you have spent in your life."

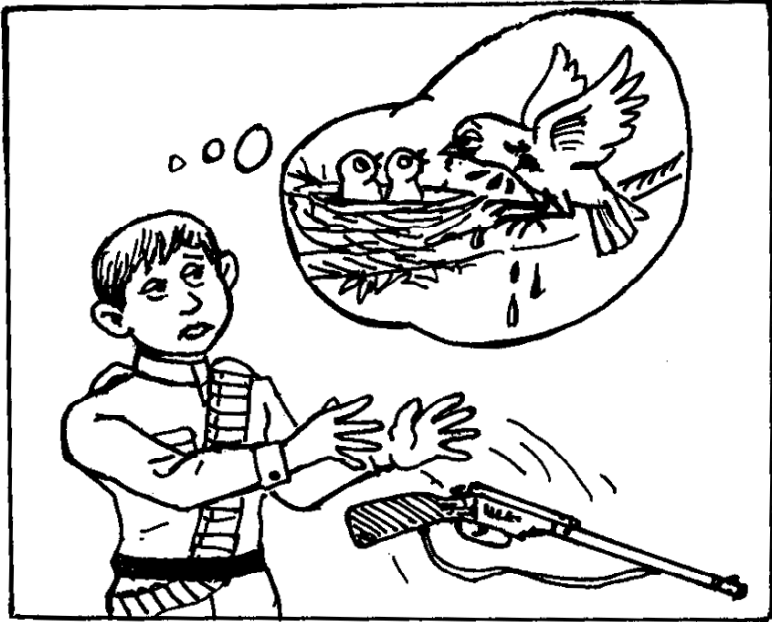
And thinking it over afterwards, Kishen realized that this was true.

Amazing Animal Fact:4



The smallest bird species is a hummingbird, the 5-cm Bee Hummingbird. They are known as hummingbirds because of the humming sound created by their beating wings which flap at high frequencies audible to humans. They hover in mid-air at rapid wing flapping rates, typically around 50 – 200 times per second, allowing them also to fly at speed backwards or upside down!

The Change



THE great Russian novelist, Turgenieff, relates a most touching incident from his own life, which awakened in him feelings that coloured all his writings with a deep and tender feeling.

When Turgenieff was a boy of ten, his father took him out one day for bird shooting. As they tramped across the brown stubble, a golden pheasant rose with a low whirr from the ground at his feet. With the joy of a sportsman throbbing through his veins, the young boy raised his gun and fired, wild with excitement. The creature instantly fell, fluttering at his side.

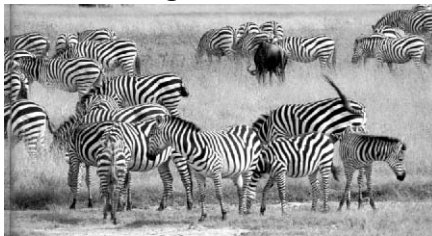
Life was ebbing fast, but the instinct of the heroic mother was stronger than death itself. With a feeble flutter of her wings, the mother bird reached the nest where her young brood were huddled, unconscious of danger. Then she gave such a look of pleading and reproach at the boy that his heart stood still at the ruin he had wrought. The little brown head slowly toppled over, and only the dead body of the mother shielded her nestlings. And never to his last days did he forget the feeling of cruelty and guilt that came upon him at that moment.

“Father, father, what have I done?” Turgenieff cried out, turning his horror-stricken face to his father.

But not to his father’s eye had this little tragedy been enacted, and he said, “Well done, my son; that was well done for your first shot You will soon be a fine sportsman.”

“Never, father, never again shall I ever destroy any living creature. If that is sport, I will have none of it. Life is more beautiful to me than death, and since I cannot give life, I will not take it.”

Amazing Animal Fact: 5



Zebras are very fast-moving animals, and can reach speeds of up to 65kmph. A zebra's stripes act like an equine fingerprint - each individual's pattern is unique. Zebras sleep standing up, and usually only when in the safety of a group.

King Sibi & The Dove



In Olden days, there ruled in Ayodhya a very great king by name Sibi. He was well-known for his justice and his love and compassion for all creatures.

One day, while the king was seated on his throne attending to the affairs of the state, a dove flew into his lap for refuge.

“Save me!” gasped the dove, “and protect me from my cruel enemy.”

The poor bird looked most pitiable. It was bleeding and its feathers were torn.

King Sibi stroked its feathers gently and said, “Poor dove, be not afraid. I shall take care of you. Cost what it may, I shall see that your life is protected. No harm shall come to you.”

At that moment, a huge hawk flew into the hall where the true king was seated. It had come in search of its prey, which it had been pursuing, and which now sat trembling on the king’s lap.

The hawk spoke thus to the king, “Great ruler, I am a bird of prey. I have to live by killing other birds and eating them. I had almost killed this bird when it flew to you for shelter. Do you know that by saving this dove you will be the cause of not only my own death but that of my whole family as well? Is this fair? How can you be said to be virtuous and just if my family and I are victims of this dire injustice at your hands?”

“Ah! I see,” said the king with an understanding look in his eyes. “It is because you have lost your prey that you are angry. But I cannot agree to let you have this dove, as I have promised it my protection. Instead, you shall have whatever you choose to feed yourself and your family. Tell me what you want and you shall have it in abundance.”

“Very well,” the hawk said slowly and thoughtfully, “you say I may have anything I choose. Then I choose a portion of your flesh of the same weight as the dove. This is the only substitute that will satisfy me.”

The king at once expressed his willingness to grant this strange request, and ordered the scales to be brought. He placed the dove on one pan of the scale. Now, piece after piece of his flesh was cut and placed on the other pan, so that the weight might be equal to that of the dove. But an unusual thing began happening. The more he cut off the flesh of his body, the heavier the dove appeared to get. But the king was undaunted although he was becoming a mere framework of bones. Lest he should fail to keep his word before life itself departed from his body, he hastily climbed onto the scale himself, thereby making the sacrifice complete.

The queen, the ministers and the generals were all struck with grief. Loud sobbing was heard on all sides. But King Sibi sat

unmoved and cheerful, because he felt happy to think that he was to his promise and had saved the life of the poor dove that sought his help.

He said, “I do not sit here as a sovereign of the lowly or the great, or of the dove or the hawk. I sit as a sovereign of Dharma or justice. If I fail in my duty, my subjects will do likewise, and Adharma or injustice will prevail everywhere.”

As the king uttered the heroic words, celestial angels and nymphs at once appeared from above and a loud voice was heard: “Saved! Saved!”

Nobody knew whence the voice came. They all looked around. The hawk had disappeared and was no more to be seen. Only the dove was there.

The dove said, “King Sibi, wonder not. I shall explain it all. I am no dove, nor was that a real hawk that asked for your flesh. It was God Indra, and I am God Agni. We heard of your great love and compassion for birds and beasts and wished to test the truth of it. We are satisfied. Now find your body whole, strong and handsome as before.”

At once the king’s body was restored whole and sound.

The dove went on, “King Sibi, long will you live and happily will you reign. Your name will be handed down from age to age, and your glory will be sung for ever.”



Will you fly away with me?

In Search of a Friend

I said to the lovely flowering tree,

“Will you be my friend and play with me?”

“You dig up my root

And eat up my fruit

A friend to you I never will be,” said he.

I said to the humming honey bee,

“Will you be my friend and play with me?”

“Don’t try to be funny,

You stole all my honey.

A friend to you I never will be,” said he.

I said to the rabbit with ruby eyes,

“Will you be my friend and play with me?”

“You chase me and kill me,

Roast me and eat me.

A friend to you I never will be,” said he.

I said to the parrot limping by,

“Will you be my friend and play with me?”

“My fine wings you tore,

I can fly no more.

A friend to you I never will be,” said he.

I said to the butterfly so gay and free,

“Will you be my friend and play with me?”

“You stick me with a pin
And think It no sin.

A friend to you I never will be,” said he.

I felt so lonely and ever so sad
And began to wonder, “Am I so bad?”

Then said I to the flowering tree,
“Sorry, I harmed you, forgive me.”

I called aloud to the humming bee,
“No more a robber will I ever be.”

I promised the rabbit with a bitter tear,
“Never shall I chase you, so do not fear.”

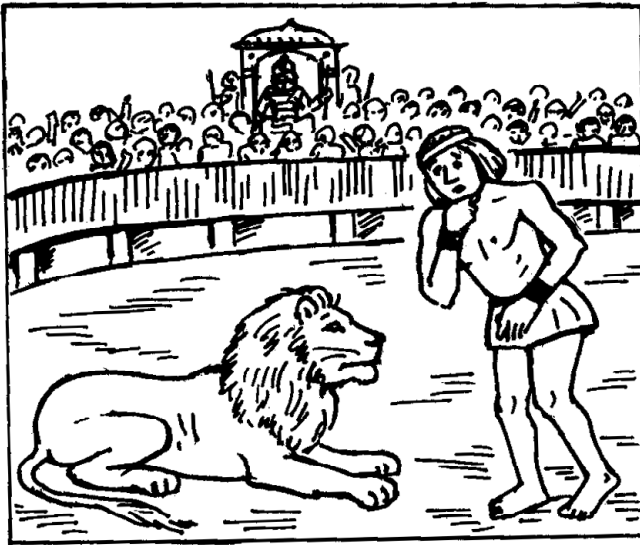
I went to the parrot and began to apologise,
“I shan’t be cruel, I shall be nice.”

I went to the butterfly and confessed my sin,
“Never again shall I stick you with a pin.”

Once again I asked these hopefully,
“Will you be my friends and play with me?”
They smiled and answered, “Most certainly!”



Daniel in the Lion's Den



WHEN the King of Babylon attacked Jerusalem, conquered the Jews and took many prisoners to Babylon, the Jews thought God had forsaken them, since the temple built by King Solomon was also despoiled. They did not know that God had power over all the earth nor did they realize that God could be with them in any foreign land.

But there was one prisoner in Babylon who believed that God still cared for him and that he must still obey His rules. That prisoner was a young man named Daniel and he served in the King's palace.

The King had instructed that the workers in the palace should get the richest and best food and wine, and that they be educated. But Daniel refused the rich food and wine and begged the chief steward for vegetables, milk and water.

The chief steward replied, “Young man, the King will chop off my head if you do not grow up strong and well built”

Daniel only said, “Judge, sir, after ten days.”

At the end of ten days, Daniel looked smarter and stronger than the rest

Daniel was endowed with a divine gift. He could interpret dreams and visions, and he was often sent for by the king to interpret the meaning of his dreams. But he told the king that it was God alone who revealed the mysteries to him. And he thanked God for His help.

The king implicitly believed his explanations and was well pleased with them, as they always came true. So Daniel was appointed as a high officer in the king’s court. He was clothed in a purple robe by the king, who also presented him with a gold chain to be worn around his neck.

When the other officers found that soon Daniel would be given the highest position in the kingdom, their jealousy was aroused. So they started plotting against him. The plot was laid and hatched.

They went to the king and persuaded him to sign a decree or law that anyone who prayed to anyone else but the king would be thrown into a den of lions.

Daniel was a man of prayer. Three times in a day he knelt beside a window and used to ask God for His blessings. The window was in an upper room facing Jerusalem’s direction. Even

though Daniel knew of the decree, undauntedly he opened the window and prayed.

The jealous co-workers of Daniel ran to the king and said, “O king, your decree has been broken by a man. Wilt thou throw him into the lions’ den?”

“Sure, I will,” said the king. “But who is he?”

Then they said, “Daniel-the exile from Judea. He still prays to his God.”

“Fools! You have all tricked me! But I have given my word of honour. So throw him into the lions’ den. His Lord will certainly save him. You deceivers shall reap what you have sown,” the king replied with a sad heart.

As they threw Daniel into the lions’ den, Daniel said, “Lord, Thy will be done.”

Roaring, the lions came up to him, but the fiercest and strongest one kept them away saying in his language, “Wait, till after I have spoken to him.”

The other lions obeyed his order implicitly.

“Do you remember me,” the lion’s eyes appeared to say, and then he went close to Daniel and lovingly licked his hand.

“Do you know me? I wonder,” thought Daniel. “God has protected me.”

The king who really loved Daniel fasted that night and prayed, “Deliver him Lord from the unrighteous.”

Before daybreak the king ran to the den shouting, “Daniel! I prayed to the Lord to deliver you.”

Strangely enough, back came Daniel’s voice, “O king, your prayer was heard by my God, who sent angels to tie up the lions’ mouths. The fiercest one stood guard over me all night.

They have not hurt me in the least. They are my friends.”

“Bring Daniel out!” yelled the king. “Throw the tricksters in!” he ordered.

But Daniel intervened, saying, “My king, forgive them for they knew not what they did.”

Dropping down with shame and with clasped hands the officers said, “We also shall worship God.”

The royal proclamation was signed.

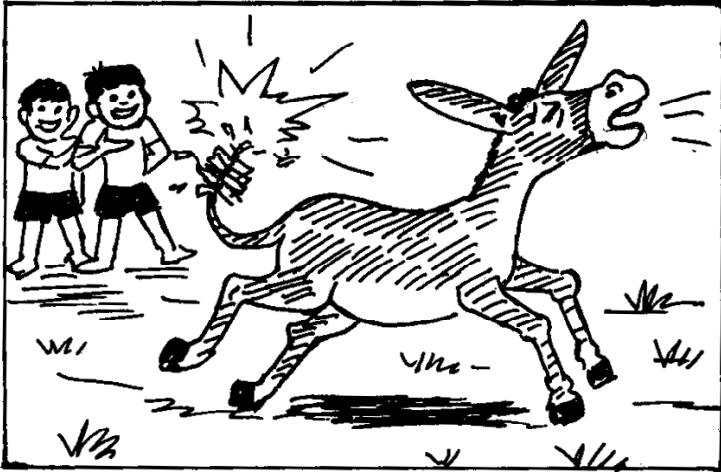
“I make decree that in all my royal dominion men shall worship God. He delivers and rescues, He works wonders in heaven and on earth.”

Amazing Animal Fact:6



The **Cheetah** is the fastest land animal in the world, reaching speeds of up to 113km/h. They can accelerate from 0 to 100km/h in just 3 seconds. When running, cheetahs use their tail to steer, like a rudder for a boat. Cheetahs are the only big cat that can turn in mid-air while sprinting.

Bachan's Diwali



BACHAN is the name I gave to my little donkey. He is the son of my father's donkey, who carries a load of clothes daily to the river and back.

Bachan has a beautiful grey coat and a white star-shaped patch between his eyes. His long ears are shaped like canna leaves. He is just a year old. So I have to take great care of him—wash him, brush him, and feed him. Often I spread a mat next to his bed of hay and sleep by his side.

Bachan loves me and never kicks me. In fact, he never kicks anyone, because I do not allow anyone to tease him. My father told me that if we are kind to our pets and do not trouble them, they behave very nicely. If we are rough to them, they also turn rough.

Last Diwali I had a bad time. Since then I am very careful where I take my pet This is what happened.

Bada Sahib, whose clothes my father washes, has two sons, who are like the two ears of Bachan. I mean that they look alike. Perhaps they are twins. One is called Ajay and the other Vijay. They have a younger sister, Jaya, whom I like very much.

The two boys had come down from their school on the hills to spend their Diwali holidays at their father's house. They looked so clean and neat in their uniforms which my father had washed so well, that I could not take my eyes off them. But after Diwali night, I took a dislike to their smartness. You can judge for yourself whether I am right

My father had bought some sweets made of jaggery and a few crackers and sparklers for me. I finished the sweets and the fireworks very quickly and asked for more. My father looked at me sadly and said, "That is all there is. I could not buy more as the prices are high."

I was disappointed but tried to laugh as if I did not care. Then my father said, "Come, let us go to Bada Sahib's house and watch the fireworks. The two young masters would like to play with you."

I jumped for joy and asked, "May I take Bachan also with me?"

My father looked a little thoughtful and then replied, "Donkeys do not enjoy fireworks but there is no harm if you keep Bachan close to you."

Marvellous patterns of fire filled the air. I wondered how little mud vessels and paper packets could produce such magic.

Stars of different colours shot up like fountains. Rivers of silver and gold flowed into the darkness. Bright circles like moons and suns twirled about. Night was turned into day. Every now and then crackers burst and Bachan shivered with fear. I put my arms around his neck and held him tight. His nose and ears both began to twitch and his eyes glistened strangely. But he did not try to run or bray, because he trusted me. He knew that no harm could come to him as long as I was by his side.

After a while the noise died down. I then noticed the two boys whispering something to each other, pointing towards Bachan and me and smiling. I felt proud as I thought that they were admiring my pet. They came up to me and said, “Will you let us have your donkey for a while? We want to play with him.”

I gladly handed over the rope and they led Bachan away. The little girl gave Bachan some sweets. I sat on the grass and started to play the game of five stones.

Suddenly I heard the terrible noise of crackers exploding, and with it the terrible braying of Bachan. He had never cried in that manner before. He howled piteously. Then followed a peal of loud laughter. I threw away the stones and ran up the steps of the terrace.

What I saw and what I felt is hard to describe. Bachan was jumping and kicking as if he had gone mad. I could not make out what was worrying him. Then I saw a tin can dangling from his tail. Loud noise and sparks came out of that can. I was horrified. So this was the mean trick they had planned! I, too, felt like kicking them. But first I had to help my poor pet.

“Bachan!” I screamed as I rushed up to him and cut off the string with my teeth. Sparks of fire burnt my face, but I did not

care. I put my arms around Bachan and sobbed. I felt dazed. I felt as if I would fall. But Bachan supported me. He seemed to understand and he turned his head towards me as if to comfort me. The little girl, Jaya, began to weep and scream at her brothers, saying, “Why did you tease the donkey? Why are you so wicked?”

She sobbed so loudly that her father, who was playing cards, came out to ask what the matter was. When he heard the whole story, he looked very stern. He called his two sons and said, “Look, boys, Diwali is a festival of joy for everyone. You cannot enjoy yourself if you hurt others. Animals are our friends and you should care for them. Jokes are no jokes if they give pain.”

He then came up to me and spoke to me very kindly. He applied some medicine on the bums. Jaya brought sweets for Bachan and also for me. Then I saw my father coming towards me. He took me in his arms and I felt all was well.

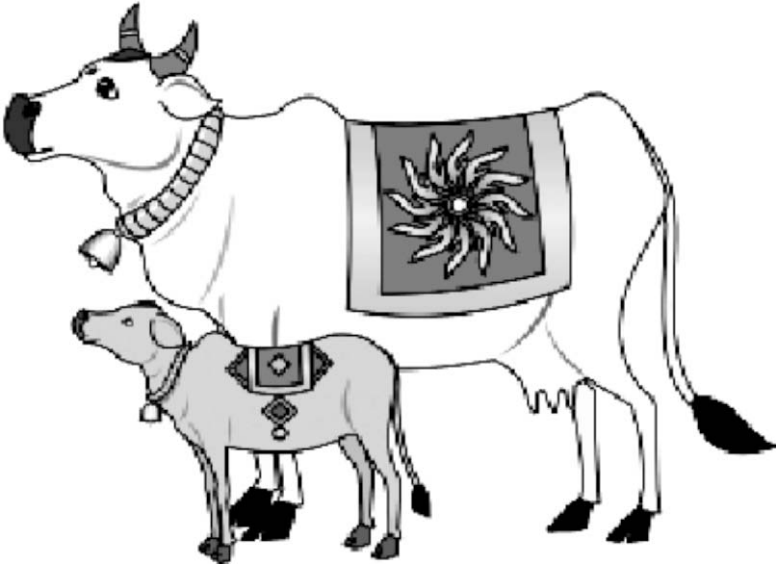
The next day, while I was feeding Bachan, I heard a noise. I saw Ajay and Vijay standing by the gate. They looked at me and said, “We are sorry,” and held out their hands. Then one of them brought out a tin soldier and gave it to me. The other held out a bat and ball and we made friends. I am glad to say that Bachan also forgave them and allowed them to feed and stroke him.



Amazing Animal Fact: 7

The kangaroo is a recognizable symbol of Australia. Groups of kangaroos are called mobs. Mobs usually have 10 or more kangaroos in them. Living in mobs provides protection for some of the weaker members of the group.

Dawn



DAWN, the little white calf, snuggled up to her mother's side and thirstily drank some of her sweet, warm milk. She felt rather wobbly on her legs still, as she was only three days old and not quite accustomed to using them yet. Her mother licked her kindly with her warm, wet tongue, and it had a very nice feeling about it and made the little calf feel very happy and secure.

“Have you heard the news?” questioned the brown cow, scratching her nose with one of her hind feet. “We are all going to be sold at the market tomorrow and Ram Singh is driving us there.”

“They won’t take us,” the black cow confidently said, whisking the flies away from the little white calf with her tail.

“My baby is much too young to walk so far. They’ll have to take us another day.”

“I’m not sure about that,” said the brown cow gloomily.

“I’ve never known Ram Singh to bother much about that sort of thing so far.” And, shaking her head sadly, she moved away and started to graze.

Sure enough the brown cow was quite right, and early the next morning preparations began for taking all the cattle to market. A little bag was hung over the black cow’s udders and Dawn suddenly found that she could not get at the milk.

“Why have they done that?” she asked her mother very thirstily. “Now I can’t get at my breakfast.”

They always do it,” said the black cow sadly. It is so to make sure that you don’t get the milk and they can have it themselves.”

A few minutes later Ram Singh arrived with his stick, and all the cows, including the black cow and her baby, were driven to the market.

It was a long and dusty road and poor little Dawn got more and more thirsty as she trotted along beside her mother in the sun. Two or three times she nearly fell down, but a sharp kick in the rear from Ram Singh’s foot quickly sent her panting after her mother. Her little legs ached and her head swam, and Ram Singh kept on prodding her in the rear with his stick, so that terror and pain somehow succeeded in making her keep up

with her mother.

At last, the market was reached and, in company with a lot of other strange cows, the baby found herself hustled with her mother into a small enclosure. Dropping down upon the grass in exhaustion, the little calf lay panting, while her mother soothingly licked her face and tired little body with her kindly tongue.

There was a big crowd at the market and it was not long before the black cow had found a purchaser.

“But I don’t want the calf,” the farmer said. “It will only drink the milk and it does not look up to much anyway. The cow does not look as though she has too much milk to spare either.”

So, to her horror, Dawn found her mother being taken away from her at the end of a rope. She did her best to follow but was only roughly pushed back. Although her mother nearly pulled her head out of the rope in order to stay with her baby, she was driven away with kicks and blows, lowing miserably in protest.

Once she had gone, no one in the market took any further notice of Dawn, who now found herself free to go wherever she pleased. Trotting through the gate in the direction in which her mother had gone, she nearly ran into a brown and white calf coming in the opposite direction.

“Can’t you look where you are going?” said the brown and white calf a trifle crossly. “What is the great hurry anyway?”

“I’m looking for my mother,” panted the little white calf anxiously. “She is a beautiful black cow. Have you seen her? I am sure she came this way. She was being pulled by a rope and didn’t want to go,” she added.

STORIES ON COMPASSION

“Oh!” said the brown and white calf thoughtfully, “that must have been the black cow I saw being taken along to Prakash’s farm. “Then, seeing a hopeful look on the white calf’s face, he added, “It is no use your going there. They will never allow you to go near her.”

“Then, what shall I live on?” wailed Dawn, who by this time was very, very thirsty indeed.

“You will have to do the same as the rest of us, I suppose,” said the brown and white calf, “and eat grass.”

“Grass?” gasped the white calf. “Grass instead of milk? But how?”

“Like this,” said the older calf, taking a good mouthful of tough-looking grass from the hedge and chewing it slowly. “It is not bad when you get accustomed to it Try some.”

“Oh! But I couldn’t,” said Dawn helplessly, trying some all the same. It caught in her teeth and cut her tongue and she spat it out in disgust.

“I think I am too young to eat grass yet,” she said woefully.

“Well, perhaps you are,” said the brown and white calf reflectively. “I tell you what I will show you where Prakash’s farm is if you like. You might manage to see your mother again-you never know,” he went on kindly.

“Oh! Thank you!” gasped Dawn gratefully, and although her legs were already aching with tiredness, she somehow managed to keep up with her friend.

By the time the two had reached the farm, Dawn could scarcely stagger into her step. Leading her carefully round to the back, the brown

and white calf showed her a gap in the fence.

“Wait until milking time,” he cautioned her, “and if you slip in quickly, there is just a chance—only a small chance, mind you—that you might manage to catch your mother when her bag is off and then you may get some milk.”

And so saying, leaving Dawn lying in the shade of the fence, he strolled away.

From sheer exhaustion the little white calf fell asleep. When she finally awoke, the sun was low in the heavens. Her tummy ached from hunger and she gave a little wail of misery and loneliness. To her amazement, in the distance she heard, an answering “Moo”. It was her mother’s voice. Without another thought, except how to get to her, she scrambled through the fence and was off in the direction of the sound. As she ran she called again and each time her mother’s voice answered her.

Then suddenly Dawn saw her, standing tied to a tree but straining at her rope in the direction of her baby. In front of her stood the farmer who had brought his little girl out to see his new purchase. It was she who saw Dawn first.

“Oh, father!” she cried, “Look—a little white calf! May I have her? You always said that one day I might have a calf of my own.”

“White calf? Why, I have no white calf,” her father was beginning, when Dawn finished at a trot and the next moment her mother was licking her all over with her loving tongue.

“Oh, father! Look, she has found her mother!” cried the little girl. “Look how happy they both are to be together!”

The farmer stared as though he could scarcely believe his eyes.

“Well, I never should have believed it,” he said at last.

“May I have her, father?” persisted the little girl. “Please, please, I want her so much!”

The farmer, though a rough man, was devoted to his little daughter. “Well, if you really want her, I suppose you may,” he said slowly.

“Oh, father, thank you!” said the little girl, and added quickly, “then may my calf have her supper, please?”

“I suppose she must,” said the farmer reluctantly, and gave the order for the bag over the cow’s udders to be removed.

“Oh! Thank you, thank you, father!” murmured the girl.

And as the tired little calf felt the warm milk once again rushing into her thirsty mouth, she also felt like saying, Thank you! Thank you!”

Amazing Animal Fact: 8



Penguins are flightless birds. While other birds have wings for flying, penguins have adapted flippers to help them swim in the water. No penguins live at the North Pole. Penguins eat a range of fish and other sea life that they catch underwater. Penguins can drink sea water.

Faithful Bobby



MORE than fifty years ago, there lived a very poor old shepherd in Scotland. He had a faithful dog named Bobby.

One day, the shepherd died and was buried in Edinburgh. His dog kept watch over his master's grave and would not leave the spot. It was against the rules for dogs to be allowed in churchyards. So the watchman drove the dog away each time he found him there. The dog, however, returned again and again.

One cold morning the watchman saw the dog, with his whole body shivering in the cold. He had not the heart to drive him away. He gave him something to eat. From that time onwards, the dog made the churchyard his home for over twelve years.

At twelve noon everyday, on hearing the firing of the castle gun, the dog would go to a hotel near the churchyard, and the proprietor would lovingly feed him, because of his great fidelity to his master.

At one time the dog was about to be killed as his tax had not been paid. When the children of the neighbourhood came to know of this, they collected among themselves the amount of the tax and paid it to the tax-collector. The Lord Provost of Edinburgh and the magistrate were so much moved by the kindly act of the children that they exempted Bobby from the dog-tax. Many visitors to the churchyard tried to make friends with the dog, but he would not respond. At last, after a watch of twelve years over the grave of his master, he died. A kind lady erected a statue in his memory.

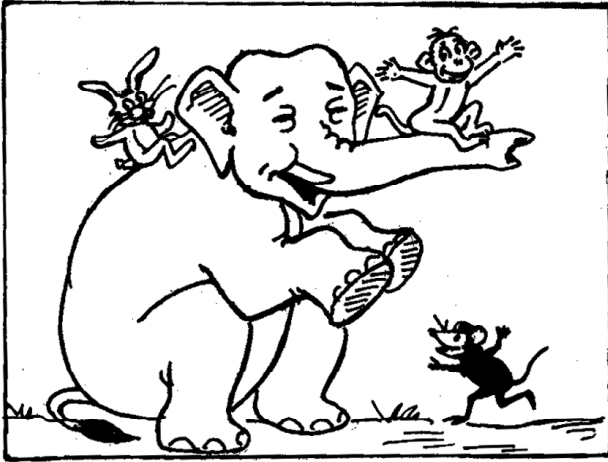
Children, what do you think of the loyalty of that dog to his master?

Amazing Animal Fact: 9



The **Elephant** is the planet's largest terrestrial mammal. The elephant's gestation period is 22 months – longer than any other land animal in the world. A new born human baby weighs an average of 7 pounds while a new born elephant baby can weigh up to 260 pounds! The baby can stand up shortly after being born.

The Rescue



ONE fine morning in the month of March, Gaja, the elephant prince, was out for a pleasant stroll along a forest path.

It was a beautiful morning in the early spring. The air was fresh, flowers peeped out of every nook and corner, butterflies flitted to and fro, and birds twittered in glee.

Gaja felt a wave of joy, which he wanted to share with someone. Unfortunately, all his companions had gone by another route to have a bath in the forest pool. So Gaja felt lonely.

As he marched along swinging his trunk, he heard a shrill squeak. He turned aside and looked into two bright eyes out of a hole and a pair of whiskers.

“Hello, Rat, did you wish me good morning? Thank you.

Why don’t you accompany me, instead of hiding in that poky hole?” Gaja asked.

“Accompany you? What a joke!” squealed Rat. “I am a tiny pigmy and you a terribly huge giant. How can we keep company? Everyone will laugh at us.”

“What does the size matter?” replied Gaja, “You and I have much in common.”

“In what way?” asked Rat.

“For one thing, I am by tradition, upbringing and taste, a vegetarian. So are you. Secondly, we have more or less the same colour, a lovely shade of grey, and you are the devotee and the chosen vehicle of God Ganesa, and my head is the very copy of His. In fact we could be twins. So come with me,” said Gaja.

Rat was delighted to be related to so grand a personality. He jumped out of his hole, humming a merry tune.

Suddenly they heard a cry, “Mind your step, monster! Don’t crush me!”

Gaja looked down and saw a fluffy tail bouncing off.

“Is that you, little rascal? You are in everyone’s way. Don’t be afraid. I won’t hurt you. Why don’t you come with Rat and me for a walk? We would enjoy your jolly company.”

The hare burst out laughing, “Ho...ho...ho! What a trio! What a trinity we shall be! The gods will be jealous of us. HO...ho...ho!”

“Stop it!” trumpeted Gaja, and the hare trembled with fear. Gaja was about to lift him up and fling him into the air when the hare apologised.

“Sorry, prince, sorry. I shall be greatly honoured to go with you.”

Saying thus, he joined them and they resumed their trip.

As they passed through a glade, Gaja felt a tickling sensation and began to sneeze. He felt the end of a rope near his ear, and he

caught hold of it and began to pull it.

“How dare you! Let go of my tail or I will tear off your ears,” screamed a monkey, who was sitting on an overhanging branch of a tree, and to whom the tail belonged.

Gaja immediately let go of the tail and apologised. “Sorry, sorry, I did not know that it was your tail. Forgive and forget, manikin.”

“Don’t abuse me. I am no manikin. I detest that race. They torture us for their own good,” scolded Monkey.

“Sorry again,” said Gaja. “I have heard that your tribe is their ancestor.”

“Nonsense. They say so. We have nothing to do with them. We are descendants of the great god, Hanuman,” Monkey added.

“Stop your argument,” cried Rat. “Why don’t you join us on this parade?”

“Yes, yes, come along,” coaxed Hare and Gaja.

“My thin legs can hardly match your heavy pillars,” said Monkey to Gaja.

“Let me give you a ride. I must make amends for my stupid mistakes,” said Gaja.

Monkey jumped on to the back of Gaja and the four enjoyed the walk.

As they went on, they saw a bush by the path, whose leaves were moving in a strange manner. They were wondering as to why it was shaking, when Rat whispered loud enough to be heard, “Beware! Beware! He is there, hiding like a thief. Don’t trust him. He is dangerous.”

“What? That puny creature, not even as big as one of my

legs, a harmless insect,” sneered Gaja.

“A scorpion!” said Hare.

“A devil!” said Monkey.

“He will chain your legs, cut off your beautiful tusks. He will enslave you and sell you to the circus,” they cried in chorus. But Gaja paid no attention.

Meanwhile, the man came up holding out a bunch of bananas in one hand and sugar-cane and lumps of jaggery. Monkey, Hare and Rat went swiftly into hiding and watched their deluded friend approach the man.

Gaja ate the bananas and sugar-cane with relish and then took the ball of jaggery and gobbled it up. No sooner had he swallowed it, than he collapsed as if struck by lightning and became unconscious. The man shouted with joy.

“I have got him! Come, comrades, bring the truck and help!”

Four other men who were in hiding rushed forward, shouting and jumping. They chained Gaja’s legs, heaved him on to the truck and drove away.

“Alas, alas!” wept Rat, “I have lost a dear friend.”

“So have I,” whimpered Hare.

“Me, too,” sobbed Monkey.

“Hush!” hissed a snake who had been watching the whole scene. “Weeping is not going to help. If you are true friends, find a way to rescue him.”

So saying, the snake glided off.

The three friends had a quick consultation. Monkey being the most agile was deputed to follow the truck by swinging himself from branch to branch. He would be able to see what they do with Gaja

and then they-the friends of Gaja-would find ways and means of setting him free.

The men in the truck got drunk. They danced and sang all round the unconscious victim. Soon they started to quarrel among themselves.

“I shall have the tusks, for I was the one who traced the beast,” said one.

“But I actually got him,” shouted another.

“But I brought the truck,” screamed a third.

The fourth said, “Let us sell him to the circus and divide the money.”

Atlast the truck arrived at a shed in the forest and Gaja was dragged out. They brought heavy logs and hammered them all round Gaja’s body to form a cage. Then they ate and drank, shouting hilariously.

“Even the devil himself will not be able to rescue him,” said one. It was nearly midnight before they fell asleep.

Meanwhile, Monkey had quickly gone and reported the whole matter to Hare and Rat. They were all horrified to hear it.

“So they have chained and caged our dear friend-the devils!”

“If they sell him to the circus, Gaja will be tortured to make him perform stupid tricks. He will be starved and beaten. It is better that he dies,” said Monkey.

“How shall we save him? We must do it now before the men wake up. The chains have to be cut and the wooden logs broken,” said Hare.

“We need a file to cut the chain. But, Monkey, can you use a file? You alone have hands.”

“I think I can. I have watched a blacksmith do it.”

Saying thus, he ran off to steal a file.

“Now, Rat, can you gnaw the wooden logs of the cage?” asked Hare.

“I have a large family and many friends, quite an army. We, shall do what we can,” said Rat “*But* then, how can we get him to wake up out of that poisonous coma?”

“Leave that to me,” said Hare. “I know a herb, the juice of which can wake up even a mountain. I shall run and fetch it”

The three friends hurried to the glade. All the men were snoring and shouting in their drunken sleep. Monkey quietly slipped into the cage with his brothers to take turns to file off the chain. An army of rats started to gnaw the wooden logs. Hare was busy preparing the herbal juice. Throughout the night they worked.

When Monkey’s hands began to ache, his brothers took it up in turn. Before dawn, all the chains were cut, except one. The logs were all gnawed and were lying as if dead. Hare had the juice ready in a leaf cup.

“Let us hurry. Dawn is about to break and all will be lost,” warned Rat

Hare hurried up the side of Gaja and poured the juice into his ears!

“He has done it too soon. There is still a bit of the chain remaining,” screeched Monkey.

Gaja heaved like a mountain bursting into life. He sprang up wildly, breaking the half-filed chain. He trumpeted like thunder, waving his trunk.

“Well done! Well done! Run, Gaja, run. They are after you. You are free, but run!” the three friends shouted and hid themselves.

Meanwhile, the men, hearing Gaja’s terrific trumpeting, woke up with a start and rushed to the cage, shouting, “He has gone-the rogue! He has broken the chain and the logs. Bring the truck, quick!

We will chase him and get him.”

Cursing and shouting, they ran to the truck. But wily Rat, knowing the ways of men, had already entered the engine and gnawed off the wire!

The men pulled and pushed in desperation, but all in vain. The motor was dead!

Gaja fled into the deep forest carrying his three friends on his back. All the animals rejoiced.

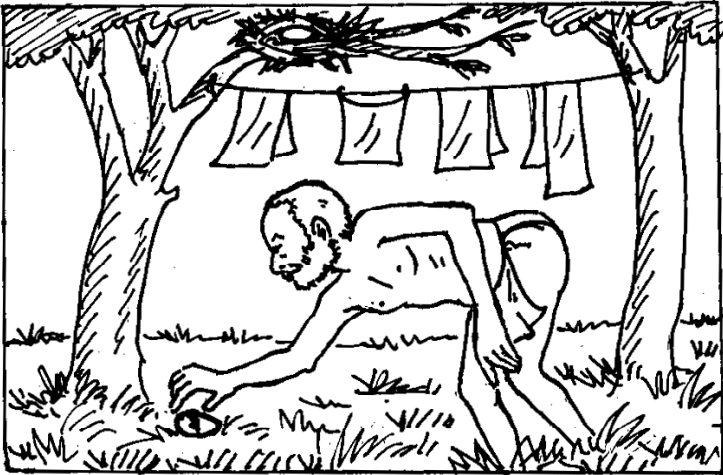
The cruel men were caught by forest guards and punished for poaching.

Amazing Animal Fact: 10



The word “**Elephant**” comes from the Greek word “*elephas*” which means “ivory. The tusks of an elephant are modified incisors that grow throughout an elephant's lifetime. An adult male's tusks grow about 7 inches a year. Tusks are used to dig for salt, water and roots, to debark trees, to clear a path and occasionally in fights.

A Sage's Compassion



BHAGAVAN Ramana the great sage of Tiruvannamalai, South India, who passed away in the year 1950, had immense compassion and love for animals and birds.

Madhavaswami, his attendant, used to dry Bhagavan's towel on a bamboo tied between two trees. On one end of this bamboo a bird had built a nest.

One day, while removing the towel, Bhagavan dislodged the nest, which fell down. One of the three eggs rolled out and cracked, but it did not break.

Bhagavan told his attendant that a grievous sin had been committed and examined the egg in pity and repentance.

“The poor mother will think that the egg is broken and will weep bitterly. She will surely curse me for having broken

her egg. Can this egg be mended to hatch a young one?" he asked.

Bhagavan wrapped the damaged egg in a piece of cloth and put it back into the nest, and every few hours he would take the egg in his hands, look at it for some time and then put it back, wrapped in its piece of cloth. All the time he would murmur to himself, "Will the crack heal? will the egg hatch?" With such care and compassion he nursed the egg for a week.

On the eighth day, Bhagavan exclaimed like an excited child, "Look, the cracks have gone! The mother will be glad. God has saved me from sin. Let us watch and see when the little one will come out"

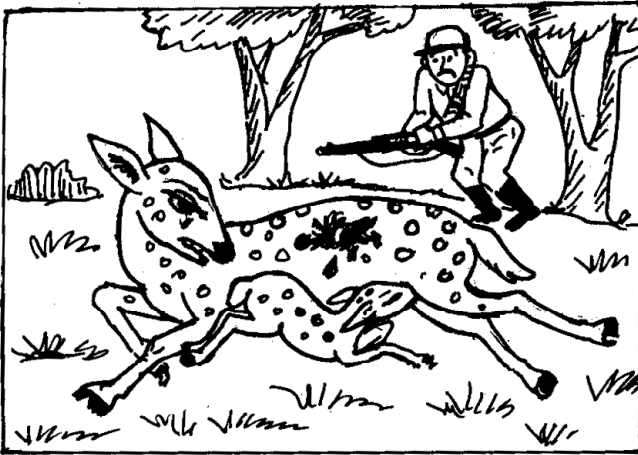
The egg was watched all the time and the little fledgling finally appeared. Bhagavan took it tenderly in his hands, beaming with joy. He showed it to everybody and finally gave it back to its mother.

Amazing Animal Fact: 11



Prairie Dogs live in complex underground burrows with designated areas for nurseries, sleeping and toilets. They greet each other with a kiss: a quick peck for strangers and a longer embrace for their friends and family.

The Cruel Sport



DURING my school days I happened to hear about a hunter's experience, which not only forced him to give up hunting once and for all, but also had a psychological impact on the local people to abhor the sport of killing animals.

Once in the 1940's, a hunter went out with his group of helpers to a forest for the pleasure of hunting. The forest was not far from our village.

Though they had traversed the forest area for hours, to their great disappointment, they did not find a single animal to shoot. Then, just when the sun was about to set, the hunter spotted a sambar at a distance, alertly watching them.

Whispering to his helpers to sit down quietly, the hunter began to stalk towards the animal with gun in hand. To his surprise, although the animal was well aware of his approach, it did not move from the spot where it stood. Instead, it took a few steps

forward, as though preparing to fight with all its might to protect its territory from the intruder.

Generally, animals of this kind quickly escape on seeing human beings. Why then, should this sambar face him so unflinchingly, he thought. But he quickly dispelled such thoughts, as the evening light was quickly vanishing, and he did not wish to lose the opportunity of shooting the animal.

Directing the weapon at the sambar, he pulled trigger, filling the stillness of the forest with the loud noise of the gun.

The impact of the bullet made the animal jump backwards and it disappeared behind the bushes. The hunter, being sure of his aim, rushed forward in pursuit of his quarry.

Though he could not find the animal in the bushes, he saw blood splattered on the ground and on the foliage. By means of the trail of blood, he hurried through the bushes with his helper jogging behind him.

“O, there it is!” he cried excitedly, on spotting the animal at a distance, struggling on the ground between life and death.

Rushing forward with eagerness, he suddenly stopped and stood still, dropping his gun and holding his head with his hands as if he had committed an unpardonable crime.

“What has happened, Sir?” his helpers anxiously asked.

“Look there for yourselves in front of you,” he said in a remorseful tone.

It was a pathetic scene: the animal was suckling her young one, which was perhaps only a few days old. It was trying with great difficulty to lick its baby fondly, while struggling with the fatal bullet wound and blood gushing all around. Finally, the courageous mother expired.

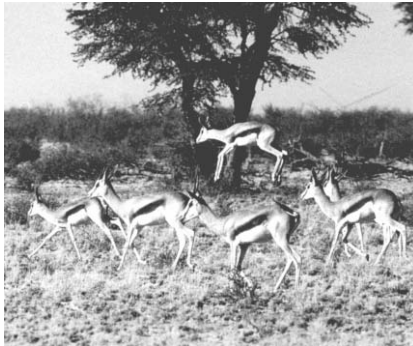
The baby, unaware of what had happened, was still trying to suck milk from her dead mother.

The grief-stricken hunter now realized why the animal had tried to prevent him from encroaching into its territory-it was because of the safety of her young one. Even on receiving the fatal bullet wound, the courageous mother still tried to suckle her young one in her last moments.

“Behind every animal or bird I have killed,” the hunter sadly said, “there must have been young ones dependent on their mothers for their survival. How would they survive otherwise? Only this incident today has opened my eyes to this tragic fact. Really hunting is the most cruel sport.”

It needs no mention that he gave up his hobby of hunting from then on.

Amazing Animal Fact: 12



Male **Deer** are called bucks. Females are called does. Male deer grow antlers every year. The antlers fall off in the winter. Does have one or two babies in the spring or early summer. The babies are brown with white spots. Deer can run up to 30 miles per hour to escape. They can also jump 30 feet.

Three Friends



THE tree stood bare, dry and forlorn by the wayside, except for one large green leaf. What made the leaf stick to this tree whose prosperous days were over? Perhaps it felt a sentimental attachment to it, a sense of loyalty. In the blazing summer heat, the leaf cast a cool shadow on the dusty path.

A little lizard, who happened to pass by, took shelter in the shade. He was dying of thirst. The leaf took pity on him and let fall a few drops of dew on his tongue. The lizard, sucking them gratefully, closed his eyelids and began to sleep.

Suddenly the lizard was awakened by loud voices. He started up and saw two boys coming along. One of them had a stick and the other a catapult. The lizard trembled with fear. He knew what the boys were about. They were thoughtless youngsters who usually went about hitting all creatures and smashing shrubs and leaves for no purpose whatsoever.

The lizard had often watched such urchins at their cruel sport. As they came close to the tree, one of them aimed a stone at the lizard. But the lizard quickly scrambled into a cleft between two branches and saved himself. The boy with the stick was swinging it to slash at the leaf. The lizard was watchful and alert. No sooner did the fellow lift the stick to strike than the lizard made a jump and landed plump on his head! Hating the touch of the cold, clammy body, the boy shook his head violently. Shouting and screaming, he bolted away as if the devil was after him. The lizard crawled into his cleft again.

The leaf was grateful to the lizard. “How can I ever repay you for saving me from that cruel monster?” it said.

Thus, in mutual help and friendship, the dry tree, the fresh leaf, and the lizard lived in peace. But they were not left to enjoy this life for long.

One day, a tall, strong woodcutter with an axe, and another short, fat man with a rope, came up to cut the branches of the tree for firewood.

At the sight of him the tree trembled with fear.

“Now, this is the end,” it groaned.

The leaf turned cold and numb, paralysed and unable to move.

The little lizard lay as still as he could, thinking. He must find a way to save the tree that had given him shelter, and the leaf that had given him shade and quenched his thirst.

The two men came up. The fat one said to the tall, muscular one, “Start cutting the branches first and then the trunk.”

The tall one replied, “Wait, I want a little rest after this walk from the village. You must rest as well.” So they lay down to rest and closed their eyes.

“This is my chance,” the lizard said to himself. Suddenly an idea flashed in his mind. He gathered up all the venomous liquid within his body into his mouth and, taking the right position, squirted it straight into the ear of the man with the axe!

The man jumped up, as if stung by a scorpion!

‘Help! Help! I am burning!’

The fat man also got up quickly and enquired, “What is the matter?”

“I can’t move, I am paralysed!” screamed the tall one. “Something terrible entered into my ear while I was dozing.”

The fat man called a helper and they managed to carry away the woodcutter to his home in the village.

The news of this disaster spread all over like wild fire. Everyone who heard it, when he repeated it to another, added

something to it out of his own imagination.

The village doctor who examined the patient declared. that the ailment was caused by a spirit in the tree. This spirit was annoyed and disturbed when it saw the axe lying ready to cut its home, he asserted.

The village council of pundits were called and the problem was placed before them. After a long deliberation, the head pundit said, “It is very clear that the spirit in the tree is disturbed. Therefore, it is necessary to satisfy it and win its favour. Every morning one of us should offer a sweet and some water to the tree. I am sure that the spirit will then become our friend.”

Meanwhile, the three friends-the tree, the leaf and the lizard-rejoiced to see the woodcutter leave.

“You have saved our lives. How shall we repay you?” the tree and the leaf said to the lizard.

“But for the refuge you gave me, I would have been killed,” replied the lizard.

“But, look what is happening now? Some villagers are coming towards us. Are they going to attack me again?” exclaimed the tree, trembling.

The villagers came up with a leaf cup filled with milk, a little piece of jaggery and a mud-pot of water.

“Don’t fear,” whispered the lizard. “They have not come to kill.”

The villagers placed the milk and sweet by the tree and poured the water at its root. The dry old tree breathed a sigh of

relief. New life coursed through its branches. The longdried up sap rose again.

Daily the villagers came to feed the tree spirit, and the tree became alive again. Beautiful, fresh green leaves sprouted all over and covered the branches. Flowers began to bloom and colourful birds visited the tree in large numbers and sang in joy.

The villagers rejoiced. They got cool shade to rest at midday. Children played in the shade of the tree.

The head pundit remarked, “I told you that the spirit will become our friend!”

Amazing Animal Fact: 13



The **Giraffe** is the tallest mammal in the world, with even new-born babies being taller than most humans. Baby **Giraffes** can stand within half an hour and after only 10 hours can actually run alongside their family. No two giraffes have the same spot pattern.

King Yudhisthira & The Dog



KING Yudhisthira was the famous Pandava king who ruled at Hastinapura. This king and his four brothers Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva-were known as the five Pandavas.

We have read the story of these brothers and the great battles they fought, in the well-known epic, called the *Mahabharata*. It is in this epic that we learn of Lord Krishna and His brother Balarama, and of the help they gave to the Pandavas.

It came to pass that Lord Krishna and Balarama, the true friends of the virtuous Pandavas, left the physical world

and ascended to heaven. When the Pandavas heard of it, they were stricken with grief. So King Yudhisthira and his brothers renounced the world and set out for the holy Mount Meru in the Himalayas. As they journeyed on and on, they were followed by a dog which belonged to King Yudhisthira.

On the long and tedious journey, all the brothers except Yudhisthira, died one after another. But the faithful dog survived them and was now the only companion of the distressed king.

King Yudhisthira, as was well-known, was one who was very virtuous, truthful under all conditions, just to all, and kind and affectionate to all living beings. He was now on his way to the celestial world, the place to which men of good and pure deeds go after death.

The lord of the celestial world was Indra. He learnt that King Yudhisthira was on his way to him. So he hastened to the king in his celestial car and said, “Most virtuous king, you are fit to come to my sacred regions and enjoy the pleasures thereof, because you had always led a life of purity, charity and love for all the creatures of God. Today, you shall enter the pure world of the virtuous as a reward for the pure and noble qualities of your heart.”

King Yudhisthira was about to enter the celestial car with his dog, when Indra objected to the animal coming in.

Amazing Animal Fact: 14

Dogs are capable of understanding up to 250 words and gestures; can count up to five, and can be trained to perform simple mathematical calculations. The average dog is as intelligent as a two year old child.



He said, “O king, in the world of the gods, dogs are not allowed. Do you not know that a dog is a mean animal? How can you keep company with such a low creature? Therefore, leave the dog behind and enter the sacred car alone.”

The king longed to enter the celestial world, but he could not bear to give up his faithful dog. So he said, “Great Indra, to enter heaven is my greatest desire, but I cannot desert my faithful companion even for the sake of this most coveted of joys. You take pleasure in calling him a mean and low animal, but I think differently. Though he is only a dumb animal, can you find one more faithful to his master than he? Does not a dog love his master and his family, and protect them more faithfully than any human being? Has any dog been known to be ungrateful to his master? The Lord has endowed the dog with two of the noblest of qualities-loyalty and love.

“How faithful and loving this dog has been to me at all times! To desert him now even for the highest pleasures of heaven would be a great ingratitude on my part. Therefore, O Indra, take me to heaven with this dog or leave me where I am.”

As the king spoke these brave and honest words, the dog suddenly disappeared and in his place stood the God of Justice.

He spoke thus, “True and noble king, I am no dog. I am the God of Justice. I have been watching you all these days. You have always been as loving and kind to animals as to human beings. You now have your reward. Go and enjoy the virtuous and holy pleasures of heaven.”

King Yudhisthira entered Indra’s celestial car and reached heaven, the place of bliss, to which all virtuous people go at the end of their lives.

Unusual Friendships



ONE DAY, a dog entered the surgery of a veterinary hospital in England, carrying a tiny kitten in its mouth. The officer in charge recognized the dog as a former patient whom he had treated for ear canker and, without waiting to find the owner, he first examined the dog, who did not appear to have anything wrong with him, and then the kitten, who, he discovered, had canker in one of its ears. When the ear had been carefully cleaned and treated, the surgeon looked around for the owner of the animal, whom he assumed must have followed them into the dispensary.

To his surprise, no one claimed either animal, and he was told by some people in the waiting room that the dog had entered the dispensary unattended, and just walked into the surgery as soon as the door had been opened. The surgeon was even more surprised when the dog, apparently realizing

that the treatment was finished, picked the kitten up in his mouth, trotted out of the door and up the road.

Three days later, the dog appeared once more with the little kitten in his mouth. He waited patiently until the latter had received the necessary treatment, and then walked out. These visits continued until the kitten was completely cured, when the dog, seeming to be aware of this, ceased his visits to the clinic.

This astonishing story is perfectly authentic. The curious circumstance connected with this friendship is that the dog seemed to know just when to pay a visit to the dispensary. The intervals which elapsed between visits coincided with those which occurred during his own visits when he underwent treatment.

It is difficult to imagine a more unusual friendship than that between a dove and a rat. The dove was one of many kept by a wealthy landowner in the south of England. It was his daily practice to feed the doves that gathered eagerly near his barn.

One day, he saw a large rat fill its mouth with the scattered grain and run to a neighbouring coach house. It repeated this performance several times. Deciding to investigate, the man followed the rat into the coach house. There he found a lame

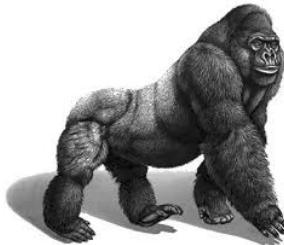


dove devouring the corn brought for it by the rat. When it finally recovered, the dove fed itself and used to wait for the rat, which would bring enough food to satisfy its friend's hunger. Not waiting for any thanks, it would scamper off as soon as its task was completed.

Another singular friendship was that between a dog and a duck, both of whom lived in Chatham. Mick, the dog, was an Irish terrier. Like some humans, he was unable to resist a fight, and on more than one occasion he was cleverly rescued by his friend, the duck. The duck would divert his opponent's attention at a critical moment, by making an unexpected appearance, quacking fiercely and attacking the opponent's hindquarters!

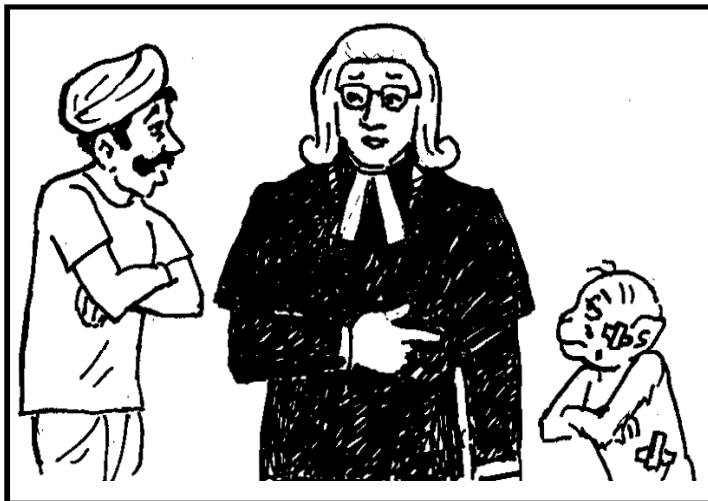
On one occasion, when Mick was badly hurt, he had to be taken to the dispensary for treatment. His feathered friend did not fail to accompany him. The duck not only insisted on following him, but sat patiently in the waiting room until Mick received the required treatment and was released, when he waddled back home with him.

Amazing Animal Fact: 15



Gorillas live in groups called troops. Gorillas are considered highly intelligent. Gorillas can laugh, grieve, have “rich emotional lives”, develop strong family bonds, make and use tools, and think about the past and future.

A Monkey Seeks Justice



THIS true story dates back to a summer evening in the year 1950. The setting is the rest-house at Digras, in Maharashtra, India.

A battered monkey chose the most opportune moment the close of the day to enter the improvised court room where I had been trying criminal cases. He was in great agony and drew my attention to his multiple injuries which were bleeding profusely. The day's work was over, but the sudden and unexpected appearance of the animal kept me in my chair.

I took in the situation at a glance and began to observe him patiently. He continued to display his injuries. If human beings, I thought, had the right to seek justice in a court of law, then why not this animal? With a kindly look, I began

to slip out through the rear door, but the monkey followed me closely, holding up his arm in agony.

Strolling a few paces away from the animal, I called for the peons and demanded the name of the culprit who caused the injury. They said that it was the gardener of the adjoining property. They were astounded when I sharply ordered that the police inspector be called in with a set of handcuffs. I was aware that I had to play my part carefully, as I was within full view of the injured complainant, who was taking in every word I said.

The inspector was not available. This, I thought, was lucky in a way from the point of view of this show of a criminal court trial.

I asked the peons to bring in the gardener. The trial commenced. The complainant stated his case by mournfully extending his injured paws in my direction and licking his wounds.

The gardener believed me when I told him firmly that animals had an equal right like human beings to seek redress in a law-court. I quoted a few enactments like the Prevention of Cruelty Act and the Wild Life Preservation Act. Then I called the gardener to defend his action.

He suddenly broke down and fell at my feet in full view of the monkey. Pleading guilty, he complained that this particular animal had been causing destruction in his garden.

Looking in the direction of the complainant, I found him still pleadingly drawing my attention to his many bleeding injuries, as though saying, "Let alone the verdict, who is going to treat my wounds?"

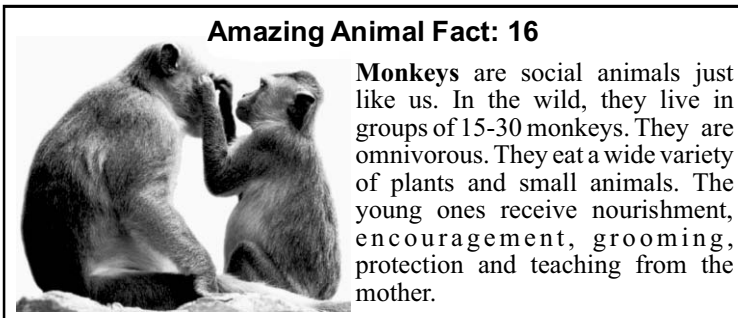
But justice had to be done. The plea of the gardener was rejected and I announced that he had exceeded his rights by acting in this inhuman manner, and that he would be put behind bars.

At this, the gardener held my feet and begged for pardon. The monkey appeared to be taking in the scene, not without some feeling of forgiveness, for he stood calmly now and kept his hands still.

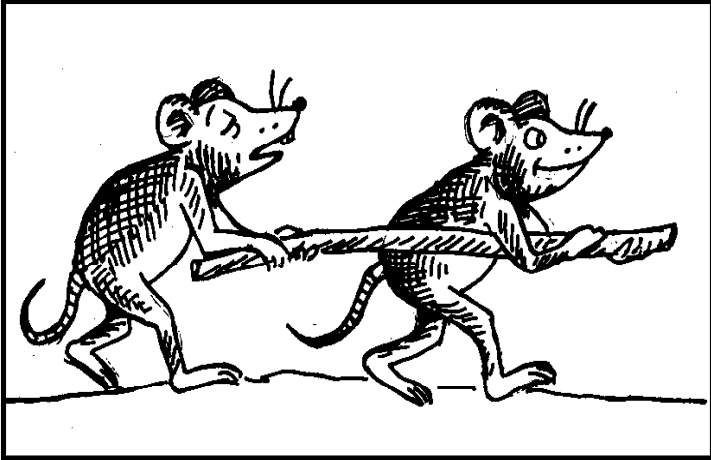
A promise was easily extracted from the gardener that in future it would suffice if he merely scared such creatures away. On that condition he was warned and released. But what about the monkey's wounds?

As the gardener gratefully turned around to leave the courtroom, he paused and looked pitifully at the monkey. Then, beckoning it to follow him, he headed towards the exit. The monkey hesitated for a while, then bounded out with the gardener to his small hut in the adjacent plot, where his wounds were taken care of.

There, I thought, had actually ended the day's criminal case work.



Mouse Changes Man



THE lengths to which animals will go to help each other, especially their own kind, is quite astonishing. Dolphins have often been seen responding instantly to the distress call of a fellow dolphin. Two other dolphins will come and push to the surface their injured comrade, so that he can breathe, and even lend support for ordinary locomotion, if that is necessary.

Even mice, as the following story shows, will give the needed assistance to each other.

Mr Brown, an American writer, related how one day he saw two mice walking along in a strange fashion. A straw was being held, each one holding one end in its mouth. They were walking side by side, with one of them a few inches ahead of the other.

Unthinking and mechanically, Mr Brown picked up a stone and threw it at them. The voice of “civilisation”, our so-called civilisation, told him that this was the right thing to do-if you see a mouse or a snake or any other creature which may be going on its way without doing any harm, you hit it with a stick or a stone!

Well, the stone hit one of the mice, the one which was in front, and killed it. But, strange to say, the other mouse did not scamper away. Instead, it began running around in circles, confused and bewildered.

Intrigued by its behaviour, Mr Brown picked it up and found to his amazement that it was blind! And then, with a gasp, he realised the meaning of the piece of straw that each one had held in its mouth. The mouse he had killed had been on a mission of mercy. It had been leading its blind brother! This incident proved to be a turning point in Mr Brown’s life.

He said of the incident, “All that night I could not sleep. I asked myself whether man was bigger or the mouse.”

In the morning I could not eat my breakfast, for meat was served. The thought that an animal was killed to serve meat became oppressive. So I renounced violence and became a vegetarian.”



Monkey's Motherly Care



A MAN who might have met a lingering death is today very much alive, thanks to the motherly care bestowed upon him by a female monkey.

The man was not only lovingly looked after by the monkey, but she also organized a rescue operation for him, which saved his life.

Mohammed Yusuf, the owner of an auto garage, fell off a Pune-bound train well past midnight. He was clinging to the handle bar of the bogey of the train, as he had been shut out of the compartment by the door being banged against him by someone, a little after the train had left Karjat. His dangling legs had hit against some stones and other objects along the rail track and were injured badly.

The severe cold of the night and the excruciating pain in his foot, which was bleeding profusely, made Mohammed lose his grip on the handle-bar and fall on the rail track from the speeding train, when it was climbing the ghats.

It was at sunrise some hours later that Mohammed opened his eyes and noticed vultures and eagles hovering over him.

Looking around, he saw that he was in an isolated spot on the slope of a mountain, where no human being would normally notice him. The shrill whistle of a distant train suddenly made him aware of his perilous train journey. The only thing he remembered was that he had fallen off a speeding train. A shudder ran through his body.

Feeling his pockets, he realised that they had been emptied by someone. He tried to recollect the happenings. The last memory he had was of his hands losing their grip on the handlebar and his fall on the railway track. Thereafter, he remembered nothing. How did he then come to lie on a spot which obviously was away from the rail track?

Surely then, someone had spotted him lying unconscious on the track, run through his pockets which contained over Rs. 500 in cash and some papers, and dragged him some feet away from the rail track.

Hovering between life and death and also between hope and despair, Mohammed occasionally saw the shadow of a man fall across the spot where he lay. But he could not see anyone, as the rail track along which these men passed was high up and some 10-13 metres away. Once, however, his shouts did attract the attention of some tribal men, but they hurried away after seeing his clothes stained with blood.

A little later, as if providentially, his saviour arrived in the form of a female monkey, whose attention he had attracted by his groan and gestures.

With two babies clinging to her, the monkey hesitatingly

came nearer and nearer as Mohammed beckoned to her to draw closer, pointing to his wounds.

It was only when the monkey was within a foot or two from him that she realised that this man needed help. She tarried for a few minutes and then quietly left the two babies near him. In her own characteristic manner, she indicated to him that he should look after them during her absence.

Mohammed somehow knew that the female monkey's concern for him would bring relief. However, as time passed, he became worried, not only because his pain began to grow with the coming up of the sun, but because he did not know where the monkey had gone, leaving her babies in his care.

According to Mohammed it must have been well over an hour, when he saw the monkey return along with a villager. The man had been sitting with a group warming themselves around a fire, when the monkey spotted them.

The villager, who could not help Mohammed all by himself, said that he would go and alert some policemen.

The man then described to Mohammed how the monkey had covered a distance of some three miles to reach them. Once near their group, she gibbered, shrieked and made gestures that they should accompany her. She appeared anxious and frightened. Their guess was that possibly some monkey or her young one was trapped somewhere, or had been overrun by a train.

The villager then decided to follow her, not knowing how far he had to go. Twice or thrice he stopped on the way to return, but she would not allow him to do so. She would jump and block his way and wail pitifully to urge him along, till finally he reached

the spot where Mohammed lay.

While the villager had gone to secure help, the monkey remained beside Mohammed and even brought wild berries from a nearby tree. She placed these in his hands, signalling him to eat. With some of his teeth broken because of the fall, and his jaw in terrible pain, Mohammed could not even open his mouth. So he did not make any attempt to eat the fruit.

A few policemen along with the villager soon arrived. They put Mohammed on a shunting electric locomotive. From the engine Mohammed saw the monkey with the two babies clinging to her jump into the trees and disappear.

Mohammed was admitted to the local Sasoon Hospital, where he was treated for multiple injuries, which included a fractured right leg, with the big toe of his right foot missing.

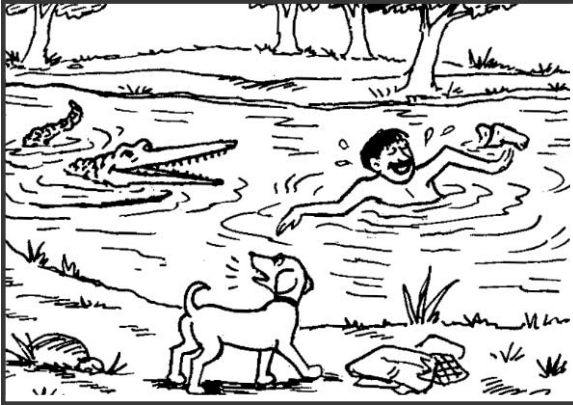
“Everytime I recall the incident, I shudder to think what would have happened to me if the monkey had not come and showered her motherly care on me,” Mohammed said.

Amazing Animal Fact: 17



Chimpanzees are among the most intelligent animals on earth. They use tools to catch food. They use sticks to find –termites and rocks to crack open nuts. They can learn new things. They can even play computer games!

“Not So Dumb”



ABOUT thirty years ago certain men were digging out a part of Pompeii, that Italian city which, in the first century, was suddenly destroyed by an eruption of the volcano, “Vesuvius”.

Outside a dwelling they discovered the body of a small lad appearing as if he had fallen asleep. The little chap had been overtaken by the clouds of poison gas and torrents of red-hot ashes from the mountain.

Beside the boy was a big dog with its teeth caught in its master’s cloak. It looked as though the dog had been making a great effort to save the boy.

Around the dog’s neck was a silver collar. The metal was all tarnished, but when cleaned it was seen to have this inscription in Latin: “This dog has thrice saved the life of his little master, once from fire, once from water, and once from thieves”.

Even at this last hour, when destruction poured down from the sky, it was plain that the faithful animal had tried to save his little master a fourth time.

General Charles Gordon, while serving in India, owned a beautiful red Gordonsetter.

One day, while the General was enjoying his swim in the Ganges near Benares, he noticed his dog running up and down the river bank, barking furiously, obviously trying to attract his attention.

The master thought it was just sheer high spirits, in sympathy with the delight of swimming in cool river water on that hot, roasting day.

Actually, having seen a huge alligator higher up stream and, heading for his master's white body, the dog was trying to warn him of the danger. Failing in this, the beautiful animal, plunging into the river, swam up stream right into the jaws of the alligator, and so saved his master's life.

Today, there on the river bank stands a life-size bronze statue of this superb dog-mate, with General Gordon's deep sorrow and gratitude inscribed on it.

Another story is of a mare in her stable. Her master, a hasty, peppery man, needed her for work, and attempted to lead her out. But she persistently jibbed, keeping still and quite motionless. In a rage the owner kept fisting her on the head, but

still she would not move. Glancing down, his startled gaze fell on his baby son cuddled up against the mare's hooves.

Could there be a greater proof of an animal's intelligence, or of its love for its master? By contrast, how shameful and base is man's exploitation of animals today, in vivisection for medical research, in trapping for fur, in bull-fighting, and in so many other horrors.

Captain Ransom used to tell a story about an elephant he was watching in Africa as it browsed in the tall grass. The animal was domesticated and had been chained to a large stake, which was driven deep in the ground.

The chain was long so that he could feed on the nearby grass. After some time he had eaten all the grass in the circle he could reach.

To the great surprise and amusement of Captain Ransom, as soon as it had finished, the elephant went over to the stake, worked it loose, transferred it to another grassy spot, then drove it into the ground and continued with its meal!



Queensland S.P.C.A. decided to make its first bravery award to a ten-month old German Shepherd named Storm, who stopped a car to get help for his injured master.

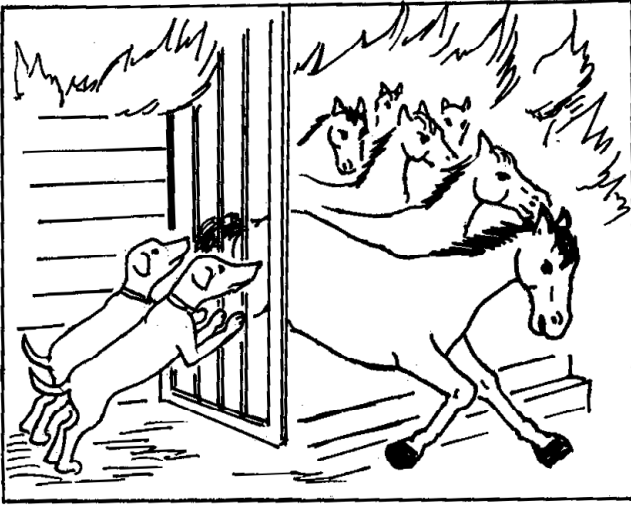
The dog hopped onto the hood of a car and clung there, pawing the windshield and whining until the driver stopped. He then led him to a nearby ditch where his injured master, Terence Collins, was lying in his overturned car. The driver got help and Mr Collins soon recovered in a hospital.

Amazing Animal Fact: 18



Camels are sometimes called “ships of the desert.” This is because they hold a lot of items to transport through the desert. Camels have three sets of eyelids with two rows of eyelashes. Camels are able to close their nostrils to keep sand and dust out. A camel's hump does not store water. Their humps store fat.

Man's Best Friends



IT WAS a cold winter night and, as I sat by the fire with my two dogs, Bess and Bob, I recalled the night two years ago when a very different kind of fire was in front of me.

I would never forget that night as long as I live. It was dark and cold when I put on my hat and coat to take the dogs out for their late night walk. Picking up my stick, I called them to me and set off. The dogs knew the path well and at once scampered ahead, heedless of the cold and wind that seemed to bite through my skin. The path led along the side of a stream and through the valley to the Manor House where we would turn back and retrace our steps.

The Manor House had stood there for centuries and I remember pondering over all the things that must have taken

place in and around it-the Lord of the Manor entertaining, the people who would have worked there. Even the house itself, if it could talk, what tales it would be able to tell! The present Lord who lived there owned most of the land around, renting it out to local farmers for a reasonable rent and maintaining good relationships with all in the village.

I passed the river and was half-way through the valley when the smell first came to me. It was a strange, acrid, yet faintly woodish smell, and I wondered what it could be. I decided to ignore it, but the dogs could not, and ran around restlessly, sniffing the air and whining. I tried to calm them, but they paid no heed, although they were usually very obedient.

Just as I was about to turn back, I saw it -a red light shining through the trees. I hurried forward to see what was causing it, and when I got closer I realised what it was-a huge wall of fire. The entire stable area was alight.

I raced forward, shouting at the top of my voice to draw attention. The heat was unbearable and I could not get any- where near the stable to see if there was anyone inside. Like a bullet from the gun Bess shot past. Without hesitation she went in through the door. I frantically called to her, but she paid no heed to my cries. With my heart in my mouth, I ran forward to try to reach her. It was at this moment that people seemed to be appearing as if from nowhere, running with horses and buckets, desperately trying to reach the stable.

It was also at this moment that I saw the most amazing thing happening. The stable door flew open and atleast a

dozen horses came galloping through, closely followed by Bess, snapping at their heels and barking as loudly as she could. Bob dashed forward to help. Within two minutes the entire stable was evacuated and not a single horse was lost in the fire.

When the fire was under control, I looked for my dogs, to find them both lying beside the horses as if nothing had happened. The fire had not done as much damage as we had originally expected, so I returned home to bed. I spent the night wondering how Bess had known how to save the horses.

The next morning, I answered the door to discover the Lord of the Manor there, with the deeds to the cottage in hand. It was his way of showing appreciation for the bravery of my dogs in saving his horses. I now owned the cottage I had always rented from him, and he assured me that any future bills of the vet would be met by him.

I still feel great pride as I walk my dogs. I know that they are the best friends that man can have, and I'm glad they belong to me.



Amazing Animal Fact: 19

The **Gibbons** swing from tree to tree which is called brachiating because it is so fast and unique. They are able to reach between gaps of almost 50 feet with just one swing and leap! The gibbon loves fruits and can often be found near fruit trees.

The Squirrel & The Sparrow



It was many weeks before winter, but on this bright crisp morning, some of the animals in the forest knew that winter would not be long in coming. A sparkling carpet of frost covered the fallen leaves on the ground.

A squirrel, who was born earlier that year, came cautiously down his tree and sniffed curiously. He reached out to touch the frost; he had not seen anything like this before in his whole long life of seven months.

The icy frost on his nose made him sneeze; and as he sat up to rub it with his front paws, he felt the frost on his hind feet. He jumped high in the air in surprise, wondering what invisible creature had bitten him. His jump carried him into a thick clump of grass and when he emerged he was covered with white snow.

A fat young sparrow, who had been watching his friend's antics, twittered, "Oh you funny little fellow! Haven't you seen frost before?"

"No", retorted Squirrel, "and neither have you. The day after I came out of the nest, you hatched out of an egg in the same tree. So, I am a day older than you. I haven't seen the likes of this before and that means you have not either."

“But I was laid in the nest before you ever came out into the world, so I am older and know more than you anyway.” argued Sparrow. He always liked to start the day arguing with the first creature he met, and that was usually Squirrel.

“Have it your way, There is no point in arguing with you, since you always win. My feet are getting cold.” And with a flick of his tail, Squirrel started rummaging around under the tree.

“What on earth are you doing now?” enquired cheeky Sparrow. He delighted in following Squirrel everywhere, prodding and teasing him with questions and riddles.

“When is a sparrow not a sparrow?” he asked Squirrel.

“When it's an egg- I have heard that one before. Please leave me alone. I have got work to do” said Squirrel.

“What are you doing anyway? I have never seen you so busy,” Sparrow exclaimed.

“I feel like collecting nuts and seeds; and I'm going to work all day and hide them around here in holes that I must dig. Please go away. I have lots of work to do. And don't ask me why I'm doing it. I just have to. Something inside me tells me I should.”

“The frost has affected your brain, young squirrel. You are crazy. There is plenty of food around. Live now and do not worry about tomorrow. Tomorrow will take care of itself –that is my motto. Save for a rainy day, and it will never rain. See you around, old worry-bag!” With a raucous laugh, Sparrow twittered off merrily to find breakfast.

As winter came, the sun took longer to come up over the trees to warm the forest; and food became harder and harder to find. Many animals had already gone to sleep. Others who had not hibernated had migrated to warmer regions in the south where food would be plentiful.

When the days were dark and cold, Squirrel would sleep, sometimes for days on end, warm and snug in a nest of leaves and twigs. His bushy tail now served as a blanket for his head and feet. His sleep was so deep – that he did not need much food. But on sunny days he would wake briefly, and have a snack from one of his well hidden stores.

On one of these days, he met Sparrow again. “How quiet you are Sparrow? No riddles today?” he asked as he nibbled an acorn. Sparrow gave plaintive cheep and said that he was hungry.

“But you look so fat!” said Squirrel through a mouthful of delicious mushy acorn.

“It's just my feathers, I fluff out to keep warm,” sighed Sparrow.

“Well, don't just perch there sighing and fluffing. Come over and share this with me.”

“Thank you,” said Sparrow, and he ate with Squirrel until he was almost ready to burst!

That meal saved his life. Without it Sparrow would have died from cold and hunger that night.

“I’ll never tease you again, Squirrel for saving up for the cold days,” he chirped. You are indeed wise to do that. Perhaps we sparrows might learn one day. Thank you again, dear friend!”

And he flew off, knowing that he would see the spring soon. The buds on the tree where he and Squirrel lived were showing green at last.

Amazing Animal Fact : 20



Squirrels can find food buried beneath a foot of snow. A squirrel's front teeth never stop growing. When squirrels feel threatened, they run away in a zigzag pattern. Squirrels are acrobatic, intelligent and adaptable. A newborn squirrel is about an inch long. They get bulky to stay warm during the winter.

Vegetarianism



A **vegetarian** is someone who doesn't eat meat, and eats foods that come from only plants, like grains, fruits, vegetables, and nuts.

Some stricter **vegetarians** avoid more than just meat. They also avoid animal products, which are nonmeat foods that come from animals. They are **vegans**.



Among the many reasons for being a vegetarian are health, environmental, and ethical concerns; dislike of meat; non-violent beliefs; compassion for animals; and economics. Research has confirmed that a vegetarian diet can meet all known nutrient needs. The key to a healthy vegetarian diet, as with any other diet, is to eat a wide variety of foods, including fruits, vegetables, plenty of leafy greens, whole foods grain products, nuts, seeds, and legumes. Limit your intake of sweets and fatty foods.



A well-planned vegetarian diet can meet kids' nutritional needs and has many health benefits. For example, a diet rich in fruits and veggies will be high in fiber and low in fat, factors known to improve cardiovascular health by reducing blood cholesterol and maintaining a healthy weight. However, kids and teens on a vegetarian diet may need to be careful that they get an adequate amount of certain vitamins and minerals.

Why become a Vegetarian? Look at all these reasons:

- **You'll ward off disease.** Vegetarian diets are more healthy than the non vegetarian diets, particularly in preventing, treating or reversing heart disease and reducing the risk of cancer.—another great reason to listen to Mom and eat your veggies!
- **You'll keep your weight down.** Research has found that overweight people who followed a low-fat, vegetarian diet lost an average of 24 pounds in the first year and kept off that weight 5 years later.
- **You'll live longer.** If you switch to a vegetarian diet, you can add about 13 healthy years to your life.
- **You'll build strong bones.** Vegetarian Foods also supply other nutrients such as phosphorus, magnesium and vitamin D that are necessary for the body to absorb and use calcium.

- **You'll have more energy.** Good nutrition generates more usable energy.
- **You'll be more 'regular.** Eating a lot of vegetables necessarily means consuming more fiber, which pushes waste out of the body.
- **You'll help reduce pollution.** Some people become vegetarians after realizing the devastation that the meat industry is having on the environment. The chemical and animal waste runoff from factory farms is responsible for more than 173,000 miles of polluted rivers and streams.
- **You'll avoid toxic chemicals.** Nearly 95 percent of the pesticide residue in the diet comes from meat, fish and dairy products.
- **You'll help reduce famine.** If all the grain currently fed to livestock were consumed directly by people, the number of people who could be fed would be nearly 800 million.
- **You'll spare animals.** Many vegetarians give up meat because of their concern and compassion for animals. Ten billion animals are slaughtered for human consumption each year.
- **You'll save money.** Eating vegetables, grains and fruits in place of the 200 pounds of beef, chicken and fish each non vegetarian eats annually would cut individual food bills by an average of \$4,000 a year.
- **Your dinner plate will be full of color.** Disease-fighting phytochemicals give fruits and vegetables their rich, varied hues. They come in two main classes: carotenoids and anthocyanins.

All rich yellow and orange fruits and vegetables—carrots, oranges, sweet potatoes, mangoes, pumpkins, corn—owe their color to carotenoids. Leafy green vegetables also are rich in carotenoids but get their green color from chlorophyll. Red, blue and purple fruits and vegetables—plums, cherries, red bell peppers—contain anthocyanins.

Vegetarian for Life



Among our human society in and around us, we witness some people pursuing non-vegetarianism. We can change them to follow vegetarianism. The external and internal body structure of human beings are similar to that of herbivorous (Vegetarian) animals. The following points prove the similarity:

1. Carnivores have sharp pointed teeth and claws with such nails which help them in tearing apart their prey easily. Vegetarian creatures have teeth embedded in flat jaws. Their claws do not have sharp nails but are framed as such to pluck fruits, etc., easily.
2. The lower jaws of carnivores move only upward and downward and whereas they swallow their food without mastication. The jaws of Human beings can move up and down, left and right i.e. in all directions. They swallow their food after chewing it.

3. The tongues of meat eating animals are very rough. They protrude it outwards to drink water. The tongues of vegetarian animals are quite smooth. They use their lips rather than a protruding tongue to drink.
4. The length of intestines of carnivores is less, almost equal to the length of their bodies and about six times the length of their torso. Due to small intestines they throw out flesh food before it gets contaminated and poisoned. We, the human beings have longer intestines, about four times their body-length or twelve times the torso, which cannot quickly expel any flesh-food.
5. The liver and kidney of meat eating animals are larger in proportion by means of which they can throw out the waste material of meat easily. The liver and kidney of vegetarian animals are smaller in proportion and unable to throw out the animal waste easily.
6. The hydrochloric acid content in the digestive system of carnivores is ten times more as compared to that of human beings which digests the meat easily. The hydrochloric acid content in vegetarian species is much less and so unable to digest meat easily.
7. The saliva of flesh eaters is acidic. The saliva of vegetarian species is alkaline and it contains Ptyalin which is helpful in digesting carbohydrates.
8. The Blood Lipo-Proteins of the carnivores are different from those of herbivores. In human beings, the Blood-Lipo- Proteins are similar to those of the herbivores.

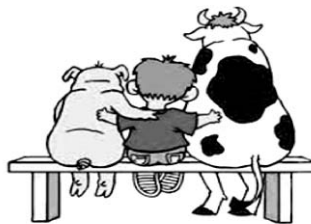
9. Carnivores have very strong sense of smell, their eyes glow in the night and their night vision is as good as in the day- time. These powers help them in killing their pray. The sense of smell among herbivores is not so strongly developed and their night-vision is nowhere as good as day-vision.

10. The visual power of kids of meat-eating animals is almost zero for about a week after their birth. The off-spring of vegetarian animals have normal sight, right from their birth.



Is the Vegetarian Food a Complete Balanced Diet?
Will the vegetarian food make you weak?
No Children, It is absolutely wrong.
The Elephants and Horses are Vegetarian Animals.
They are Strong Animals.

Yes It is.



ANIMALS ARE FRIENDS, NOT FOOD!

Few facts related to vegetarianism:

- A person can be pure vegetarian but in no way can be purely non- vegetarian.
- Many researchers have proved non- vegetarianism to induce innumerable diseases.
- Various religions prohibit and discourage the intake of meat and other non- vegetarian foods.
- Almost all the great people of the world have condemned non- vegetarianism.
- Vegetarian food is cheap and best.
- The money expended on food of single non- vegetarian person is enough to be spent on food for eight vegetarian people.
- The land required to produce the fodders to feed the animals to obtain certain amount of flesh food is 14 times more than that required to feed same amount of vegetarian diet to man directly.
- Non- vegetarianism is accounting to be the reason of water problems. If one kilogram of wheat production requires 50 gallons of water, then the same quality of cow flesh production requires 1000 gallons of water.
- Production of meat is one of the reasons for increase in ‘Global Warming’ and ‘Imbalance in atmosphere’.
- As the harmful effects of non- vegetarianism is coming into light, the percentage of consumption of non-vegetarian food is reducing in the foreign countries.

Animals and birds are also living beings, they can be helpful to human beings in any way. For instance, cow gives milk, bullocks help in ploughing, donkey carries loads etc., But killing of these animals and birds by human beings for food or business is an immoral cruelty. Similarly, using up of trees and plants for grains, fruits, vegetables is not wrong, but cutting up of trees for any purpose is not acceptable. Thus, **“Adopt vegetarianism – Be healthy”.** Also send a supporting hand to protect the economic, moral, spiritual and environmental values by encouraging vegetarianism.

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

THE COMPASSION OF BUDDHA

1. Why is there difficulty in driving the herd of sheep?
2. What did the Buddha do seeing the limping lamb?
3. Where was the herdsman driving the herd?
4. What did the Buddha tell the king?
5. What was the advice given by the Buddha to the people?
6. Find out from your grand parents, village elders about the belief behind animal sacrifice.

THE STORY OF BULLOCKS

1. How did Ramu treat the bullocks?
2. Why did the bullocks fall ill?
3. How did Ramu sell the vegetables in the absence of the bullocks?
4. What did the doctor advice Ramu regarding how he should treat the bullocks?
5. How did Ramu's behaviour change?
6. Meet a bullock cart owner and write the conversation you had with him.

THE PRICE OF KINDNESS

1. What did Kishen buy with his pocket money?
2. What did Kishen ask the bird - seller?
3. What did Kishen want to do for the bird?
4. What changed his mind?
5. What did Kishen finally do?
6. 'Caged birds are like prisoners' Do you agree? If so give 2 valid reasons.

THE CHANGE

1. What did the boy Turgenieff do with his gun?
2. What did the wounded bird do?
3. What did the boy tell his father?
4. Why did he not want to shoot again?
5. If you happen to see a wounded bird what would you do at once?

KING SIBI & THE DOVE

1. Who came as refuge to King Sibi? Why?
2. What did King Sibi tell the bird?
3. "I have to kill by killing birds and eating them. Do you know by saving this bird you will be the cause of not only my death but also of my family" - Who said these words?
4. How did King Sibi offer a solution to the hawk?
5. What did King Sibi do to protect the bird from the hawk?
6. Who were the dove and the hawk?
7. Draw the picture seen on pg. 17. Write two lines about King Sibi.

IN SEARCH OF A FRIEND

1. What did the man say to the flowering tree? What was its reply?
2. What did the man say to the humming bee? What was its reply?
3. What did the man say to the rabbit? What was its reply?
4. What did the man say to the parrot? What was its reply?
5. What did the man say to the butterfly? What was its reply?
6. How did the man feel at the end and realize?
7. What did the animals say to the man atlast?

DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN

1. Who was Daniel?
2. What food did Daniel take in the prison?
3. What was the gift that Daniel was endowed with?
4. Why were the other officers jealous of Daniel?
5. What was the trick played by the officers to put Daniel under trial? What was the punishment?
6. What did the fiercest lion do to Daniel?
7. What protected Daniel from the lions?
8. Have you ever prayed for the welfare of an animal? If so when and for what purpose?

BACHAN'S DIWALI

1. Who is Bachan? What are his good qualities?
2. Where did the master go with his Bachan to celebrate Diwali?

3. Why did Bachan bray suddenly? What happened to him?
4. How did the little master save his pet?
5. Were the boys right in doing so? How did their father advise them?
6. Meet a pet owner and to find out the care & Protection he takes for his pet at the time of Diwali.

DAWN

1. Where are the cows being taken by Ramsingh?
2. Why is Dawn not able to get her breakfast?
3. Why did the farmer refuse to take the calf along with the mother cow?
4. How did finally Dawn reach her mother?
5. Is it right to separate a calf from its mother?
6. Write a thanking note to Prakash the farmer for having allowed Dawn to stay back with her mother.

FAITHFUL BOBBY

Say True of False

1. Bobby was not a very affectionate dog.
2. The watchman gave Bobby something to eat in the shivering cold.
3. Tax was not collected for the dog.
4. The dog kept watch over his master's grave for twenty years.
5. The dog was loyal to his master.
6. Have you seen dogs waiting near tea shops, looking eagerly at people who drink tea why do you think so?

THE RESCUE

Say True of False

1. Poaching means catching the elephant alive.
2. Poaching is bad.
3. Rabbit, Rat and Monkey helped the elephant prince to escape.
4. The man gave Gaja jaggery and sugarcane out of love.
5. The man was selfish and had no love for animals. What will you do if your friend is in distress? Say if he is hurt in his legs? Write how you helped to save a wounded dove.

A SAGE'S COMPASSION

1. How did the saint Ramana react and feel for the broken egg?
2. What surprised Bhagavan on the 8th day?
3. If you happen to see a fallen egg from its nest, please see that the egg is put back into the nest with the help of your elders.

THE CRUEL SPORT

1. Why was the hunter shocked to see the wounded Sambar?
2. What was the wounded animal doing even after being hurt?
3. Why did the animal did not move even after seeing the hunter and knowing the danger ahead?
4. How did the incident change the hunter's life?
5. You must never go near a mother cat or dog when their young ones are suckling - talk to your mother about her feeling you with her milk. Write few lines about what she said.

THREE FRIENDS

1. How did the little lizard save the tree from the boy with the stick?
2. How did the lizard save the tree from the wood cutter?
3. How did the tree come into life again?
4. Have you heard of Sri - Bahuguna who saved trees by hugging them? If not get some information about his work and tell all the others in the school.

KING YUDHISHTRA AND THE DOG

1. Why did Indra object to taking the dog along with King Yudhishtira to heaven?
2. What did King Yudhishtira reply?
3. Who appeared in the place of the dog?
4. How did the God of Justice praise the king?
5. Why did the king take the dog also with him?
6. Talk to any pet owners and write their experience with their pet on Loyalty and Love.

UNUSUAL FRIENDSHIP

1. Write in your own words how the dog took the wounded kitten to the hospital.

2. Write how the rat helped a dove.
3. Describe the friendship between a dog and a duck.
4. Visit a nearby pet clinic to get more such friendship set between animals from the veterinary doctor.

A MONKEY SEEKS JUSTICE

1. What was the gardener's mistake?
2. What did the monkey complain to the judge?
3. What was the judgement?
4. With the help of any animal organization get some information on prevention of cruelty to animal act.

MOUSE CHANGES MAN

1. How were the two mice walking?
2. What did Mr. Brown do as soon as he saw the two mice? Was he right?
3. What happened to the two mice?
4. How did Mr. Brown become a vegetarian?
5. Is there an incident in your life that has made you feel guilty with a sorry note to the person whom you have hurt.

MONKEY'S MOTHERLY CARE

1. How did Mohammed Yusuf meet with an accident?
2. What did the monkey do as soon as she saw the wounded man?
3. How did the villagers help Mohammed?
4. If the monkey had the power to speak write what it would have spoken to the villagers about mohammed.

NOT SO DUMB

1. What was written in the metal dollar of the dog?
2. How did the dog save his master while swimming?
3. What do you understand from this incident?
4. What was the incident that proved the elephant's intelligence?
5. Why did the SPCA give a bravery award to the German Shepherd?
6. SPCA means society for the prevention of cruelty to animals. Do you have one such society in your place. Find more about their work and activities.

MAN'S BEST FRIENDS

1. What were the names of the faithful dogs which the Lord of the manor have?
2. What did the Lord of the Manor do one day?
3. Did the Lord maintain good relationship with the farmers? In what way did he exhibit?
4. Why did the dogs become restless during the stroll of the Lord?
5. What incident did the Lord notice in the night near his stable?
6. Who were responsible for saving the horses from the stable of the Lord?
7. How did the Lord of the Manor feel at length?

THE SQUIRREL & THE SPARROW

1. How old were Squirrel and Sparrow?
2. What did Sparrow like to do at the start of the day?
3. What was Squirrel busy doing?
4. What did Squirrel do when the days were dark and cold?
5. Why was the Sparrow quiet ?
6. How did Sparrow know that spring will come soon?

VEGETARIANISM

1. What does a vegetarian eat?
2. Give one health reason for vegetarianism
3. How does Vegetarianism save lives?
4. How is the human body suited to eating vegetarian food?
5. How are the intestines of herbivores and carnivores different?

COMPASSION

“Why is compassion not part of our established curriculum, an inherent part of our education? Compassion, awe, wonder, curiosity, exaltation, humility - these are the very foundation of any real civilisation, no longer the prerogatives of any church, but belonging to everyone, every child in every home, in every school.

- Yhudi Menuhin