

SECOND REPORT ON LADY, THE "MIND-READING" HORSE

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IN THE January number of this JOURNAL we reported on a study of Lady, a "mind-reading" horse. This study was made at Richmond, Va. during the academic year of 1927-28. The (then three-year-old) filly had been claimed by the owner, Mrs. C. D. Fonda, to be of such superior intelligence as to be able to reply to questions by touching lettered blocks, and to execute mentally simple arithmetical problems. Of this superior intelligence we obtained no evidence; on the other hand we were able to show that Lady did not even recognize the letters of the alphabet.

The horse was advertised by Mrs. Fonda as being capable also of "mind-reading", that is, able to receive mental influence from others without the use of its ordinary senses. She claimed that it was able to answer unexpressed questions by touching lettered or numbered blocks with its nose, the letters or numbers being mentally chosen by Mrs. Fonda or other persons present. It was to the investigation of this claim of telepathy that our principal efforts were directed.

There was some movement on the part of Mrs. Fonda, inclination of the body, and movements of arm and whip; she also spoke frequently to the horse. While we did not discover any significance to these movements and while they appeared quite natural, they were at once suspected, and systematically eliminated. That is, Mrs. Fonda was gradually restricted to the point where all recognized possibilities of guiding the horse to the correct block by voice or visual cue were removed, not only individually but finally all together. Nevertheless the horse was successful. Good results were obtained with F (Mrs. Fonda) silent, motionless, and with eyes controlled, and with F separated from the horse, or with a screen between her and the animal. More than this, Lady was successful with F entirely ignorant of the block chosen, and with Dr. William McDougall and R as agents, or R alone, controlled and guarded against the giving of unconscious signals. It did not seem possible that any system of indications, conscious or unconscious, could operate under these conditions, and we felt ourselves com-

pelled to recognize another means of transference of mental influence other than the known senses—in brief, telepathy.

The colt was at that time quite active and playful, and was not easily managed even by F herself. It kept biting the blocks, nibbling at F's coat-sleeve, pawing the ground, and was generally restless. F had considerable difficulty in overcoming this and getting it to work. She felt that she had to use the whip in order to do this, a policy with which we did not agree. But once the animal came under her control it became very passive, and its movements were leaden. It was with this passive state that our best results were associated. Those of Brugmans, referred to in our earlier report, were also associated with a similar passivity in his subject.

On December 3-8, 1928, inclusive, we were able to make a further study of Lady at the same place and under the same general conditions as before. The colt had matured greatly in the interval since our earlier study, and was quite well-behaved and very much more obedient and tractable than it had been before.

The weather was unusually good, and the demonstration tent described in the first report was heated. We had thought that the low temperatures under which our earlier investigations were carried on had interfered somewhat with the animal's passivity, and so reduced to some extent the number of successes. In this new study, however, all these external disadvantages were removed.

OBSERVATIONS SUMMARIZED

In spite of better conditions than formerly, better results were not forthcoming. Lady seemed to be unable to work successfully when restrictions were placed upon F. It was noticeable at once that F was doing more talking to the horse than before, making movements that seemed to coördinate with the direction she desired Lady to take, and was using the whip in a way that was obviously significant. All of these movements and sounds were quite apparent, and required no cleverness to detect. For example, when the block chosen was one at a distance from F, she leaned and even stepped forward. She kept leaning farther forward until the horse's head came over the block chosen, then she stopped and moved back a little and the horse touched the block. The whip and voice seemed also to coördinate very significantly with the body movements.

All this was quite different from the procedure we had witnessed during the year previous. Only on our last visit to Lady

(in April) had we noticed anything of the kind. Then we saw that F was using the whip, and speaking, when we did not restrict her, much more than she had previously done, thereby rendering the demonstration valueless. But on that occasion we had excused F on the ground of nervousness due mainly to recent illness. Also at that time she had introduced a halter strap which she was again using when we began the December, 1928, series, but of course it had to be eliminated. Promptly becoming suspicious of the many movements, we proceeded to repeat the same tests we had given before under duplicated conditions.

It soon became evident, however, that under the conditions used in obtaining the earlier successes, Lady was no longer susceptible to influence from R as agent. His attempts to direct the animal mentally were failures not only when he stood in front of it with eyes shaded from it and from F, but even when he stood at its head with eyes unshaded. When he stood behind F and wrote the number on a pad as he had once done with excellent results, there was now complete failure.

Formerly L E R (Louisa E. Rhine) had not acted as sole agent on more than a few occasions, the results seeming to show that she did not do so well as F and R. Now, however, she tried frequently, following the failures of R, and obtained somewhat better results than he. But her results in no series were good enough to be convincing. Out of 110 tests, with F ignorant of the choice, L E R obtained 19 successes (best series 3 out of 10), while R got only 7 out of 70.

With F acting as agent Lady's success in the original study had been almost unbroken. We had secured good results not only with F motionless and silent and with eyes controlled voluntarily, but also with an 18 inch square screen interposed between herself and the horse; and with F blindfolded, motionless and silent. Repeating these tests now under approximately the same conditions, we obtained astonishingly poor results. In fact it appeared that Lady had very little better success with F knowing the block but restricted by screen or blindfold than with F ignorant and R and L E R acting as agent.

When F was blindfolded, Lady got only one out of ten tests correctly. With the blindfold raised so that F could see the blocks, however, results were perfect. With blinders on the horse (these had not been available for earlier tests) results were fairly good (three out of five) if F was allowed to speak and use the whip which she did freely. But when voice and whip were eliminated

failure resulted. Yet with the blinder on the left eye turned back or raised up so that some vision of F's movements were allowed, good touches were made with F practically silent and without the whip. She leaned conspicuously, however, and even stepped forward and backward, as the block lay in the farther or nearer row.

Results were almost equally bad when the 18 inch square screen was interposed between F and the horse. At most, 2 successes out of 10 were obtained even though F spoke continuously and used the whip. Her efforts to see around the board were very obvious, though not successful, and her nervousness marked.

It was impossible to get F to carry out our restrictions for the most part. She did not remain motionless in spite of our repeated requests, although she would acquiesce and appear to try. When asked to fix her gaze upon a certain point she would hold the pose only momentarily. Then finding the animal loitering or touching wrong blocks as it invariably would do, she would break control and scold or whip the horse. As noted in the earlier report this had occurred occasionally at that time, but not to the exclusion of all success as it did in this later study. At that time, however, the horse usually succeeded promptly and F's provocation to break control was less. But now the horse seemed entirely dependent on the various and obvious cues which F, unrestricted, gave it, and it did not succeed without them.

But not only were F's indicative movements apparent. They were easily duplicated. R himself, standing at the horse's head was able to direct it by voice inflection and body movements so that it touched the desired blocks or cards with very few failures. He obtained 20 successes consecutively in one series. He could do this even with F outside the tent, though in the year previously he had been unable to direct Lady or even to control her in F's absence. When he followed this series by one in which he remained silent and motionless as he had done successfully the year before, however, he had entire failure.

When he stood in front of the horse and across the table from it instead of at its head and attempted to guide it by indicative body movements, however, he failed. Even when he exaggerated these by tilting his head far off to one side or leaning his body until he was decidedly off balance (F blindfolded and so unable to get the signal and give to the horse herself) Lady still failed to get the cue. And when F herself was required to stand in front to direct the horse, she was not successful, although she was unrestricted. More than this, with F in that position and R at

Lady's head, both unrestricted except from actually walking around, R was able to over-ride whatever influence F may have had on the horse and by his indicative body movements, guide the horse at will. It was clear, therefore, that the animal was accustomed to taking its cues from the individual who stood at its head (F's accustomed place) rather than from the one who stood in front and across the table from it.

Not only was the horse's dependence upon sensory cues very evident in the later tests, but the passivity which had been a conspicuous feature of its best working state before was now completely gone. It never got into the state of extreme relaxation and apparent stupor we had noted previously and which we had associated with the telepathic process, although, being older now, it was in general more docile and less restless and active than formerly. At all times now it maintained a certain alertness, one ear usually directed toward F at its side, instead of relaxed and drooping.

In view of these facts, the result of over 500 tests made during the week, we were forced to conclude that the telepathic ability we earlier found the horse to possess has been now almost if not entirely lost and that Lady has become merely a trained animal conditioned to a system of signals made up of indicative body movements, voice inflections, whip movements. These signals are usually given by F but may be duplicated easily by others, if the person giving them stands in F's accustomed place at Lady's head.

These signals supposedly originated with F in unconscious body movements and voice inflections and were gradually substituted in the horse for the telepathic sensitivity which probably disappeared slowly. Whether or not this sensitivity could have been preserved by different management of the horse, or whether it was an ephemeral quality due to pass in any case, is an unanswered question. According to Brugmans' and other reports on telepathy in human beings it is an ability which in some cases has been weakened and finally lost; so that Lady's case is not entirely unique.

Unfortunate to science as this change in Lady is, at least the negative results of our final week of experimentation may be taken as a check upon our earlier conclusion that the horse was then telepathic. If Lady had been guided at that time by sensory cues she should have improved in training in the interval. But the later data show that she could no longer succeed under any of the restrictions imposed upon her earlier. This shows unmistakably

that a profound change in the horse's capacities has occurred. That the change was not merely in the investigators' greater skill in avoiding the giving of signals, is shown by the fact that Lady no longer could be directed by R standing in front of her even when he tried to direct her by signals from that position. In the earlier work she did respond to his thought when he stood in that position and endeavored in every way to guard against giving a sensory indication. It is hardly conceivable that R could have given unconscious indications in the earlier case when he was trying not to do so, that could more easily be followed by Lady than the cues he later gave intentionally after the horse had had much longer training and experience.

The change in the horse's passivity mentioned above is significant in this connection too. Whatever the relation of this sleepy state to telepathy it was not the animal's normal state of alertness and attention, yet it was while in this state that it succeeded best. Later when normally alert and attentive it failed. And so our earlier conclusion that Lady was then telepathic seems to be supported in a substantial measure by the later negative findings, in so far as they constitute a check or comparison.

Since Lady's failure there is greater need than ever for the discovery and development of other telepathic animal or human subjects and their careful study under controlled conditions. We hope that such studies may be made possible.

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