

# **ANECDOTES OF ANIMALS**

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Anecdotes of animals by Percy J. Billinghamurst

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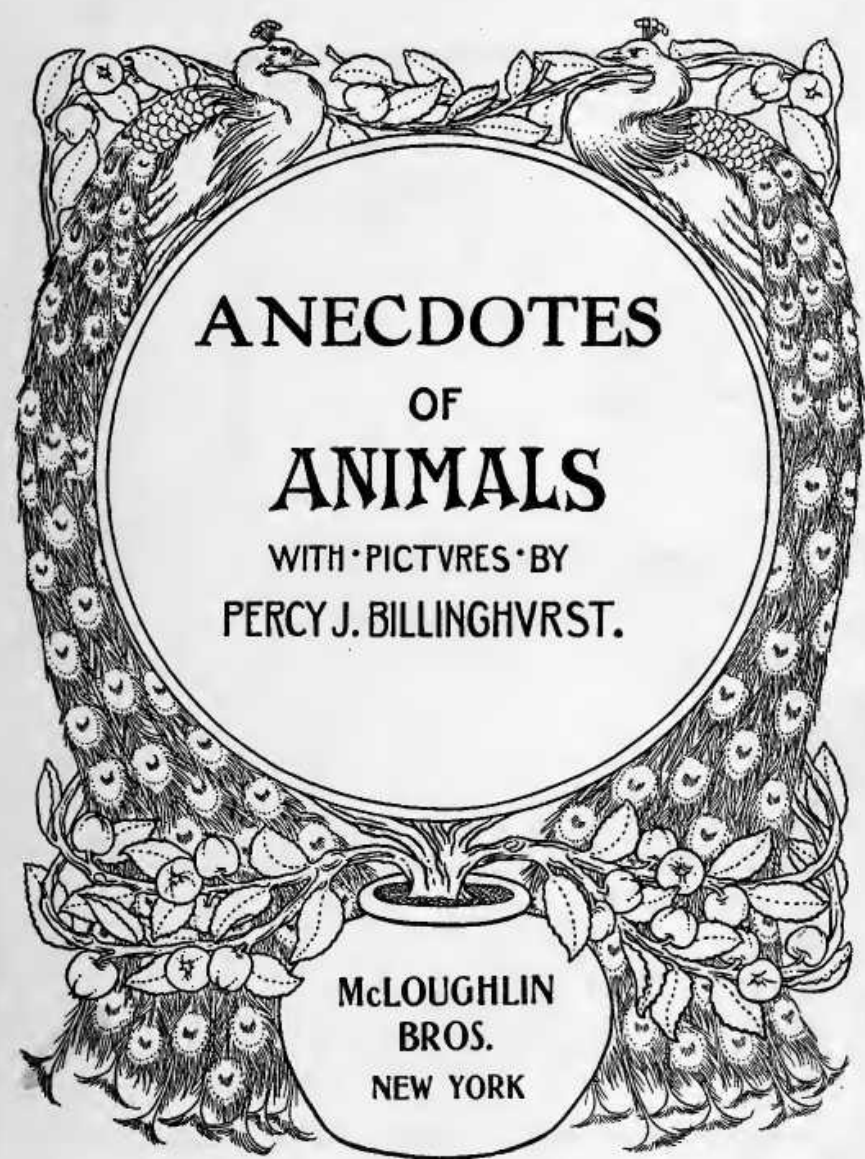
**PERCY J. BILLINGHURST**

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An Animal Concert.— Page 5



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WITH • PICTURES • BY  
PERCY J. BILLINGHURST.

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## I

## ANIMAL CONCERTS

**A**N abbot, a man of wit, and skilled in the making of new musical instruments, was ordered by Louis XI., king of France, more in jest than earnest, to procure him a concert of swines' voices. The abbot said that the thing could doubtless be done, but it would cost a good deal of money. The king ordered that he should have as much as he required for the purpose. The abbot then contrived as strange a thing as ever was seen. Out of a great number of hogs of various ages, which he got together under a tent, or pavilion, covered with velvet, and before which he had a table of wood painted with a certain number of keys, he made an organical instrument, and as he played upon the keys with little spikes which pricked the hogs, he made them cry in such order and consonance that he highly delighted the king and all his company.

## II

## A NEWFOUNDLAND DOG

ONE of the magistrates in Harbor Grace, in Newfoundland, had an old dog of the regular web-footed species peculiar to that island, who was in the habit of carrying a lantern before his master at night, as steadily as the most attentive servant could do, stopping short when his master made a stop, and going ahead when he was ready to follow.

If his master was away from home, and the command was given "Go fetch thy master," he would at once pick up the lantern, hold it fast between his teeth, and start for the town, which was more than a mile away from the home of his master. He would stop at the door of every house which he knew his master was in the habit of visiting, and laying down his lantern, growl and strike the door making all the noise in his power, until it was opened. If his master was not in the house, he would go on farther in the same way, till he found him. If he had gone with him only once to a house, this was enough to make him take in that house in his rounds.





## III

## STUDYING

A MAGPIE belonging to a barber in Rome, could imitate very perfectly almost everything it heard. Some trumpets happened one day to be sounded before the shop, and for a day or two afterward the magpie was quite mute, and seemed sad and melancholy. All who knew it supposed that the sound of the trumpets had so stunned it as to rob it at once of both voice and hearing.

But this was not the case, as very soon appeared. The bird had all this time been studying how to imitate the sound of the trumpets; and when at last master of it, the magpie, to the astonishment of all its friends, suddenly broke its long silence by a perfect imitation of the flourish of trumpets it had heard; repeating with the greatest exactness all the repetitions, stops, and changes. The learning of this lesson, however, so exhausted the magpie's brain that it forgot everything it had known before.

