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RENSEIGNEMENTS

La BANQUE CANADIENNE NATIONALE publie un bulletin mensuel qui expose brièvement diverses questions d'ordre économique. Les commentaires qu'il contient intéresseront ceux qui désirent se tenir au courant de ces questions, mais qui n'ont pas le loisir de parcourir de nombreux périodiques financiers. Vous pouvez recevoir gratuitement ce bulletin en faisant la demande à l'un de nos 595 bureaux de la Banque au Canada ou au Siège social, Place d'Armes, Montréal.

BANQUE CANADIENNE NATIONALE

‡ HOW COCKS CROW

I quote from an article in the *READER'S DIGEST* (FEB. 1957, PAGE 177), «What We Can Learn From Children» by Joseph Wechsberg:

«*We were driving through a small town in the south of France when our little girl became fascinated by a shaggy, noisy dog in the street. «Does the dog bark in French?» she asked. I didn't flinch. «Yes», I said, «the dogs here bark in French».*

One can sense a hint of complacency in the fact that Mr. Wechsberg thought fit to report an incident which enabled him to state that he never flinched. But, assuredly, there was no merit in that forbearance any more than there would have been if he had merely proclaimed that 2 plus 2 are 4. For it is a universally known fact that animals speak a different language according to the country in which they were born. Let us take another example than dogs: invariably French cocks, from birth, chant: «Cocorico» whereas their English counterparts sing: «Cock-a-doodle-doo».

What is infinitely more wonderful is that, when expatriated, they *instantly* adopt the language of the country of which they have become guests. This fact was revealed to me many years ago, when a farmer friend had imported a French cock into England. The minute it started crowing, all his English friends who happened to hear it, noticed that it crowed: «Cock-a-doodle-doo» and *not* «Cocorico». How very stupendous.

In my younger days I taught French in an English University for some forty years, but I can truthfully assert that, even amongst my most brilliant students, I never came across a single case of such marvelous instinctive adaptation. It is one of those happenings when the study of animals cannot but inspire us with righteous modesty.

Félix de GRAND'COMBE

