

EDUCATION

Dogs Get New Type of Training To Serve As Guides for Blind

Properly Educated Dog Will Disobey Unsafe Command Given by Blind Master, Report to World Conference States

DOGS educated to guide their sightless masters have proved their high worth in Germany, where probably close to 4,000 of the animals are in actual use by blind war veterans and civilians. Efforts are now being made to extend the service in other countries. Progress of this work was described in New York during the past week at the World Conference on Work for the Blind by Mrs. Dorothy Harrison Eustis, under whose direction the dog guides are being trained at Mont Pélerin, Switzerland, for use in other countries.

Great difficulties have had to be met, for the dog guides of the blind must be educated rather than trained. Merely "trained" dogs are dangerous, as they obey commands blindly and the situation resolves itself into a case of the blind leading the blind. If his sightless master gives an unsafe command, the educated dog will, on the other hand, of his own volition disobey that command and let his master know why the command was disobeyed and what he must do to reach his objective safely.

Not only is it necessary for the dogs to be educated to guide their blind masters but the owner himself must be taught how to follow the signals of his dog. A dog guide works in a special harness, which places him next to the left knee of his master, close enough so that the blind man can feel every movement of the dog's body. These movements are signals by which the dog tells his master to step down or up, to turn to the right or left, or to stop for traffic.

How blind students in a school founded to prepare them for manual labor demonstrated such an aptitude for the profession of music that over half the pupils now earn part or all their living as organists, piano tuners or teachers of music was described by Prof. Pierre Villey of the Valentin Haüy Association of Paris. Music was at first taught only as a recreation, but instances of extremely talented blind musicians, and especially the case of a blind man who persisted, in spite of punishments, in taking pianos apart and

tuning them, led to the successful experiment.

Factors which have contributed to the success of the project in France, Prof. Villey attributed in part to special conditions existing in that country. Musical training is not so universal there as in Italy, for instance, and so there was more need of instruction, particularly among the middle classes. The Church also favored the efforts of the Paris school and coöperated by employing blind organists.

Blind Seldom Hurt

Blind industrial workers suffer from fewer accidents than their average-sighted fellows, it is indicated by the experience of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind in the placement of the blind in work for which sight was formerly considered essential. This report was made by Capt. E. A. Baker and J. F. Clunk. They attributed this encouraging record to careful placement methods, coupled with the natural caution of the blind worker.

The jobs which blind persons of ordinary ability and normal energy can perform safely and efficiently, if employers can be persuaded to give them a trial, represent a wide range of industries.

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MEDICINE

Reports 21-Year Experiment In Goitre Prevention

RESULTS of a 21-year experiment in the prevention of goitre in human beings by feeding foods high in iodine content have been reported to the American Association for the Study of Goitre, by Dr. J. F. McClendon of the University of Minnesota.

Dr. McClendon originally planned to make his prophylactic experiments on babies, but had to abandon the project when he found he would have to adopt the babies legally in order to complete the experiments. He then continued the

work with two families, one being used as the control and the other as the prophylactic family.

At the beginning of the experiment they were all living in a non-goitrous region. One of the women had a goitre but this was reduced by feeding her foods high in iodine. The goitre became so small as to be non-evident. The two families have lived in the Great Lakes goitre belt since 1917.

Marine animals constituted the high iodine foods for the prophylactic family for some years. Then they were changed to vegetables procured oftener than once a month from South Carolina which is in a non-goitrous region, according to the U. S. Public Health Service.

To each family were born two children during the years of the experiment. In the control family not receiving high iodine foods, the first child developed a goitre and the second child was born dead. In the family receiving the iodized foods both children were normal, Dr. McClendon reported.

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MORE AT HOME IN THE WORLD
A blind person can move about with greater safety if he is guided by an "educated" dog with this type of leash.