

HEAVY STUFF

Dr. Edward M. Vardon of Detroit, a nationally prominent figure at dog shows, recently explained his liking for bulldogs. "Bulldogs are relaxing," he said. "You want somebody who is quiet and relaxing and doesn't get on your nerves all the time."

That explains preferring bulldogs to yapping, fidgety breeds. But there is no dog more quiet than no dog at all. Dr. Vardon has anticipated that objection, tho, by producing a second reason for liking bulldogs. "I like heavy animals," he said. "I like draft horses and beef cattle and heavy chickens. Perhaps that's why I like bulldogs. They are a lot of animal in a small package." Certainly a bulldog is a lot more animal than no animal at all.

Rating by weight set us to thinking about the precious metals such as gold, silver, and platinum. Where do these elements stand in weight?

Silver is relatively light, but gold and platinum are well towards the top, weighing per cubic foot, 1,204 and 1,334 pounds, respectively. Heaviest element of all, tho, is osmium, which weighs 1,404.6 pounds per cubic foot, and has a specific gravity of 22.5.

The name *osmium* comes from the Greek word for *odor*, in reference to the pungent, poisonous vapor formed

when this stuff is heated in air. Osmium is brittle and difficult to work with. An alloy of osmium and iridium has been used commercially for pen tips and phonograph needles, but nature's heaviest element is not good for much.

This heaviness bit can be carried too far. Probably most of us, with good reason, will keep on liking gold and bulldogs, content to remain unaware of osmium.