

“Our Zoo News”

A MONTHLY CHRONICLE OF NEWS OF
CHESTER ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

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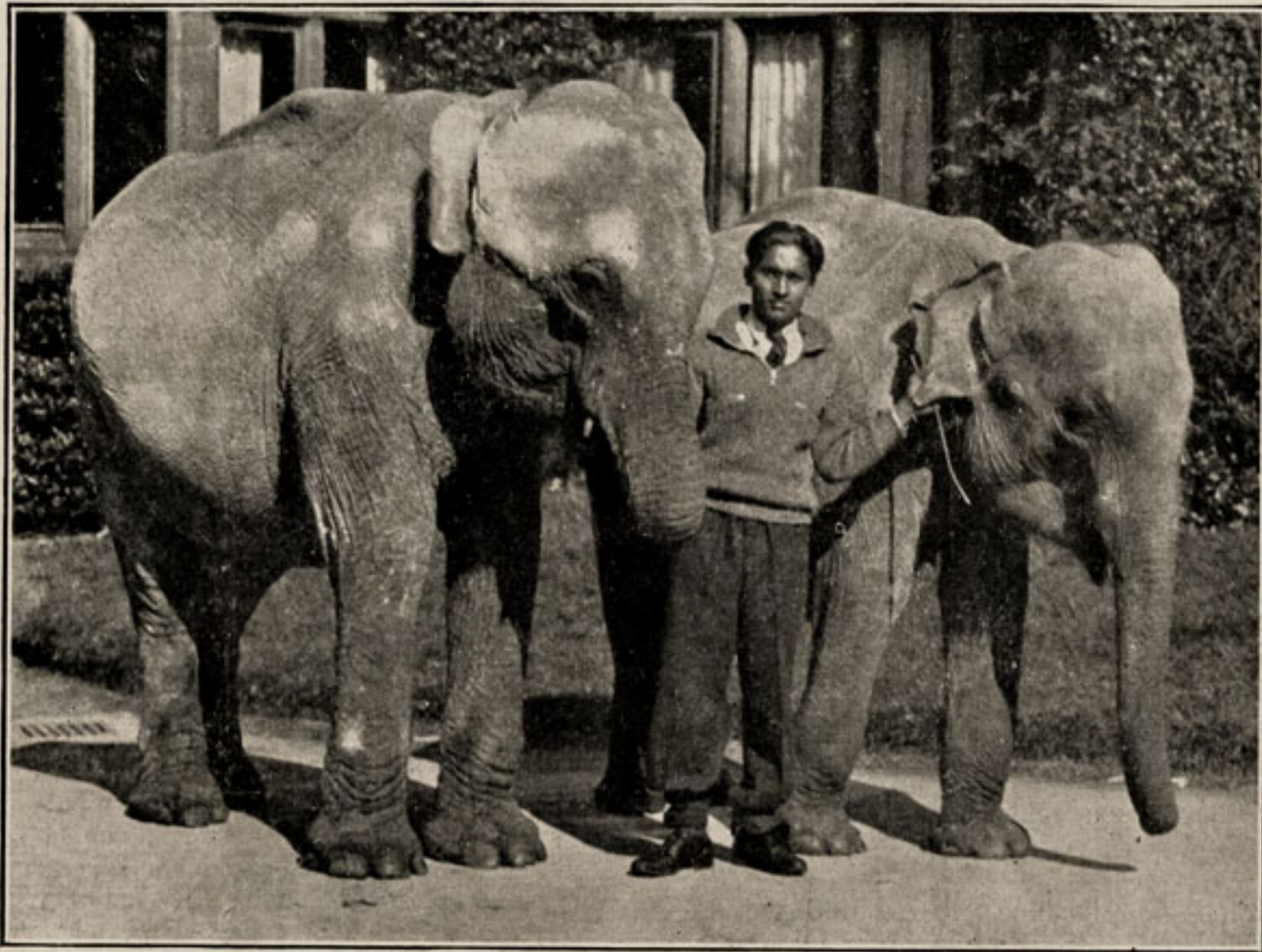


Photo. by G. W. Ellis, Esq.

THE TWO ELEPHANTS—“Molly” and “Mannekin”—with their
Mahout, Khanadas Karunadasa.

ELEPHANTS AT CHESTER ZOO.

Since our last issue the Zoo has been pleased to receive on deposit two young Elephants. One eight and the other ten years old.

These animals had travelled with Doorlay's Tropical

Express Revue, but owing to the war found themselves out of work. We understand that they were offered to the Government for work in the forests, but could not be taken on as there was no provision for them in that particular department.

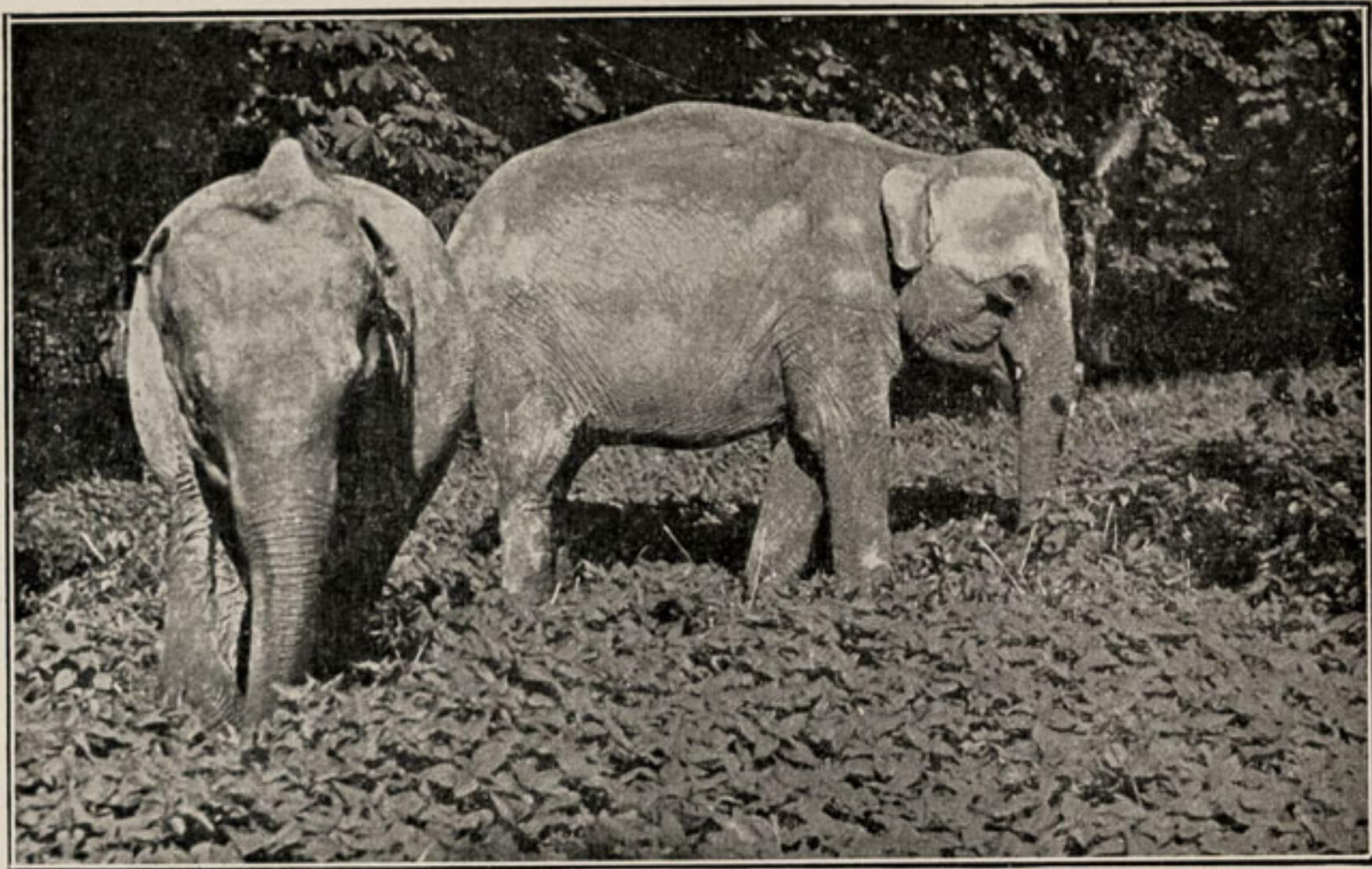


Photo. by H. F. Parker, Esq.

The Elephants in the Zoo's Orchard where much of their time is spent.

Their photographs appeared in the press at the time, together with a report that their services to the country had been turned down, and unless some accommodation was offered for them they might have to be destroyed.

This brought several letters to Chester Zoo from school children and animal lovers, asking us to take the Elephants and offering to contribute small weekly sums of money towards their upkeep.

We therefore got in touch with Mr. Ralph Marshall, the Theatrical Agent, and it was agreed that they should come to Chester for the duration, and remain in the collection for the season following the cessation of hostilities.

Accommodation was hastily prepared and we are pleased to say that the animals have settled down quite happily here. During nice days they spend most of their time either in the field near the Malayan Sun Bears, or in the Orchard near the Polar Bears. Visitors can there study their many curious habits as they feed.

We feel sure that these Elephants will prove an immense attraction next year, so are appealing to our many friends to help us to provide them with food until the better weather comes again when they can earn their own keep.

An Elephant Fund has been opened for this purpose and all contributions paid into it will go towards their

upkeep. If there should be a surplus, it is proposed to use this towards purchasing an elephant when these two go back, or purchasing them should their owner decide to sell.

With these two Elephants is their keeper, Mahout Khanadas Karunadasa, a Singalese, who has been with them since they were quite babies, and they are very devoted to each other. He lives at the Zoo and has become very popular, taking an interest in all the other exhibits.

OUR ZOO NEWS.

We very much regret that owing to circumstances not within our control, this issue has been somewhat delayed. However, we hope its contents will be none the less interesting to our readers.

Number 40 of our "Zoo-News" completes four years of publication. Latterly, owing to war conditions, one or two numbers had to be published together, and it was then decided that for the duration of the war, each issue would be recognised by its number and not by the month, on account of the difficulties of going to press at regular times.

By doing this we have been able to produce an eight-page magazine instead of four, which we feel is a decided improvement on our first issue—being a type-sheet consisting roughly of about seven hundred words. Our last previous issue, in addition to four photographic blocks, contained between five and six thousand words.

In April, 1939, it was decided to have the Zoo News printed, and this too, was another step in the right direction. Now, its pages are not confined exclusively to news of Chester Zoo, but incorporate news from other zoos, which we feel has an added interest to the majority of readers, many of whom know the zoos in question and although not able to visit them for some reason or another, still like to keep in touch with them through our magazine.

With our first issue just over two hundred copies were circulated, but this has now reached two thousand copies. When one considers that we have never advertised the News outside the Zoo, we can judge our progress as being satisfactory. By present day standards this may perhaps appear a little slow, but we feel that we have at least made some headway, and laid the foundations for a larger and better magazine with a much wider scope which we hope to produce when the war is over.

We have on many occasions in the past, been asked for hot meals, but although careful consideration had been given to the matter, it was thought to be impracticable at the time for several reasons, the principal one being the question of labour, for having started this kind of thing it must be continued, and the vagaries of labour were not to be too lightly considered.

Recently however, owing to the constant request for something hot to be served in the cafe at lunch time, it was decided to put on a popular menu at reasonable prices. We now have two hot luncheons on the menu daily from twelve to two o'clock daily at 1/6 and 2/3, and these are proving quite a success.

Luncheon Tickets can be purchased at the entrance for 1/9 and 2/6 respectively, and this will include admission to the Zoo.

This will, we feel sure, prove popular with the people living or staying in the vicinity, as it saves them the trouble of preparing a mid-day meal, particularly in these days when time is valuable, whilst at the same time they will be helping the national urge to dine in cafes and restaurants as much as possible for economy's sake.

In any case we feel confident that the visitors to the Zoo during the winter will appreciate being able to

buy a nicely cooked hot luncheon, served under ideal conditions.

A sample menu for a 2/3 Luncheon is given below.

Soup.
Fish.
Two Vegetables.
Sweet.
Coffee.

We have recently re-opened our cafes once more. It will be remembered that at the early part of the year, owing to labour problems we could only open these as a Buffet. Whilst this was a success a certain percentage of our visitors naturally preferred the cafe, so now, although we are still continuing to run the Buffet, teas at reasonable prices can be had in comfort in the Dining Room, where there is a cosy fire and the tables are attractively set out.

Cups of tea and light refreshments can be obtained at any time during the day, from 10 a.m. until dusk, which incidently are the Zoo's hours of opening and closing.

We might mention here that many people are under the impression that the Zoo closes down for the winter, but this is not so, for we are open every day including Sundays, and this winter we hope to make the Zoo so attractive in one way and another that more and more people will visit it.

LIFE AT THE ZOO.

The writer of this article has found it impossible to contribute to this issue, but hopes to be in time for the next "Zoo News."

CHESTER ZOO LIONS.

It is now almost seven years since the Society received its first Lions. These were two six month old males presented by Miss G. M. Russell Allen and Mr. A. F. Holden. Unfortunately after the cubs had been at the Zoo for nearly twelve months, they both died from gid worm on the brain. After their death it was discovered that prior to coming to the Zoo, they had been fed on sheeps' heads and had contracted the worm from an infected sheep.

The next one we had was an adult lioness, presented by the London Zoological Society. This animal had such a vicious temper that we christened her "Katrina," after Shakespeare's well-known character. Unfortunately, she contracted tuberculosis and had to be destroyed.

"Jubilee" and "Okene", so named by the Attah of Igbirra, an African Chief, who presented them to the Zoo in 1935, were the next to arrive. They were both

females, forest bred and full of life. A lot of amusement was created on account of the new names which their keeper gave them.

One was very gingery in colour, active on its feet, and was christened "Ginger Rogers." The other one was more plump and well rounded, so was honoured with the name of "Mae West."

Both these animals grew up very tame and affectionate, and it was therefore a great blow when we lost them suddenly at the end of 1936, from an outbreak of feline distemper.

In the early spring of 1937 we obtained two more lion cubs by exchange. Although they were both lionesses they were called "Romeo" and "Juliet."

Later the same year Bristol Zoo presented us with three very fine lionesses just over twelve months old, and these were known as "Faith," "Hope" and "Charity." With "Romeo" and "Juliet" they were transferred to the new Lion House ready for the official opening by Lord Leverhulme in October 1937.

In the early months of 1938 we exchanged the latter two cubs for an adult lion with Dublin Zoo. This animal we called "Patrick," in honour of the country of his origin.

"Patrick" was introduced to his three wives in the early summer of 1939, and in August of that year the first cubs were born at Chester Zoo. During the next fifteen months, no fewer than twelve cubs were born and reared successfully. Other lions were also introduced into the collection, but by the end of 1940 after twelve months of the war, it became necessary to reduce the stock. Only the most outstanding ones were kept as a nucleus of what we hope will be the finest Pride of Lions in the country. Even to-day, we feel sure that they can hold their own as such, for they are a continued source of admiration and pride to all who behold them.

During the last few weeks we have received still further additions to the Lion collection. Tommy Hayes of Rossaires' Circus presented us with three very nice cubs, two males and one female. As the parents of these are a different type to our own they should be quite distinctive.

Bristol Zoo have again very kindly presented us with a three-year-old lion and a four year old lioness. The former is a well made animal, being big boned and has settled down on the best of terms with our own lions. "Nero", as we have called him should make a very fine exhibit. "Nahum" will be introduced to our own lionesses as soon as she has settled down.

Judged by its merits, our collection of Lions alone, is well worth a visit, and there is little doubt they are proving a great attraction.

The following is a list of Lions and Lionesses belonging to the Society at the present time, together with their names, date and place of birth.

It will be noticed that the names of the animals of the same parents begin with the same initial (i.e. Patrick and Faith's cubs begin with the letter "C").

MALES.

PATRICK—Born in Dublin Zoo 1931, and received in exchange for two young lionesses.

NERO—Born in 1938 and presented by Bristol, Clifton and West of England Zoological Society in October 1941.

REGAL—Born in Chester Zoo (Patrick-Hope) 1939.

VALENTINE—Born in Rossaires' Circus July 1941, and presented by Tommy Hayes 12th September, 1941.

VICTOR—Born in Rossaires' Circus July 1941, and presented by Tommy Hayes 12th September, 1941.

FEMALES.

FAITH—Presented by Bristol, Clifton and West of England Zoological Society. Born 1935.

NAHUM—Presented by Bristol, Clifton and West of England Zoological Society. Born 1937.

CASSANDRA—Born in Chester Zoo (Patrick-Faith) 1939.

CORAL—Born in Chester Zoo (Patrick-Faith) 1939.

CORDELIA—Born in Chester Zoo (Patrick-Faith) 1939.

ROXANA—Born in Chester Zoo (Patrick-Hope) 1939.

CYNTHIA—Born in Chester Zoo (Patrick-Faith) 1939.

VALERIE—Born in Rossaires' Circus July 1941, and presented by Tommy Hayes 12th September, 1941.



Photograph of Leopard in Edinburgh Zoo.

THE LEOPARD (*Felis Pardus*).

To many, the name "Leopard" denotes in the animal kingdom, something of exceptional fury. True, it is an animal which can be and very often is, ferocity itself, nevertheless some specimens are fairly docile, and in exceptional cases have become tame enough to be handled.

When in good health it is undoubtedly a beautiful animal and much to be admired.

The Leopard ranges over most of Africa and India and while generally there is a difference in the size between the specimens in both countries,—the former often being both smaller and darker in colour than those from India—a very large number appear to be just between the two. It therefore becomes extremely difficult to say for certain which country each individual specimen comes from, unless it is definitely known.

There are also black Leopards found in both Africa and India, but it appears that they are sports of the ordinary spotted variety.

Generally speaking, the variation in both size and colouration is so marked that one could be forgiven for believing that they were different varieties. At Chester Zoo we have four Leopards, all distinctly different in some way or another, yet all are the same variety.

Of Lions, Tigers and Leopards, we would certainly class the latter as the most ferocious. On no occasion can it be trusted not to spring and attack should the

opportunity arise, even though the animal has just partaken freely of a huge meal. It appears to kill just for the sake of killing. In the wild they feed on any animal which they kill, and in districts close to the native villages, they play havoc with the dogs. Birds such as fowl are often sought for and killed by the Leopard.

The cry—for it can hardly be termed a roar—of the Leopard is short, rather harsh and infrequently heard. Its movements are stealthy, whilst it is capable of springing great distances, and climbing trees with considerable speed and agility, although in captivity its tread, as it paces its cage, appears much heavier in comparison with the Lion or Tiger.

It is a very light feeder, only partaking of quite a small portion of meat compared with these two other animals. Even the Ocelot from South America, which is only about a quarter the size of the Leopard, eats more than the latter to keep it in good condition.

Generally speaking, the Leopard is a much shyer breeder in captivity than either the Lion or Tiger. The cubs usually number four at birth, and one can wish to see no prettier sight than the Leopard with her baby cubs.

Only too frequently one sees Leopards in far too small a cage for them to be seen to advantage. Our Leopard cages at Chester provide ample room for the animals to spring about, but we hope some day to provide an enclosure similar to the one at Edinburgh Zoo, which shows this graceful animal to full advantage.

THE AQUARIUM

will be found to be well stocked with an interesting collection of fish, but we have suffered this season greatly from the hands of misguided people who took a delight in destroying whatever they could lay their hands on. On several occasions, within a couple of hours of the tanks being relabelled, they have been wilfully destroyed, even when glass has been placed in front of the labels as a further measure of protection, it has been broken. It is difficult to comprehend such maliciousness, but it is only one of the many things which we have to put up with.

The large tank, which since the opening of the Aquarium has contained some very fine Angel Fish, has now been made into a Community Tank and has a much brighter effect.

The old female *Cicfilasoma Nigrofasciatum* who has in the past raised hundreds of young—until she decided to kill her mate—steadfastly refuses to have another.

We are hoping now that the winter nights are coming on, to spend more time in the Aquarium, so that it will be a source of unending interest to visitors. Our difficulty has been finding an attendant who has all the qualifications required to make it a really successful exhibition. Since Peter Falwasser, who looked after the Aquarium, left to join the Forces, we have had no one with quite the same interest and experience.

Peter by the way was wounded whilst serving in North Africa, but to what extent we do not know. However, we wish him a speedy recovery and a safe return to the old country.

In a letter we received from him a short time ago he describes various birds and reptiles he has seen out there, whilst in one part of his letter he says:—

“When we first arrived out here I was much intrigued by the catch of a small native boy, from one of the irrigation canals. He had a bamboo rod with a line made from fine plaited grass, from which were suspended six 5 in. to 7 in. fish. They had been much dried by the sun and the colours had begun to fade, but for all that they appeared extremely like *Cichlasoma Nigrofasciatum*. Just think of fishing for them.”

We are constantly being asked for reptiles by visitors to the Zoo. In fact as soon as possible we intend to introduce them once again, although they are not so easily obtained as they used to be. This time they will be accommodated in part of the Aquarium extension, which incidently is being opened out and developed to combine an air raid shelter and Aquarium. When completed there will be another exit which will relieve the congestion which is at present inevitable when a number of visitors are looking at the tanks of fish.

OUR ADOPTION SCHEME.

It is just two years since we first launched our Adoption Scheme, and during that time it has been a tremendous help to us.

We wish to express our thanks to all those Adopters who, by paying for the keep of various animals in the Zoo, have made it the success it has been, and earnestly appeal to them to continue with their support.

We shall also be pleased to send on request, a list of animals and birds still awaiting adoption.

Will YOU please help us to carry on through the winter?

NEWS FROM OTHER ZOOS.

Zoological Gardens, Belle Vue, Manchester.

Reported by G. T. Iles.

A notable addition has been made to the collection this month when “Annie”, a large female Indian elephant was purchased from the sale of Lord John Sanger's famous Circus. This elephant has probably lived in England longer than any other elephant and is considered about 50 years old. As soon as the problem of her transport has been solved the elephant will take up her new quarters at Belle Vue. As she has for many years been in the company of other elephants, Annie will be placed in the same stall as Lil, the larger of the three elephants in the Gardens.

The alterations and improvements to the cheetah cage have now been completed and in a few days the male cheetah Rob will have been returned to the cage and introduced to the female Gipsy, a fiery young cheetah recently purchased as his mate. Rob was obtained as a cub in British Somaliland, East Africa, and after eighteen months spent in a private house, he was shipped to England, arriving at the Gardens in May 1938. He is a delightful fellow and nothing ever seems to annoy him, even when he once escaped from his cage and the keepers dragged him from a goat that he was unsuccessfully attempting to kill. Of Gipsy we know very little, but she spits beautifully and at everybody. She once raced on a greyhound racecourse.

The monkey population has increased greatly during the past month. A number of gifts have been made and some Rhesus monkeys purchased for the Monkey

Mountain. The original tenants of the rocks strongly objected to the newcomers and had not the arm of authority (in the shape of the keeper) intervened, some deaths might easily have occurred. As it was, the ringleader of the attacking force was removed for a couple of days until the revolt collapsed and on his return, the new animals were left to go their way in peace, or at least, a monkey's idea of peace.

Other new arrivals include four very nice Indian pythons which have completely filled all available space in the Reptile House.

The baby giraffe to which we had looked forward to with such excitement was born early in August. Unfortunately, she was a weakling and did not survive many days. As if this bad luck was not enough, the large male giraffe dropped dead two days later without any warning. To the writer's best knowledge, nine giraffes have died in Britain during the past twelve months so that only eight are now left. Regent's Park, Whipsnade, Bristol and ourselves each having two.

The young chimpanzee Peter is already a firm favourite and thanks to the great care lavished upon him during the ten months he was a private pet in the Gold Coast, he should pull through his first difficult English winter. Little Peter's education is being carefully planned and he is now being taught to ride a tricycle.

Bristol Zoo.

Reported by R. E. Greed.

"Alfred"—the only Gorilla now exhibited in this country—has been with us just over eleven years and is in excellent health despite the fact that he has had to go very short of fruit during the past twelve months. Vegetables grown specially for him in our glasshouses and gardens have taken the place of Bananas and Oranges, etc., which formed the main part of his diet prior to the war.

The young Giraffe and Lion Cubs—all born in June—have proved a great attraction and two very fine Woolly Monkeys obtained recently are undoubtedly going to be favourites with our visitors. With these two animals the Society now possesses a finer collection of Monkeys than at any time and they are seen to advantage in the modern house completed in 1939.

Every effort has been made to keep the Gardens up to pre-war standard and this has, undoubtedly, been appreciated by our visitors—a great many of whom have remarked that the place looks as well as ever.

The support received under the Adoption Scheme which was put into operation a little more than a year

ago has been most encouraging and it is gratifying to have so many kind friends subscribing regularly to the scheme in these days of severe taxation.

Maidstone Zoo Park.

Reported by Sir Garrard Tyrwhitt Drake.

I hope every Zoo has found its attendance improving as much as I have.

August Bank Holiday visitors were more than three times the number of last year's, and the attendance up to date compared with last year is nearly double.

With regard to stock there is nothing of particular interest to report, unless it is that their general health has been good and casualties few.

The Women's Land Army of Kent had a great rally on July the 27th. A march past of over 500 members. A cabaret including that great artiste Miss Beatrice Lillie sang and Miss Dorothy Dixon and Mr. Arthur Cresham gave one of their inimitable sketches, etc. The Military Band of the Royal West Kent Regiment, all helped to make it a successful meeting.

The only recent arrival is a fine young lioness from the Sanger Circus sale.

Dudley Zoo.

Reported by E. Wilsdon.

As the season draws to a close we now take stock of the year's work, and so far as ascertained at present it will be a better season in all respects than last year.

We are pleased to be able to report that, in spite of the War and its attendant difficulties, all our stock of animals and birds are intact, and in fact we have during the last week or two, added to it by the birth of six Lion Cubs, three to each of two Lionesses.

Our Miniature Railway, drawn by exact miniatures of locomotives and run on coal, the joy of the grown up as well as the children, has surpassed last year's figures.

Edinburgh Zoo.

Reported by T. H. Gillespie.

The chief attraction in the Zoological Park at present are the three lion cubs which were born in July and reared by a collie foster mother. They have been given the house formerly occupied by the baby elephant (which has now been promoted to the Elephant House), and the yard attached to this house is an ideal playground for them, where they spend most of the day

gambolling and playing with each other. They spend the night in a house in another part of the grounds, and a most amusing sight is to see the three of them every morning and evening trotting along behind the girl keeper who is in charge of them. It is doubtless owing to the care and attention that this girl has given them that they are doing so well and are so charmingly tame. A weekly record is being kept of their weight increase and this will be published in a subsequent issue.

The male keeping staff in the Park has been reduced to a quarter of what it was at the outbreak of war, and recently two girl keepers have been appointed. They are proving a great success.

The hybrid Arabian x Bactrian Camel born last May is thriving exceedingly and is now equal in size to his mother.

Owing perhaps to the restriction of the amount of fish in their diet last winter and spring, the penguins have been very backward, this season, in moulting and breeding. The gentoo penguins missed their breeding season entirely, and the king penguins, who would have in the ordinary case have moulted in April, did not begin to moult until July. They have now all moulted, however, and are apparently going to have a late breeding season. One egg has already been laid and is being steadily incubated, and there are signs that others will follow.

A death which is much regretted is that of "George", the old mandrill. "George" came to the Park in 1920 when he was probably two or three years old, so that he was not less than twenty-three or twenty-four years old when he died. That is not by any means a record span of life for a mandrill in captivity, but there is no doubt that "George's" death was due to senility.

Zoological Society of London, Regent's Park.

Reported by Dr. G. M. Vevers.

Arrivals at the London Zoo recently have been few and far between, but there have been some babies born, including a Llama, Blackbuck, Hog Deer, and a very small Shetland Pony, the offspring of the Zoo's famous riding Ponies, "Scrap" and "Lighting." When he was born he measured barely 12 inches at the shoulder. Two young Brown Bears which were born at Whipsnade last January have found a new home in a large cage in the Lion House and make a most attractive show as do the twin Lion Cubs, "Victor" and "Victoria," born at the end of June. The Zoo has also received a Spotted Mongoose which is a welcome arrival because its stock of Mongooses had dwindled to one solitary specimen.

Whipsnade arrivals include a Cape Buffalo and a White-tailed Gnu, born in the Park, and three Royal Cream Horses, one stallion and two mares, presented by Sir Garrard Tyrwhitt Drake. These are the last of their kind in the world. The breed dates back to the 17th Century, when they were the Royal Horses of Spain. Queen Isabella of Spain presented certain German Knights, mostly from the Thuringenwald, with a Royal Horse each as rewards for services rendered in the Queen's Army. These were taken to Germany and eventually annexed by the King of Hanover. George 1st was already King of Hanover and he brought his Royal Horses to England. After that time they were used continually with one exception (a period of 7 years) for state occasions by the Kings and Queens of England up to 1921. In that year the late King George Vth decided to give them up and because Sir Garrard Tyrwhitt Drake had helped with advice in breeding these horses, he was presented with three, from which many were bred.

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