

P. L. Sclaber 1887

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## PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

## SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS

OF THE

1887

## ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

January 18, 1887.

Prof. W. H. Flower, LL.D., F.R.S., President, in the Chair.

The Secretary read the following report on the additions to the Society's Menagerie during the month of December 1886:—

The total number of registered additions to the Society's Menagerie during the month of December was 89. Of these 1 was by birth, 71 by presentation, 5 by purchase, 6 by exchange, and 6 on deposit. The total number of departures during the same period, by death and removals, was 125.

The most noticeable additions during the month were:—

1. A young male of the true Zebra, *Equus zebra*, purchased December 11th, which fills a serious void in our collection of Equidæ, no specimens of this now rare animal having been received by the Society since 1867. It would appear, however, from Mr. H. A. Brydon's recent letter in the Field<sup>1</sup>, that this animal is not yet, as has been supposed, quite extinct in the Cape Colony.

2. A young male of the larger Indian One-horned Rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*), presented by H.H. The Maharajah of Couch Behar, F.Z.S., through the kind intervention of Dr. B. <

<sup>1</sup> Mr. H. A. Brydon says:—"The true Zebra, the *Equus montanus*, the hippotigris of the ancients, the dhow of the Hottentots, and the wilde paard (wild horse) of the Cape Dutch, is purely and essentially a mountain-abiding animal. It inhabits the most remote and rugged ranges of the Cape Colony; and at the present time, though sadly reduced in numbers and in the limits of its occurrence, it may be found in the Sneewenburg, the Zwaart Ruggens, the Zwartberg, and Winterhoek mountains, and in one or two other localities, in the Eastern Province. Quite recently a troop was running on the slopes of the Cockscomb, the highest peak (6000 feet in height) of the Winterhoek."—*The Field*, vol. lxxviii. p. 816, Dec. 4, 1886.

Simpson, and received December 25th. This is an important acquisition, as the only other specimen we possess of this huge animal is the male presented by the late Arthur Grote, Esq., F.Z.S., which has lately shown serious symptoms of old age.

Mr. F. W. Styan, F.Z.S., placed on the table for exhibition a collection of eggs of Chinese birds, which he had made in the vicinity of Kinkiang and Shanghai. The collection contained clutches of the eggs of *Cyanopolius cyanus*, *Chibia hottentotta*, *Acridotheres cristatellus*, *Corvus torquatus*, *Munia acuticauda*, *Rhynchæa capensis*, *Hydrophasianus chirurgus*, *Gallixes cristatus*, *Ardeetta flavicollis*, *Anas zonorhyncha*, and *Podiceps minor*.

Mr. Howard Saunders, F.Z.S., called attention to a specimen of the Mediterranean Black-headed Gull (*Larus melanocephalus*), shot on Breydon Water, near Great Yarmouth, on the 26th December, 1886, and sent up for exhibition by Mr. G. Smith of that town. Mr. Saunders remarked that the bird was an adult in winter plumage (*i. e.* without the black nuptial hood), as indicated by the primaries being of a pure white, except a narrow black streak on the outer web of the first primary, a coloration which distinguishes the adult of this species from any other Gull of the Hooded group. An immature example of the same bird, said to have been shot near Barking Creek, on the lower Thames, in January 1866, was in the British Museum; and there could be little doubt of the correctness of its history, which Mr. Saunders had given in 'The Ibis,' 1872, p. 79, and in the fourth edition of 'Yarrell's British Birds,' vol. iii. p. 605. The somewhat restricted breeding-area of *L. melanocephalus* was known to extend from the Black Sea along the Mediterranean to the south-west coast of Spain outside the Straits of Gibraltar. Mr. Saunders had also reason for believing that this species breeds on the shores of France south of the Gironde; it undoubtedly frequented that coast up to Bordeaux in winter, and MM. Marmotton and Vian had stated that an example taken at Le Crotoy, in Normandy, on the 28th of November, 1878, was in the collection of the former. South-westerly gales, such as prevailed in December, would easily bring a straggler to our shores.

Mr. Sclater exhibited a skin of the rare Amazon Parrot, *Chrysotis bodini* of Finsch (P. Z. S. 1873, p. 569, pl. xlix.), brought by Mr. W. L. Sclater, F.Z.S., from British Guiana.

The specimen had been obtained alive from a settler on the Amacuru River, British Guiana, by Mr. E. F. im Thurn, in October last, and kept for some time living at Maccasseema, his residence on the Pomeroon. This Parrot was stated to be known to the Warrau Indians of the Amacuru district as the "Toua-toua," and to be found wild in the mountainous district of the Upper Amacuru. It was considered by the Indians to be rather a rare bird, and was much valued for its talking proclivities.