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NOTES ON THE ZOOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS OF
AMSTERDAM, ROTTERDAM, AND ANTWERP.

BY GRAHAM RENSHAW.

HAVING recently had the opportunity of visiting these magnificent collections, perhaps the following notes which I have made may be of interest to readers of 'The Zoologist.'

The entrance to the Amsterdam Gardens, the property of the Society "Natura Artis Magistra," is in the Kerk Laan. The visitor, on entering, is provided with a guide-plan of the Gardens, and photographs of the various animals, including the rare Mountain Zebra (*Equus zebra*), may also be purchased. The series of animals in the Monkey-house included a full-grown Chimpanzee (*Anthropopithecus niger*), the largest I have ever seen, in the best of health and spirits, protected from draughts by glass. In the same house was an Echidna (*Echidna aculeata*) buried under a heap of straw. The keeper obligingly removed the straw for me, but all efforts to move the Echidna, even by leverage with a stout pole, were quite ineffectual. The Lion-house was roomy and well lighted, but presented no special features. The small Cats'-house contained two Geoffroy's Cats (*Felis guigna*), and a pair of the now rare Tasmanian Devil (*Sarcophilus ursinus*). The series of Bears included an interesting albino of the Himalayan Black Bear (*Ursus torquatus*), kept in the same cage with a normal specimen. Amongst the Ungulates, the most interesting animal was a European Bison (*Bos bonassus*), placed in a pen adjoining that of the American Bisons (*B. americanus*), so that the two species could be readily compared. The Anoa (*Bos depressicornis*), which unites the Oxen to the Antelopes, was also represented. The Antelopes included a fine Waterbuck (*Cobus ellipsiprymnus*), and a brindled Gnu (*Connochætes taurina*). The coat of the Gnu was of a beautiful and distinct blue-grey colour. A specimen of the Mountain Zebra (*Equus zebra*) was placed next to the Burchell's Zebra (*E. burchelli*); the Burchell's Zebra belonged to the typical form with very thick dark stripes on the body and none whatever on the legs. By the kind help of the keepers I was enabled to photograph the animal as it stood in its yard. In the same building with the Zebras was an extensive ornithological museum.

There were several aviaries in the Gardens, and the Bird Gallery was

well stocked. Two beautiful Boat-billed Herons (*Canchroma cochlearia*) sat on their respective perches, one bird having the feathers at the base of the bill a delicate lemon-yellow, the other bird having the same feathers white. *Photodilus badius* sat sleepily on its perch, gazing on the spectator with all the dignity expected of an Owl which unites in the anatomy of its skull the characters of the *Strigidæ* and *Bubonidæ*. The glossy Starlings were well represented by the West African *Juida ænea*, with its long tail; *Lamprotornis chalybea*, metallic green; *L. nitens*, a lovely bird with bright bluish reflections on side of breast; and the yet more lovely *L. aurata*, metallic greenish blue all over head and breast, with metallic purple reflections under chin, and green wings and tail. The smaller birds included the *Estrelata cærulescens*, of an exquisitely delicate bluish grey, with crimson lores and under tail-coverts. The collection of Parrots was very comprehensive, and contained the rare Hawk-billed Parrot (*Deroptynus accipitrinus*). The Cockatoos were lively and in fine voice, screeching furiously and unitedly to form a most unmelodious concert. The Parrotlets were represented by the pretty little *Psittacula galgula*, with green plumage, varied by the yellow on the nape of the neck and the crimson of the throat and upper tail-coverts. The Kiwis (*Apteryx mantelli* and *A. oweni*) slept snugly under their straw, till I was able to induce the keeper to dislodge them for me to photograph. Cranes were represented in great variety, and amongst other allied birds I noted were the Goliath Heron (*Ardea goliath*), the Straw-necked Ibis (*Ibis spinicollis*), and the White Egret, so shamefully persecuted for its plumes, which now everywhere (including, I am sorry to say, Holland and Belgium) adorn women's hats under the name of "aigrettes." In an adjoining aviary was a beautiful Rose-coloured Pastor (*Pastor roseus*), and several Bower-birds. I was much interested to hear the vocal performance of the Parson-bird (*Prothemadera novæ-zealandiæ*), consisting of a few musical notes followed by a harsh clanking sound. The extensive list of birds of prey included the American Black Vulture (*Catharista atrata*) and the Fishing Owl (*Ketupa ceylonensis*).

The Aquarium was a splendid building, the interior being very fine. Perhaps the prettiest tank was one full of large Gold-fish of a fiery red, contrasting well with the sanded floor and the delicate green *Vallisneria* plants. The tanks faced each other; on one side of the hall were the marine tanks, on the other fresh-water fish were exhibited. In the marine series I may mention the viviparous Blennies (*Zoarcetes viviparus*), crowded together at the bottom of their tank in dozens; Herrings (*Clupea harengus*) in multitudes; a huge grey Wolf-fish (*Anarrhichas lupus*), its great jaws almost touching the glass; and some small Sturgeons (*Acipenser sturio*) of different sizes. Three Silurus (*Silurus glanis*), each about five feet long, were shown in a tank of fresh water. The room at the end of the Aquarium-

hall contained Paradise-fish (*Macropodus viridi auratus*), colours very vivid; Peacock-fish (*Trichogaster fasciatus*), in dazzling iridescence of green and orange. The following amphibians were also shown:—*Bombinator pachypus*, *Rana esculenta*, *R. temporaria*, *Bufo calamita*, *Triton tæniatus*, *T. alpestris*, *Salamandra maculosa*; also seven large Axolotls in a tank, greyish green, marbled and mottled with darker green.

A good Museum, the cases all painted white, was attached to the Aquarium building, and contained a collection of Snakes and Tortoises, well mounted in spirits, and also several other zoological collections.

The Insect-house, close to the Bird-gallery, contained living insects, such as *Papilio machaon* and large silk moths, in great variety, and in various stages of metamorphosis.

At Rotterdam, the Gardens, which are close to the Delftsche Poort Station, possessed two examples of the Thibetan Black Wolf (*Canis niger*); a very interesting Siberian Tiger, the fur of which was remarkably delicate, the stripes being long and thin, and the whole animal presenting a pale washed-out appearance, contrasting markedly with the darker coat of the Malaccan Tiger in the next cage.

The Eagle aviaries were fine and spacious, and the Heron pond of very ample dimensions. It was curious to note that just outside the wires a colony of free Herons had taken up their abode.

The Antwerp Zoological Gardens, which are very fine, are close to the principal railway-station; admission one franc. The Monkey-house, a handsome building, contained amongst its inmates a very rare and little known *Cercocebus* from the Belgian Congo; an example of *Cercopithecus brazzæ* (Brazza's Monkey), smaller apparently than the specimen in London; and many other animals. Perhaps the most curious building is the Elephant-house, the front of which is decorated, in Egyptian fashion, with figures of the Mountain Zebra and other animals painted on the outside. The Ungulates are well represented at Antwerp, the most noteworthy being two Mountain Zebras (*Equus zebra*); a Giraffe (North African form), protected from draughts by a huge sheet of plate-glass in front of its cage; a European Bison (*Bos bonassus*); two short-horned African Buffaloes, darker perhaps than normal (*Bubalus pumilus*); several American Bison (*Bos americanus*); Malayan Tapir (*Tapirus indicus*), in the very best health, as a glance at its beautiful coat testified; Sable Antelope (*Hippotragus niger*); Roan Antelope (*H. equinus*); Brindled Gnu (*Connochætes taurina*); Dama Gazelle (*Gazella dama*); Addax (*Addax nasomaculatus*); and a Sumatran Rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros sumatrensis*). The Lions, Tigers, and other large Carnivora were provided, as in London, with outdoor cages.

Birds, as at Amsterdam, are well represented: Hornbills, Barbets, Finches, and hosts of other tropical forms are displayed in the aviaries. One aviary compartment, I noticed, was provided with rows and rows of perches, on which nestled a crowd (probably hundreds) of tiny Finches—a pretty sight.

All the three Gardens are well timbered, and the grounds themselves elegantly laid out. The buildings are very imposing and beautiful. I must here express my thanks to the Director of the Amsterdam Gardens for his kind permission to photograph some of the animals; and to the keepers for their kind and willing assistance to me, a stranger in a strange land.