

several attempts at making a grand marriage, had ended by getting engaged to a poor lieutenant of Marines, while Constance was actually unsuccessful in her pursuit of a rich banker, and was seeing a simple little country girl succeed where she failed.

"What is exciting you in this way, Lilian?" inquired Mrs. Durnford, on Tuesday morning. "I don't suppose it is the party, for you have been to plenty of parties, but I never saw you in such a state before."

Lilian flung her arms round her mother, and kissed her.

"Don't ask inconvenient questions, Mammie," she cried, "for I really can't answer them. I will just tell you that something very nice will happen this evening!"

"I am glad to hear it," said Mrs. Durnford, "but I hope Maisie will have her share. She has not looked well this last week."

"Maisie will enjoy herself, never fear," answered Lilian, and ran away, thinking, "What a comfort it is mothers never know when their children are grown up!"

The evening came at last, and the two Durnford girls looked very nice in plain white silk, severe simplicity which set off their fresh prettiness. Miss Colville was gorgeous in pink tulle, but did not succeed, as usual, in making the rest look shabby. Mrs. Clarke received her guests with her usual cordiality, but now and then looked apprehensively at Sam, who was in a rather uncertain temper, and seemed by no means inclined to make himself agreeable. People arrived punctually at Woodham; it was not long before the music began, and after the first glee, Sam's brow relaxed, and he could even smile as he watched his mother having a quiet chat with Lilian in a corner.

Presently it was time for Miss Colville's song, and Sam bent over Maisie for a moment, "Will you come out on the verandah?" he whispered, and Maisie followed him without a moment's hesitation.

"We can hear just as well here," he said, "and it is not so hot." There was a pause, and then he went on, "You will sing 'My Lady's Garden,' won't you?"

"If you like," answered Maisie, dreamily. "How pretty the room looks from here. Shall we go in?" as the song came to an end.

"No! there's a violin thing next—Maisie?"

"Yes!"

"Maisie?"

"Yes!"

"You don't think I like that London woman, do you?"

Maisie laughed. "How very uncomplimentary you are!" she said. "No! It's very easy to see that you can't bear her."

"I can't! Mother is always at me to get married; but——" a long pause.

"Yes!" said Maisie, giving him a helping hand.

"I never cared for any girl but you!——"

"Sam! are you there? It's time for your song," and Sam was led away by his sister.

Maisie stayed outside a few moments, listening to the exquisite notes of his voice, and then came into the room, with a bright look in her eyes, which made her prettier than ever. For the rest of the evening she kept in full view, singing, playing accompaniments, smiling, looking after people, and generally helping.

"One more song, Maisie?" said Janet, late in the evening.

"Is it any good?"

"Yes! the carriages aren't all ready;" and before Maisie had time to object, a sheet of music was put in her hand, and the accompaniment began. She knew it well enough, and had sung it with Janet dozens of times; but, though half the company were at supper, it was a trying ordeal to have to inform the rest that "her true love had her heart, and she had his."

"Thank you, dear," said a low voice in her ear, as she finished.

She turned, saw Sam, forgot all about the rest of the company, and in another minute they were in the shady verandah again.

The guests had to depart without another sight of their host, and it was not till Mrs. Durnford wanted Maisie that Janet let them be disturbed. They came out looking rather conscious, and Maisie did not recover herself till Sam told Mrs. Durnford that they were engaged; then the old merry look came into the girl's face as she cried—

"Indeed, Sam, I never said, 'Yes!'"

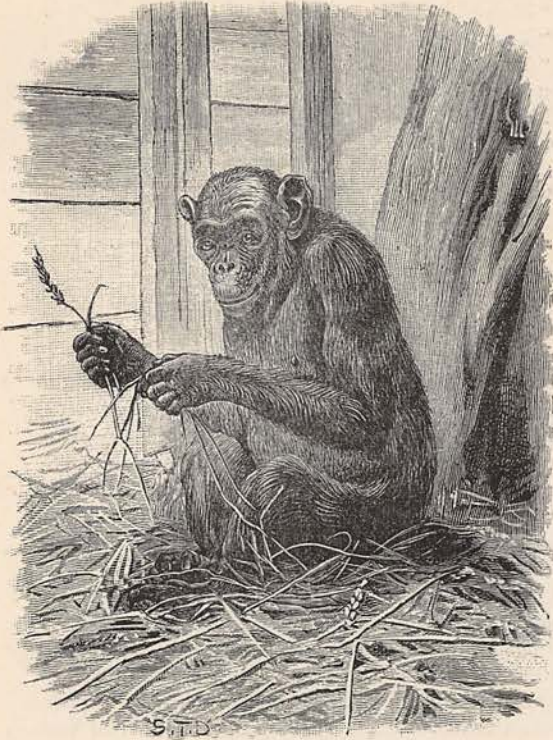
"No! you said something nicer still," was his answer; and Miss Colville, standing unnoticed in the background, made up her mind to have a summons to London the next morning.

SOME RECENT ARRIVALS AT THE "ZOO."

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IT is possible, unfortunately, that before these lines are published, some—perhaps all—of the animals here referred to may have died; but then it is equally possible that they may have been replaced by other specimens. The large collection in the Regent's Park Menagerie, though maintaining a very fairly constant average both in number and in species, is, of course, subject to continual change.

Every week about twenty animals die or are exchanged for others, and the same number are purchased or presented to the Society. Those who are curious in such matters may be interested to learn that in the year before last (1888) no less than one thousand one hundred and twenty-one animals were either purchased, presented, or born in the Gardens, while the number of deaths in the same year was nine



AN OLD FRIEND, "SALLY."

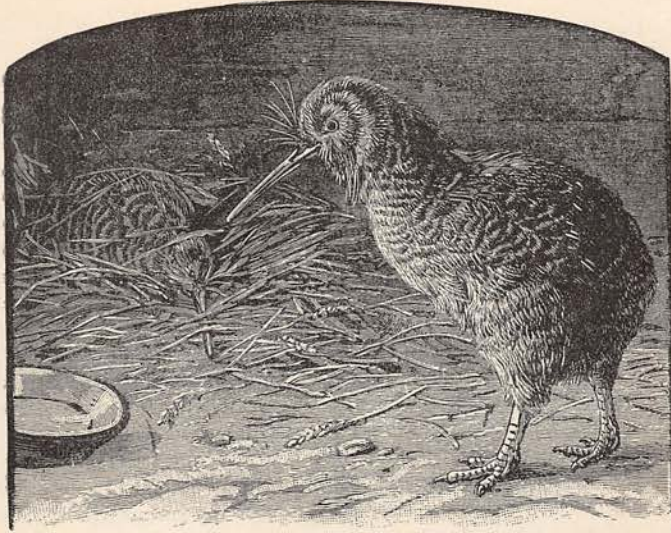
hundred and forty-eight. From these figures it is obvious that the collection is by no means stationary. The most likely place in the Gardens for new arrivals of interest is the "Marsupial House." The inscription over the door is, however, a little misleading, as its inhabitants are by no means always marsupials—indeed, just at present there are nearly, if not quite, as many creatures belonging to other orders. In the "Marsupial House" lives the celebrated "Sally," whose portrait is affixed to the wall outside; but the intellectual achievements of this chimpanzee are now, through Mr. Romanes' articles, so well known that we will pass on to a small creature which lives in the antechamber to the apartment which "Sally" shares with some other chimpanzees. On the right-hand side is a large cage in which used to dwell a pair of sloths. It is now inhabited by a little animal which it would hardly occur to anyone to regard as a deer. To begin with, it is of very small size—not much more than a foot long; but then most groups of animals have their dwarfs as well as their giants. A weasel presents a greater contrast to a full-grown "grizzly" than this little chevrotain does to a large deer like the North American Wapiti. In the

second place, it has no horns. This is certainly unusual in the group to which it belongs; but we have another instance in the musk deer—an animal which has often been confounded with the chevrotain. In order to appreciate the differences between the two forms, the visitor will have to make a journey to Bond Street, where in the shop window of Messrs. Piesse and Lubin is a stuffed specimen of *Moschus moschiferus*—the musk deer. A curious point about the chevrotain is the enormous development of the canine teeth in the male, which form veritable tusks. These are, perhaps, used for fighting; but it has been gravely asserted that the deer, when chased, springs into a tree, and suspends itself by the said tusks until the danger has passed by.

Leaving the "Marsupial House," and crossing the canal by a bridge, from which in summer the canal, fringed with trees, offers a really beautiful prospect, we arrive, in course of time, at the Insect House, or Insectarium, as it is sometimes called. At the time of writing this house is undergoing cleaning and repair; when it is in full swing it is tenanted by a great number of creatures of all kinds—not only insects, but fishes and birds. Among the birds four specimens of the New Zealand *Apteryx* are "recent additions," and very interesting. Unfortunately, they are shy and retiring in their habits, so that the visitors will, it is to be feared, have some difficulty in catching a sight of them. Their time for activity is night, when they prowl about and dig their long beaks into the soil—with which their cage is half filled—in search for earthworms. The *Apteryx* is one of the so-called "wingless" birds, like the ostrich and cassowary; but it really possesses wings, though they are rudimentary and absolutely useless for flying purposes. A curious fact in the life-history of this bird seems to be very much in harmony with its antipodean habitat, where everything is supposed to be upside down. When it builds its nest, which is placed on the ground, it proceeds to excavate a burrow underneath it, in which it remains off



CHEVROTAIN.



APTERYX.

and on until the eggs are hatched. It is clear, therefore, if this story is true, that the bird reverses the ordinary procedure, and sits not *upon*, but *under* its eggs!

In the same insect house is another bird—the manu-mea, or *Didunculus*—which can hardly, perhaps, be considered a recent arrival, as it has been now a few years in the Gardens. But, considering that a parrot once lived for more than fifty years at the Zoo, it is not a very great exaggeration to include the manu-mea among recent arrivals. There is no great peculiarity in the appearance of this bird, and most visitors would probably pass it by unnoticed. It has no gaudy colours to attract attention, and no assertiveness of demeanour to compel the gaze of the passer-by, who, by the time that he has reached this *ultima thule* of the Gardens, is probably a trifle wearied. But the manu-mea is famous—or, rather, notorious—on account of the fact that it was for some time believed to be a near relative of the dodo. As the dodo was probably the dull-



DIDUNCULUS.

est and most unshapely bird that ever existed, the alliance claimed on behalf of the manu-mea, and which gave rise to its scientific name—*Didunculus*—is not a noble one. The manu-mea is not dull, but uncommonly sharp-witted—so much so,

from a bird to a reptile; perhaps the most interesting new arrival there is the little "Horned Toad." There are always examples of this odd creature on view, so that the prophecy with which this article commenced will probably not be verified in this particular case. In the first place, it is an example of the advantage which English names often possess of misleading the public as to the nature of the creature. The horned toad is a lizard which is common in California, and in spite of the formidable appearance which the spiny frills round its neck give to it, it is a harmless beast; but like many harmless creatures, it possesses certain attributes which seem to be sufficient to frighten away some of its foes. When annoyed, it squirts out from certain glands in the neighbourhood of the neck a few drops of a bloody fluid; this capability must be of some protective value. The nature of this red fluid has not been thoroughly investigated; it has a curious similarity to the red "sweat" of the hippopotamus (which is supposed to have been the origin of the priestly deceptions in Egypt of bloody sweats); but in neither case has the fluid anything to do with blood.



"HORNE TOAD."

that it has learnt to circumvent the wiles of that arch enemy of all feathered creatures—the cat! In Samoa, which is the habitat of the manu-mea, there were originally no cats, but they were introduced later. When they did come they found abundance of food in the young chicks of *Didunculus*, which had the very unfortunate habit of nesting on the ground. This went on for some time, the bird getting scarcer and scarcer, until it suddenly occurred to the manu-mea that it was high time to prevent the utter extinction of its race; so the bird discontinued its habit of nesting on the ground, and took to building upon the most inaccessible tree-top. After this it began to increase in numbers, and is now fairly common.

It is a long way from the Insectarium to the Reptile House, though it is not a very great jump, zoologically,