

## THE MONKEY HOUSE IN THE ZOO.

THE keepers in the Zoological Gardens ought to know a good deal about the animals it is their work in life to look after, and it occurred to me as I was leaving the Prosector's laboratory that if he knew a great deal about the anatomy of the residents, the keepers ought to know something about their mental peculiarities, their gastronomical predilections, and their social economy. Darwin and Romanes made great use of the keepers when engaged upon their scientific searchings. Why should they not be interviewed from a less scientific standpoint for the readers of *The English Illustrated*? At all events there could be no harm in trying what might be done in this direction, so I walked towards the monkey-house determining to make a start in that popular resort—the house which as a boy I had always made straight for when I spent a day in the Zoo.

As I turned the handle of the door leading to the keeper's private rooms I won't say that I felt as one does outside a dentist's, but the awe that keepers inspired in one in youth came over me at that moment, and my enterprise was "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought." The taciturnity, almost moroseness, with which the keepers invest themselves soon passes away when they find that you are not one of the gaping,

rude, irritating, idle crowd; and mentioning Mr. Beddard's name as a sort of introduction, I tried to make myself feel (and look) at ease.

As it was early, I found Richardson and



RICHARDSON AND HIS FAVOURITE LEMUR.

Jungbluth, the two keepers in this house, in their rough clothes, preparing the animals' food in one of the two rooms leading out of the main building, so I just said "Good morning," and waited for a favourable opportunity to begin my questions. They curtly responded to my

salute and went on with their work, leaving it to me to take the initiative.

Jungbluth was attending to a pot of potatoes which was on the fire, and Richardson, whose face I had known since my schooldays (he told me he had



THE BARBARY APE AND THE POTATO.

been a keeper over thirty years), was cutting up loaves of stale bread. I wondered how he came to follow such a strange calling, for one can no more imagine a boy saying he will be a keeper in the Zoo than saying he would be a keeper of a box-office in the theatre, or a minor poet; for there are a certain number of callings which men can only drift into, there being no recognised apprenticeship to them, and a keeper's is one of these.

In a spirit of sympathy I said, "I suppose you find the crowd very troublesome, especially at holiday times?" One instinctively felt that a keeper's life, like Gilbert's policeman's, was not altogether a happy one. "It takes us all our time, Sir, to look after the place, I can tell you. They tease and worry the monkeys to that extent that they get almost distracted. They quarrel among themselves, and we have more trouble with 'em than enough. When the house is empty the monkeys are quiet enough. You see people give 'em all kinds of things to eat, and even stick pins and needles into sticks to prick them with. I noticed a lump under the arm of that Tchili monkey outside, and when we came

to open it—for it turned out to be an abscess, Sir—we found a broken needle that was working its way out. That monkey was at one time as quiet and good-tempered as you could wish, but it's had its temper spoiled by the visitors teasing it."

A Barbary ape in a cage in this outer room kept walking up and down, and when I called attention to it Jungbluth said that it had been brought into hospital, as he termed it, to be nursed into health, for it had got very bad outside, though it looked well enough now; and addressing it by name, he gave it a hot potato, which it proceeded to peel with its fingers, and eat the portion on the outside which was cool enough. This ape always looked for a potato, said the keeper, when they were being boiled, and though apparently tame, is ready to grab hold of anyone venturing within reach, and could not even be trusted by the keepers. Jungbluth said this just in time to prevent my being grabbed, for it has a way of lying quiet until you are within reach, and then darting its arm through the bars and seizing whatever it can meet with. This Barbary ape, the only monkey found in Europe—namely, at Gibraltar—got bad through the high temperature which has to be maintained to suit the tropical ones. The monkeys from the hills in China and Japan are kept outside, being quite hardy.

Monkeys invariably get bad-tempered as they get older, the keepers told me, and some of them can never be trusted; but, taking them all round, they are affectionate animals; and when I stood outside with Jungbluth I watched the monkeys in the cage nearest him come and cling on to the bars and put out their hands for food, and make a cooing noise at him. The keepers often carry apples or grapes in their pockets, and the delight of the monkeys when they get an extra morsel shows that they fully appreciate such little attentions. They are all known by name, and by calling to them they come to the bars, and delight to nibble at the keepers' hands when they put them into the cages. I noticed, too, that they utter a kind of cooing noise when spoken to.

The hospital generally contains several patients, as monkeys are tender creatures, and are very subject to chest affections, owing to the dampness and changeability of our climate. A monkey's views on this matter would coincide with those of the Yankee who remarked that we had no climate but a good deal of weather. In

the second room was a very miserable-looking spider monkey, which certainly called forth pity; for, in addition to chronic influenza, which it appeared to be suffering from, it was paralysed in the lower limbs, and half lay, half squatted all of a heap, just holding up its head and looking at one with rheumy eyes, and then, in a tired sort of way, burying its

head in the hay when I looked at them, though her mate fixed his bright eyes on me, chattering and showing me his small white teeth.

I asked the keepers if monkeys often bred in the gardens, and they said that some five had had babies last year, but none of their offspring had lived more than a few weeks. One curious fact was



JUNGBLUTH AND THE RHESUS.

head between its arms as though indifferent to everything.

Rheumatism not infrequently causes loss of power in the legs of monkeys, and I watched a Rhesus dragging himself along by his hands without moving the lower part of his body, while preserving the utmost gravity, which was somewhat humorous to witness. New arrivals are also placed in the hospital, and I was pointed out a pair of marmosets which had only that day arrived. They appeared to be very nervous, and the female at once

noticed in one case, and that was that the baby sucked both teats at the same time. Some mothers exhibit a curious barbarity, pulling off the fur until the youngster is quite bare, or gnawing a hand or foot off. This is probably induced by nervous irritability due to the want of seclusion. Of course, a monkey when it is with young is removed into hospital as soon as the fact is noticed. Lemurs have been successfully reared, and there are one or two still living which were bred some years since.

I remember hearing about a pair of marmosets belonging to a lady, some years ago, which had a young one, and the parents took as much trouble with its education as we do with children, teaching it to walk, and even cuffing it when it didn't please them, while at the same time exhibiting the greatest solicitude when any danger appeared to threaten it. But one never knows how much to believe, for stories about animals are such a blend of truth and fiction. Imagination is the father of many yarns, and yet now that naturalists are studying the overlapping of reason and instinct we have more reliable data to guide us. A naturalist from Singapore told a friend



THE SIGNALMAN'S BABOON.

of mine in Oxford that monkeys used to be constant visitors to the Botanic Gardens there, and his dogs made for them whenever they saw a chance, but the monkeys, always on the alert, usually escaped. On one occasion a monkey was wounded and its companions had to leave it to its fate to escape the dogs themselves. The owner of the dogs took up the wounded monkey, and, taking it indoors, bound up its wounds and thus saved its life. Some time after this, while walking in the Botanic Gardens, he saw two monkeys holding up a third between them, which turned out to be wounded, and it seemed as though, remembering what he had done on a former occasion, these two monkeys were bringing him a patient. This was told me by a scientific friend, who heard it from the naturalist himself, but I can quite understand many readers classing it with the story of the dog who, having been a patient at Charing Cross Hospital, took another dog there

whose leg was broken to be treated as a patient as he had been. Professor Thomson showed me two photographs sent to the museum at Oxford from South Africa, showing a baboon trained by a signalman to help him at his work; and as it is a perfectly authentic case I have given drawings of the monkey and his master: a good object lesson, showing what an amount of intelligence these animals possess if it be developed.

The curious habit that monkeys have of searching in each other's fur, apparently for live stock, induced me to ask the keepers whether they were troubled with vermin, but they replied that it is a sign of friendship, and that there was nothing in their coats, for even the slightest speck of dust is carefully picked out. Jungbluth put his hand into one of the cages and told a monkey to search for fleas, and the little beggar at once began turning over the hairs on his hand. A great deal of a monkey's time is spent in this minute searching in a friend's coat, and some very curious bits of comedy may be seen, one monkey with a look of resigned pleasure giving itself up to being searched while its chum carefully goes through every bit of fur on its chest. The look of serious earnestness on the face of the searcher always attracts me, and you will sometimes see one monkey looking through his friend's head while he is having his breast and arms picked over. Monkeys exhibit strong likes and dislikes, not only for people, but for each other. They strike up friendships, and that not necessarily for those of their own species. Some of the larger monkeys are chained up in the cages, in order to confine them within certain limits, and while many of their fellow-sojourners take good care to keep well out of reach, others are quite chummy, and will nestle in the arms of their bigger friend. Many of the monkeys which are free appear to take pleasure in annoying the one chained up by chattering and rushing forward just within reach, and then darting away when the one they are baiting comes at them. Monkeys are very sensitive to ridicule, and if you want to make them frenzied, you have only to look at them and make grimaces, when they will get quite excited with rage.

The Zoo is looked upon by many people as a good place to take children at holiday times, and they in turn look upon it as a place to feed animals on stale buns; but naturalists and artists find the Zoo invaluable, and I naturally asked the keepers if they remembered any of the men whose

names occur to everyone in this connection. Richardson said he remembered Sir Edwin Landseer; but the painter of "The Sick Monkey" was only known to him as a visitor, and not as a worker there. Darwin,

one of the cleverest apes he had ever seen. Joe would accompany him on his rounds when he went to feed his flock, would fetch a broom, unlatch a door, and perform on the horizontal bars like a gymnast,



THE KEEPER OF THE CHIMPANZEE.

however, he knew well, and when I told Richardson some of the anecdotes from "The Descent of Man" he remembered the author coming to perform some of the experiments he mentions in his book. Richardson had Joe the Chimpanzee, which Darwin studied so attentively, in his private room, and the keeper said it was

and was as docile as he was clever. Romanes both he and Jungbluth knew well, as his pet subject, the instinct of animals, made him a constant visitor at the Zoo, especially to the monkey house; and by the way they both spoke of him the keepers had evidently lost a good friend in Romanes.

The following are among some of the most striking anecdotes related by Darwin :

"In the Zoo Gardens I saw a baboon who always got into a furious rage when his keepers took out a letter or book and read it aloud to him.

"Breton gives a curious account of the instinctive dread which his monkeys exhibited for snakes, but their curiosity was so great that they could not desist from occasionally satiating their horror in a most human fashion by lifting up the lid of the box in which the snakes were kept.

"I was so much surprised at this account that I took a stuffed and coiled up snake into the monkey-house. They exhibited



"SALLY," SKETCHED JUST BEFORE HER DEATH.

great fright, except three, who took no notice of it. Placing it on the ground in a large compartment, the monkeys after a time collected around it in a large circle, and staring intently at it, presented a most ludicrous appearance. I then placed a live snake in a paper bag with the mouth loosely closed. One of the monkeys timidly approached, cautiously opened the bag a little and peeped in, and instantly dashed away.

"Monkey after monkey, with head raised high and turned on one side, could not resist taking a momentary peep into the upright bag.

"Several years ago a keeper at the Zoo Gardens showed me some deep and scarcely healed wounds on the nape of his neck, inflicted on him whilst kneeling on the floor by a fierce baboon. The little American monkey, who was a warm friend of this keeper, lived in the same large compartment, and was dreadfully afraid of the great baboon. Nevertheless, as soon as

he saw his friend in peril he rushed to the rescue, and by screams and bites so distracted the baboon that the man was able to escape, after, as the surgeon thought, running great risk of his life.

"In the Zoological Gardens, I heard from the keeper that an old baboon (*C. Chacma*) had adopted a rhesus monkey, but when a young drill and mandrill were placed in the cage she seemed to perceive that these monkeys, though distinct species, were her nearer relatives, for she at once rejected the rhesus and adopted both of them. The young rhesus, as I saw, was greatly disconcerted at being thus rejected, and it would, like a naughty child, annoy and attack the young drill and mandrill whenever it could do so with safety, this conduct exciting great indignation in the old baboon."—See *Brehm's "Thierleben."*

"In the Zoo Gardens a monkey which had weak teeth used to break open nuts with a stone; and I was assured by the keepers that after using the stone he hid it in the straw, and would not let any other monkey touch it.

"At the Cape of Good Hope an officer had often plagued a certain baboon, and the animal, seeing him approaching one Sunday for parade, poured water into a hole and hastily made some thick mud, which he skilfully dashed over the officer as he passed by, to the amusement of many of the bystanders. For long afterwards the baboon rejoiced and triumphed whenever he saw his victim."—Quoted by *Dr. Lauder Lindsay.*

This anecdote, quoted by Darwin, is not more difficult of belief than the one from Singapore.

The anthropoid apes are kept in that part of the Gardens through the tunnel, as it was found that much greater attention had to be paid them than was possible in the Monkey House. "Sally," the bald-headed chimpanzee, who lived in the Gardens for eight years and a half, that is from October 1883 until August 1891, was the most historic monkey ever seen in the Gardens, possibly in Europe, and for this reason, that no chimpanzee was kept so long a time or so carefully educated as "Sally." G. Mansbridge was her keeper, and by the direction of the late G. J. Romanes, whose researches into the mental evolution in animals have secured him a permanent place among naturalists, she was taught to count, but I cannot do better than give the gist of the paper read by him before the Zoological Society on

"The Mental Faculties of the Bald Chimpanzee" (*Anthropopithecus calvus*):

"The intelligence of 'Sally' is conspicuously displayed by the remarkable degree in which she is able to understand the meaning of spoken language, a degree which is fully equal to that presented by an infant a few months before emerging from infancy, and, therefore, higher than that which is presented by any brute, so far, at least, as I have met with any evidence to show. The only attempts she makes by way of vocal response are three peculiar grunting noises, one indicative of assent, another of dissent, and a third (quite different from the other two) of thanks or recognition of favours. By vocalising with a peculiar monotone (imitative of the beginning of her own song) the keepers are usually able to excite her into a remarkable series of actions. First she shoots out her lips into the well-known tubular forms (depicted in Darwin's 'Expressions of the Emotions'), while at the same time she sings a strange howling note, interrupted at regular intervals. These, however, rapidly become shorter and shorter, while the vocalisation becomes louder and louder, winding up to a climax of shrieks and yells sometimes accompanied by the drumming of the hind feet and a vigorous shaking of the cage bars, the whole performance ending with a few grunts."

In teaching how to count, she was first asked for one straw, two straws, or three straws, and, when right, rewarded by a gift of fruit. If two or three straws were demanded, she was taught to hold one straw or two straws in her mouth until she had picked up the remaining straw, and then to hand all together. She exhibited some idea of multiplication, for she very frequently (especially when dealing with numbers above five) doubles over a long straw so as to make it present two ends and thus appear as two straws. She was able to count up to five or even six, but Mansbridge, on his own account, tried to teach her to count up to ten, but her computation of numbers above five or six becomes vague, and verges in a merely general idea of many. Attempts were made to teach her the names of colours, but though she would pick out the white ones from among the coloured, she could not be taught the difference between one colour and another, possibly owing to colour-blindness. "Sally" was fond of animal food, and would kill rats which came into her cage, and would also kill and eat small birds, throwing up pellets or

"quids" of undigested matter resembling the castings thrown up by raptorial birds. She would drink beef-tea with a spoon, holding the mug in one hand and the spoon in the other. For a scientific account of "Sally" see Beddard's paper in the Zoological Society's Transactions.

The chimpanzee now in the Gardens is quite young, and not having been there many months, has not been subjected to any great amount of teaching. She delights in being taken out of her cage by her keeper, and the way she puts her arms around his neck shows her to be a most affectionate creature. She is very friendly with the Wanderoo monkeys, allowing them to feed with her, but the black apes, also living in the same house, have constantly to be on the alert lest the chimpanzee pays them out, for she seems to have a rooted prejudice to these black neighbours. The expression on the chimpanzee's face when her keeper comes in shows how delighted she is at his reappearance. She likes being tickled, and gives one the impression of being thoroughly happy and contented in her captivity.

Buffon had a chimpanzee in 1740 which always walked upright, offered people his arm, walked with them in an orderly manner, sat down to table like a man, opened his napkin and wiped his lips with it, made use of spoon and fork, poured out wine and clinked glasses, fetched a cup and saucer, put in sugar, poured out tea, and let it get cool before drinking it.

One in Berlin in 1876 became on friendly terms with Dr. Herme's two-year-old son. It would run to meet him and embrace and kiss him, seize his hand and draw him towards a sofa that they might play together. He behaved more roughly to older boys, and would cuff them. He was gentle and considerate to young animals, but rough with older ones. He displayed a special talent for cleaning window-panes.

Several attempts have been made to bring a gorilla to the Gardens, but without success. One was kept for a year in Berlin in 1876, and though the gorilla has the reputation of being untamable and ferocious, this one behaved with propriety, playfulness, and good temper. He generally slept in the bed of his keeper, covered himself up in an orderly manner, and ate at the man's table of plain but nourishing food. He seemed quite conscious when he stole sugar or fruit out of a cupboard that he had done wrong, and when about to be chastised would cling to his master's feet. When he was punished, as it was

necessary to do at first, he never resented it, but came up with a beseeching air, looking in an expressive way that disarmed all displeasure. He liked thrumming on casks, dishes, or tin trays, and he took up every cup or glass with instinctive care, clasping the vessel with both hands and setting it down again quite softly and carefully, so that none were ever broken.

It may not be malapropos to end this article with one more quotation from Darwin, for in these few lines the pioneer-naturalist summarises one of his most celebrated books—if not his position in the sphere of speculative thought itself. "The main conclusions arrived at in this work" ("The Descent of Man"), "namely, that man is descended from some lowly organised form, will, I regret to think, be highly distasteful to many. But

there can hardly be a doubt that we are descended from barbarians. . . . He who has seen a savage in his native land" (referring to the natives of Terra del Fuego, see his "Voyage in the *Beagle*"), "will not feel much shame if forced to acknowledge that the blood of some more humble creature flows in his veins. For my own part, I would as soon be descended from that heroic little monkey who braved his dreaded enemy to save the life of his keeper, or from that old baboon who, descending from the mountains, carried away in triumph his young comrade from a crowd of astonished dogs—as from a savage who delights to torture his enemies, offers up bloody sacrifices, practises infanticide without remorse, treats his wives like slaves, knows no decency, and is haunted by the grossest superstitions." FRED MILLER.

