

OUR POOR RELATIONS

FROM its resemblance to man, the tribe of monkeys is placed by Cuvier second in the scale of being; but in intellect and physical organisation, it may be safely assigned a lower place.

The monkeys have four hands, while the mammalia generally have four feet, and for this reason it is well to dispose of this anomalous race at the beginning. It would be wrong, however, to suppose that their four hands are at all equal to the two hands of man. Some have thumbs opposable to the fingers on both the fore and hind limbs, which enable them to grasp an object, such as the

branch of a tree, firmly; but this is nearly all they can do. Their hands are feet for walking on trees, which are their

true and natural abodes, with the exception of those which inhabit the craggy precipices of the Cape of Good Hope and the Rock of Gibraltar.

In the dense tropical forests, the numerous tribes of monkeys find their food and shelter. At mid-day they commonly lie concealed amid the thick foliage, but at morning and evening they are all activity, busily seeking food or gambolling among the branches. When a stranger approaches their haunts he observes their little curious eyes looking from their concealment, watching his movements; and so great is their curiosity that it sometimes surpasses their care for self-preservation. Some one more forward than the rest will venture to throw a nut or flower at the intruder, which is commonly succeeded by a shower of rotten branches and decayed fruit. The food of this family is almost entirely vegetable, but some species add insects, such as flies, ants, bugs, and spiders, the honey of wild bees, and the young and eggs of birds. In Ethiopia, Ludolph relates that

he saw flocks in the mountains turning up the stones in search of worms and emmets. And Careri tells us that when the fruit is exhausted, the orangs descend from the mountains to the shore, where they feed on various shell-fish, and particularly on a large species of oyster. "Fearful of putting in their paws, lest the oyster should close and crush them, they insert a stone within the shell, which prevents it from closing, and then drag out their prey and devour it at leisure."

They are exceedingly troublesome and destructive when they become numerous near a cultivated region. They set watches to guard from surprise, and plunder the maize fields and orchards of their choicest fruit. In doing this they sometimes make a line from the orchard to the forest, and pitch the fruit from hand to hand into the covert. In confinement they will eat almost any food eaten by man, but they manifest dislike to animal food, and especially to the flesh of the hog. Wine or diluted spirits, if given to them, soon becomes a passion; and those exhibited in menageries are commonly bribed with wine to perform the tricks with which they amuse the spectators.

Nearly the whole family are gregarious, and commonly they live together in harmony; but a favourite supply of food, or rivalry, will sometimes stir up the selfishness of their natures, and the weaker be compelled to yield to the stronger. Their breeding places are clefts of trees, forsaken nests of fowls, rocks, and thickets of brush. The young, seldom more than two, are attended with great care by the female, who will encounter almost any animal in their defence. In confinement, however, she entirely neglects her young, and in no case, we believe, have they ever lived more than a few hours.

The monkey family is distributed among the islands of the Indian Ocean, the southern coasts of Asia, various portions of Africa, South America, and the

Rock of Gibraltar in Europe. It may be subdivided into Orangs, Guenons, and Baboons, inhabitants of the Old World; and the Howlers and Sapajous, inhabitants of the New. The Orangs are the largest, and approach nearest the human species in form. The Black Orang, or Chimpanzee, is a native of Africa, and particularly of the Guinea Coast. They are said to live in troops and to be dangerous to persons in the forests where they are found; but they are very shy and cunning, and no full-grown animal is known to have been taken alive. If the accounts of travellers can be depended upon, they are said to attain the height of six feet, and to be able to carry a man with ease. Some years ago one was brought to Liverpool from the Isle of Princes, by Captain Payne. It had been some time in the possession of a native trader, and "when it came on board it shook hands with some of the sailors, but refused its hand with marks of anger to others. It speedily, however, became familiar with the crew, excepting one boy, to whom it never was reconciled. When the seamen's mess was brought on deck, it was a constant attendant; would go round and embrace each person, while it uttered loud yells, and would then seat itself among them to share the repast. When angry, it sometimes made a barking noise like a dog; at other times it would cry like a pettish child, and scratch itself with great vehemence. In warm latitudes it was active and cheerful; but on approaching the colder regions, it showed a desire to have warm covering, and would roll itself carefully up in a blanket when it retired to rest. It generally walked on all-fours, never placing the palm of its forearm to the ground, but closing its fists rested on the knuckles. It did not appear to be fond of the erect posture, though it could run nimbly on two feet for a short distance, invariably aiding the motion of its legs, as well as keeping its position, by grasping its thighs with

its hands. It had great strength in the four fingers of its superior extremity; for it would often swing by them on a rope upwards of an hour, without intermission. It ate readily every sort of vegetable food; at first it did not relish wine, but afterwards seemed to like it; and once stole a bottle, which it uncorked with its teeth and began to drink. It learned to feed itself with a spoon, to drink out of a glass, and showed a great disposition to imitate the actions of men. It was attracted by bright metals, seemed to take pride in clothing, and often put a cocked hat on its head."

In 1854, there was a beautiful specimen of the Chimpanzee in the Jardin des Plantes at Paris. "Having landed at Plymouth, he passed through London on his way to Paris, and there being two chimps resident in the Gardens in the Regent's Park, the French chimp was allowed to lodge in their hotel for a couple of nights. On his appearance, both of these young females uttered cries of recognition, which, however, evinced more fear than anything else. Chim was put into a separate compartment, or room with a double grille, to prevent the probable injuries which discordant apes will inflict on each other. He had scarcely felt the floor under his feet when he began to pay attention to his country-women, thus suddenly and unexpectedly found. Their fear and surprise gradually subsided, and they stood watching him attentively, when he broke out into a characteristic *pas seul*, which he kept up for a considerable time, uttering cries scarcely more hideous than seem the notes of a Chinese singer, and not far out of unison with his loudly-beating feet. The owner, who was present, said that he was imitating a dance of the negroes which the animal had often seen while resident in his house in Africa. The animal was upwards of a year and a-half old, and had spent one year of his life in this gentleman's house.

The chim maidens gradually relaxed their reserve as the vivacity of the dance increased, until at last, when it was over, each stealthily put a hand through the grille and welcomed their friend and brother to their home in a far land. As the weather was severe (it was early in December) it is possible that their talk was of their native palm-groves and their never-ending summer. Chim thenceforth made himself as agreeable as possible, and when the time for his departure came, the maidens exhibited the liveliest regret, short of tears, at losing him. At Paris he increased rapidly in stature and intelligence. The climate, diet (he drinks his pint of Bordeaux daily), and lively society of the French seem to be congenial to chim's constitution. He makes acquaintance not only with the staff but with the visitors of the Garden. The last time I saw him (May, 1854), he came out to taste the morning air in the large circular enclosure in front of the Palais des Singes, which was built by M. Thiers for 'our poor relations,' as the poet Rogers facetiously called the monkeys. Here Chim began his day by a leisurely promenade, casting pleased and thankful glances toward the sun, the beautiful sun of early summer. He had three satellites, coatimundis, either by chance or to amuse him, and while making all manner of eyes at a young lady who supplies the Singerie with pastry and cakes, one of the coatimundis came up stealthily behind him and dealt him a small but malicious bite. Chim looked round with astonishment at this audacious outrage on his person, put his hand haughtily upon the wound, but without losing his temper in the least, he walked deliberately to the other side of the circle, and fetched a cane which he had dropped there in his promenade. He returned with majestic wrath upon his brow, mingled, I thought, with contempt; and, taking Coati by the tail, commenced punishment with his cane,

administering such blows as his victim could bear without permanent injury, and applied with equal justice to the ribs on either side, in a direction always parallel to the spine. When he thought enough had been done, he disposed of Coati, without moving a muscle of his countenance, by a left-handed jerk which threw the delinquent high in air, head over heels. He came down a sadder and a better Coati, and retired with shame and fear to an outer corner. Having executed this act of justice, Chim betook himself to a tree. A large baboon, who had in the meantime made his appearance in the circle, thought this was a good opportunity of doing a civil thing, and accordingly mounted the tree and sat down smilingly, as baboons smile, upon the next fork. Chim slowly turned his head at this attempt at familiarity, measured the distance, raised his hind foot, and, as composedly as he had caned the coati, kicked the big baboon off his perch into the arena below. This abasement seemed to do the baboon good, for he also retired like the coati, and took up his station on the other side. To what perfection of manners and development of thought the last year and a-half may have brought him I can scarcely guess; but one day doubtless some one will say of him, as an Oriental Prince once said to me, after long looking at the Orang 'Peter'—'Does he speak English yet?'

In the islands of Borneo, Sumatra, and the peninsula of Malacca, there is a red orang, commonly called the Orang-Outang, which is much better known than the African species. Captain Methuen furnishes the following information of one brought to England by him:—"When he first came amongst strangers, he would sit for hours with his hand upon his head, looking pensively all around him; or, when much incommoded by their examination, would hide himself behind any covering that was at hand. He soon became

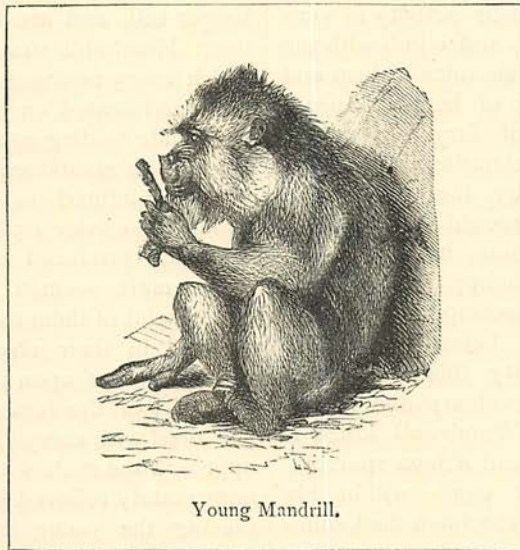
strongly attached to those who used him kindly. By their side he was fond of sitting; and getting as close as possible to their persons, would take their hands between his lips; and when annoyed by others would flee to them for protection. From the boatswain of the *Alceste*, who shared his meals with him, and was his chief favourite, although he sometimes purloined his grog and his biscuit, he learned to eat with a spoon; and he might be often seen sitting at his cabin door enjoying his coffee, quite unembarrassed by those who observed him. His favourite amusement in Java was in swinging from the branches of trees, in passing from one tree to another, and in climbing over the roofs of houses; on board, in hanging by his arms from the ropes, and romping with the boys of the ship. Of some small monkeys on board the ship he took little notice, whilst under observation, and once openly attempted to throw a small cage containing three of them overboard; but he seemed not to be indifferent to their society when unobserved. The intercourse, however, did not seem to be that of equals, for the orang-outang never condescended to romp with the monkeys as he did with the boys of the ship."

The orang is grave and melancholy in its deportment, and leads a solitary life, in the deep recesses of the forest. The natives of Borneo even seldom see one, and regard it with as much curiosity as we do here. The chimpanzee is much more lively: it is gregarious, and delights in society. The orang is more exclusively fitted for arboreal life; when it walks on the ground it treads only upon the outer edge of the foot; but when it ascends a branch or tree, the inward turning of the legs and ankle joints are admirably adapted for climbing. The difference between the human limb and that of the orang is very great, the one being made to press outwardly against a plane surface, the other to grasp inwardly one perpendicular.

There are seven or eight other species of oranges, all natives of India and the adjacent islands; but we must next advert to the Guenons, which differ from the oranges chiefly in having a long tail. The most remarkable of them is the Probo-scis monkey, which stands about three feet high when in an erect position, and boasts a nose nearly four inches in length; and the Cochin China monkey, which is singularly but beautifully marked. There are about forty varieties of long-tailed monkeys in the Old World, exclusive of the Baboons, which differ from the

described as being "docile to his keepers, but easily exasperated by strangers; and, among other accomplishments had been taught to drink gin and smoke tobacco. In the first he delighted, but was induced to smoke only for the sake of the gin-and-water promised him for the performance."

The general colour of the adult male is olive-brown, passing into whitish in the under parts; a golden-yellow beard hangs from the chin; the hair of the forehead and temples converges to a peak; skin round the callosities red. The nostrils have a broad rim around



Young Mandrill.

Guenons in having a face resembling a dog. In appearance and manners they are the most disgusting of the whole. Their size is large; their strength great; and their disposition generally malignant. They are arboreal in their habits, but not to such an extent as the long-armed apes. They are at greater ease when upon the ground, and one of them, the Barbary ape, inhabits the southern districts of Spain, and breeds in the inaccessible places of the rock of Gibraltar. Of this tribe, a Ribbed Nose baboon, long exhibited in Exeter Change, London, is

them, at the extremity of the muzzle; the tail is short, and nearly hid by the fur. The cheek-bones are enormously swollen, rising like two ridges, and the skin is obliquely marked with deep furrows; a streak of brilliant vermilion, commencing on the beetling superciliary ridge, runs down the nose, and is diffused over the muzzle. Ears, palms, and soles violet-black. In the female the cheeks are less swollen, and the scarlet is pale or wanting. In the young the cheeks are little if at all swollen, the furrows barely discernible, and the

colour black. It is not until the fourth or fifth year, when the second dentition is fully complete, that the characters of maturity are assumed; and to this point there is a gradual progress, the bones of the face developing, the colour of the skin changing, the muzzle becoming broader and thicker, and the furrows more marked.

In its native forests the mandrill associates in large troops, which are more than a match for the fiercest beasts of prey, and often make incursions into villages and cultivated fields, which they plunder with impunity. In their movements on the ground they are quadrupedal; but their activity is very great, and they leap and climb with the utmost facility. Their voice is deep and guttural, consisting of hoarse, abrupt tones, indicative of fury or malice. That the species is abundant in Western Africa, is proved by the numbers of young individuals brought from time to time to Europe; these, however, very rarely attain to maturity; the period of dentition, which is accompanied by such marked changes, being peculiarly critical. In captivity this baboon is ferocious and malevolent; one in the possession of Mr. Wombwell killed a monkey, a beagle, and a java sparrow, which by accident came within his reach. A splendid specimen died, some years ago, in Mr. Cross's menagerie. He was accustomed to smoke, and to drink porter, which latter he quaffed with an amusing air of gravity, holding the mug with great address while seated in his arm-chair. His temper was violent in the extreme, and the slightest offence roused him to fury: his appearance was then terrible, and well calculated to alarm the boldest; nor could any man, without weapons, have had any chance in a contest.

The monkeys of the South American continent differ from the African and Asiatic species in being generally of smaller size and less ferocious; in the

thumb not being placed in opposition to the fingers; in the want of cheek pouches and naked callosities upon their bodies; in having thirty-six teeth instead of thirty-two, and generally in having a prehensile tail, which is constantly made use of, and only relieved from an object after its feet are fixed, when it is again wound round another. They are divided into Howlers and Sapajous. In the first group there are seven varieties distinguished by an extraordinary development of the larynx, which enables them to make a plaintive, mournful noise, to which they owe their name. The Sapajous are of a more slender form, have a flatter face, a longer tail, and are of gentler disposition. Humboldt saw one at Maypures which every morning caught a pig, and continued seated on its back during the day, while feeding round the Indian huts. Another is mentioned by a missionary, which delighted to ride upon a cat. Frederick Cuvier had a pair, the female of which produced three young ones. "The male seemed more affectionate and careful of them than the mother, and assisted in their charge. The young generally kept upon the back or under the belly of the female, and when she was tired with carrying them, she would approach the male with a shrill cry, who immediately relieved her with his hands, placing the young upon his back, or under his belly, where they held themselves and were carried about till they became restless for milk, when they were again given over to their mother."

The Brazilian girls are fond of pets; and, among others, a great favourite is the ouistiti, a small species of marmoset, which is rarely seen out of Brazil, even in the best zoological collections. It has a skin like chinchilla fur, and its face presents none of the repulsive features of other monkeys. These little animals become very tame, and sleep upon the laps or shoulders of their mistress. Their actions are most graceful and rapid. In their native forests they are fond of in-

sects, which they catch with great expertness. A gentleman took a pair from Brazil in a small square cigar box. One of them was teased by the sailors, and in consequence died in convulsions. It was pitiful to see the other look at himself in a glass, making a plaintive noise, licking the reflection of his own face. With great care the sorrowing one was kept alive through a northern winter. His food was bread, sponge-biscuit, apples, and now and then a chicken's neck or a mouse. It was curious to see him devour the latter. He began at the snout and carefully pushed back the skin, eating the bones and everything until he reached the tail, which was all that he left inside the skin."

Cunning joined with caution, an inquisitive and prying disposition, with great power of imitation, are the characteristics of the race. These propensities are increased and become more developed in a state of confinement, and by tuition, and their imitations of humanity are often extremely ludicrous. One day, in returning from church, in Washington, a lady observed a crowd of people collected on the pavement, and looking up to a window she discovered a monkey sitting with a book in his hand, who with abundance of gesticulation was pretending to address the audience. He was probably one of the species found in Brazil called "The Preacher," of which Marcgrave, an old traveller, says, "that morning and evening they assemble in the woods; that one mounts upon a higher branch, while the rest seat themselves beneath; that when he perceives them all seated, he begins, as

if it were to harangue, and sets up so loud and sharp a howl as may be heard a vast way, some say a league; a person at a distance would think that a hundred joined in the cry; the rest, however, keep the most profound silence, till he stops and gives a signal with his hand; then, in an instant, the whole assembly join in chorus, till he commands silence by another signal, which they obey in a moment; then the orator resumes his discourse, and finishes his address, and the assembly breaks up."

Travellers tell us that monkeys are sometimes caught, by filling shoes with glue and leaving them below the trees, when they descend, and thrust their feet into them, and being unable to get them off again or to climb with them on, are taken prisoners.

Among the curiosities brought to Jerusalem by Solomon's ships of Tarshish, were apes; and in India, so full of debasing superstition, there are hospitals erected for the benefit of apes, where thousands are kept in fancied ease and indulgence. In some cities there are as many apes as human inhabitants, and gorgeous temples are erected to their honour. Mofleas, in his "History of India," describes one of great magnificence, fronted by a portico supported by no less than seven hundred columns, in which human victims were sacrificed; and when the Portuguese plundered one of these palaces in the island of Ceylon, they found in a little gold casket the tooth of an ape, which was held in so great veneration by the natives, that they offered seven hundred ducats to redeem it.

