

PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL MEETING**9 December 1937**

Dr. W. T. CALMAN, C.B., F.R.S., Vice-President,
in the Chair.

The Proceedings of the General Meeting, held on Thursday, 25 November 1937, having been circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

A list of names of those who had made gifts to the Library since the previous meeting was read and laid on the table.

The following Fellows signed the Obligation in the Book of the Charter and Bye-Laws and were admitted :—Paul Rosenheim, Alfred Samuel Edwards, John Kenneth Spearing, Navalpakkam Parthasarathy, and Bernard Alwyn Jay.

Certificates of recommendation of the following candidates for Fellowship was read :—For the second time, in favour of Paul Octave Wiehe and Michael Evenari.

Dr. F. S. BODENHEIMER (Visitor) gave an account of 'Problems of animal distribution in Arabia'.

Abstract.—

The fact that, until late in the Tertiary period, Arabia was connected with the neighbouring parts of Africa and Iran—NW. India is of basic importance for the understanding of the history of its fauna. The western mountains belong to the geological structure of NE. Africa, as those of Oman belong to the system of the Iranian Mountains.

A survey of the present state of zoological exploration of the different landscapes and animal groups will be given in the extended paper. The types of animal distribution in Arabia are very manifold, and many zoogeographical elements are to be found as dominants, penetrants, or remnants. The most important seem to be :

(1) The Eremian Saharo-Sindian element. This desert fauna dominates all parts of the peninsula, with a few exceptions to be detailed below. Besides the endemic forms the following types of distribution are clearly represented :—

- (a) Paneremian species extending from Morocco—Sahara to Baluchistan and Sind.
- (b) Eastern Eremian forms extending from Sind and Baluchistan to Eastern Arabia, often south to Muscat.

We are only at the fringe of the problem and it is hoped that further exploration and analysis will enable us to elucidate the present distribution, the history, and the ecology of the fauna of Arabia.

Discussion.—

Dr. B. P. UVAROV said that Professor Bodenheimer's preliminary scheme of zoogeographical elements of the Arabian fauna presents a sound foundation for future work on the fauna, and pointed out the exceptional interest of Arabia to biogeographers, owing to the position of the peninsula bordering, as it does, on several profoundly distinct faunistic areas. Further and more detailed studies of Arabian zoogeography should be expected to throw much light on the affinities and evolution of the southern Palaearctic and Eremian faunas, and it is very fortunate that practically all investigations so far carried out, and still being conducted, emanate from England, so that probably 90 per cent. of the material is concentrated in one place.

Mr. N. B. KINNEAR and Dr. W. T. CALMAN also spoke.

Dr. A. TINDELL HOPWOOD, F.L.S., read a paper, 'Contributions to the study of some African Mammals.—II. The subspecies of the Black Rhinoceros, *Diceros bicornis* (Linnaeus), defined by the proportions of the skull' [which will be published in the Journal.]

Abstract.—

Measurements and proportions of twenty-one skulls of *Diceros bicornis* (Linnaeus) are analyzed and discussed.

The typical locality of the subspecies *D. b. bicornis* is shown to be the Cape of Good Hope.

D. b. holmwoodi (Slater) and *D. b. samoliensis* (Potocki) are diagnosed by means of their skull-characters, and a neotype is selected for the latter.

Attention is drawn to the probable existence of two distinct subspecies in West Africa.

Mr. M. A. C. HINTON, Sec.L.S., commented on the results and congratulated the author.

Mr. S. SAVAGE, F.L.S., read a paper, 'William Sole's unpublished notes on his "Menthae Britannicae", 1798' [printed in full below, p. 52].

Mr. A. L. STILL (Visitor), Mr. H. W. PUGSLEY, and Dr. W. T. CALMAN, V.-P.L.S., discussed the paper.

Mr. N. H. HOWES read a paper, 'The ecology of a saline lagoon in south-east Essex'. (Communicated by Dr. E. A. FRASER, F.L.S.). [This paper will be published in the Journal.]