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# THE ZOOLOGIST:

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OF

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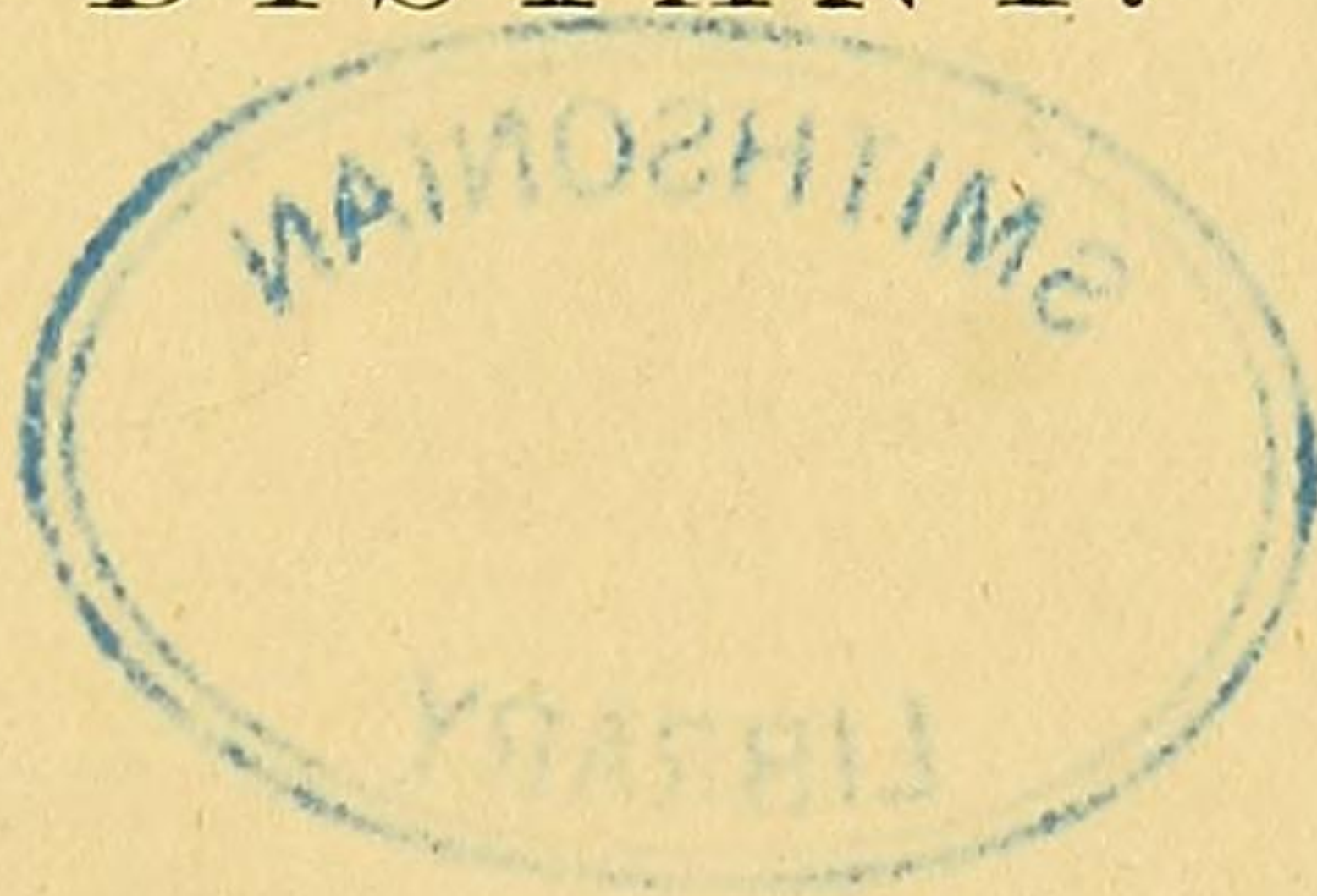
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Elephants : About 25 in Knysna, and 120 in Uitenhage divisions. Gemsbok : About 4000 principally in Bushmanland and Bechuanaland, with a fair lot in Barkly West division. Koodoos ; 4000, found mostly in the divisions of Uitenhage, Willowmore, Jansenville, Port Beaufort, Albany, Victoria East, and Vryburg ; and in lesser numbers in Ladismith, Oudtshoorn, Prince Albert, Riversdale, Griqualand West, Kuruman, and Mafeking. Oribi : A few are still to be found in Bathurst division, where they were specially protected until Jan. 31st, 1901 ; and in Griqualand East (where they are specially protected), and in Bathurst until Oct. 21st, 1900. Rietbok : About 450 in Komgha and Kimberley divisions, and a few in Griqualand East, where they are specially protected until May 28th, 1902. Zebra : Between 300 and 400. The bulk of them in George, Oudtshoorn, and Uniondale divisions, with a few detached troops in the divisions of Cradock, Prince Albert, and Somerset East. Hartebeest and Wildebeest in fairly large numbers are found in Bechuanaland and Griqualand West, but continued unauthorised slaughter of these animals on the unoccupied lands on the desert borders has, it is feared, already largely reduced the numbers ; but the Game Laws Amendment Act, No. 33, of 1899, passed last session, will, it is hoped, enable effective measures to be taken to put a stop to such acts. The presence of these animals in large or small numbers in the former locality depends largely on the state of the veld, and the dryness or otherwise of the season in the Kalahari Desert. Wild Ostriches : About 2500, principally in Bechuanaland, Griqualand West, and Bushmanland."

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THE vanishing Mammalian Fauna of South Africa is the subject of an interesting article in the 'Cape Times' of Nov. 28th, by Frederick R. N. Findlay, from which we quote as follows :—

"It is marvellous how rapidly the countless herds of game that once roamed over the rolling plains of South Africa\* have been practically exterminated. The exquisite fauna of Africa in the past added greatly to the charm and fascination which that continent has had for so many men, but they are being swept away by an unenlightened 'civilization.' Some useful and magnificent forms of feral life are already as extinct as the Dodo, and others are on the verge of extinction. No more could a Pringle sing :

'And the timorous Quagga's wild whistling neigh  
Is heard by the fountain at fall of day';

for the last of its tribe fell more than a score of years ago. The Blaauwbok (*Hippotragus leucophæus*) has gone these hundred years, and its beautiful relation, the Roan Antelope (*H. equinus*), is nowhere plentiful. The White

\* "For the purposes of this article, when speaking of South Africa I mean the territory lying to the south of the Zambesi and Cunéné Rivers."



Rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros simus*) can almost be said to be extinct; its black brother (*R. bicornis*) is now rarely found south of the Zambesi River, and even the Black Wildebeest is in danger of extinction. A brief period of sixty-three years has elapsed since Captain (afterwards Sir) Cornwallis Harris,\* while encamped near the present site of Pretoria, at the foot of the Cashan Mountains (Magaliesberg), encountered large numbers of Rhinoceroses, and recorded what he had seen in the following words:—‘The country now literally presented the appearance of a menagerie, the hosts of Rhinoceroses in particular that daily exhibited themselves almost exceeding belief. Whilst the camp was being formed an ugly head might be seen protruded from every bush, and the possession of the ground was often stoutly disputed. In the field these animals lost no opportunity of rendering themselves obnoxious, frequently charging at my elbow when in the act of drawing the trigger at some other object, and pursuing our horses with indefatigable and ludicrous industry, carrying their noses close to the ground, moving with a mincing gait, which ill beseemed so ungainly and ponderous a quadruped, and uttering the while a sound between a grunt and a smothered whistle.’ And, again: ‘On our way from the wagons to a hill, not half a mile distant, we counted no less than twenty-two of the white species of Rhinoceros, and were compelled in self-defence to slaughter four. On one occasion I was besieged in a bush by three at once, and had no little difficulty in beating off the assailants.’ To-day the Cashan Mountains are topped with frowning forts overlooking a great town—Pretoria.

“In Pretoria a collection of animals was started some months before the war broke out; the Government bought a very valuable and extensive property bordering on the Aapies River, at the northern extremity of the town, and presented it to the National Museum for the purpose of erecting a new museum building and starting a Dieren-tuin (Zoological Garden). In September, 1899, a good start had been made at the building of the new museum, and quite a fine collection of animals for the Zoo had already been secured by Dr. Gunning; when I last saw them they were flourishing in their extensive runs. It was a Staats or Government institution, but we hoped soon to frame a scheme which would have made it a public concern. A few months ago there was some correspondence in the local papers as to starting a Zoo at Cape Town, but I for one do not think it is advisable to make the first attempt here. Mr. Rhodes has already a fine collection of animals on his Groote-Schuur estate, and the public have free access to the beautiful grounds. I consider Pretoria to be the most suitable place in South Africa for an extensive National Zoological Garden. In arriving at this conclusion I have borne the following facts in mind:—

\* ‘Wild Sports of Southern Africa,’ pp. 182, 183 (fifth edition, 1852).



“ Firstly, a fine property has been secured for that purpose ; there is plenty of water in the river, and Hippopotami and Crocodiles, and other water-loving animals, birds, and fish will undoubtedly thrive splendidly ; indigenous trees or rather shrubs, grass, and reeds abound, and the animals will at once be at home there.

“ Secondly, the valley in which Pretoria now stands was, as I have already pointed out, once the habitat of a great variety of game ; consequently it may reasonably be hoped that animals will prosper better there than, for instance, Cape Town,\* with its climate and pasturage almost foreign to some species ; or than in the London Zoo, with its fogs, cold weather, and new conditions of life.

“ Thirdly, Pretoria, situated as it is, will be able to secure specimens of many rare animals in the Sabi Valley and elsewhere at a comparatively low cost, for there will be no great difficulty about transporting them.

“ Fourthly, it is hoped that an extensive track of at present almost valueless country, either in the districts of Waterberg or Zoutpansberg, or the Sabi Valley, may be secured from the Government in the near future, for the purpose of forming an immense reserve. I feel confident that, once such a grant has been obtained, funds sufficient to enable us to close the territory, and to drive in and secure as much game as possible, will be forthcoming from the many men who wish to see a comprehensive scheme for the preservation of wild animals set on foot.”

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BIRD MIGRATION IN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.—The Third Interim Report of the Committee appointed to work out the details of the Observations of Migrations of Birds at Lighthouses and Lightships, 1880–87, was presented at the recent meeting of the British Association at Bradford, and consists of a “ Statement furnished to the Committee by Mr. W. Eagle Clarke, containing a summary of the observations as regards (i.) the Song-Thrush (*Turdus musicus*), and (ii.) the White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*).” As regards the extreme value and interest of the publication, the Committee well remark that it “ throws such a light on the natural history, and especially the movements, of those two species as has never been possessed before.”

\* “ It must, however, in fairness, be remembered that when Van Riebeeck and his Dutch companions landed in Table Bay in April, 1652, they found a great profusion of animal life roaming upon its shores. Hippopotami occupied a swamp, it is said, on the present site of Church Square, and ‘ Harts and Elands ’ were numerous on the slopes of Table Mountain. The surrounding country was ‘ swarming with Elands, Hartebeests, and Stemboks,’ and Lions were numerous and bold ; even as late as June, 1694, nine Cows were killed by Lions within sight of the Castle ; and the animals in Mr. Rhodes’s Zoo have hitherto thrived fairly well, although some of the species are but poor representatives of their wild brothers.”