Trinity College, Dublin,

15 Nov^r, 1877

12.

Dear Sir

I received your note, of 5th inst — The statement you allude to was made by me, in a correspondence published some years ago, on the "Breeding of Lions" — I cannot say where, or how long ago — the experience gained in

our Dublin Gardens amounted to this —

As long as we fed the Lioness of beef or horse flesh, her cubs were born with cleft palates; but when we fed her on fresh goats, the cubs were born perfect —

I enclose two memoranda on our Irish Lions that I happen to have at hand — I am

Yours very truly

Samuel Haughton

John Tweedy —

From Brit. med. Journ. Feb. 26, 1876

NUGÆ HIBERNICÆ.

I.—The Dublin Lions.

The breeding of lions was undertaken in the Dublin Gardens in the year 1857—the stock selected being the South African lion, from a single pair of which, with an occasional dash of outside blood, the Dublin Gardens succeeded in breeding, during the space of sixteen years, ninety-two lions, of which seventy-one reached maturity. This remarkable result, unparalleled in the records of lion-breeding, is attributed by the managers of the Dublin Zoological Gardens to their superior skill in feeding the lions, which are believed in Dublin to owe their fecundity to the occasional use of "boiled potatoes", which, in the opinion of many Irish women, are believed to be efficacious in conferring offspring upon a barren woman. From my experience of lion-breeding, I should be disposed to say that "Pat" and "Biddy" have something to do with the result as well as the potatoes; for I find that of the ninety-two cubs horn in the Gardens, a single lioness produced fifty-four, of which she reared fifty, losing only four, or 8 per cent., instead of the average 23 per cent. The following table contains the particulars of the breeding, distinguishing the sexes.

Table of Lions Bred and Born in the Dublin Zoological Gardens from 1857 *to* 1873.

No. of Litter.	No. in each Litter.	Sex.		Date of Birth.
		Male.	Female.	
I	1	0	1	Nov. 17th 1857
II	4	2	2	September 20th, 1858
III	5	4	1	September 8th, 1859
IV	4	1	3	May 18th, 1861
V	3[a]	1	2	December 7th, 1861
VI	4	4	0	May 30th, 1862
VII	3[b]	0	3	July 18th, 1862
VIII	4	1	3	August 3rd, 1863
IX	4[c]	1	3	September 5th, 1863
X	5	—	—	April 2nd, 1864
XI	5[d]	—	—	April 3rd, 1864
XII	4	2	2	October 3rd, 1866
XIII	5	2	3	June 16th, 1867
XIV	6[e]	5	1	January 4th, 1868
XV	5[f]	2	3	August 5th, 1868
XVI	5[g]	3	2	April 18th, 1869
XVII	3[h]	1	2	May 24th, 1869
XVIII	6[i]	4	2	February 12th, 1870
XIX	4[k]	4	0	October 9th, 1870
XX	4[l]	2	2	September 18th, 1871
XXI	3[m]	2	1	March 10th, 1872
XXII	3[n]	2	1	December 23rd, 1872
XXIII	2	0	2	October 23rd, 1873

Summary of foregoing Table.

1. Period of observation ... ... 16 years.
2. Total number of litters... 23
3. Total number of cubs—male, 43; female, 39 ... 92 — 10 Sex un
4. Total number dying young, under 3 to 4 months ... 21
5. Juvenile mortality per cent. ... ... 23 per ct., or less than one-fourth.

In my next communication, I hope to furnish some interesting particulars concerning individual lions and lionesses of the foregoing family, whose habits and private character have been made by me a subject of special study.

ZOOPHILUS.

a. Born prematurely; one dead, the others died next day.
b. One died September 1st, 1862; had been weakly from birth.
c. One born dead.
d. One died soon after birth
e. Two males died within their first week after birth.
f. One died soon after birth.
g. One female cub was either born dead, or died immediately after birth.

h. This litter, though born, was not bred, in the Dublin Gardens, as the lioness was in cub when purchased. Of her three cubs, the two females died—one on the 29th June, and the other on the 1st July. The remaining cub (male) was reared by hand.

i. One of the females died on the 27th February, 1870.

k. Two cubs died of dysentery on the 13th February, 1871; and the remaining two, of the same disease, on the 19th February, 1871.

l. All these cubs died before the 22nd September, from inanition, as their mother's milk failed.

m. The female died on the 5th May, 1873.

n. The female died on the 2nd January, 1874.

[*From the* BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, *June 24th*, 1876.]

NUGÆ HIBERNICÆ.

No. II.—THE DUBLIN LIONS.

THE original pair of lions (of whose family a sketch has been given in No. I) came from Natal, and was purchased by the Royal Zoological Society of Ireland for £285, on May 10th, 1855. The first cub (a female) was whelped on November 17th, 1857, and was sold to a dealer in Glasgow for £80 in March 1859. She was reared from the time she was weaned, in company with a little black-and-tan terrier, to whom she was much attached, and from whom she would not allow herself to be separated: indeed, as I shall presently show, a love for black-and-tan terriers seems to be hereditary in her family.

The original Natal lion died on January 12th, 1864, of a fever, which lasted for fifteen days, during which he was treated and his life prolonged by means of large draughts of beef-tea and whisky-punch. On the Sunday before he died, the people from Dublin came out in large crowds to see him take his punch, which, they said, he did "just like a Christian, only he wasn't handy at stirring it". He was attended during his last illness by Deputy Inspector-General M. C. Robert Templeton, by Dr. Arthur Wynne Foot, and by the Secretary of the Society. All Dublin was sad when he died, especially considering the long struggle made to save his life; and the grief of the public took the form of an elegy, composed by one who has since earned substantial titles to fame.

"*Elegy on the Death of Our Lion.*

" Alas! another heavy blow
Has added to the weight of woe
Already pressing on the Zo-
ological Society.

'Tis only one short month ago
(A fever 'twas that laid him low)
Death took the lion of the Zo-
ological Society.

The keeper found him very low,
And sent a message for Pro-
fessor Haughton, of the Zo-
ological Society.

The doctor came, with *Foot* not slow;
He found his patient but so-so,
And told the Council of the Zo-
ological Society.

He wrote a grand prescription though:
'R. Kinahan's spir. oz. duo;
Aquæ oz. sex; sumat leo;
S. H., physician to the Zo-
ological Society.'

They tried to make him drink; but no
Teetota'er was ever so
Staunch as the lion of the Zo-
ological Society.

In vain they sought to urge the no-
ble beast; that 'tumbler' was no 'go':
He thought that whisky-punch was low
For him, the lion of the Zo-
ological Society.

They watched his every dying throe;
They rubbed him down from top to toe;
So died the lion of the Zo-
ological Society.

Some said it was the frost and snow;
Others declared they did not know;
But all agreed that, high or low,
Than this there ne'er was finer show,
This feast of reason, and this flow
Of whisky-punch, so promptly pro-
vided by order of the Zo-
ological Society,

In this whole transaction, we are reminded of the *facere scribenda* and *scribere legenda* of Pliny: "Equidem beatos puto, quibus, Deorum munere, datum est, aut facere scribenda aut scribere legenda. Beatissimos vero, quibus utrumque.—C. Plin., *Epist.* lib. vi, 16.

The third cub born to the original Natal pair has recently died under circumstances that touchingly recall her sister's affection for black-and-tan terriers. Her end is thus described in the business-like report of the Council, which has been already translated into several European languages, and circulated widely in South and North America, with pictorial illustrations.

"During the course of the year, the gardens sustained a heavy loss in the death of the beautiful lioness, familiarly called 'Old Girl' by her friends and admirers. She was born in the gardens, of South African stock, on September 8th, 1859, and died on October 7th, 1875, after six weeks of prostration from chronic bronchitis. During her long and honoured career, she presented the gardens with fifty-four cubs, of which she actually reared fifty, losing only four. This is a feat unprecedented in the history of menageries and gardens. She was a lioness of very high spirit, although very gentle, and was admitted by judges to be the handsomest lioness they had ever seen. It may be added, that her offspring not only added to the attractions of the gardens, but that the judicious sale of a portion of them brought £1,400 in cash for the benefit of the Society. The closing weeks of her useful life were marked by a touching incident worthy of being recorded. The large cats, or carnivores, when in health, have no objection to the presence of rats in their cages; on the contrary, they rather welcome them, as a relief to the monotony of existence, which constitutes the chief trial of a wild animal in confinement. Thus it is a common sight to see half-a-dozen rats gnawing the bones off which the lions have dined, while the satisfied carnivores look on contentedly, giving the poor rats an occasional wink with their sleepy eyes. In illness the case is different, for the ungrateful rats begin to nibble the toes of the lord of the forest before his death, and add considerably to his discomfort. To save our lioness from this annoyance, we placed in her cage a fine little rattan terrier, who was at first received with a sulky growl; but when the first rat appeared, and the lioness saw the little terrier toss him into the air, catching him with professional skill across the loins with a snap as he came down, she began to understand what the terrier was for. She coaxed him to her side, folded her paw around him, and each night the little terrier slept at the breast of the lioness, enfolded with her paws, and watching that his natural enemies did not disturb the rest of his mistress. The rats had a bad time during those six weeks."

ZOOPHILUS.