

enables a good keeper to anticipate the moods of the animals and to interpret their actions at critical times so as to act quickly and without violence. He knows just when the foxes are getting too much food, just when the sexes should be brought together or separated, when the female becomes pregnant, when the young should be born, when they need special attention, and when they may safely be left to the exclusive care of the mother. He is not over-inquisitive as to the number of young that are born, and seldom needs to disturb the anxious parent, relying on her actions to show whether or not the little ones are thriving. It is a good precaution for the attendant to avoid changing the appearance or color of his clothing during his visits to the animals at the most critical periods of their history.

Aside from the matter of propagation, the mere keeping of foxes in confinement has proved simple. It is true that they do not become very tame, or only in exceptional cases. Even the offspring of several generations of foxes reared in captivity remain wild and, except when young, evince more or less distrust of human beings. Still, life in the wire inclosures does not seem unpleasant to them. When thinking themselves unobserved they play together or lie contentedly stretched at length in the sun. Cold weather has no terrors for them and snow is a delight. At times of alternate freezing and thawing it is dangerous to allow them to lie down on snow, as they may thus seriously injure their coats. They rarely make determined efforts to escape from the inclosures, except during the first few days.