

## THE BIDEL MENAGERIE.

Mr. Alexandre, a skilful operator of Brussels, says *La Nature*, has taken a series of photographs representing the animals that compose the celebrated menagerie of Bidel, the tamer, who has recently obtained the greatest success at the representations given by him at the capital of Belgium. Mr. Alexandre has sent us the photographs that he has taken, and the specimens given here will show our readers that they are worthy of being reproduced.

First we have Bengali, a royal tiger, the finest in the menagerie. He was captured in 1880, in Cochin China, where the species is quite widely distributed, without, however, being as common as in Bengal. Next we have Sultan, a black maned lion of the Atlas mountains, Africa. He was born in 1872, and was captured in a trap in 1876. When he reached Lyons he was the cause of a terrible accident, an account of which we reproduce from the *Salut Public*:

A sad accident, caused by the inconceivable imprudence of the person who was the victim of it, occurred at the Vaise Station, at Lyons. On the first of September, 1876, Mr. Bidel, proprietor of the great menagerie installed upon the Perrache, received from Africa a magnificent lion, which had been very recently captured in the deserts of Central Africa. This animal, confined in a strong barred cage, had been placed in a special car, with the following inscription: "Ferocious animal; lion; one is forbidden to open."

A drover of beeves named Vicard, in the absence of the conductor, opened the car, switched off into one of the annexes of Vaise Station, and held out a piece of bread to the lion. Naturally, the animal, being carnivorous, did not care for it, and only exhibited the appearance of being disturbed. Emboldened by this apparent somnolence, our man passed his arm through the bars of the cage, in order to pat the lion's head. The animal uttered a roar and seized the arm of the imprudent fellow with his mouth and paws. In a minute Vicard's arm was crushed by the powerful jaws of the beast, from the wrist to the shoulder. The men of the gang, running forward armed with iron bars and wooden stakes, were unable to make the furious animal let go his hold, and he kept half of the arm of the unfortunate man between his jaws. Vicard died in consequence of his injuries.

On the day following the accident Mr. Bidel gave a representation for the benefit of the widow and her child, and worked the terrible beast, which continues to have an ever increasing success.

Fig. 3 from a beautiful instantaneous photograph, represents Bidel, the tamer, entering the cage of another lion, Pacha, a magnificent specimen of the leonine race of the Atlas, captured in 1887.

The Bidel Menagerie, which exhibited at Brussels, and a few days afterward at Lille, comprises also the following animals: Nero, a superb lion from the Cape of Good Hope, captured in 1871; three panthers from the Indies; a leopard, native of Asia, captured in 1889; a Persian leopard; three superb lions, recently captured

at the Cape of Good Hope; three royal Bengal tigers; two white polar bears; a black Russian bear; and hyenas, wolves, monkeys, etc.

This exhibition is very remarkable, and tends to develop a taste for the natural sciences, and zoology especially, among the numerous people who visit it.

Mr. Bidel's entire existence is devoted to the collection of rare animals and the exhibition of them at fairs in most of the cities of France, Italy, and Spain. The celebrated tamer avers that he has no special process for training ferocious animals. "It simply requires," says he, "great energy and much will and courage."

Bidel has, without any preliminary preparation, several times entered cages containing tigers, the most formidable of ferocious animals. He unhesitatingly presents himself to them, a whip in hand, looks at them fixedly, and does not fear to strike them if they make a threatening movement. Despite such courage and boldness, he has, nevertheless, been wounded by his animals, and sometimes quite severely.

Everybody remembers that in the month of July, 1886, at the Neuilly fair, a lion lacerated all of one side of his throat. The celebrated artist Edward Detaillo was among the spectators of this dramatic scene, and made a sketch of it.

Some years ago, Pezon, a well known

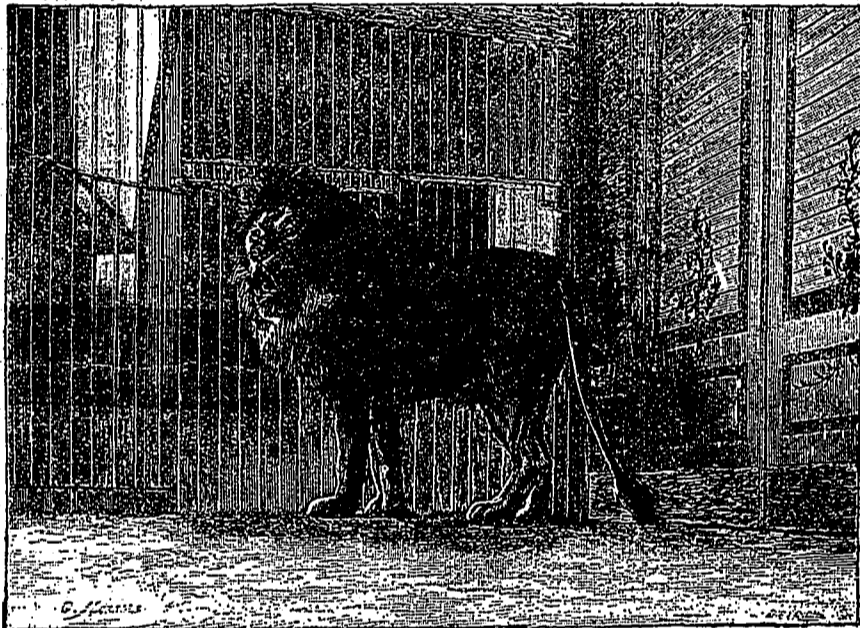


BENGALI, A ROYAL TIGER OF THE BIDEL MENAGERIE.

anecdote is more amusing than veracious.

The keepers of the wild animals in the menageries of our museums never enter the lions' cages, even when these animals have for a long time been accustomed to their prison life.

THE QUICKEST WAY to become convinced that there is a devil in to try to live a Christian.



SULTAN, A BLACK MANED LION OF THE ATLAS.

rival of Bidel, came near being devoured by one of his bears at a fair at Chalons-sur-Marne.

One hears sometimes narrated the story of the tamer who, having discharged his valet, took a willing man, whom he put in charge of the cage cleaning. The next day our tamer was much surprised to see his new servant in the lion's cage, quietly sweeping the floor with big licks of the broom between the animal's paws. The

## AS OTHERS SEE US.

The publishers of the *Messenger* are very much obliged to the friends all over the country for their cordial and unasked for words of appreciation. Here is a sample of many letters received during the past month, from Sunday-school superintendents and others:—

"Out of the large number of samples of S.S. papers which we have had sent to us, we consider the *Northern Messenger* by far the best, as it has the most reading matter of any paper for the price and the reading is all good."

This letter was accompanied with a list of ten names for the *Northern Messenger*:—

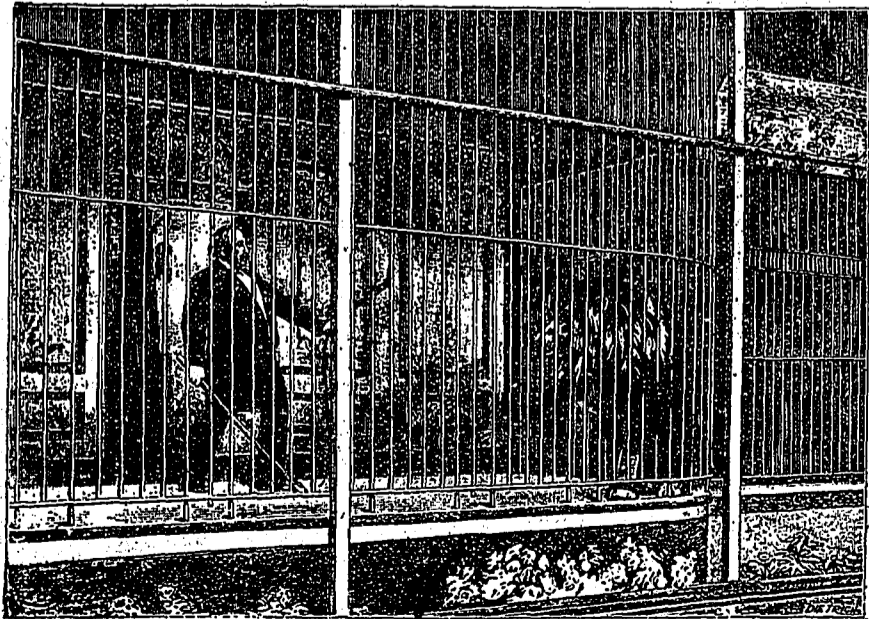
DEAR SIRS,—Please find enclosed \$3.00 cash amount of subscription for *Northern Messenger*. Please send "Black Ivory" No. 100 of Ballantyne's Stories, and for balance of names send two of Pansy Books, No. 86, "Mrs. Solomon Smith Looking on" and No. 19, "The Man of the House." I hope to get more names next year.

I am twelve years of age, the eldest of seven boys. Our baby is four months old, and his name is John Dougall.

I wish you all a Happy New Year.

ROY SPENCER.

The Story Competition is full of promise. We hope to be able to announce results before long.



BIDEL IN THE CAGE OF ONE OF HIS LIONS.

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