

tinguish between stripes and spots, and that no one could mistake a leopard for a tiger. Yet this mistake was not only repeatedly made, but was actually the rule. Even in the popular Indian hunting scene, where the tigers and leopards were shown close together, nearly every one spoke of the leopards as young tigers or sometimes as small tigers. In several other parts of the exhibition stuffed leopards were shown, and in almost every instance were called tigers by the spectators. The same Indian group showed two wild boars, making off at their best speed. I did think that every one would know swine by sight, if only by their tails; but I actually heard them called beavers, not once but several times.

All those who visited the exhibition must have been struck with the groups illustrative of ostrich-breeding at the Cape. One group represented the parent birds, their eggs and young. Not far from them was the admirable series of models of the Diamond Mines. These, as a lady explained to her offspring, were the holes in which the ostriches laid their eggs. She had actually taken no note of the model huts, washing machinery, steam engines, tackle, travelling carriages for the soil, and the swarming human beings which thronged the quarries, and really thought that the models were the actual nests of the ostrich. That any one who was evidently well educated should have betrayed such absolute want of observation and hopeless ignorance seems almost impossible; but I heard another remark which equalled, if not surpassed, it in absurdity. A lady, evidently a schoolmistress, was passing through one of the galleries with her flock, dispensing information as she went. One of them caught sight of a stuffed adjutant in a case, and asked what odd bird that was. "That, my dears," said the instructress of youth, "is a dodo," and swept on benignly; as if dodos were as plentiful as barn-door fowls, and as if there were the least resemblance between the extant stork and the extinct dodo.

It is easy enough to say such persons have no business in museums, and that their opinion is of no consequence; that is only waiving the difficulty; such persons should really be caught and taught. In most cases their ignorance is, then, not their own fault, but is due to the imperfection of their education.

Were I requested to take a number of children to the zoological galleries at South Kensington, I certainly should not try to interest their un-instructed minds by showing them a series of comparative anatomies. I should show them one or two of the monkey tribes, and point out the distinctions between the principal groups, giving at the same time a brief account of their geographical distribution. They should not be allowed to range about as they liked, but be taken afterwards to the bats, and their attention carefully drawn to the modifications of structure which enable a mammal to fly as swiftly as a bird.

Then I would show them the leading types of the cat tribe, followed by those of the dogs, and so on throughout the mammalia. Next I would take them in like fashion through the typical birds. The same plan could be pursued with the other branches of zoology, and so the young people would gain, without much trouble, a clear and systematic knowledge of the subject, which they could scarcely compass in any other way.

To return to our museums, what kind of museum ought it to be? A very old Utopian dream of mine is a natural history museum for the public, which would attract them, and give them an interest in animal life. Attempts have been made in this direction, but they have all been on too small a scale, have few or no leading ideas, and are too often marred by errors so glaring that they convey false teaching, and do actual harm to the science of which they are meant to be the exponents.

As familiar examples of this false teaching, I may mention the groups in the Wurtemberg Gallery in the Crystal Palace. On an average the taxidermy is good, and the groups are spirited in their action, but they are spoiled by the most outrageous blunders. There is one, for instance, representing a horseman carrying off some young tiger cubs, and pursued by the infuriated parents. He has shot one of them, and is turning round in his saddle to shoot the other. So far so good; but the man is a Moor, whereas the tiger is exclusively Asiatic, and is no more to be seen in Africa than in England. Nothing would have been easier than to have placed an Indian on horseback, or if the Moor were retained, to have substituted for the tigers, lions; in either event the group would have been just as spirited, and the teaching would have been true instead of false.

Another group represents a fight between a bison and a jaguar; the former animal is depicted crushing his antagonist against a tree. Now the jaguar is an inhabitant of South Africa, and is essentially arboreal in its habits, whereas the bison inhabits North America, and is essentially a creature of the plains where not a tree is to be seen. Here again a false impression is created when it would have been just as easy to create a right one by substituting wolves for jaguars. Even in Ward's fine hunting group, the taxidermist has embodied a scene which never could occur in real life. I believe there is no instance known of a tiger attacking an elephant, unless the latter were trained to tiger hunting, and ridden by sportsmen. But this elephant is unriden, and is not even guided by a mahout (or driver). It would not have cost much additional trouble to have put a howdah, or even a pad carrying a couple of armed sportsmen, on the elephant's back, and a mahout on the animal's neck. As a rule, stuffed snakes, too, are absurdly wrong, the taxidermists, being ignorant of the peculiar manner in which the skeleton is constructed, twisting and coiling them in any direction as if they were mere ropes without any vertebrae inside them. Again, the snakes are almost invariably furnished with birds' eyes, having circular pupils instead of narrow slits like those of a cat's eye at midday.

There are mistakes even of costume which are quite unwarrantable, and the crowning absurdity of these is attained in a group of North American Indian warriors in council, where the speaker is wearing on his breast the head dress of a Bechuana woman. The figures in all these are admirable, but the clothes and weapons are distributed at random, and women

are portrayed as carrying weapons instead of burdens, as is the invariable custom among all uncivilised people.

Museums occupy so vast a range, I can only treat of those which illustrate the science of zoology, and these should be pre-eminently attractive; for this purpose four requisites are necessary—plenty of space, plenty of time, money, and an intimate knowledge of the subjects. I suggest then, on behalf of the general public, that their museum should consist not of isolated animals but of groups; some large, some small, but all representing actual episodes in the life history of the animals exhibited. Neither scenery, trees, nor herbage should be conventional or evolved out of the inner consciousness of the maker. They should be truthfully copied from the many photographs or trustworthy sketches which are at our command, and, as far as possible, each group should be the reproduction of some scene which has been actually witnessed and described by travellers, such as Gordon Cumming, Anderson, Baldwin, and others.

### A FEW GENTLEMEN COMMONERS.

THERE was Gladstone on the Treasury Bench, with his head half concealed in a colossal collar, which looked like a white wooden paling surrounding the knotted trunk of a venerated tree. There was Hartington beside him, tall and slouchy, with an air of aristocratic conceit, his silk hat tipped over his eyes as if to shut from his lordly vision the turbulent scene which so scandalously outraged the traditions of "the finest assembly of gentlemen in Europe," and consequently of the world. There was John Bright, alongside, getting rather portly, dressed rather sleekly, saying nothing, but looking volumes of cantankerous phrases in elegant rhetorical bindings. There was Vernon Harcourt, Sir William of that ilk, big, and stout, and pompous, as if he were the British Constitution in a two-and-fifty pound parcel of flesh and bones. There was "Buckshot Forster," the Coercion Secretary of Erin's Isle, with a cast-iron face and an unhappy frown. There was Fawcett, with a pair of green spectacles over his sightless eyes, and though a blind Postmaster-General, singularly enough one of the best Postmaster-Generals in an age of such useful worthies.

Randolph Churchill, once the clown of the House, then a potent leader, but looking like a pet pug dog with a red ribbon around his throat. Little Lord Randolph struts about the lobbies with his hands in his pockets, his crimson necktie displaying itself like a danger signal to all old foggy Whigs who chance to get in his way. You would never take this energetic man of insignificant appearance for a British aristocrat, unless, indeed, you had enjoyed some previous acquaintance with the personal appearance of British aristocrats. When he addresses the House his tongue clatters with the sharp rapidity of a telegraphic ticker, and there are times when his words convey to the opponents whom he wishes to confuse, about as much significance as the ticker's clatter conveys to the untutored ear. There are also moments, not infrequent, when Lord Randolph dances about and oratorically worries Mr. Gladstone on the opposite bench, very much as the diminutive canine he so closely resembles worries a sedate mastiff through the apertures of a picket fence.

The "Grand Old Man" is imperturbable under such attacks. He sits there apparently heedless of all that is going on around him. His clothes look as if they had been thrown at him by a second hand tailor. He throws his right foot across his left knee, draws his head into his monstrous and oft-caricatured collar, which has peaked ends like rustic gate-posts, closes his eyes, and apparently starts on a brief trip to the Land of Nod. But he has a return ticket, and telephonic communication *en route*, as you perceive when his would-be tormentor has finished amid Conservative cheers. Then the "Grand Old Man" draws his head up from its white enclosure, looks around him as who should say "What is all this noise about, my children?" gets upon his feet in a majestic fashion, stretches his right arm aloft with a muscular grace derived from much tree-felling at Hawarden, and dramatically beseeches the "gentlemen" assembled, in the name of their common Britishism, to abstain from partisan prejudice and vote in union for the weal of the empire. He holds the assembled "gentlemen" in the palm of his hand, and they listen with awe and admiration as he convinces them against their wills that the moon is made of green cheese. But he has no sooner finished than the assembled "gentlemen" proceed to fight over the cheese with an avidity which shows that their partisan appetites were only temporarily sated by the pabulum of eloquence so adroitly administered. And yet, despite his seeming trip Nodwards, Gladstone has followed his opponent's argument line by line; he takes excerpts from it and hurls them back with such force that the previous speaker has to dodge consummately during these exercises, lest he should be torn by the flying fragments. Thus you see that the "Grand Old Man" is never so wide awake as when he is apparently fast asleep.

Joseph Chamberlain is the exquisite of the House. With a figure of elegant slenderness, enveloped in a habit of immaculate black, in which the regulation Prince Albert coat plays a leading part, or, perchance, arrayed in the most faultless attributes of evening dress, with an orchid in his lappel buttonhole, with a single glass in his eye, there are times when he comes just short of being a parliamentary dude. He is getting well on toward middle-age, presumably, but he has a bright, young face, cleanly shaven, save for a mere hint of side-whisker just before his ears, and his eyes are sharp enough to pierce the walls of the Parliament buildings, if the walls were not so enormously thick, and to tunnel the bed of the Thames, if the Thames itself were not a stream of unpierceable mud. Chamberlain is too sleek to look like a politician, but he is a red-hot politician for all that. He is consistent in one thing—his self-advancement. To secure this, he takes the attitude of a weather vane, and he rears him-