

The Fauna Preservation Society

NOVEMBER 1959

EDITORIAL NOTES

DR. V. VAN STRAELEN.—We congratulate our eminent Vice-President Dr. V. Van Straelen on the presentation to him of a beautiful medallion bearing his portrait. It has been given to Dr. Van Straelen by the National Parks Institute of the Belgian Congo to commemorate his twenty-five years as President of the Institute and his untiring work for nature conservation and scientific research, not only in the Congo but throughout the world.

DR. WILLARD G. VAN NAME.—We record with deep sorrow the death on 25th April, 1959, of our Vice-President and great benefactor Dr. Willard Van Name, at the age of seventy-eight. He was not only a regular correspondent and honoured counsellor but a most substantial contributor to our funds, because—he was once kind enough to say—we did so much for the preservation of the African fauna in which he was intensely interested.

From 1910 to 1916 Van Name was Zoologist of the New York State Museum at Albany and became connected with the American Museum of Natural History. In 1926 he became Associate Curator of Lower Invertebrates in that Museum and, upon his retirement in 1942, was elected Associate Curator Emeritus of Invertebrates. His special field included the chemical composition of gelatin; the embryology of the planarians; the ascidians of the coasts of North and South America, Bermuda, the West Indies and the Philippine Islands; and the isopod crustaceans of American and Congo regions.

But Van Name was not only one of the foremost students of marine life, he was a devoted worker for the preservation of the forests and parks of the United States, and indeed in the whole cause of nature conservation throughout the world. For his contribution to these causes we remain for ever in his debt.

INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES.—The Seventh General Assembly of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources and the Eighth Technical Meeting will be held at Warsaw and Cracow from 15th to 24th June, 1960.

D

The subjects for consideration at the technical meeting will be :—

Theme I.—The management of wild grazing animals in temperate zones and its relation to land use.

Theme II.—The ecological effects of biological and chemical control of undesirable plants and animals.

The Education Commission and the Survival Service Commission will each hold a public meeting.

Excursions have been arranged both during and after the Assembly. They include visits to Bialowieza forest, where the European bison still lives, and to national parks in the mountains of Tatra and Pieniny, on the border of Poland and Czechoslovakia. Here the Union's National Parks Commission will consider "International control of scientific research and tourism in boundary national parks". The excursions end on 29th June.

For further information please write to the Secretary-General, I.U.C.N., 31 rue Vautier, Brussels 4, Belgium.

International Committee on National Parks.—This Committee was established by the Union at its General Assembly in Athens in September, 1958. Its purpose is to strengthen international co-operation in matters relating to reserves and national parks throughout the world, to serve as an information centre on reserves and parks, to advise on national park systems and to undertake scientific research.

The first move was to make an international list of such reserves and parks and the Union's proposal for this list was sent to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. It was afterwards included in the agenda of the United Nations Economic and Social Council for its meeting in Mexico City in April, 1959. There a resolution, sponsored by France, Mexico, Pakistan, Sudan, the United Kingdom, the United States and Venezuela, drew attention to the value of national parks and reserves in protecting natural resources and in contributing to the welfare of mankind, and approved the establishment by the Secretary-General, of the world list of reserves and parks. It was carried unanimously.

The International Committee on National Parks, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Harold J. Coolidge, has its headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Survival Service Commission.—As our readers will know, the chairmanship of the Commission is at present held by the Secretary of our Society. While this continues, and while the Society performs the secretarial work of the Survival Service, the I.U.C.N. has kindly promised a grant of £250 yearly. A new

part-time assistant, Mrs. L. E. Smith, is working in a room rented for the combined use of the Society and the Commission.

The Great Indian Rhinoceros.—Both the Society and I.U.C.N. have brought Mr. E. P. Gee's report—published in April *Oryx*—to the notice of the appropriate authority and have asked for action on the Report's recommendations. Readers will be interested to know that Mr. E. P. Gee has gone to Manipur, on the border of Assam and Burma, to inquire about the brown-antlered deer, or thamin, one of the rarest of animals. It is hoped to publish his report in *Oryx*.

OIL POLLUTION OF THE SEA.—The Society was represented by the Secretary at an informal conference on oil pollution held in Copenhagen on the 3rd and 4th June, under the chairmanship of Mr. James Callaghan, M.P. Nine countries were represented, besides delegates from harbour boards, oil companies and private organizations.

The conference considered the working of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution of the Sea by Oil, 1954, the present position and future action.

The 1954 Convention which restricts the areas of the sea where oily refuse may be discharged by any ship of the ratifying countries, makes rules for the installation of oil and water separators in dry cargo ships and provides for the reception of oily wastes in harbours, has been ratified by the United Kingdom, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Federal Germany, the Irish Republic, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. The most important omissions are Russia, Poland, Italy, U.S.A., Panama and Liberia. The adherence of Russia, greatly desired by Scandinavian countries, would mean that the Baltic could be cleared of oil and thousands of sea birds saved annually. The importance of the United States in this respect lies not only in her own shipping, but in her influence on the "flags of convenience" countries, Panama and Liberia.

At the conference the representatives of the United States reported the views of two important national bodies. The American National Committee for the Prevention of Pollution of the Seas by Oil, a committee of all interested government departments and agencies, had agreed to recommend to the Secretary of State that the United States should accept the 1954 Convention. The other body, an industrial group whose report received wide approval from shipping and petroleum industries, recommended that the industries affected should not oppose ratification by the United States.

D*

Both bodies made reservations, some of which would avoid dilution of those American laws which were already stricter than the Convention.

The adherence of the United States to the Convention should not be long delayed. It will be a turning point in the fight for clear seas and beaches.

Thanks to the working of the Convention, the problem of discharge of oil by dry cargo ships has been almost solved. That of tankers remains. The Conference thought it something on the credit side that, in spite of the enormous increase in tanker tonnage, pollution of the seas and beaches appeared in general to be getting no worse.

The next moves in the prevention of oil pollution rest with the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization, which was set up this year with its headquarters in London. The Copenhagen Conference recommended that I.M.C.O. should :—

(1) Collect information on the extent to which the 1954 Convention was being enforced in the law courts of the world ; on the degree of inspection ; on the extent to which codes of conduct had been distributed to ships' officers ; on the adequacy of reception facilities for oily waste at ports.

(2) Collect and publish information upon the value of chemicals in separating oil from water and in preventing emulsification.

(3) Report on the facilities at oil loading ports for the disposal of oily waste from empty tankers.

(4) Encourage ratification of the 1954 Convention by countries which had not yet done so.

(5) Prepare for a new official International Conference at which nations should agree that, from a definite future date, their ships should not discharge oil into the sea anywhere.

Only when seas the world over are completely free from oil will the sea birds be safe, the beaches clean and the task of the Committee on the Prevention of Pollution of the Sea by Oil accomplished.

THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON will, in 1960, again hold a course for its Certificate of Proficiency in Natural History. For further information apply immediately to The Secretary, Natural History Certificate Course, Department of Extra-Mural Studies, University of London, Senate House, London, W.C. 1.

PORTUGAL.—In "Notes on the Nesting of the Golden Eagle in the Serra do Marão", Dr. José de Lima, Vice-President of

the Portuguese section of the International Committee for Bird Preservation, tells the usual sad story of sportsmen and shepherds who will not tolerate any large birds of prey, but shoot or poison them and destroy nests, eggs and young. But it is not only predators which are wantonly destroyed. "On Sundays quantities of hunters of all ages, equipped with fire-arms of every description, kill and wound every kind of bird, simply for the joy of killing." Dr. de Lima criticizes also those amateur ornithologists who make their own little museums of stuffed birds. He urges that school children should be taught that no creatures are necessarily harmful. There are protective laws in Portugal, but laws are not enough.

On the credit side there is the work of Professor Santos Junior, who started the first bird-ringing centre in Portugal and was instrumental in forming the first ornithological reserve, under the Director of the Forestry Service. Further reserves are being considered.

TANGANYIKA—THE SERENGETI.—Members who have followed the Society's work for the preservation of the wild life of the Serengeti will remember that since the boundaries of the new national park were fixed, on the whole satisfactorily, interest has been concentrated on the Ngorongoro Crater, an area of about 160 square miles in the highlands to the east of the park. Here a great variety and number of wild animals is combined with scenic magnificence in a way found nowhere else in the world. Indeed it had been a question whether the removal of the Ngorongoro from the old national park was too great a price to pay even for the great gains to preservation elsewhere on the Serengeti.

But the Ngorongoro was not forgotten. From the very first it was the heart of the proposed Conservation Area, which covers 2,500 square miles and lies to the east of the national park.

In 1958 our Society welcomed the national park in its new form and suggested that substantial assistance from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund should be given to the implementation of the Conservation Area. Without it the grand new plan for the Serengeti could be but partly successful.

There have now been great developments. A grant of £182,000 has been made from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund for the use of the Conservation Unit, which will establish and manage the Conservation Area, and the Nuffield Foundation has given £20,000 for the establishment of a pasture research

unit within it. A five-year scheme has been launched, starting with the Ngorongoro, but spreading eventually to the whole of the Conservation Area. The object of the scheme is to conserve and develop the forests and water supplies and also the grassland where, because of over-grazing and constant burning, resistant but unpalatable grasses have spread widely.

All this amounts of course to the proper land-use of the area. It is true that it is primarily in the interests of the indigenous pastoralists, the Masai, but readers of Professor Pearsall's Report* will realize that the appalling state to which human settlement, woodland clearance and fire have been reducing the water catchment areas, must if uncorrected, result in the crater becoming useless, not only for cattle but for wild life also.

Moreover, besides conservation of grasslands, water and forests, one of the main problems facing the new Conservation Unit, is officially stated to be the special protection of the wild life in the area, to the fullest extent compatible with the reasonable interests of the pastoralists. To deal with that part of the work the Unit will include a game ranger, a head game scout and fifteen game scouts. This seems to show a realization that the preservation of wild life is itself a human interest. Indeed this fact in its direct financial aspect—which is not the only aspect—can hardly be better exemplified than in the Ngorongoro crater itself; for the crater with its animals is the chief tourist attraction in Tanganyika and “could in this way make a considerable contribution in the economic expansion of the territory”.

There have been many misrepresentations of the situation which, on 1st July, 1959, followed the relinquishment by National Parks of control of the Ngorongoro crater. It was even said that the Ngorongoro had been handed over to the Masai, and the Masai themselves lent colour to this misstatement by immediately and wantonly killing five rhinoceros.

The true situation has now been described by Sir Richard Turnbull, Governor of Tanganyika, in a speech to the Masai on the 27th August. In it he promised development of the Ngorongoro Crater in the interests of the people using it, but he said that the Masai, for their part, must carry out their obligations in the conservation of forests, water and pasture. “The Government intends to protect the game animals of the area, though should there be any conflict between the interests

* Report on an Ecological Survey of the Serengeti National Park. From the Fauna Preservation Society, price 5s.

of the game and the human inhabitants, those of the latter must take precedence."

His Excellency emphasized the importance of the preservation of wild life as a tourist attraction and said that £40 monthly would be paid to the Masai treasury by the Ngorongoro Safari Lodge Authorities. But this payment would be subject to the Masai not needlessly interfering with the wild game. "If you slaughter the large game animals which the tourists wish to see, strangers will no longer come to this country and spend their money here. And if they do not come our wealth will be reduced and money will not be available for the improvement of Masai water supplies and grazing."

The Conservation Unit is starting off on a firm foundation. We look forward hopefully to its progress in the cause of Nature Conservation.

CENTRAL AFRICAN FEDERATION.—The Federal "Hansard" for 12th August, 1959, contains reports on a motion by Captain Robertson asking the Federal Government to discuss with Territorial Governments—that is Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland—the promotion and development of national parks, national monuments and game reserves. He made out a very strong case for unified control of reserves and parks throughout the Federation, speaking of the "deplorable picture" in Northern Rhodesia where the only national park, the Kafue, was one in name only. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gaunt, Federal Member for Lusaka West (Northern Rhodesia), and supported by all who spoke, including four African members. All showed their appreciation of the wonderful wild life which still remained within the Federation.

But in Northern Rhodesia itself a different view is taken, for 94 per cent of the country is native reserve and native trust land, and game reserves are a fiercely contested political issue. Early in the year the outgoing Government had gravely reduced the Department of Game and Tsetse Control and finally had split the Department (well organized and administered, as it admittedly was) leaving Tsetse Control with the Minister for Natural Resources but putting "Game" under the Minister for Native Affairs.

The Northern Rhodesian "Hansard" for 22nd July, 1959, tells how Mr. Grindley-Ferris, Member for Lusaka West, tried to put the matter right by introducing a motion in the Legislative Council requesting the Government to return the "Game and Fisheries" to the Ministry of Land and Natural Resources.

He gave eleven reasons, supported by argument, why the action of the late Government should be reversed. An inconclusive debate followed, a distressing feature of which was its political emphasis, culminating when Mr. Mulonda (Barotseland) said quite bluntly: "Africans have got confidence in that Ministry (Native Affairs) but Africans have not got confidence at all in the Ministry of Land and Natural Resources, because the head of it, or the Minister concerned, is a member of the United Federal Party."

Captain Robertson's motion, as it stood, was opposed by the Government, but on a motion of the Chief Secretary it was finally agreed to request Government to review the matter in eighteen months' time. A not very satisfactory ending to a not very inspiring debate.

The Red Lechwe.—Through the generosity of a member of our Society, Mr. A. R. Llewellyn-Taylor, the Game Preservation Association have bought a fine shallow draught speed-boat which, on test, made tight turns at over 50 m.p.h. She will be invaluable in harassing the lechwe poachers on the flooded Kafue flats.

This boat was on show at the Game Preservation stand at the Lusaka Show last August. She has been aptly named "Llewellyn-Taylor".

UGANDA.—Readers will remember that the April *Oryx* gave some account of the work of Dr. A. M. Harthorn on the growth rate of the African buffalo and discussed the use of this animal as a source of meat. We showed how closely this work was connected with the preservation of wild life in tsetse fly areas, where buffalo and other animals, though resistant to fly-borne disease, are being destroyed to make way for cattle.

Working with Dr. Harthorn is Mr. J. A. Lock, Head of the Department of Pharmacology at Makerere College. They are experimenting in the marking of wild animals with identification tags, so that individuals may be recognized later. By this means information—vital for preservation—on food, breeding and herd movements can be obtained. To mark the animals, they have to be temporarily and harmlessly immobilized by a drug loaded in a syringe and fired by a kind of gun.

After the correct doses for different species have been discovered, a difficult matter, the immobilization technique can also be used to move animals from places where their destruction is certain, to reserved areas. In this respect a start has been made in the movement of Kenya kob, and plans are in hand to

move twenty-five Rothschild's giraffe to West Suk and, should this prove successful, to move others to the Queen Elizabeth Park. These kob and giraffe live on farm land and will be destroyed if new quarters cannot be found for them.

The Council of our Society consider Dr. Harthoorn's projects so important that they have authorized a contribution of £200 towards them.

NEW SOUTH WALES.—We welcome *Wild Life Service*, a printed journal which the Fauna Protection Panel has brought out to replace the old *Bulletin for Rangers*, often quoted in *Oryx*. The first number (March, 1959) starts with an encouraging message from Mr. C. A. Kelly, the Chief Secretary, and, besides other articles, contains a very interesting report on Lion Island Reserve, home of the fairy penguin and the sooty and wedge-tailed shearwaters.

DETERRENTS TO GRAZING.—Colonel J. Vincent, Director of Wild Life Conservation in Natal, writes of steps taken to keep hippopotamuses away from three acres of new plantations, which included an area the animals used for wallowing. The vicinity was sprayed with a 10 per cent solution of 1,100 cc. of concentrated Dr. Hildebrandt's Eau de Leo No. 1, in ethyl alcohol. This was immediately successful and the hippopotamuses were still not using the wallows seven weeks later.

The cost of the treatment is high, due to the price of ethyl alcohol, but experiments are being made with cheaper solvents such as industrial and absolute alcohol. Spraying such as this might be valuable for many other purposes.

MICHAEL GRZIMEK MEMORIAL FUND.—By the 26th September, 1959, nearly two hundred people of many races had already subscribed £598 towards the memorial to Mr. Michael Grzimek. It will take the form of a Michael Grzimek Memorial Laboratory and will be built at Seronera, the new headquarters of the Serengeti National Park.

Readers will remember that Michael Grzimek was killed in an aeroplane accident at the end of a year's investigation into the wild life of the Serengeti, conducted at his own expense.

Further donations should be sent to The Director, Tanganyika National Parks, Private Bag, Arusha.

ORYX.—The editor and our printers thank members for their excellent response to the appeal for the return of spare copies of the April *Oryx*. The cost of a possible reprint of this number has been avoided. Other numbers returned are also most gratefully acknowledged.