

PRESIDENT FIELD PRESENTS RARE OLD DICTIONARY

Mr. Stanley Field, President of the Museum, has presented to the Library of the institution a rare and valuable work, the two volumes of the first edition of Dr. Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language*, published in 1755.

This interesting work, published at a time when a good lexicon was very much needed in England, was hailed with great enthusiasm by Johnson's contemporaries. It was even proposed that he should be made a "dictator" over the English language, whose decisions on definitions or controversial matters should be regarded as authoritative and final. The dictionary represented a labor of seven years, and was brought out by a group of eminent publishers who combined to commission Johnson to undertake the task. It was at this time that Johnson had broken with his famed patron of previous years, the Earl of Chesterfield.

While Johnson's definitions have been superseded largely by later lexicographers, it still remains a monumental work and is especially notable for the apt choice of examples of usage of words selected from the greatest writers. In addition to the dictionary, the volumes contain Johnson's history of the language, and an English grammar.

The books, which are beautifully bound and excellently preserved, were formerly in Mr. Field's personal library.

ARCHERY IN CHINA

The remarkable development of archery in China, for warfare, for sport, and as a means of physical education, is illustrated in an exhibit of Chinese bows, crossbows, arrows, darts, bullets for crossbows, and related equipment in Hall 32 (Case 25.)

Among novelties in the collection are some whistling arrows, which shrieked when passing through the air, and were used by the imperial bodyguards to disperse obtrusive people when the emperor was driving out, as policemen's motorcycle sirens are sometimes used today in conveying celebrities through traffic.

In addition to familiar types of bows, there is a series of bows of different sizes made in the K'ien-lung period (1736-95) especially for the purpose of testing the strength of men; a series of crossbows designed for shooting bullets; and a self-loading repeating crossbow, similar in principle to the modern repeating rifle, with a magazine holding eleven darts which can be discharged one after another in rapid succession.

A pocket-size spring-gun, carried in the sleeve by the Chinese, is also shown. It shot arrows or darts, and was the equivalent of a pistol as a personal weapon. Brigands used such sleeve guns, as hold-up men today use revolvers. Another personal weapon shown is a blow-gun which, by means of a detachable knob, could be camouflaged and used as a walking stick.

The ordinary Chinese bow is a composite type with layer upon layer of carefully prepared sinew glued upon the wooden foundation, and strips of polished buffalo horn on the other side. The strings are usually twisted deerhide.

The test bows displayed were used solely for measuring the strength of candidates in the military examinations held under the former Manchu dynasty for the appointment of officers. These bows, which the contestants had to draw and pull, were classified according to the number of

"strengths" of pulling power. The unit "one strength" was an arbitrary measure like our "horsepower," and represented the power required to lift ten "catties" (a "cattie" being equal to about one and one-third pounds). Bows of four, six and seven strengths were used in preparatory training and for exercise; in the competitions the bows used were of from eight to twelve strengths. On exhibition is a complete series of the eight sizes.

The crossbow is still the regular weapon of some aboriginal tribes in China, as well as being a weapon often kept around the house by city dwellers to scare burglars.

RARE FOUR-HORNED ANTELOPE PLACED ON EXHIBITION

A specimen of the four-horned antelope, a little animal from India rarely found among museum collections, has been placed on exhibition in George M. Pullman Hall (Hall 13). Because of its four horns, this creature is unique in its family, the Bovidae, which includes all the world's antelopes, oxen, sheep and goats. The other mem-



Rare and Unique

This small antelope, known in India as "chauvingha," is distinguished from all other members of its family by possession of four horns. The specimen shown is on exhibition in George M. Pullman Hall.

bers of the family, comprising all hollow-horned mammals, have only two. Some animals in other families, such as the giraffes, have more than two horns, but no other antelopes or their immediate relatives.

The four-horned antelope is known in India as "chauvingha." It bears the scientific names of *Tetraceras* and *quadricornis*. The females have no horns. The largest of the bucks weigh about fifty-five pounds, and stand about two feet high, according to Dr. Wilfred H. Osgood, Curator of the Department of Zoology. The pair of horns in front, which point on a slightly forward angle, range from one to one and one-half inches in length, while the rear horns, which point on an angle in the reverse direction, average three to four inches.

The animals, which are, apart from their horns, somewhat similar to the abundant duikers of Africa, are found only in a very restricted area in central India. They are tawny in color, with a white patch running down the under part of the neck and body.

The Museum's specimen was obtained by the late Colonel J. C. Faunthorpe, of Bombay, and has been mounted by Assistant Taxidermist W. E. Eigsti.

Papyrus manuscripts from ancient Egypt are exhibited in Hall J.

THE CIRCUS LIZARD

BY KARL P. SCHMIDT
Assistant Curator of Reptiles

It has become a widespread custom at circus performances throughout the United States to offer for sale small bright-green lizards, tethered usually by means of a wire collar and short chain, so that they may be worn on the lapel of the purchaser's coat. These small lizards, while interesting and attractive as inmates of a well arranged terrarium, can only rarely be kept under suitable conditions. They usually die in a few days or weeks.

The lizard in question is known by the scientific name *Anolis carolinensis*. The species is found in the southern states, from the Carolinas to Texas. The fact that these lizards undergo a conspicuous change of color from bright green to brown has led to the popular application to them of the name "chameleon," but zoologists prefer "anole" as a common name. The power possessed by the true chameleons of the Old World of changing color to an extraordinary degree has become firmly associated with the word chameleon and rooted in the language, so that it is easy to understand the transfer of the name to any lizard whose skin has a similar capacity for color change.

The true chameleons are not at all closely allied to the anoles. The chameleons form, in fact, the most distinctive and bizarre of all the families of lizards. They are characterized by a projectile tongue, modification of the feet into tong-like structures for clasp ing twigs, prehensile tail, and a casque-like skull, often with horns or other appendages. They inhabit Africa, Madagascar, Arabia, and India; a single outlying species is found in southern Spain, and in Syria.

The anoles are lizards of more normal form, belonging to the primarily American family of iguanas. There are in the West Indies, and Central and South America, a great number of distinct forms allied to the North American species. The feet of these lizards are modified in correlation with their tree-climbing habits. Adhesive pads on the toes are effectively supplemented by terminal claws whose movements are independent of the pads. One of the most striking characteristics of the group is the presence in the males of a distensible throat-fan or disk, which is displayed in courtship and which may be brilliantly colored in contrast with the green or brown body.

The color changes of the anoles, like those of chameleons and some other lizards, occur in response to stimuli received through the eyes. The coloration of the skin may take on an astonishing resemblance to the limb or leaf on which the creature rests. Color change is also induced by excitement of the emotions, such as fear or rage.

Mrs. Oscar Straus Elected Patron

Mrs. Oscar Straus, widow of the late Oscar Straus who was a former ambassador to Turkey and later Secretary of Commerce in the administration of President Theodore Roosevelt, was elected a Patron of Field Museum at a meeting of the Board of Trustees held May 18. This honor is in recognition of her eminent services to the institution. Mrs. Straus's deep interest in the work of the Museum was manifested in 1934 by her sponsoring of the Straus West African Expedition which obtained notable zoological collections. At present she is making a visit to New Zealand and Australia where she is endeavoring to obtain for the Museum specimens of certain extremely rare birds required for proposed habitat groups for the Hall of Birds.



Schmidt, Karl Patterson. 1936. "The Circus Lizard." *Field Museum news* 7(6), 3-3.

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