

TWO INTERESTING ANIMALS AT THE NEW YORK ZOOLOGICAL PARK.

The popular name snow leopard seems almost to involve a contradiction of terms, for leopards, as well as lions and tigers, have always been associated in the minds of most of us with the torrid zone. The popular idea, however, that the larger species of wild animals belonging to the cat kind are confined to the tropics is an essentially mistaken one. Our own big cat, the puma, for example, is at home at least as far north as British Columbia, and extending through every variety of climate, lives as far south as the frigid extremity of Patagonia, thus possessing perhaps the most extensive longitudinal range of any living mammal.

Even the tiger, of which, together with the last-mentioned animal, there are now remarkably fine specimens at the zoological parks, is not supposed to have been originally a tropical animal. Its fossil remains are associated with those of the mammoth in the New Siberian Islands, which are situated well toward the pole within the Arctic circle, and living specimens are yet found as far north as Lake Baikal in Siberia.

But the member of the Felidæ apparently best fitted by nature to withstand a cold climate is without doubt *Felis onca*, the long-tailed or snow leopard. This animal never descends beyond the snow line of the mountains it inhabits. It is associated in the high lands of central Asia with the Siberian ibex, the big-horned argali, and Marco Polo's sheep, animals more or less akin to our Rocky Mountain goat and sheep.

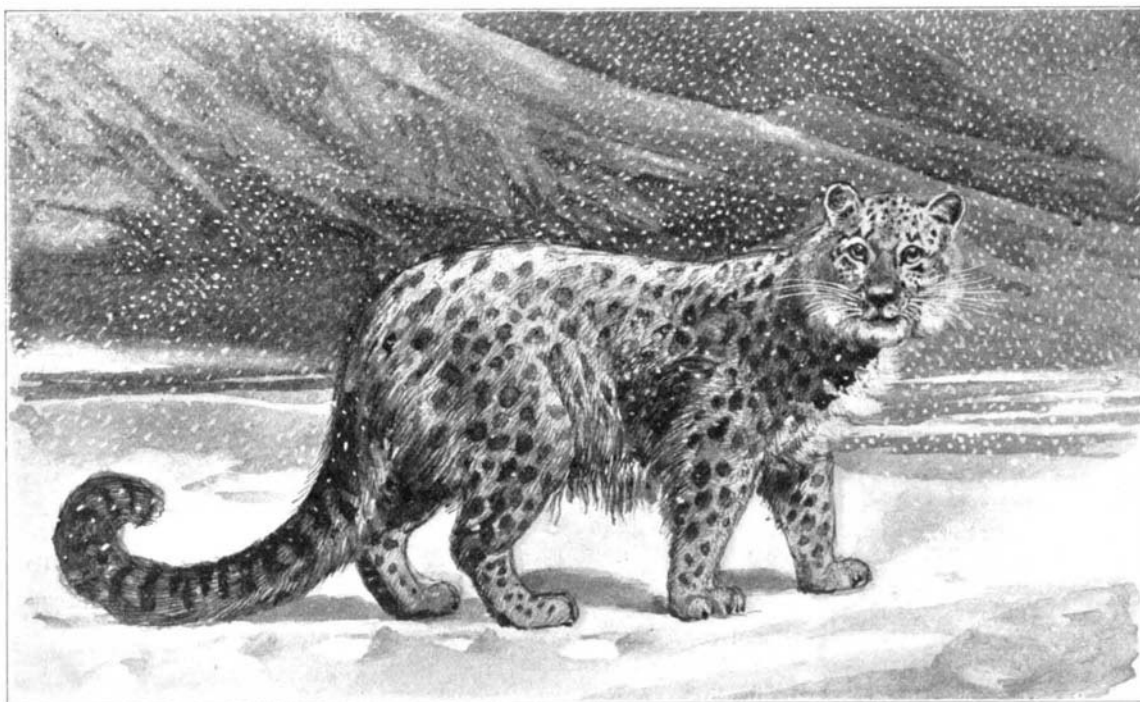
The specimen at the park, a fine male in splendid health and condition, although not yet fully grown, is at least as large as any ordinary leopard, and on account of the long and thick coat of fur with which it is covered, it looks much heavier. Indeed, in this respect it seems to suggest a similar variation from the ordinary type to that exhibited by the long-haired breed of domestic cats when compared with our common fireside pussies.

The color of the snow leopard is a gray inclining to buff. A few large, dark spots show about the lower parts, and a number of smaller ones congregate about the head and the neck. The back and the sides are marked with faded-looking brown rings or rosettes. The comparatively enormous tail of the animal is fully as long as his body. "Chang" is the first of his species ever seen in this country. He is the sole survivor of four of the species collected by Mr. Hagenbeck's agents in the northern border of Thibet, and is one of the only three snow leopards now in captivity, of which Berlin has one and London another.

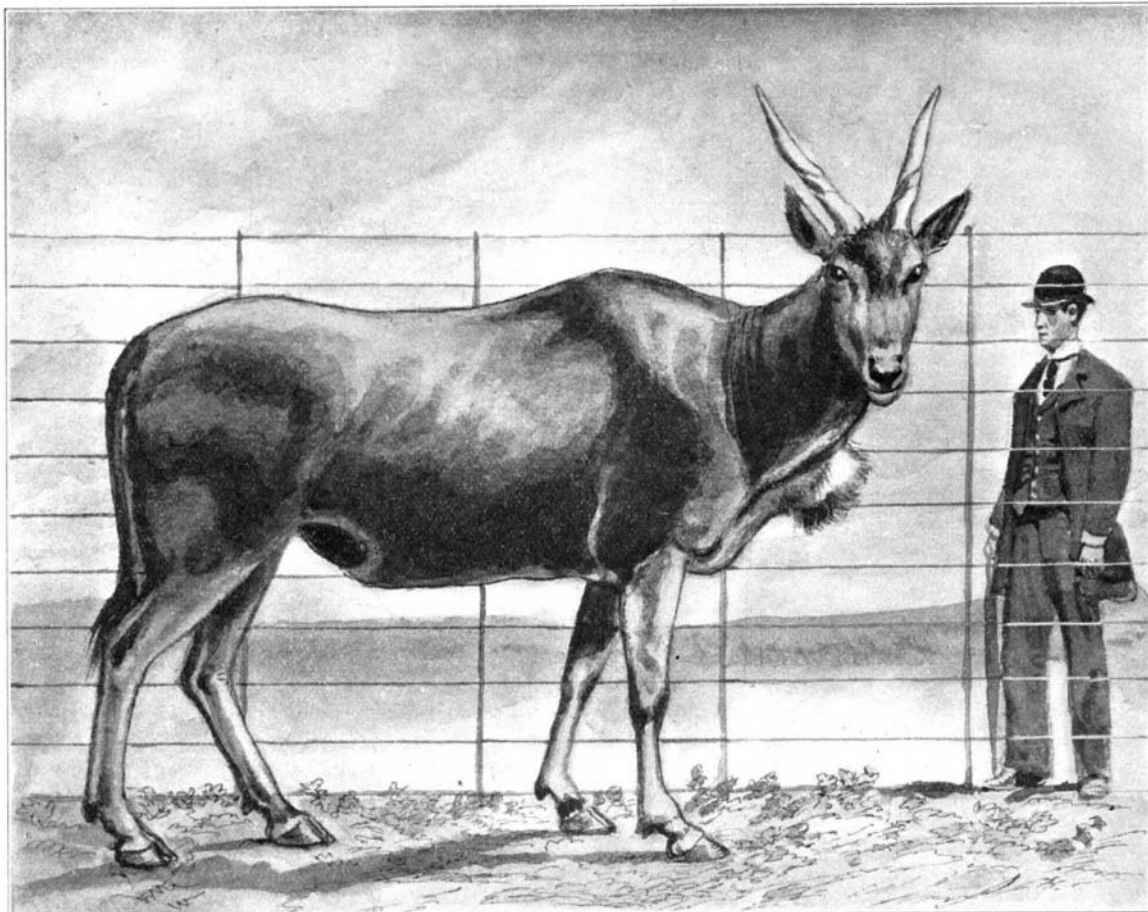
Mr. Hornaday, director of the New York Zoological Park, says that sometimes as many as two thousand tanned skins of the snow leopard are brought from the interior of China to Shanghai in a single year, but that "not one live specimen accompanies them. The distance," he says, "is too great, and the difficulties to be encountered with a live animal in a cage are too numerous to tempt even a Chinaman to try to surmount them. Naturally, these animals are very costly; the price of our specimen was nine hundred dollars."

Another late addition to the attractions of the park is a fine large eland (*Oreus canna*), the giant species of antelope that equals an ox in size, reaching the

height of nearly or quite six feet at the withers. For all its ponderous proportions, the eland is not an ungraceful-looking creature. The expression is mild, and the head is decidedly of the antelope type. It seems as though such an animal might be domesticated here, as it has been in numerous instances in England. The flesh, when the eland is properly fed, is superior to beef in delicacy and flavor; and certainly an animal that without special breeding puts on a weight of from eight hundred to one thousand five hundred pounds and more, is worth experimenting with. One peculiarity of this magnificent animal should recommend it for the great plains of the Southwest, and that is its capacity of going for a long time without water. The ease with which it is reared, its mild disposition, the fact that it breeds freely in captivity, the great value of its hide as well as of its



Long-Tailed Snow Leopard, an Animal that Lives Only Amid Snow and Ice.



The Giant Antelope.

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flesh, and the rapid improvement it shows under scientific cultivation, all conspire to increase the regret with which we see it rapidly approaching extermination in its native country. Few indeed of the wild members of the order of hoofed mammals exhibit so many claims for domestication and preservation by the human race. Particularly is this the case in a country like our own, which includes regions reproducing in so many particulars the character of the particular parts of the African continent included in the range of these giant antelopes.

The Russian Board of Mercantile Shipping and Harbors is working out a project to connect the White Sea, near Soroka, with Lake Onega, near Powyenetz, by means of a canal, which would be 135 miles in length, and which would cost £1,320,000.

THE LESSON OF THE BALTIMORE FIRE.

BY DAY ALLEN WILLEY.

Enough time has elapsed since the conflagration occurred in Baltimore for architects, builders, insurance investigators, and other experts to form an intelligent opinion as to the actual destruction caused, and to draw some conclusion as to the effect of heat and flames on various materials. It is admitted that no fire has ever occurred in the history of the world where a greater variety of buildings were damaged or destroyed; for, as is well known, they ranged in character from small antiquated structures of brick and masonry, two and three stories high, to the modern office building. Especially interesting, however, was the effect of the fire upon bank buildings recently constructed. Within the last few years, more of these edifices have probably been built in Baltimore than

elsewhere in the country—buildings designed exclusively for banking purposes, and erected of what was supposed to be the most durable material and provided with the latest appliances which modern ingenuity has devised for protection against fire. Some of these buildings were literally works of art, but one story in height, their exterior composed of massive walls of granite or marble lined with masonry, the framework being of heavy steel girders, and the roof of metal, save where skylights of thick glass were used. Nearly all the skylights, however, were protected by a metallic grating placed a few inches above them. With the exception of the counters and furniture, carpets, and ornamental hangings, the interiors of these banks were supposed to contain no material which would burn, the majority being finished in ornamental metal or stone work with floors of tile, marble, or concrete. With three exceptions, however, these structures suffered as heavily as the others, the interior being literally wrecked. One of the three—the building of the International Trust Company—was principally damaged inside by the wall of the adjacent building falling through the roof, and not so much by the fire. A building recently built by Alexander Brown & Sons had exterior walls of red brick with marble trimmings, being of colonial architecture. Except for the scorching of the walls it was unhurt, although in a portion of the city where the fire was most destructive. The building of the Safe Deposit and Trust Company, also in the heart of the burned district, escaped with slight damage. It was faced with stone, but the masonry lining of the interior was over two feet in thickness.

An examination of the stone ornamental work of the bank and office buildings showed that apparently polished granite withstood the action of the flames and heat much better than the rough surface, although not only granite but marble and other stone was subjected to such a temperature that it cracked off pillars and other portions of the walls in chips, some of which weighed four or five pounds. In fact, the sidewalks around most of the larger buildings were piled with pieces of marble, granite, and brownstone, in some places to a depth of two or three feet. It was noticeable that but little of the terra cotta crumbled away, and most of the brick which fell came down in the walls, but few pieces of brick being detached separately.

Some peculiar instances of the effect of the heat upon different kinds of stone were noted at the International Trust building, also in the United States bonded ware-