

not at all constant. The skull is beginning to be broader, with a shorter face in a number of individuals. This is a character favoured by fanciers. It is deliberately selected and will therefore become pronounced in the comparatively near future. Shortening of the face is a common feature of domesticated animals, well known in the Bulldog and the Pig, for instance. With the change of food many domestic cats are undergoing at present, from their original diet of live rodents and birds to cooked meals including fish, and to milk and biscuits, the rate of morphological change is likely to increase in the future.

It is common knowledge that, when animals are reduced to the state of domestication, their wild ancestors disappear in a short time. This is illustrated by cattle, goat, horse, camel, and others. The cat is an example of one of the ways in which this process works: constant hybridization contaminates the wild stock the existence of which is, at the same time, regarded as undesirable by man.

In this way our European cat has already lost most of her territory and the Scottish refuge has become its main stronghold. As it is most desirable to preserve this interesting species as a memorial to our sadly reduced wild fauna, it seems to me necessary to consider not merely the protection of a few surviving specimens but also the prevention, so far as this is possible, of interbreeding with domesticated cats.

VARIED NEWS FROM TANGANYIKA

The Serengeti National Park.—The Park boundaries have at last been agreed. For some time it seemed that the whole park was in jeopardy except the Ngorongoro Craters and the adjacent highlands; all the rest it was suggested should be called a "National Reserve" in which settlement by man would be allowed. This proposal, made to include in the Park only those areas to which no one whatever would take exception, spelt its doom. Another proposal, made in order to give the Wasakuma tribe the maximum possible area for expansion in the south-west, was for the boundary of the Park to run from Victoria Nyanza along some sixty miles of the Mbalageti River, and then turn southwards. This would have been equally fatal as it is just this stretch of the river which is essential to the animals in the plains, when they migrate westwards in the dry season. The Mbalageti is by no means a big river in the dry season

and, had the boundary run along its banks, all the animals drinking there would have been at the mercy of shot and arrow from the south.

Until the new agreed boundary has been passed by the Tanganyika Legislature the Park, as will be seen from the map, includes the headwaters of the Duma River but this country will then be sacrificed to the needs of the Wasakuma. The new boundary along the summit of the Nyaroboro Range and the Itonjo Hills makes a clear and unmistakable watershed between the Duma and Mbalageti Rivers and includes the minimum for which our Society has been pressing.

The boundary of the Park is to be withdrawn eastwards from Victoria Nyanza to allow of a north to south stock route.

At present there are considerable numbers of Masai tribesmen living in the Park but the ultimate aim is to exclude man and his stock. The process of removal is to be rather by attraction out of the Park than by expulsion. The development plan for Masailand is therefore being closely integrated with the Park policy. The Endulen area will be cut from the Park and wells sunk there to make it attractive to the Masai; on the other hand the south-eastern Park boundary will be extended to include some highland forest essential to the wild animals.

On the whole it may be said that we shall have as satisfactory a solution to the problem of the Serengeti Park as could be expected and one that it is hoped may be permanent.

The Game Bill.—It is to be feared that the hopes expressed in the last issue of *Oryza* may not be fulfilled. The new game bill has been subject to a great deal of criticism and many of its best provisions are in jeopardy. The new “a la carte” licence is to be retained but all the safeguards in the way of the filling in of the licences are likely to be abolished. Further the African native is to be exempted from it and to be licenced by a “Local Game Licence”.

The worst new provision suggested is the introduction of a cheap annual licence; fifty animals for £5! This in effect would mean unbridled hunting for meat and profit. It appears that poisoned arrows are still to be allowed, putting into every man's hand the legal means to kill anything—previously he had at least to have enough money to buy a gun and powder.

Little more can be said at present. A Select Committee is being appointed to discuss the bill and Captain Caldwell, who is once more in Africa, may be giving evidence before it. Our Society could not leave its cause in more capable hands.

Regarding the general picture in Tanganyika, a correspondent

whose name cannot be given, but whose knowledge and integrity are unquestionable, writes as follows :—

“ I have travelled thousands of miles and have witnessed the most unsporting, senseless, cruel, and stupid destruction of game, and the complete deterioration of large areas. This time the chief culprit is not the native but a certain type of settler who fears that his “ vested rights ” in shooting to his heart’s delight to make oxen harness, to feed labour, and for profit are in danger and who says ‘ All right, make all the blinking laws you like, but just try to catch me ’.

The greatest shock I had was at Maji Moti, a gem on the northern shores of Lake Manyara, where the hot sulphur springs may one day be world famous. Here beside magnificent bird life you used to see herds of big game grazing peacefully up to mid-day. I found that unscrupulous people had been driving in circles round buffalo and rhino right out in the open, finally shooting them down, and that other game was completely wild. A herd of elephant and buffalo stampeded at the sight of my car when live hundred yards away.

The question of game has been taken far too lightly in the past. Then there may have been reason for it as the majority was in inaccessible areas. To-day when a three-ton lorry can crash through almost any type of bush the situation has changed.

The Game Warden and his Department needs to-day support at the very highest level and by support I do not mean only increase of staff. The Game Department has become Public Enemy No. 1 of a certain type of settler and it is not too much to say that these people are almost in open rebellion against any game laws which may curtail their rather foul atrocities.”

This makes bad reading but perhaps the fear that the game laws are to be stiffened and enforced is not a bad sign. It remains to be seen whether the Tanganyika Authorities have the will to introduce wild life protection laws worthy of a civilized community and the ability to enforce their own legislation.
