

# Pete the Penguin arrives by taxi

AN interesting new arrival at London Zoo is Pete, a young black-footed or Cape penguin.

"Pete, who is about seven months old, was rescued in Cape Town docks," a Zoo official told me. "He was found in a fender lying alongside the s.s. *City of Durban*."

"At first Pete was in a very bad way. His plumage was sadly oiled, and it took several days to clean him. When finally presentable, Pete was allowed to go for a daily swim in the ship's 18-foot-long swimming pool. The main trouble here was to get him to come out. They usually managed it by showing him the fire hydrant used for giving him showers, which he very much enjoyed."

"On the voyage home he was given salmon, mackerel, or any

## Just a big lizard



Roger Ainsley, a reptile keeper at the Chester Zoo, has an iguana, or South American lizard, as a pet. It was six inches long when he bought it. It is now four feet long and still growing.

other luxury fish that happened to be going. He is now so attached to these rich foods that we shall probably have a little trouble in getting him on to more ordinary fare, such as herrings and whiting.

"Incidentally, Pete must be the only penguin ever to arrive at the Zoo in a taxi. He was brought by a cadet-officer from the liner."

## Schoolboy to the rescue

OTHER newcomers to the Zoo are three young Greater Spotted woodpeckers, a gift from a south London lady, Mrs. Sylvester. She and her family were camping near Box Hill when they found the mother woodpecker lying dead at the foot of a tree—apparently shot by an airgun. A clamour from the tree above prompted Mr. Sylvester to climb up. He found the baby woodpeckers inside the trunk, but as the hole to the nest was too small for him to pass his hand through he sent his 7½-year-old son Robert up.

The birds were taken home and fed every four hours on bread-and-milk—with an eyedropper. Later, they were weaned

## WHO'S WHO at the ZOO

on to worms, ants, and other insects.

"We now have these three orphans in the bird house," said an official. "They are thriving so well that we hope shortly to be able to transfer them all to an outdoor aviary. They are the first of their kind we have had on show for some years."

## Babies by the thousand

IN a large sea-water tank at the aquarium, baby octopuses are now hatching out—by the thousand!

The eggs were laid in a crevice of the rocks a few weeks ago by a large octopus from Madeira. They resemble little grains of rice and are in the form of long strings. There are so many that at times they look like a small cloud.

"These infants measure only about one-eighth-of-an-inch. But we are trying hard to rear them," an official told me. "Prospects are not too favourable. The job is to provide them with food tiny enough for them to take, and of the right quality. Unfortunately, we shall probably also lose the mother octopus shortly. The effort of hatching out so many offspring seems too much for most octopus mothers. They rarely take any food during the incubation period, and usually die from sheer exhaustion as soon as their eggs are hatched."

## Keepers raise family of 300

KEEPERS of the Zoo's insect section have a tricky task on their hands just now. They are trying to act as "foster-mothers" to a newly-hatched brood of some 300 Moroccan hunting spiders.

"Soon after we placed her on exhibition here in April," said Mr. George Ashby, overseer of the insect section, "the mother spider produced a cocoon, or egg-cluster, which she dragged around between her hind-legs."

"The other day the cocoon hatched and the 300 babies were then carried around on her back. Each about the size of a pin's head, the babies clung on so tightly that not one was lost."

"But the other morning we found the mother lying dead on the sandy floor of the cage—with all the tiny spiders still clinging to her. With great care (and a good deal of patience!) we removed them all to a glass container in the laboratory, where we are now trying to get them to feed on aphids and other minute insects—a difficult, not to say laborious job."

CRAVEN HILL



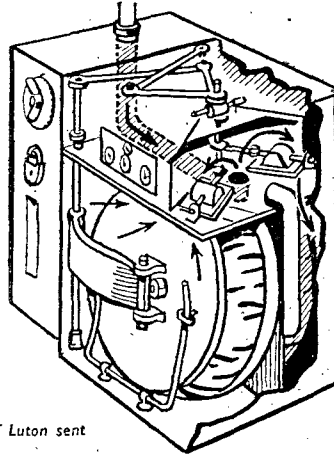
# Ask Mr. THERM!

## SEND A QUESTION AND WIN TWO BOOK TOKENS

Lots of people are interested in answers to interesting questions, and on this page are three of the sort Mr. Therm is always being asked. Can you think of a good question? Write it on a plain postcard, with your full name, address, and age, then send it to Mr. Therm's Mailbag No. 10, c/o Children's Newspaper, 3 Pilgrim Street, London, E.C.4 (Comp.).

Each week Mr. Therm will award two-guinea Book Tokens for each of the three best questions for answering. If more than one of you send the same questions, the first received will be chosen.

## HOW DOES A GAS METER WORK?



Barbara Rickards of Luton sent this question.

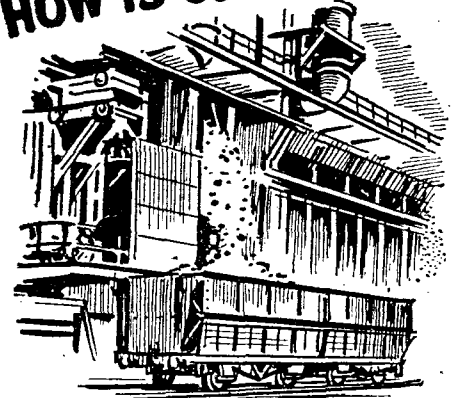
Gas could come straight from the mains into your gas-cooker or water-heater. But then no one would have any idea how much gas each house used, and the gas company would find it difficult to work out what to charge you. So between the mains and your stove stands a little half-way house, the gas meter.

Some gas meters only work when money is put into them, like the one in our illustration. Others just record the amount of gas you use. In this case, the bill is sent to your home four times a year. But whichever sort you have, the principle is the same. On the left is a pipe which brings the gas into the house from the mains. In a slot meter this intake will only open when a coin—usually a shilling—is put in.

The gas, shown by arrows in our drawing, goes into a valve chamber (top right) and down through two intakes into the large chamber below. Here there is an ingenious arrangement of double bellows which breathe gas from the mains into your home. These bellows work alternately, and their in and out movement is transmitted, by means of rods, to a series of dials—you can see them on the front of your meter—which tell you how much gas you have used. The rods are also linked to valves which control the flow of gas into the bellows.

After the gas has passed through the bellows chamber, it goes out to your cooker or heater through the pipe on the right—but, of course, no gas comes through until you turn on the taps inside the house.

## HOW IS COKE MADE?



Charles Watts, of Taunton, wins a Book Token for this question.

When raw coal is brought to the gasworks, it is fed into enclosed chambers or ovens, known as retorts. Then it is "baked," that is, subjected to a high temperature (1,000° C.).

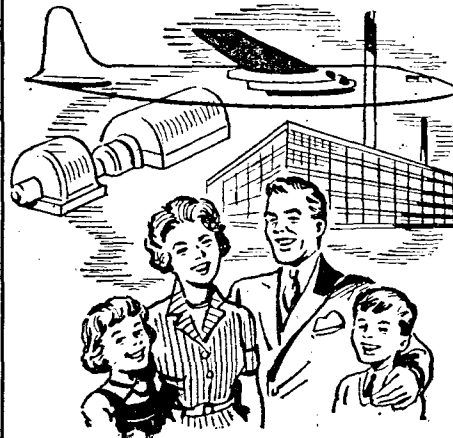
The coal softens, and gas, tar, sulphur and ammonia are driven off in the form of a thick, brown smoke. This smoke then passes in a continuous process through various apparatus where the chemical products are extracted and the gas is cleaned and purified for home and factory use.

The residue left behind in the retorts is coke, and after being discharged into waiting trucks (as in our illustration) it is cooled, and taken to a special place where it is cleaned and graded into appropriate sizes for use in home, in factories and on the farm.

Over 15 million tons of coke and breeze (the name given to small coke) are produced each year by the gas industry. It is a very efficient and economical fuel and is used for many different purposes. Here are just some of them: central heating, fires in the home, boilers in laundries, industrial drying and heating, iron smelting, greenhouse heating, crop drying, gas-making, steam generation in electric power stations.

Coke has all the advantages of solid fuel, besides being light, clean, smokeless and long-burning. It is one more way in which Mr. Therm makes the wheels of life go round.

## HOW WILL GAS HELP IN THIS ATOMIC AGE?



A two-guinea Book Token has been sent to Christopher Livesey for this question.

Without Mr. Therm, we should find it difficult to make the best use of nuclear energy in the coming atomic age. For in literally thousands of ways, gas contributes to industrial progress.

Tar alone, for example, is helping to make our roads fit to take the heavy traffic of the 20th Century. It also makes printing ink and sheep dip. The chemical industry use coal-tar as the source of an enormous variety of substances, including synthetic perfumes and flavourings, dyestuffs, synthetic resins, antiseptics, and preservatives and, of course, man-made materials, of which the most famous is nylon.

Plastic materials of all sorts—derived from coal—will play a key part in atomic development. Already plastic materials have replaced wood in a number of domestic fittings and are used in all kinds of everyday articles, from ash-trays and radio cabinets to the insulation of enormous electrical machines. In not too many years from now, we shall probably find that plastics have completely replaced natural raw materials in the home and in factories.

And the atomic world of to-morrow will be a clean world thanks to Mr. Therm's development of smokeless fuels. The pall of smoke and soot that has spoiled so many of our lovely towns and villages will disappear, and Britain will be a much healthier place—thanks to Mr. Therm.

*When it's a question of Happy Homes—GAS gives the right answer every time*