

JAMES PATRICK FLAHERTY, III
(Originally published June 1965)

This is a story, undoubtedly an old one, picked up at a recent medical meeting. Since it does have that connection and a few other medical aspects related to the field of genetics and is not too risqué, it qualifies as *Bulletin* material.

A famous mid-American zoo was presented recently with a pair of bald-headed, red-faced baboons. These rare animals, the only two ever to survive in captivity, received much national publicity, and as the mating season approached, there was considerable public and scientific interest. Just as the female began showing signs of season, the male unexpectedly succumbed to an acute respiratory infection.

The zookeeper, a zoologist of note, was extremely distressed about this unfortunate turn of events and, in view of the publicity build up, did not immediately release the information about the male baboon's death. Calls were placed to zoologists and collectors all over the world. All were unsuccessful, and no mate could be found. As he became more frantic, he remembered an old friend and drinking companion, James Patrick Flaherty III, another zoologist of note, whom he induced to fly in from afar to help with the problem.

James Patrick was a smallish, red-faced, bald-headed Irishman, slightly stoop shouldered, and with uncommonly long arms. Arriving on the scene, and before the upset zookeeper got very far into outlining the situation, Flaherty held up a restraining palm and said, "Sure, and I know what's in your mind. And I'll have no part of it!" There followed long argument and a discussion that carried on well into the night. Finally, under the influence of his friend's frantic persistence and the persuasion of a modicum of liquid nourishment, Flaherty's resistance weakened. "All right," grumbled James Patrick Flaherty III. "You've twisted me arm. I'll do it, but only under three conditions. First there's to be no kissing. Next there'll be no return service. And last, if there's any issue, it'll be raised in the Catholic faith."