



## THE RHINOCEROS AT HOME.

**A**t our English Zoological Gardens we may now behold the mighty rhinoceros. Eager hunters have invaded the African reed-beds or Indian jungle, and after infinite toil and trouble have fetched him thence to present him before our wondering eyes. Admiring eyes we cannot say, for he is decidedly not handsome, being unwieldy, grotesque, and more like a huge hog than anything else, and in fact a distant relation of the same.

The Indian rhinoceros has one horn only on his nose; the African has two, and both are used alike for grubbing up the earth to find the roots on which they feed. For they are vegetarians and mostly of a quiet and passive temper, spending their lives in marshy places or basking in the rivers. They can even be tamed, and Bishop Heber tells us of one he saw in India which was as quiet and obedient to its keeper as an elephant might be. But when aroused or irritated the same creature can be fierce and furious.

Some time ago in the Zoo was a rhinoceros of some years' standing. Mostly living peace-

fully in his small paddock or shelter to which he could retire, he was occasionally restless and excitable, and once in some way of his own he slipped his fastenings and strode away through the Gardens.

Happily it was early in the morning, so that few visitors were there, but great was the dismay of the keepers as the huge beast trampled down the flower-beds and made nothing of iron railings. But Mr. Bartlett was equal to the occasion. There was a certain keeper whom the rhinoceros for some reason or other specially disliked, so, putting a five-pound note into his hand, the Superintendent said, "Call the animal by his name and then run before him for your life."

So the race began. It did seem a matter of life or death; if we had been there we should have held our breath in the intense anxiety of watching it, for though its legs are short the creature can get rapidly over the ground when angry.

Of course you can guess what the man was intended to do and what he did. Speeding along the gravel path in full swing he made

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straight for the paddock; in rushed the rhinoceros after him, the gate was closed behind him and there he was secure and safe, while he who was pursued escaped at the other end—out of breath indeed, but having done valiant service.

The alarm had spread.

“Alas!” said a stranger soon after in great

alarm, “I hear there is a rhinoceros loose in the Gardens.”

“Oh, dear no,” replied Mr. Bartlett; “come and see him calm and quiet in his own domain.”

I do not think that the rhinoceros in our picture ever had such an escapade as that, do you?

S. K. M.

