

EXTRAORDINARY ADVENTURE WITH A RHINOCEROS.

MR. FRANK BUCKLAND writes to *Land and Water* an account of a "strange ice accident" to the rhinoceros at the Zoological Gardens, London, on Wednesday week. The animal had been turned out that morning as usual into the paddock behind the elephant house while the dens were being cleaned. The snow had fallen thickly during the night, so that the pond was not to be distinguished from the ground. The rhinoceros, not seeing the pond, put her fore feet on the ice, which immediately gave way, and in she went head over heels with a crash. The keepers ran for Mr. Bartlett, the resident superintendent. When he came, in a few minutes, he found the poor rhinoceros in great danger of drowning, as she was floundering about among great sheets of ice, under which she had probably been kept down till her great strength enabled her to break up the whole mass. Mr. Bartlett immediately let the water off the pond. The pond is nine feet deep; so while the water was running off, Mr. Bartlett, losing no time, sent for all the available keepers, and a long and strong rope; barrow-loads of gravel were at the same time strewn on the sloping sides of the pond to give the exhausted animal a foot-hold. The rope was then tossed round the haunches of the rhinoceros, and twenty-six men, one-half at the end of the rope and the other half at the other, pulled hard on the rhinoceros; so that in her struggles to get up the bank she would not only be supported, but pulled forcibly forwards. After much hauling on the part of the men, and much plunging on the slippery bank of the pond, the rhinoceros was at last landed on *terra firma*. The salvors of this valuable living property had then to look out for themselves. Mr. Bartlett had anticipated this, for he had left the sliding gate of the enclosure open just wide enough to let out one man at a time, but not a rhinoceros. An absurd scene then ensued; everybody rushed to the gate, but the first of the fugitives from the rhinoceros, naturally stout, and possibly stouter at Christmas-time than usual, jammed fast in the open gate, so that the other twenty-five men were in the paddock with the rhinoceros. The poor frightened and half-frozen beast luckily behaved very well; she did not rush after the men, but stood still, pricked her ears, and snorted, giving the keepers time to get out as fast as they could, and how they could, through the ingenious "man-hole," or guard, in the railing, made in case of emergencies. Neither the rhinoceros nor the men received the slightest injury.