

*Arrival of a Sumatran Rhinoceros in the Zoological Gardens.*

By EDWARD NEWMAN.

THE arrival of a third species of rhinoceros at the Gardens of the Zoological Society is an event of no small interest. The Society already possessed three specimens of rhinoceros: one, the smallest, is the *Rhinoceros bicornis* of Linnæus, a native of Africa; and the other two are the large Indian species, *Rhinoceros unicornis* of Linnæus.

A very interesting question has arisen, whether this last, a huge and powerful animal, is not the Unicorn of Scripture, Monoceros of the Greeks, and the Unicornis of the Latins: the suggestion is very reasonable, and well worthy of investigation. Stupendous strength is the constant attribute of the Unicorn as it is of the rhinoceros. We read, in the Book of Numbers xxiii. 22, that by way of exalting the power of the Almighty, it is written, "God brought them out of Egypt; He hath as it were the strength of an Unicorn." I think it is evident that the Unicorn was the most powerful animal known, or this comparison would have no signification. A very beautiful passage in the Book of Job (xxxix. 9—12) shows that the Unicorn was not only an undomesticated animal, but an animal that could not be domesticated; and the contrast with domestic cattle gives its force and beauty to the passage.

"9. Will the Unicorn be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib.

"10. Canst thou bind the Unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee?

"11. Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him?

"12. Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed, and gather it into thy barn?"

Notwithstanding this passage, commentators have frequently insisted on the identity of the Unicorn with the bullock or some species of *Bos*, using as an argument that *horns* in the plural are sometimes mentioned; but the animal now for the first time brought into England has two horns, and this animal is undoubtedly Asiatic, though distant from Palestine, and we may continually observe that distance magnifies an object to the mind's eye just as a fog magnifies it to the natural eye. And though there are passages that

support this idea of a two-horned Unicorn, yet there are others which point very decidedly to his characteristic of being one-horned; for instance, in Psalm xcii. 10, "My horn shalt thou exalt like the *horn of the Unicorn*:" the words "*horn of the*" are added by the translator. It is worthy of remark that in instances where *horns* is used in the plural so also is *Unicorns*: for instance, in Deut. xxxiii. 17, "his horns *are like* the horns of Unicorns;" Ps. xxii. 21, "for thou hast heard me from the horns of Unicorns." No naturalist, who found in the narrative of a voyage that the captain brought home the *horns of narwhals*, would conclude that each narwhal had more than one horn: there is no other mode of so simply expressing the meaning as by making both words plural. It is not improbable that many of my readers will consider all this out of place: if so they will please "skip it" and pass on.

The Sumatran rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros sumatranus*) is much less than the Indian species, *Rhinoceros unicornis*, two magnificent specimens of which are already in our collection, both unfortunately mutilated by the loss of their horn: the first loss, that of the male, was an instance of self-mutilation, for he absolutely forced the horn off of his own accord by employing it as a lever, apparently with the view of removing one of the bars of his enclosure: before this event the horn was observed to be loosened, and it is possible that might have caused some irritation. A similar accident is recorded in the 'Zoologist' (S. S. 1915) as having happened to a female rhinoceros at Moscow: the horn is still preserved in the museum in that city, and the animal has developed a new horn on the site of the old one—a remarkable and interesting fact: the singular position or inclination of the horn of the female in the Zoological Gardens was recorded on the same page: this horn has now been removed, as will be seen by the record immediately following this memoir.

The Sumatran species, as its name implies, was first discovered in Sumatra, but it also inhabits Burmah, and indeed a great part of continental India, and I believe the island of Java: it differs from *R. unicornis* in having two horns, one of which, the smallest, seems exactly intermediate between the eyes, and the other, the larger one, occupies the same site on the nose as the single horn of *Unicornis*. Both the horns in the individual now before me have the appearance of having been sawn off, an appearance admirably represented in the masterly figure of the animal published at p. 233

of the 'Field' newspaper, a faithful representation of nature which does the artist infinite credit. In this and many other figures by the same artist, there is a total absence of that sensational exaggeration which often converts a portrait into a caricature. The skin is without those enormous folds which are so imposing in *R. unicornis*: it has only one fold, and that is immediately behind the shoulder and extends round the barrel of the animal; there are half-folds or large wrinkles between the ears, on the under side of the neck, and at the base of the fore legs: it is also without any indication of those dermal excrescences or tubercles which on the Unicorn species a good deal resemble flattened warts; the skin, moreover, appears flexible, and is covered with coarse hair, which is of a rufous-brown colour as far as the fold, and thence gray to the tail: this coarse hair occurs also on the upper anterior portion of the fore legs, and more sparingly on the belly. There is a fringe of long pendant hair on the margin of the ears, and also a good deal of long wiry hair on the tail. I purposely omit all reference to the absence or presence of incisor teeth, having no knowledge of the teeth except from books.

For a most interesting account of the capture, purchase and transport of this valuable animal, I am indebted to the columns of the 'Field,' to which paper it was contributed by my friend Mr. Tegetmeier. It is here reprinted.

"About five years ago a Calcutta paper announced the capture of a young female two-horned rhinoceros, which was taken near Chittagong, after having exhausted itself in its efforts to escape from a quicksand. In this condition it was secured by the united efforts of some 200 men, and, being bound with ropes, was secured to a tree. On the arrival of the news at Chittagong, Capt. Hood and Mr. Wickes started with eight elephants to secure the prize, which was found to be the two-horned Sumatran species described by Sir Stamford Raffles. After being bound with ropes between the elephants, she was marched into Chittagong, having to be conveyed across two considerable rivers, through one of which she was towed by the elephants, and the second she passed in the ordinary cattle ferry-boat. So great was the attention she excited, that the train of followers sometimes reached a mile in length. Arrived at Chittagong, she was placed in charge of an attendant, and by feeding with chuppatees and plantain-leaves she became somewhat tamer. When first captured she was about six feet in length from

the forehead to the root of the tail, and upwards of four feet in height. The horns were small, not more than three inches in length, the upper being in front of the eyes.

“The existence of the species became known to Mr. William Jamrach, a well-known natural-history collector, then located at Calcutta, who made three journeys to Chittagong to arrange for her purchase and transport. The animal was confined by ropes and chains some miles from Chittagong, and, from her size and want of docility, the transport was attended with great difficulty. Fortunately she had become attached to her feeder, and followed him by night as he carried a lantern and proceeded singing through extemporised roads to Chittagong, the passage through the villages being forbidden by the authorities. There she was embarked with great difficulty in a small vessel, being chained down on the deck, and conveyed to Calcutta. On her arrival she was so exhausted by her efforts to escape that she lay down after being landed, and had to be dragged by main force into the bazaar.

“The transport to England was a matter of the greatest difficulty. The strength of the animal is so enormous that it would have been impossible to confine her in an ordinary stall, such as would have served for a horse or ox, or even for a docile elephant. Mr. Jamrach therefore had a cage built of teak, in the strongest possible manner. The dimensions of this cage were twelve feet by nine feet, by eight feet high. As it now stands empty in the Zoological Gardens, it looks as if it would serve for a very fair-sized country cottage. In this the animal safely reached England, in company with five small elephants, a couple of tigers, and a number of smaller animals of various kinds. On arrival at the Gardens, it was found that there was no gate sufficiently wide to admit the cage, and a portion of the inclosure had to be taken down to permit of the entrance of the huge and intractable beast, which, tied by large ropes, was, not without some considerable risk to all concerned, conducted to the inclosure where she will in all probability spend the remainder of her life.”

Two other species of *Rhinoceros* are said to exist; one in Africa, the white or flat-nosed rhinoceros, a two-horned species, which has been called *Rhinoceros simus*; the other Asiatic, a one-horned species, much less than *Unicornis*, and called *Rhinoceros sondaicus*. I doubt whether either of these has been seen alive in Europe.

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