

BIRTH OF A RHINOCEROS IN LONDON.

WHATEVER may be said of the birth of a young hippopotamus in the Zoological Society's Gardens, the event has since been eclipsed by the birth, in the London docks, of a young rhinoceros (*R. sumatranus*)—the same species as the animal which lately died in "The Zoo."

When it is remembered that a hippopotamus has thrice brought forth in the Regent's Park, and that only on the third occasion has the young one lived and thrived, and then only through the unremitting care and attention bestowed upon it by the superintendent of the Gardens, it is certainly remarkable that a young rhinoceros, whose advent was neither prepared for nor expected, should, under the peculiarly adverse circumstances attending its birth on board ship, be still alive and doing well. Yet such is the fact which we have lately been able to verify by an inspection of the mother and calf, in their comfortable though rather restricted quarters on the premises of Mr Rice, in Grove-street, Commercial-road.

The young one was born on the evening of the 6th inst., and on the morning of the 10th, accompanied by two distinguished naturalists, we were allowed to take a peep at the interesting little stranger, and learn its curious history from the owner's obliging keeper, Mr John Warnken. He informed us that the mother had been captured in a pitfall, and was shipped, with a male of the same species, from Singapore in the steamship *Orchis*. The ship encountered such heavy seas on the voyage that the strong teak cage of the male was broken in, and the occupant was either killed or died from injuries received. After a passage of 73 days the vessel arrived in the Victoria Docks, and before the survivor could be removed from deck, she gave birth to this young one. The period of gestation, hitherto unknown, has, we believe, now been ascertained to be nine months. Mr Bartlett, of the Zoological Gardens, was at once sent for, and under his superintendence the "little stranger" was removed in blankets to Mr Rice's premises. The mother soon afterwards arrived in a van, and the young one was fed with her milk. This is the only nourishment it takes; but it is so strong and vigorous that it applies to the mother repeatedly, and the keeper (who sleeps all night with it) informed us that it had sucked no less than seven times during the night previous to our visit.

No one who has not visited establishments like those of Mr Jamrach or Mr Rice can form any idea of the singular appearance which they present; they are, in fact, Zoological Gardens indoors. The proverbial "bull in a china shop" could not seem more out of place than does Mr Rice's bear in his bedroom, or lion in his parlour, to say nothing of the various monkeys, porcupines, and other equally agreeable creatures which are scattered at intervals throughout the premises. After passing down some steps, and through a room in which a young lion gently rubbed his nose against the bars of his cage and sniffed us, not "from afar," but from within six inches of our coat tails as we passed him, we came upon a specimen of the mandrill (*Cynocephalus mormon*), to which Bewick in his "Quadrupeds" has attributed such evil ways. If allowed to judge by appearances, we could believe anything of him; but we had come to see the young rhinoceros, and to this alone we paid attention.

Descending some steps into a dark stable, we could see by the dim light of a bull's-eye lantern that the further end had been partitioned off, and covered with sacking to exclude the light. In this compartment the old rhinoceros was lying down, while the young one, pretty strong on its legs, was walking slowly towards us, and making for a square opening, that led into a separate chamber wherein a feather bed had been placed for its especial benefit. The opening through which it entered is too small to admit the mother, although the keeper, who shares its feather bed, informed us that the dam comes to the opening and looks in affectionately at her infant while it sleeps. She is very quiet, and seems little to think that with one toss of her strong and sharp horn she could send cradle and keeper through the roof of the stable. As we peeped in at a small aperture, the keeper holding the light down for us, the young one walked up deliberately to the lantern, and gave us an excellent view. In appearance it reminds one of the young hippopotamus, but has a longer head, and apparently stands higher on its legs. The face is bare, with just a rudiment of horn, but the body is covered with black hair. The ears are long and directed backwards, although occasionally twitched perpendicularly with a quasi-nervous movement. From its feeding so well, we have little doubt that it will live and grow; and it is to be hoped that Fellows of the Zoological Society and their friends may be saved a journey to the Far East, by inspecting the new arrival in their own gardens if it can possibly be secured for them.

DEATH OF MR J. K. LORD.

WITH much regret we announce the death of Mr John Keast Lord, the manager of the Brighton Aquarium. Mr Lord some months ago, just

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The young one was born on the evening of the 6th inst., and on the morning of the 7th accompanied by two distinguished naturalists, we were allowed to take a peep at the interesting little creature, and to witness the history from the owner's obliging keeper, Mr. W. W. Rice, who informed us that the mother had been captured in a pitfall, and was shipped, with a male of the same species, from Singapore, by the steamship *Orchis*. The ship encountered such heavy seas on the voyage that the strong tank-cage of the male was broken in, and the occupants were either killed or died from injuries received. After a passage of 73 days the vessel arrived in the Victoria Docks, and before the survivor could be removed from deck, she gave birth to this young one. The period of gestation, hitherto unknown, has, we believe, been ascertained to be nine months. Mr. Bartlett, of the Zoological Gardens, was at once sent for, and under his superintendance the "little stranger" was removed in blankets to Mr. Rice's premises. The mother soon afterwards arrived in a van, and the young one was fed with her milk. This is the only nourishment it takes; but it is so strong and vigorous that it applies to the mother repeatedly, and the keeper who sleeps all night with it informed us that it had sucked more than seven times during the night previous to our visit.

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A PAIR of tigers was born in Mr. Rice's sale collection of animals at the Alexandra Palace on Sunday last.

A SINGAPORE RHINOCEROS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Not long ago it was my privilege to announce the birth of a baby hippopotamus at the Zoological Gardens. "It never rains but it pours," and it is therefore with great pleasure I beg to inform the public through your columns that a young rhinoceros (*R. sumatranus*) has been born at the Victoria Docks. The steamship *Orchis*, 73 days from Singapore, arrived in the docks with one rhinoceros, male and female; but the frightful waves smashed the cage of the male, and he met his end before the voyage.

This pair of rhinoceroses had been captured by the natives of Malacca in a pitfall. Out of six or seven rhinoceroses so caught, the average is only one un injured and fit to send to Europe. The female alone arrived safe in London, and on Friday evening last this rhinoceros gave birth to a young one. My friend, Mr. Bartlett, of the Zoological Gardens, kindly informed me of the fact, and I at once went to inspect it. The little beast, with its mother, is now at No. 1, King's-place, Commercial-road, and is the property of Messrs. C. W. Rice, A. H. Jamrach, jun., and C. Hagenbesk. It is about three feet long and two feet high. It has a ridiculous-looking innocent, hairless face, not unlike that of a newly-born mouse; it carries its ears folded backwards like a hare, and its body is covered with black hair; while it has a little horn as big as a shilling on its nose. It had a narrow squeak for its life. It escaped from the cage soon after it was born, and wandered about the ship's deck, getting quite wet and cold. It was, however, rescued and Mr. Bartlett called into consultation. By his advice it was carefully wrapped up in blankets and moved to Mr. Rice's house. On arrival Mr. Rice nursed it before a warm fire till its mother arrived in her cage. Mr. Bartlett advised that no cow's milk should be given. After a time, when the mother arrived in a van, she was milked like a cow and the milk given to the young one, and the little wretch got so lively that Mr. Rice could not hold him; so they put him with his mother at once, and the pair ever since have been doing famously in a dark, warm corner at Mr. Rice's establishment. The little one has a box to himself and a feather bed to sleep on. "Jack," Mr. Rice's head keeper, sleeps in the box with the young rhinoceros, and takes care that it is warm and comfortable. The mother—a great beast about 10ft. long and about 4ft. 6in. high—has been hitherto very quiet, but now she is getting a little savage, even though she has a nice warm horse rug tied over her, and has the best of food. The little animal seems quite strong and active, and walks about by himself, going into his box or lying down by his mother when he has had his dinner. I have tasted the milk of the rhinoceros. It is excellent. I suppose I am about the only man who has tasted rhinoceros milk and eaten a steak of young hippopotamus in London. We must look out for new articles of diet in these hard times.

I should be very sorry if this young rhinoceros and its mother were allowed to cross the Atlantic, and I trust sincerely that the Council of the Zoological Society will see fit to purchase these two interesting and valuable animals. Very great credit must be given to Mr. Kegeleke, who has been 16 times to India to bring back living animals, and to Mr. Rice and Mr. Jamrach for the capital they have embarked and the courage they have shown in the capture and shipment of "wild beasts" for the instruction and amusement of the public. At the next meeting of the Zoological Society, December 17, at Hanover-square, Mr. Bartlett will give further particulars of this young rhinoceros, the first, and I believe the only one, ever born in England.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,
FRANK BUCKLAND