

## THE JAVAN RHINOCEROS

### TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir,—Mr. Vernay's letter in your issue of to-day modestly understates the extent of his most recent benefaction to the national collections, and it is desirable that public mention should be made of the fact that not only has he obtained for this museum a skin and skeleton of one of the rarest of living mammals, but he is defraying the considerable cost of having the skin mounted for public exhibition. Further, Mr. Vernay took with him on his recent expedition Captain Beresford Holloway in order to collect small mammals, reptiles, &c. As a result a very valuable series of specimens has been added from a region hitherto imperfectly represented in our study collections.

Now that adequate material has been obtained for scientific record it is to be hoped that the surviving individuals of *Rhinoceros sondaicus* will be protected so far as possible. If anyone is inclined to make the cheap and obvious jibe that the British Museum, having obtained all that it wants, is unwilling that other institutions should possess specimens of this rare species it should be enough to reply that the aim of the museum (I can speak for the Zoological Department) is not the hoarding of rare specimens, but the accumulation of material for scientific research. Our vast study collections, the very existence of which seems, from a recent judicial comment, not to be generally realized, are constantly and freely placed at the disposal of scientific workers from all parts of the world. This side of our work, no less than the more popular and educational purpose of our public galleries, has received welcome support from Mr. Vernay's expedition.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

W. T. CALMAN, Keeper of Zoology.

British Museum (Natural History),  
Cromwell-road, S.W.7, June 9.

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