

A RHINOCEROS SHOT BY THE KING IN INDIA

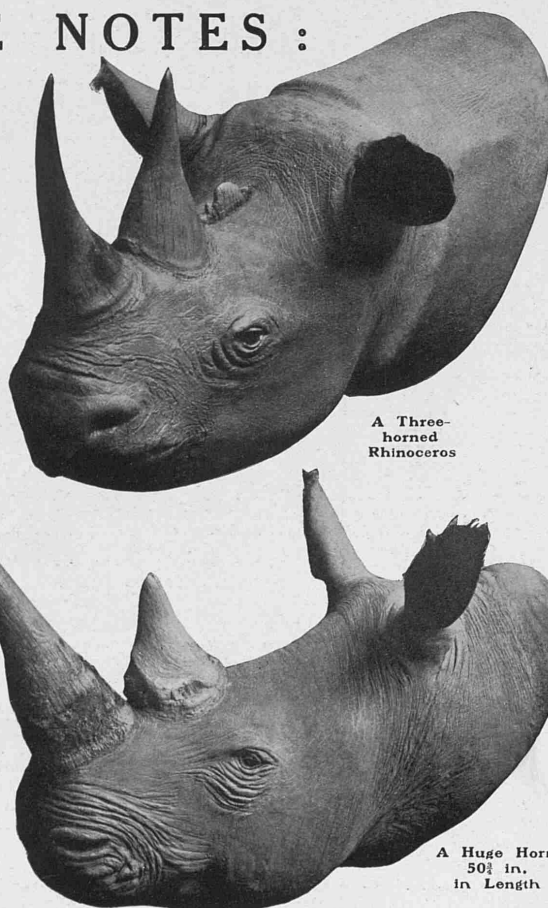
The head was presented by his Majesty to the Natural History Museum at South Kensington and it has recently been placed in position

## BIG-GAME NOTES :

*Specially Described for "The*

Among the strangest of the strange and wonderful fauna of Africa are the two rhinoceroses—the white and the black—two excellent examples of which are shown in the illustrations. These prehistoric-looking creatures, which still roam the interior of the great continent in considerable numbers, have an antiquity and seem even more out of the picture in an age of aeroplanes, the Marconi system, and other scientific marvels than the Bushmen, Esquimaux, and other examples of primitive mankind.

The so-called "white" rhinoceros obtained its name at the beginning of the nineteenth century from the frontier Boers of Cape Colony, who, pushing their way north beyond the Orange River, found these monsters inhabiting the grass plains in the regions now known as Great Namaqualand, Griqualand West, and South Bechuanaland. They christened the mighty beast "witte rhinoster," and as the white rhinoceros the animal has ever since been known. Why this title was bestowed has never been explained. The white rhinoceros is, as a matter of fact, almost precisely similar in hue—a dull drab colour—to the so-called black rhinoceros. The probability is that these early hunting Boers encountered some specimens which had been rolling in light-coloured mud, and which when dried in the fierce African sun presented a much paler appearance than they otherwise would have done. These animals were extremely plentiful between the Orange and Zambesi rivers, but from their sluggish habits were easily slain, and by the early nineties of the last century were already approaching extinction. As a rule they were harmless and inoffensive, much less truculent in fact than their near cousin, the irritable and suspicious black rhinoceros. Yet the great white rhinoceros did occasionally turn and rend its adversaries. Oswald, one of the greatest South African hunters of his time—he flourished in the middle of the last century—narrowly escaped with his life in an encounter with one of these animals. He had wounded a long-horned specimen and rode up to finish it. His horse took fright and refused to budge, and the great rhinoceros, coming leisurely up, thrust its horn clean through the animal's body and tossed horse and man easily over its



A Three-horned Rhinoceros

A Huge Horn 50½ in. in Length

head. The horse was slain and Oswald received a severe wound.

The white rhinoceros, of which only a few carefully-preserved specimens now survive in South Africa, in a tract of country in Zululand near the junction of the Black and White Umvolosi rivers, is readily to be distinguished from the black rhinoceros by its much longer fore-horn, its greater bulk and height, and its square mouth, which contrasts strikingly with the prehensile upper lip of its congener. The white rhinoceros is in fact a grass-feeder while the black species lives mainly on the leafage of bushes and shrubs, for the plucking of which its

## TWO REMARKABLE RHINOCEROS HEADS.

*Sphere" by H. A. Bryden*

prehensile upper lip is manifestly well adapted. The white rhinoceros is, next to the elephant, the biggest land mammal in the world. Fine examples have measured 6 ft. 6 in. at the shoulder, while the black rhinoceros seldom exceeds 5 ft. 6 in. or 5 ft. 8 in. The splendid fore-horn of the white rhinoceros head shown in the illustration measures 50½ in. and is one of the half-dozen longest hitherto recorded. The record horn of this species attains a length of no less than 62½ in. (5 ft. 2½ in.) and is in the possession of Colonel Gordon-Cumming. It was obtained many years ago by his famous relative, Roualeyn Gordon-Cumming, during one of his hunting expeditions in the Bechuana country between 1843-50. The head shown in the illustration came from a white rhinoceros shot in Zululand in the middle of the last century by a contemporary of Livingstone. It has lain by for many years and was recently unearthed and set up again by Messrs. Rowland Ward, to whom I am indebted for the pictures of the two heads.

Until the last few years it was supposed that the range of the white rhinoceros never extended north of the Zambesi. It has recently been discovered, however, that they exist in some plenty in the Lado Enclave and the Bahr-el-Ghazal province, on the west bank of the Upper Nile.

The black rhinoceros, once found from Table Mountain to Abyssinia and Somaliland, has been exterminated in most parts of South Africa. It is abundant in East and Central Africa, and will probably remain so, thanks to the protective laws, for a good many years to come. The average horn measurements of the black rhinoceros seldom approach those of the white species, and fair examples rarely exceed 3 ft. in length; nevertheless, the finest specimen of a black rhinoceros horn, mentioned in Rowland Ward's *Records of Big Game*, attains the wonderful length of 53½ in. This came from East Africa and is in the possession of Dr. C. H. Orman. The head of the black rhinoceros given in the illustration is remarkable as showing besides the two horns normally found in this species an incipient third horn. This is a very rare occurrence, though Sir John Willoughby during his expedition to East Africa in the eighties came across such an example.

The specimen shown in the illustration was shot by the Maharajah of Daria last year in British East Africa.