

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The new Session opened with a Queen's Speech of a singularly unexciting character. Legislation is promised for the reorganisation of municipal government in London, secondary and technical education in England and Wales, and assistance to small house-occupiers to purchase their dwellings. These are the principal measures. The debate on the Address took a placid course in both Houses. Lord Kimberley asked some well-meant questions, and Lord Salisbury spoke confidently about the future of the Sudan and the situation in China. The most interesting part of the Prime Minister's speech related to Germany. Some highly important agreement has been concluded, the details of which will be laid before Parliament. Lord Salisbury alluded in cordial terms to the peace proposals of the Czar, but did not state the particulars of the understanding arrived at by the international Conference on Anarchism. According to the Queen's Speech, "some amendment of the laws of the realm upon this subject appear to be required." In the Commons Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman followed the main lines of Lord Kimberley's speech, but laid special emphasis on the question of London government. He declared that if the Ministerial measure should interfere in any way with the legitimate jurisdiction of the County Council, it would be met with the most vigorous opposition. Mr. Balfour replied in general terms, and Sir Charles Dilke took the opportunity of dissenting in almost every particular from the foreign policy of the Government. Curiously enough, while Lord Kimberley was declaring in the House of Lords that the sooner the remaining territories lately under the rule of the Khalifa were reconquered the better, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman remarked that the satisfaction of the Opposition with the conduct of the military operations in the Sudan must not be taken as approval of the policy which led to them. At this distinction the members of the Government smiled. In both Houses appropriate reference was made to the lamentable bereavement which the Queen and her family have sustained by the death of her grandson, Prince Alfred of Saxe-Coburg. The Irish Party appeared without a head, Mr. Dillon having resigned the leadership of the Nationalists, apparently in respectful imitation of Sir William Harcourt.

THE CONFLICT IN THE PHILIPPINES.

Scarcely has the peace treaty between the United States and Spain been ratified, when the former Power finds itself once more involved in war. The relations between the Filipinos and the United States have been daily growing more strained, and on Saturday night the whole insurgent line at Manila from Calocan to Santa Mesa opened fire upon the American outposts. The pickets held their ground until reinforced. Artillery came into play, and a terrific fire lasted for about an hour. At 2.45 on Sunday morning the fusillade was renewed, the United States troops being supported by the monitor *Monadnock*, stationed off Malate. The Californian and Washington troops then made a superb advance upon the villages of Paco and Santa Ana, which they cleared of the insurgents. Paco was cleared by a few companies of Californians. The Filipinos had taken post in the upper story of the church and convent, and defied their assailants for nearly an hour, keeping up a heavy fusillade while. Then Colonel Dubocq, with a few volunteers, made a dash for the church and set fire to the building. As the defenders were smoked out, the Idahoans and Washingtons picked them off. Our Illustrations show the chief points of interest in the battle-ground. Felipe Agoncillo, Aguinaldo's agent at Washington, has fled to Canada. Aguinaldo has declared war upon the United States.

BY RAIL TO KLONDIKE.

Very soon after the discovery of gold in the far North-West, a railway became an obvious necessity, and the question arose as to where it should be located, and where its coast terminus should be. Various schemes were mooted. Up the Stikine River to Telegraph Creek, then to have a railway to Lake Teslin, was "boomed," but the idea was abandoned. Fort Simpson, really in Canadian territory, was suggested as the sea starting-place, but so far nothing has been done. On several other routes and trails, endeavours have been made to persuade the Canadian Government to build a railroad, but all plans have, so far, come to nought, and nothing at all promising has been done by them. It was known, however, to certain people that there is a way in, which is at once the shortest, has the easiest pass of all to cross, has a port to start from which is open to sea-going ships all the year round, and possesses a harbour capable of accommodating an immense fleet. It is also easily accessible from Victoria, Vancouver, and the

American ports on Puget Sound. This place is Skagway, at the head of the Lynn Canal. The town which has lately arisen here is at the foot of the White Pass, and it is here that the sea terminus of the railroad, which is really being constructed, is located. It is undoubtedly the best, as it is the first, and to-day the only real road into the Yukon and Klondike gold-fields. A considerable portion of the track has now been completed, despite the difficulties of overcoming the summit, and the railway is in proper working order.

The first two Klondike Illustrations in our present issue give an idea of the work that had to be done. Porcupine Cliff had to be conquered. The drawings show how it was managed, and how the line is successfully carried past it. Our third Illustration shows the police post and starting-place of the steam-boats at White Horse, just below the rapids so named. The wooden tramway by which passengers, their gear, their boats, and their stores and merchandise are carried round the only really dangerous bit of navigation on this journey is an interesting feature of the drawing. It is by this route that future communication with the Yukon region will be carried on.

COUNT VON CAPRIVI.

The second Chancellor of the German Empire has died in retirement at the age of sixty-eight. For a considerable part of his life Count Caprivi was a soldier. He entered



THE LATE COUNT VON CAPRIVI, FORMERLY CHANCELLOR OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE.

BORN FEBRUARY 4, 1831; DIED FEBRUARY 6, 1899.

the Prussian Guards, distinguished himself in the war of 1866, and in 1870 was Chief of the Staff to the Tenth Corps, and took an important part in the decisive operations near Metz. From the German army Count Caprivi's abilities were transferred to the navy, and with no practical experience of naval affairs he succeeded in reorganising the whole system in a manner which commanded general approval. Returning to the army, he was probably more astonished than anybody when the Emperor William summoned him to the responsible post vacated by Prince Bismarck. It is curious that the retiring Chancellor was for a while disposed to claim credit for having recommended his successor. But this appreciation did not last long. Bismarck's bitterness spared nobody, and Count Caprivi was compelled to take part in the undignified campaign with which the Emperor met the unveiled attacks of his old adviser. The new Chancellor was accused of having wrecked the foreign policy of Germany. In Bismarck's caustic phrase, he was "un ministre étranger—aux affaires." But the truth is that Caprivi mastered the problems so suddenly thrust upon him as easily as he had mastered the secrets of naval organisation. He was an admirable writer and speaker, a model of personal dignity, and he enjoyed the entire confidence of the Emperor. The world was scarcely less amazed when he retired from office than when Bismarck fell. Count Caprivi, with his master's strong approval, had initiated the agrarian legislation which gave such bitter offence to the Prussian nobility. They intrigued against him with so much success that the Emperor abruptly dispensed with his services. Under this unmerited stigma he showed the most dignified fortitude, presenting in this respect, at all events, an admirable contrast to his great predecessor.

STUDIES AT THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

VI.—THE INDIAN RHINOCEROS.

Although now, like elephants, restricted to Africa and the East Indies, rhinoceroses formerly inhabited the greater part of the world, even the British Islands being once the home of at least two species. They may accordingly be regarded as survivors of an antediluvian fauna; and, like most archaic creatures, seem destined ere long to disappear for ever. One, the so-called white rhinoceros of South Africa, has indeed already become nearly as extinct as the dodo; and it therefore behoves us to make the most of such species as still remain. Fortunately, in spite of an exceedingly disagreeable and vicious temper, "rhinos" flourish remarkably well in menageries, and examples of three out of the five living species may now be seen in the "Zoo."

Among these is the great Indian rhinoceros, which forms the subject of our Illustration. Although all the species possess at least one horn, the rhinoceroses of Asia may be distinguished at a glance from their Ethiopian brethren by the great pleats or folds in the skin; and in none are these folds more deep than in the species depicted. One of the special characteristics of this animal is displayed in the great knobs or bosses dotted over the triangular fold of skin overlying the shoulder, which look for all the world like the bolt-heads on a boiler-plate. The massiveness of the armour of the great Indian rhinoceros is doubtless the

origin of the idea that its hide is bullet-proof. But, as a matter of fact, this is by no means the case, as was proved during the Indian Mutiny, when one of these animals that had been captured from a native chief was shot dead by an Irish private, who shared the popular belief as to its invulnerability. The result of his rashness was to lose something like £1000 in prize-money to his regiment!

It is another common idea that the Indian rhinoceros fights with his horn, and old sporting books represent him as impaling the elephant on this weapon. This, however, is an error, as the animal does battle entirely with his lower tusks, which rip like those of a wild boar. On the other hand, the African rhinoceroses, both of which have two horns, do make use of these weapons for attack; and as in some individuals of the white species the front horn was considerably over fifty inches in length, a charge from such a monster was a serious matter.

VII.—THE HIPPOPOTAMUS.

Africa is essentially the home of huge and bulky animals. The African elephant, which is a much bigger creature than its Asiatic cousin, occupies the forests, the rhinoceroses inhabit the open plains, and the rivers and their reedy banks are tenanted by the still more unwieldy hippopotamus. Weighing some three or four tons when fully adult, the "hippo," with its square, gainly mouth, armed with a most formidable array of tusks, and its short, massive legs, presents but little external resemblance to the familiar pig. Yet, nevertheless, the latter animal is its nearest living relative; and the name of river-horse (the literal translation of hippopotamus) in an arrant misnomer. Nor is that of zee-kuh (lake-cow), given to the creature by the Dutch Boers, much better.

But, after all, the meaning of a name is of little real importance; and what we have to admire in the hippopotamus is its exquisite adaptation to its environment. Every visitor to the "Zoo" has probably watched one of these huge creatures slowly subsiding in its bath till it finally leaves only its nostrils and eyes just appearing above the surface of the water. These apertures are, indeed, situated on the most prominent points of the head, and thus occupy a very different position from that which they hold in the pig. The nostrils, too, can be completely closed, thus permitting the creature to be thoroughly at its ease when submerged. Probably the extreme shortness of the legs is intimately connected with the hippo's capability to walk leisurely along the river bottom; and the huge cavernous mouth, with its powerful armature, permits the lush herbage of the river's bank to be gathered with the greatest despatch. It is, however, only when much harassed by man that the hippopotamus displays its utmost caution in coming to the surface or venturing on land; and in undisturbed lagoons it will rear its whole head above the water in clumsy gambols.

In past times hippopotami inhabited the rivers of India and Europe; and it is distinctly sad to think that the solitary African survivor of this strange type is only too likely to disappear within a comparatively short period. It has long since been killed off in Egypt; and the demand for its hide to make *sjamboks*, or ox-whips, as well as the price obtainable for its ivory, has already made it of extreme rarity in many parts of South and East Africa, where it abounded less than twenty years ago.

In the "Zoo" it flourishes well; one individual, whose mounted skin is now exhibited in the Natural History Museum, having lived there for over twenty years.

R. LYDEKER.



STUDIES FROM LIFE AT THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS: No. VI.—THE GREAT INDIAN RHINOCEROS.

By LASCELLES AND Co., 13, FITZROY STREET.

The rhinoceros, which is now restricted to Africa and the East Indies, formerly inhabited the greater part of the world, and was found even in the British Islands. It is a survivor of antediluvian fauna, and seems destined ultimately to disappear. We refer our readers to the article on "Our Illustrations" page.