

FEARFUL FIGHT WITH A RHINOCEROS.

A very serious accident occurred at the Gardens of the Zoological Society in the Regent's-park. The elephant house consists of a number of cages, opening into one large paddock, and each cage is provided with double doors. On the above morning, Andrew Thompson and Richard Godfrey, keepers, were sweeping out the cage of the large Indian rhinoceros, when the brute, which is of a most malevolent disposition, rushed in from the paddock, knocked the men down, and tried to trample on them. Matthew Scott, assistant keeper, who was in the building, came at once to their aid, and hitting the rhinoceros in the eye with his whip, drove it off. Fortunately, there is a corner of the cage which is fenced off with iron, and into this Scott dragged the two men. Godfrey at once fainted, and fell with his head in the cage, and the rhinoceros, seeing him within its reach, rushed back and again attacked him. Scott, with nothing but his whip, once more drove the animal off. Godfrey, however, fell a second time, and the rhinoceros, returning to the charge, tore the flesh off the man's leg from the thigh down to the knee, laying the bone bare. Once again Scott drove the beast away, and finally succeeded in carrying the two other men out of the cage. We need hardly state that all this was done at the risk of his own life. The rhinoceros has no horn, which has been worn down by rubbing against the bars; but it is a most mischievous and spiteful brute, and weighs close upon seven tons. Godfrey's life is despaired of. Thompson is badly bruised, and it is feared that he has suffered some severe internal injuries. Scott escaped unhurt. He is a small man, by no means remarkable for his strength, but possessed of very great courage and presence of mind. All three of the men have been for several years in the service of the society, and are well known to the visitors to the gardens. It is a singular fact that Thompson, who was in the gardens before the rhinoceros came, has more than once been heard to express his belief that the brute would one day kill one or more of its keepers. We may add that there is no ground for general apprehension, as the bars of the cage in the elephant house are of wrought iron, some half a foot in diameter, and the paddock is fenced equally strongly.