

will hunt three times a week. Captain Gettin was appointed Master until the close of the season in succession to the late Lord Waterford.

of the year
this year

DEATH OF AN AFRICAN RHINOCEROS.

LOSS TO THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

The Zoological Society has to regret the most serious loss by death of the year. On Thursday last the larger of the two African rhinoceroses, a female, purchased in 1906 for £700, was found dead. On the day before it had been out in the yard, had taken its food well, and appeared to be in normal health. The *post mortem* examination showed the presence of extensive and long-standing disease of the heart, thickening of the pericardium and gelatinous degeneration of the valves, while there were serious changes in the lungs and liver. The appearances suggested that some time ago, probably years before, the animal had suffered from a serious disease, possibly of an infective character, from which it had recovered, but which had left it permanently weakened. As a matter of fact, when the rhinoceros arrived in London as a small animal, probably about two years old, it was in a fragile condition, and the officials were unable to conclude the purchase until after three months' detention, when it appeared to have recovered and to be putting on flesh.

There is no doubt that the young African rhinoceros is subject to some kind of sickness which is often fatal, and the large price which it fetches in Europe and America is the result of the heavy mortality during transport and soon after arrival. They are slow-growing animals, not reaching their full size until they are 12 or 15 years old. In proportion to its size, and considering that its diet presents no special difficulties, the rhinoceros is not a long-lived animal. Those of the Indian species have lived over 40 years in captivity, while the African form has lived more than 20 years in the London Gardens. There are no records of the African species breeding in captivity, and the death of the female at the Gardens is the more to be regretted as she might have mated with the young male of the King's African Collection. Horses, zebras, and tapirs, the nearest living allies of the rhinoceros, breed readily in captivity, and probably the absence of records in the case of the rhinoceros is due to the infrequent occurrence of suitable pairs in captivity rather than to any physiological indisposition.

From **The Times** of 1811.

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