

REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION OF BENGAL, 1885-86.

Calcutta:

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1887.

Zoological Garden.

THE total income of the gardens during the year under report, including the Government grant of Rs. 20,000, amounted to Rs. 46,338, against Rs. 52,097 in 1884-85. From donations and subscriptions an income of Rs. 2,946 was derived, against Rs. 3,588 in the preceding year; entrance receipts amounted to Rs. 7,664, against Rs. 8,511 in 1884-85; and there was a slight decrease under every other head except "rents," which improved by about Rs. 600, and receipts from the moonlight fête and the Fancy Fair, which amounted to Rs. 3,665, as compared with the Rs. 1,743 of the previous year. Exclusive of opening balances and receipts from sales of Government paper (amounting to Rs. 4,884 in the year under review and to Rs. 9,880 in 1884-85), the net income of each year was—

1884-85 ... Rs. 42,096 | 1885-86 ... Rs. 40,043

The expenditure of the year amounted to Rs. 39,406, against Rs. 50,685 in 1884-85. Establishments cost Rs. 8,494; food of animals, Rs. 9,266; construction and repairs of buildings and roads, Rs. 13,215; and purchase of animals, Rs. 3,078. It is evident that the financial resources of the institution must be husbanded with care, as it is only by strict economy that they can be maintained on a satisfactory footing. The most important works of the year were the re-adaptation of the "Doomraon" and "Sarnomoyi" houses, the building of a masonry house for the sambars, and the filling up, on sanitary grounds, of the old water-fowl tank near the entrance lodge, and converting the site of the tank into a lawn planted with ornamental plants and shrubs.

The number of visitors to the gardens, on payment of the usual entrance fees, was 108,944, against 120,813 visitors in 1884-85, and against an average number of 129,373 for the six preceding years. A large number of students and children under eight years of age were also admitted during the year 1885-86 free of charge. During the year season tickets were issued at the following rates:—

		Rs.
To admit one family on foot, horseback, or in a carriage.	{ For one year ...	16
	{ For six months ...	10
To admit one person on foot, horseback, or in a carriage.	{ For one year ...	12
	{ For six months ...	8

The season commences from the 1st April or the 1st October. Holders of family season tickets for seven years, and of single tickets for nine years consecutively, or otherwise, may become life members without further charge.

Considerable additions were made to the menagerie, chiefly by presentations, exchange, and deposit. The most interesting acquisition was a young hippopotamus, purchased for Rs. 3,000, which has already proved a great attraction to visitors. A sight uncommon in these latitudes was furnished by a Polar bear, which was last winter deposited in the gardens by its owner for sale, and has, with the assistance of the luxury of 15 seers of ice daily, got safely through the hot weather. The following is a list of animals for the first time exhibited in the gardens:—

Hippopotamus. Polar bear (deposit). Cassybara. Prairie marmot. Rufous kangaroo. Two-toed sloth. Virginian opossum. Selater's monaul.	White pea-fowl (deposit). Native companion. American ostrich (Rhea). Californian quail. Amherst pheasant. Scemmering's pheasant. Virginian nightingale. Waxwing. Rose breasted Crossbeak.
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As noticed in last year's Report, the Committee's attempt to establish a dairy farm and to improve the indigenous breed of cattle proved a failure, all the imported stock having been lost by an outbreak of rinderpest. The Committee remark that there are many difficulties in the way of successfully carrying out such experiments, and it is necessary to secure trustworthy supervision, the cost of which swallows up the profits which might otherwise accrue.