

## RHINOCEROS FOR THE KING'S COLLECTION.

### ARRIVAL AT THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

A young African rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros bicornis*) arrived at the Gardens on Friday evening and was transferred to the quarters arranged for it in the King's African Collection early on Saturday morning.

It is apparently in excellent health and appears to be about 18 months old. It was obtained some eight months ago by an English settler in British East Africa, and Mr. R. B. Woosnam, the Game Warden, who is a corresponding member of the Society, secured it for the King's Collection. It was brought by train from Nairobi and shipped at Mombasa in the Union-Castle Line's Carisbrook Castle in charge of Mr. A. D. Welstead, who has recently been acting as Assistant Game Warden. The young rhinoceros was accompanied by a native boy, with whom it is on the friendliest terms, and for whom it screams when separated. It stands over two feet in height, and the anterior of the two horns characteristic of the African form is stout and conical, being over three inches long, whilst the posterior horn is represented by a small sharp stump. It has been taking chiefly milk and sugar cane, and the Curator of Mammals has been able to provide a large supply of the latter, the quantity shipped with the animal being nearly finished. The young rhinoceros has come at the best time of the year, and as it is a male will be a mate for the fine young female already in the possession of the Society. There seems to be no reason why rhinoceroses should not breed in captivity, but it has very rarely happened that suitable pairs have been in the possession of Zoological Gardens, and there appears to be no record of a birth in captivity, at least in European gardens. A full-grown African rhinoceros of the black or most common species may reach a huge size, the height at the shoulders being as much as five to six feet, and the rarer species, the square-nosed or white rhinoceros, which has not been exhibited in captivity, attains a still greater size. There is some doubt as to the longevity of these creatures; Brian Hodgson was of the opinion that a century was the natural term of their lives, but the *maximum* duration of which there is an exact record is that of an Indian rhinoceros which lived for 40 years in the London Gardens. A rhinoceros about the age of the new arrival fetches as much as £800 in Europe.

Owing to unexpected delays on the voyage, the Union-Castle steamship Comrie Castle, which is bringing a very large consignment of South African animals for the King's Collection, will not arrive this week, as was anticipated, but some time in the course of next week. A full list of the animals will be posted when the ship calls at Lisbon, so that final preparations may be made for their landing at Southampton, entraining for London, and arrangement in the new enclosures. The delay is in one respect fortunate, as it is to be hoped that the existing spell of unseasonable weather will be over before their arrival. The authorities hope to have the animals displayed in the Gardens within 48 hours of their landing, and the collection will be on public view as soon as the King has made his promised visit of inspection.