

NATURAL HISTORY,

GENERAL AND PARTICULAR,

BY THE

COUNT DE BUFFON,

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH.

ILLUSTRATED

WITH ABOVE 300 COPPER-PLATES,

AND OCCASIONAL

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS:

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SECOND EDITION.

V O L. VI: (of 9)

L O N D O N:

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interrupted thickness of his skin, that he also loses much less by perspiration.

S U P P L E M E N T.

I have seen a second rhinoceros, which was lately brought to the royal menagery. In the month of September 1770, if the people who conducted it can be credited, the animal was only three months old. But, I am persuaded, that it was at least two or three years of age; for its body, including the head, was already eight feet two inches long, five feet six inches high, and eight feet two inches in circumference. A year afterward, its body was lengthened seven inches; so that, on the 28th day of August 1771, it was eight feet nine inches, including the length of the head, five feet nine inches high, and eight feet nine inches in circumference. On the 12th day of August 1772, the length of the body, comprehending the head was nine feet four inches, the height of the crupper six feet four inches, and that of the withers only five feet eleven inches. Its skin had the colour and appearance of an old elm tree spotted in some places with black and gray, and in others doubled into deep furrows, which formed a kind of scales. It had only one horn, the
color

colour of which was brown, and its substance solid and hard. The eyes were small and prominent, the ears large, and pretty similar to those of an ass. The back, which was hollow, or depressed, seemed to be covered with a natural saddle. The legs were short and very thick. The feet were rounded behind, and divided before into three hoofs. The tail resembled that of an ox, and was garnished with black hairs at the extremity. The penis lay along the testicles, and erected itself for the discharge of urine, which the animal threw out to a great distance. The point of it was also very remarkable, forming a cavity like the mouth of a trumpet. The sheath from which it issues is fleshy, and of a vermilion colour, like the penis itself. This fleshy substance, which formed the first tube, came out of a second sheath composed of skin, as in other quadrupeds. The tongue is so hard and rough, that it tears off the skin of any person whom it licks; hence this animal eats large thorns, without feeling any pain. The rhinoceros requires one hundred and sixty pounds of food every day. His flesh is much relished by the Indians and Africans, and especially by the Hottentots. If trained when young, he might be rendered domestic, and, in this state, he would multiply more easily than the elephant.

‘ I could never discover the reason (M. P. remarks) why in Asia the rhinoceros is allowed

to remain in a wild state, while in Abyssinia he is rendered domestic, and is employed in carrying burdens *.

'M. de Buffon,' says Mr Bruce, 'conjectured that there were, in the interior parts of Africa, rhinoceroses with two horns. This conjecture is fully verified; for all the rhinoceroses I saw in Abyssinia had two horns. The first, that is, the one nearest the nose, is of the common form; the second is sharp at the point, and always shorter than the first. Both spring at the same time; but the first grows more quickly, and exceeds the other in size, not only during the time of growth, but during the whole life of the animal †.'

On the other hand, M. Allamand, a very able naturalist, wrote to M. Daubenton a letter, dated at Leydon, October 31. 1766, in the following terms:

'I recollect a remark of M. Parsons, in a passage quoted by M. de Buffon: He suspected that the rhinoceroses of Asia have but one horn, and that those of the Cape of Good Hope have two. I suspect the very opposite: The heads of the rhinoceroses which I received from Bengal and other parts of India, had always double horns, and all those which came
' from

* *Défense des Recherches sur les Américains*, p. 95.

† Note communicated by Mr Bruce to M. de Buffon.

Plate CLXVII.



Albillo sculpt.

RHINOCEROS.

'from the Cape of Good Hope had but one
'horn.'

This last passage proves what we have formerly remarked, that the rhinoceroses with double horns form a variety in the species, a particular race, which is found equally in Asia and Africa.