

MISCELLANEOUS.

—5—

The Unicorn.

LITERARY GAZETTE, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1822.

Mr. Campbell has brought with him from Mashow, in Africa, the head of an animal which is believed by many, and it is endeavoured to prove, to be the Unicorn of Holy Writ. It is in the museum of the Missionary Society, and has been inspected by several Naturalists, who are divided in opinion on the subject. We have only seen a drawing of it, and from that, as well as from the information of intelligent persons, are inclined to consider it the cranium of the double-horned rhinoceros (so called from a small horn immediately behind the long projecting one;) but as the point is of the highest interest, we shall have a print of the head engraved, and insert it with the particulars (if ready) in our next week's Gazette.



LITERARY GAZETTE, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1822.

THE above Engraving represents the head of the animal mentioned in our last GAZETTE, as having been seen by Mr. Campbell at Mashow, in South Africa, the skull of which is now in the Museum of the Missionary Society in London. When shot, it was called a rhinoceros, but the head being brought in, it was found to be different from all the others that had been killed. The common African rhinoceros, continues Campbell, has a crooked horn resembling a cock's spur, which rises about nine or ten inches above the nose and inclines backwards; immediately behind this is a short thick horn; but the head they brought had a straight horn projecting three feet from the forehead, about ten inches above the tip of the nose. The projection of this great horn very much resembles that of the fanciful Unicorn in the British arms. It has a small thick horny substance, eight inches long, immediately behind it, which can hardly be observed on the animal at the distance of a hundred yards, and seems to be designed for keeping fast that which is penetrated by the long horn; so that this species of rhinoceros must appear really like a unicorn when running in the field. The head resembled in size a nine-gallon cask, and measured three feet from the mouth to the ear, and being much larger than that of the one with the crooked horn, and which measured eleven feet in length, the animal itself must have been still larger and more formidable. From its weight, and the position of the horn, it appears capable of overcoming any creature hitherto known. Hardly any of the natives took the smallest notice of the head, but treated it as a thing familiar to them. As the entire horn is perfectly solid, the natives, I afterwards heard, made from one horn four handles for their battle-axes. Our people wounded another, which they reported to be much larger.*

* The head being so weighty; and the distance to the Cape so great, it appeared necessary to cut off the underjaw and leave it behind; (the Mashow who cut off the flesh from it, had ten cuts on his back, which were marks for ten men he had killed in his lifetime). The animal is considered by naturalists, since the arrival of the skull in London, to be the unicorn of the ancients, and the same as that which is described in the

It has been further stated in No. XV. of the Missionary Sketches, that "the head measured from the ears to the nose three feet: the length of the horn, which is nearly black, is also three feet, projecting from the forehead, about ten inches above the nose. There is a small horny projection, of a conical shape, measuring about eight inches, immediately behind the great horn, apparently designed for keeping fast or steady whatever is penetrated by the great horn. This projection is scarcely observed at a very little distance. The animal is not carnivorous, but chiefly feeds on grass and bushes.

"Mr. Campbell was very desirous to obtain an adequate idea as possible of the bulk of the animal killed near Mashow, and with this view questioned his Hottentots, who described it as being much larger than the Rhinoceros, and equal in size to three oxen or four horses.

"The skull and horn excited great curiosity at Cape Town, most scientific persons there being of opinion that it was all that we should have for the Unicorn. An animal of the size of a horse, which the fancied Unicorn is supposed to be, would not answer the description of the Unicorn given in the Sacred Scriptures, where it is described as a very large, ferocious, and untameable creature; but the animal in question exactly answers to it in every respect.

"The Hebrew name by which it is called is *Reem*, which signifies *Might* or *Strength*. The translators of the Old Testament into Greek called it *Monoceros*; in the Latin (or Vulgate) translation it is *Unicornis*. In various countries it bears a name of similar import. In Gees it is called *Arice Harich*, and in the Amharic, *Auraris*, both signifying "the large wild beast with the horn." In Nubia, it is called *Girwangirn*, or "horn upon horn." This exactly applies to the skull in the Society's Museum, which has a small conical horn behind the long one. From the latter we presume this animal has been denominated the Unicorn, it being the principal, and by far the most prominent horn, the other, as before intimated, being scarcely distinguishable at a short distance. The writer of the article "Unicorn," in the Supplement to the Encyclopedia Britannica, observes, (defining the term,) "the Scriptural name of an animal, which was undoubtedly the one-horned Rhinoceros."

"Some authors, both ancient and modern, have described an animal, which they call the Unicorn, said to resemble a horse, or deer, with a long horn, represented in English heraldry as one of the supporters of the royal arms; but there is reason to doubt the existence of any such quadruped. It is probable that the long horn ascribed to such an animal is that of a fish, or, as termed by some, a Sea Unicorn, called the *Mowden* or *Norwhol*, confounding the land and sea animal together. The horn of the fish here alluded to was formerly imposed on the world as the horn of the Unicorn, at an immense price. On the whole it seems highly probable that the Rhinoceros, having one long horn projecting from its face, is the only Unicorn existing, and although it has a kind of stump of another horn behind the long projecting one, yet that it has been denominated Unicorn, (or one horn,) from that which is so obvious and prominent; and certainly its great bulk and strength render it such a formidable and powerful animal as is described in the Sacred Scriptures."

Names.

Names in common use among the English, expressive of the very reverse of the character or qualities of those whom they are intended to designate; with a few characteristic of the real qualities of others

"We have Mr. *Light*, whose weight is only one stone less than that of the memorable *Lumbert*; a Miss *Eve*, who is the tenderest and most innocent lamb in the universe; a Mr. *Plot*, who never thought in his life; a Madam *L'Estrange*, who is the commonest woman upon town; one of the fairest ladies in the world is Mrs. *Blackmore*; and one of the fattest men Mr. *Lean*. Mr. *Wiseman* is, without exception, the greatest fool in the neighbourhood in which he resides; and *Price* is notoriously the name of a man of no price or value whatever.

"This populous city has been known to afford a very honest parson *Hell*, and Mr. *Death*, a very ingenious apothecary; and the polite world cannot have so soon forgotten Mr. *Manly*, who knotted all the fringes of his own ruffles and of his aunt's petticoats. *Laus* is, perhaps, almost the only man in the world who does not know that there are any laws in it. We never yet knew a Mr. *Short* who was much under six feet in height; and the friends of the two families swear that Mr. *Goodchild* broke the hearts of his father and mother, and drove another of his nearest relations to distraction, by his wicked and undutiful behaviour while Mr. *Thoroughgood* turned out a complete rogue and vagabond at fifteen years of age, and was transported at the expense of the government at five and twenty."

39th chapter of the book of Job. The part of the head brought to London, may be seen at the Missionary Museum; and for such as may not have the opportunity of seeing the head itself, the annexed drawing of it has been made.