

THE CHILD'S
ZOOLOGICAL GARDEN

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The fact is, that Elephants exhibit almost as many traits of character as human beings; and, no doubt, those traits can be well studied when they are in captivity. But, to appreciate the picturesque grandeur of the creature, he must be seen in his native wilds "in the spicy lands where the skies are bright." There amongst the luxuriant tropical vegetation, where the "heavy-scented blossoms" hang, and the gorgeous birds and butterflies flash, with the glorious blue sky over his head, and a sunshine that penetrates even his tough skin and warms and gladdens his heart, he roams a mild and mighty monarch. In such a scene as is described by Southey in the "Curse of Kchama," one would like to see him best:—

Trampling his path through wood and brake
 And canes which crackling fall before his way,
 And tassel-grass, where silvery feathers play,
 On comes the Elephant to slake
 His thirst at noon in yon pellucid springs.
 Lo! from his trunk upturned, aloft he flings
 The grateful shower; and now
 Plucking the broad-leaved bough
 Of yonder plane, with wavy motion slow
 Fanning the languid air,
 He moves it to and fro.

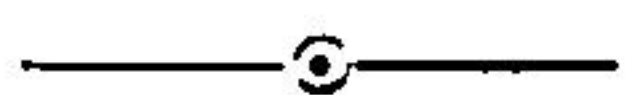


THE RHINOCEROS.

The Rhinoceros inhabits the same countries as the Elephant. He is also wonderful to look upon, but he is certainly neither an interesting nor an intelligent animal, nor is he beautiful. A pig-like head with two little dull eyes; a short thin tail with a few stiff hairs at the end; a huge uncouth body covered with a hard impenetrable skin like armour; and four short, stout, strong legs,—such is his

outward appearance. He has a portentous appetite, and likes wallowing in the mire like a pig. He is of a solitary disposition, and wanders in moist marsh ground near the river. He is neither carnivorous nor ferocious, or very wild, but totally rude and untractable. It is said that the expense of food and journey for Rhinoceros from Bengal to England amounts to nearly a thousand pounds. I do not think the difficulty of importing him is a matter of much regret, for on looking at him one certainly does not feel inclined to say like my friend, who mistook the weasel for a squirrel, "Dear little things, I wish there were more of them!"

The Rhinoceros is enormously strong and powerful, and can quite hold his own against the Elephant, with whom he has frequent encounters of a terrific nature.



THE BEAVER-POND.

It is impossible to help liking and admiring these sensible, industrious creatures who build strong comfortable houses for the winter, and can live together in large colonies without quarreling. They are wise enough, however, to have separate apartments for each family, but all join together to build their establishment and keep their water-dams in order. Their tools are their fore teeth, which they use like pincers and chisels, cutting a thick twig as clean across as could be done with a knife. Their fore paws are most useful instruments, with which they dig, soften, and work the clay. Their hind feet, which are webbed, are swimming-paddles, and their broad tails are rudders in the water or supporting props when needed. Two or three hundred will assemble together, and having chosen a suitable spot, which is generally a level piece of ground with a small rivulet running through it, they divide into companies to work. Some cut down trees of considerable size, which they lay across the dam or form into piles, while others roll down to the water, where they make holes for receiving the ends, in which they place them upright and secure them. Others bring twigs to interweave and twist among the piles, and some collect large quantities of earth, stones, clay, and other solid materials. The edifice is raised on the piles, either round or oval in shape, with an arched top, which gives it the appearance of a dome outside. Inside it is like an oven. The size is proportioned to the number of the intended inhabitants. Twelve feet in length and ten in breadth are sufficient for eight or ten Beavers. All these works are finished in August or