

MISCELLANEOUS.

CURIOSITY IN (INDIAN) NATURAL HISTORY.

BY YOUNG NIMROD.

(An osseous structure, characteristic of Fossil Rhinoceroses, discovered to exist also in the Sundarban Rhinoceros.—*Rh. Sondaicus*. Müller).

In *Journal, Asiatic Society, B.*, Vol. xliv, Pt. ii, 1875, appears an interesting "Note on a partially ossified nasal septum in *Rhinoceros Sondaicus*," i. e., the Sundarban Rhinoceros, from the pen of Mr. O. L. Fraser, Osteologist of the Indian Museum, therefore one fully competent to deal with the subject, and whose discovery is deserving the attention of the general body of us sportsmen out here as a curiosity in (Indian) Natural History, inasmuch as it clearly proves the existence of a peculiarity in this animal which is, strange to say, inherent in Fossil Rhinoceroses, but not found, evidently, in any other species of that animal extant than the one just noticed. I shall, therefore, give a *resumé* of the article referred to, devoid of its technical details: it is accompanied with a plate, which clearly illustrates the writer's accurate description, but this I cannot, of course, re-produce here.

Cuvier in *Oss. Foss.*, Vol. ii, p. 26, states that the partially ossified *septum narium*, characteristic of Fossil Rhinoceroses, does not exist in recent animals of that genus, and Professor Owens in *His. of Brit. Foss Mamm.*, gives a sketch illustrating this peculiarity in one of the Fossil ones, *Rh. leptorhines*.

Mr. Fraser first discovered the existence of a partially ossified septum when operating on the skull of an adult female Sundarban Rhinoceros, which specimen he had obtained in the Sundarban, and on examining other skulls of the same species he found in two of them "traces where such a structure might have been," and in a third "distinct evidence of an exactly similar formation." Thus, the existence of a partially ossified nasal septum in the Sundarban animal may be considered to be abundantly proved.

In his examination of half-a-dozen or more skulls of the so-called common Indian Rhinoceros, (*Rh. Indicus*, Cuvier), he could not find this peculiar structure, or "the slightest indication of it." This animal, therefore, it has been fully established, does not possess a partially ossified nasal septum, or any traces of it.

In the concluding para of the paper, Mr. Fraser mentions that the female of the Sundarban Rhinoceros is devoid of a horn, whilst in the common Indian Rhinoceros, as well as in the double-horned species (*Rh. Sumatranus*?) horns are owned by both sexes. And I do not remember to have read that this distinguishing trait had been noticed by any one before.

- KHOOLNAH, (JESSORE).