

THE

BOOK OF QUADRUPEDS,

FOR THE

Instruction of Young People.

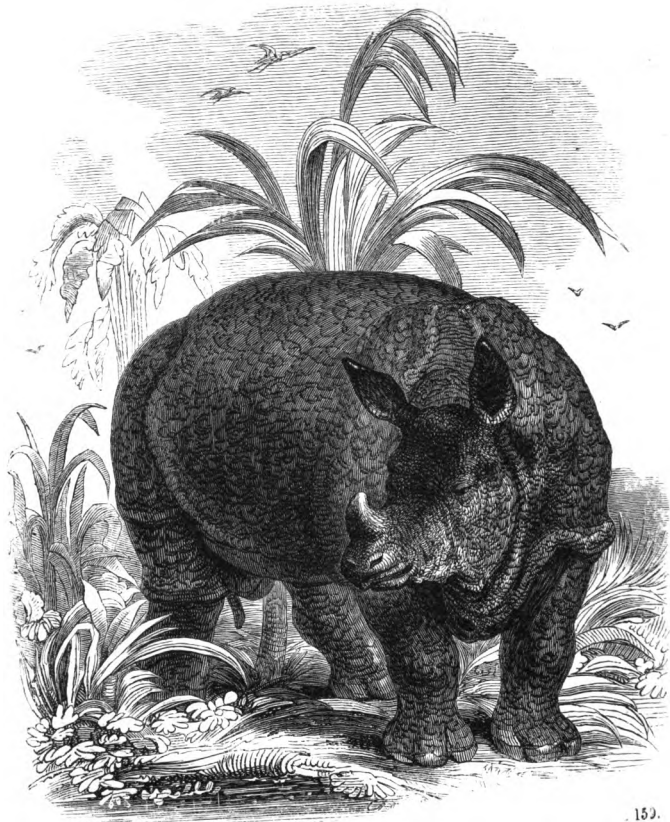
BY

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EXEMPLIFIED BY ORIGINAL AND SELECT ILLUSTRATIVE ANECDOTES.

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LONDON:
DARTON AND CLARK, HOLBORN HILL.



THE RHINOCEROS.*

THE Rhinoceros is, in bulk, the next quadruped in size to an ordinary elephant, but with shorter legs. The length of its body is about from ten to twelve feet. Its head is somewhat in shape like that of the hog, except towards the snout; and, like the hog, it is fond of wallowing in swampy places, of eating roots and shrubs, and of living lazily and at peace if unmolested. It is protected by a hard skin, of a dirty brown colour, which, over its neck, shoulders, and hind-quarters, appears in folds, like coats of mail, and would resist a bullet: its tail is rather meagre, the legs are muscular and thick, and the hoofs are divided into triple points.

We have said that the appearance of its head is somewhat like that of the hog; but the upper lip is much longer than the under one, and terminates in a point. Its eyes are small, and so placed that it can only see in a direct line, and not on either side; its ears

* *Rhinoceros* is the Latin appellation for this animal.

are pointed and erect, and its scent acute. His snout is rather broad, and furnished with a horn (sometimes with two), which, so advantageously placed, renders him a potent enemy to contend with, and a match for any beast of the forest.

The Rhinoceros is a native both of Africa and Asia, and of which there are, at least, four varieties; two of these being provided with one horn only, the others with two. He is fond, we have said, of herbage; but, "besides the trees," says Bruce, "capable of most resistance, there are in the vast forests, during the rains, trees of a softer consistence, and of a very juicy quality, which seem to be destined for its principal food. For the purpose of gaining the highest branches of these, his upper lip is capable of being lengthened out, so as to increase his power of laying hold with it, in the same manner as an elephant does with his trunk. With this lip, and the assistance of his tongue, he pulls down the upper branches which have most leaves, and these he devours first. Having stripped the tree of its branches, he does not abandon it; but, placing his snout as low in the trunk as he finds his horn will enter,

he rips up the body of the tree; and, when he has thus prepared it, he embraces as much of it as he can in his monstrous jaws, and twists it round with as much ease as an ox would do a root of celery."

The hunters, when in pursuit of the Rhinoceros, are careful in approaching him on the leeward side, lest he should discover them by the scent. Indeed, we see no just cause to disbelieve those travellers who have asserted, that the lion and tiger are less inclined to cope with this formidable creature than with any other inhabitant of the forest. When roused, he is more active than the elephant, and defends himself more effectively.* In a combat between these two animals, which were let loose upon each other for the diversion of Emanuel* king of Portugal, the Rhinoceros conquered his opponent; and we are assured that such is generally the case when they singly engage.

The natural fierceness attributed to the Rhinoceros by some writers, is imaginary; since, unless first pro-

* Surnamed "The Great." He ascended the throne, A.D. 1495; his captains sailed to Hindoostan and Brazil.

voked or pressed by hunger, he is inoffensive, either in a wild or an artificial state. We have seen several living specimens, all of which corroborate the assertion. There is one at present in the Regent's Park, which appears to be as gentle as any others which we had previously seen.

CAMELUS—THE CAMEL.

THE Camel and Dromedary being but two varieties of the same genus, as such we shall speak of them under the present head.

The Bactrian* Camel has two humps, is chiefly met with in the countries of the Levant, and is much larger and stronger than the Arabian Camel, or Dromedary, with shorter legs, and capable of carrying a much greater weight; its burden not unfrequently exceeding ten hundred pounds. The services of this creature, however, are confined to a comparatively narrow sphere;

* Bactria, or Bactriana, was the ancient name for that province of Persia now called Sablestan, the capital of which is Bost, about thirty miles south of Candahar.