

C H A P. IV.

Of some particular ANIMALS of INDIA. The ELEPHANT and RHINOCEROS. The CAMEL, DROMEDARY, and CAMELOPARD. The LION and LIONESS. LEOPARD and PANTHER. The TYGER. The APE.

IT is not in men alone, that the difference of talents and dispositions is remarkable: all nature is full of similar examples. Every climate is not proper for every fruit; happy is that which produces the best. It is true, that India is deficient in some of the conveniences of life; but this loss is amply made up by the great abundance of all that is necessary, and of several things that are peculiar to it, which draw thither all other nations of the world, either to admire its curiosities, or to make a profit of its riches and fertility. For there is none of them, but whom either necessity or luxury lead to the Indies: but the Indians themselves are not obliged to go any where else to give proofs of their indigence: they can even boast with justice, that they have more rarities than all other nations together; of which every one may be convinced, when acquainted with the nature of some animals familiar to them, and of the fruits which they gather in the fields.

No other countries in the world but the Indies, and some southern provinces in Africa, produce Elephants: but the Indian are much better than the African in quality. This animal, the largest, and the most extraordinary in its nature, which the earth produces, deserves to be considered in the first place. As savage of itself as the lion or the tyger,

tyger, it must be hunted like other wild beasts ; and there formerly were none among the Indians, but the shepherds who had that permission. They inclosed, by a large and deep ditch, a plain about a quarter of a league in circumference ; where they built a bridge of wood, and hovels into which they might retire ; into this inclosure they carried some tame female elephants, who drew the wild ones thither in the night-time. As soon as they entered, the hunters retired out of their inclosure, drew off the bridge, and went into the neighbouring villages to seek for aid. Several days after, when they saw the elephants weakened with hunger and thirst, they returned upon tame elephants, with which they pursued and harrassed them, until they had exhausted their force. Then they bridled them, and made incisions about their mouth, and round their neck, to render them more sensible, and stop them when they made too violent a motion : afterwards they mounted, and drove them into stables by the force of blows.

NOTWITHSTANDING the enormous bulk of this animal, being twenty feet in circumference, he is of a docility and ingenuity approaching to the human intelligence. He is susceptible of love, affection and gratitude to such a degree, as to pine away with grief when he has lost his keeper : he is observed to be transported with grief, and ready to kill himself, when, in a furious moment, he has killed or treated him ill.

To this instinct of humanity, the elephant joins an extraordinary force, proportioned to his stature, which renders him the strongest of all animals. The Indians have always trained them to war, and made them the terror of the enemy, by the slaughter which they occasioned when they gave them the signal to advance. This happened by the

sound

sound of drums and trumpets, by the sight of blood already spilt, at which they have a horror, or by a view of certain liquors which resemble it, as the juice of mulberries or grapes. In an instant they make a furious assault, throw themselves across the battalions, and carry every where terror, disorder and death. The smell and dreadful bellowing of these animals occasion still more disorder among the horses than the men. At the first attack, they are struck with terror, they cannot be made to advance; they fall back upon one another, and even throw their riders. Cæsar had but one elephant, when he gave battle to Cassibelan, king of the Britons, and he alone put the whole army to flight. This was the principal use which the Persians, Syrians, and Romans made of them.

SOMETIMES they built upon the back of those monstrous creatures great wooden towers of several stories, upon which the archers mounted, and shot in safety, having almost their whole body under covert. In the battle which Antiochus Eupator gave to Judas Maccabeus, that king of Syria had more than thirty elephants of this kind, on each whereof were thirty-two archers, who shot arrows from all sides; and an Indian who guided them. In the Indies they were ranged in the front of the army, at a hundred paces distance the one from the other, where they served as a rampart against the enemy, until the moment when they were to be roused and united. Porus placed two hundred in the same line, when Alexander came to attack him.

THIS animal is sixteen or eighteen months in the belly of its mother, after which he comes forth about the bigness of a calf. He does not arrive at his full strength, until the age of fifty or sixty years;

years ; it is only then that they can build a tower upon his back. From his nose there hangs a mass of long and hollow flesh, which they call his trunk, and sometimes his hand, because it is of infinite service to him whether for feats of advantage, or of strength : he makes use of it to carry things to his mouth ; from that arise two teeth, or prodigious tusks, which grow to six feet in length, from whence we have our ivory. As if this animal was acquainted with their value, or apprehended being killed on their account, he hides them in the earth whenever they fall from him through age, or any other accident. The skin upon his back is like a thick buckram, or rather a suit of armour, which can scarce be cut through ; but under his belly it is much thinner.

THEIR ordinary food is grass or corn ; but they are very fond of sweets, such as barley-sugar, and this is given to tame them. They make those whom they design for war drink the wine of the country, that is a kind of beer : but others who are weaker, and used for labour, drink only water, which they love best when it is muddy. They are subject to different distempers, of which the Indians know the remedies ; and this makes that animal live two or three hundred years. Apollonius Fyaneus, or Damis, related that they had seen in the city of Taxila, the elephant of the famous Porus, with two circles of gold round his tusks, in which it was written, in Greek characters, that Alexander, in esteem of him, had consecrated him to the Sun. At the same time he must have been above four hundred years old. But their too great love for the marvellous renders this suspected.

THE Rhinoceros, called by the modern Indians Abadu, comes very near the elephant in bulk and figure.

figure. This creature is chiefly found in the island of Java ; but is common enough in the kingdoms of Bengal and Patna. The ancients have frequently mentioned this animal, but without giving an exact description of it.

We must then have recourse to the moderns for a knowledge of this extraordinary animal. Bon-tius and Father le Compte, who had examined it several times, speak of it pretty much in the same manner. Here follow the words of the missionary. The Rhinoceros is one of the most extraordinary animals in the world. He is somewhat like the wild boar, if it was not that he is much larger, that his feet are thicker, and his body more unwieldy. His skin is all over covered with large and thick scales of a blackish colour, and an uncommon hardness. They are divided into small squares or buttons, raised a little above the skin, and nearly like those of the crocodile. His legs appear to be set in boots, and his head wrapt up behind in a smooth capuchin, which has given occasion to the Portuguese, to call him an Indian monk. His head is large ; his mouth little ; and his snout down to a great length, and armed with a long thick horn, which makes him terrible to the tygers, buffaloes, and elephants. But what appears most wonderful in this animal is his tongue, which Nature has covered with so rough a membrane, that it is not at all different from a file, and flays every thing which he licks. As we have animals in Europe that make a grateful repast on thistles, whose small points agreeably stimulate the fibres or the nerves in their tongue ; so the rhinoceros eats with pleasure the branches of trees bristled all over with the largest thorns. We are told by some travellers, that they have frequently given him of these, whose points were very rough and

and long, and it was wonderful to see with what greediness and dexterity he immediately licked them up, and chewed them in his mouth without the least inconvenience. It is true, it was sometimes a little bloody, but that even rendered the taste more agreeable, and these little wounds to appearance made no other impression on his tongue than salt and pepper make on ours." The author might have added, that this animal has two kinds of wings of a skin extremely ugly, which cover his belly like a housing, and in shape resembling the wings of a bat.

THOUGH the rest of his body is in a manner wrapt up in armour, and those who attack him are exposed to great danger; yet the Indians hunt him as they do other animals, because he is of great use to them after his death. The Moors eat his flesh, however hard it may be. His horn is not less curious than useful: when it is cut through the middle, on each side is seen the figure of a man, whose outlines are marked by little white strokes, with those of different birds and other things, as in the Egyptian flints. The greatest part of the Indian princes drink out of cups made of this horn, because they say, it sweats at the approach of any poison whatsoever. The people of Java likewise set a great value on this animal, because there is no part but is found in some degree useful in medicine. They make use of its flesh, horn, blood, teeth, skin, and even its excrements. They are persuaded there cannot be a better antidote against all kinds of poison, and they attribute to it the qualities which the ancients did to the Unicorn. Frequently they make bucklers of its skin with its scales.

THE camel and the dromedary perform to the Indians, and the greatest part of the eastern nations,

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