

THE
VOLUME OF THE WORLD:

EMBRACING THE
GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, AND STATISTICS,

OF THE
NATIONS OF THE EARTH:

THEIR

GOVERNMENTS, INSTITUTIONS, FINANCES, POPULATION, INDUSTRY, PRODUCTIONS, ARTS, SCIENCES, EDUCATION, RELIGION, LAWS, AND CUSTOMS;

WITH

COMPLETE STATISTICAL TABLES,

FROM THE LATEST AUTHENTIC SOURCES,

AND

ONE HUNDRED ILLUSTRATIONS

OF

WORKS OF ART AND NATURE, VIEWS OF CITIES, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, IMPORTANT LOCALITIES, PROMINENT OBJECTS IN NATURAL HISTORY, AND DELINEATIONS OF CIVILIZED AND SAVAGE LIFE;

ALSO EMBELLISHED WITH

A MAP OF THE WORLD, ON MERCATOR'S PROJECTION,

WITH

ITS DETAILS BROUGHT DOWN TO THE LATEST DATE OF GEOGRAPHICAL DISCOVERY, AND DELINEATING THE PRINCIPAL VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY SINCE THE TIME OF COLUMBUS.

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COLUMBUS:

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The Zoology of this great division of the earth is as vast as the climate of the regions it comprehends is diversified. Inhabited by nations jealous and superstitious, or lawless and barbaric, obstacles of no ordinary difficulty, have long debarred the European from a full investigation of those productions of nature characteristic of the Asiatic continent. That intellectual development which leads the Caucasian to discern his God, and adore his Creator in the contemplation of his works, does not appear in the Mongolian, a race long sunk in gross idolatry and in a senseless superstition on the divinity of perishable beasts. Hence it is, that the interior of China and Thibet, those vast regions forming the centre of Asia, have never been trodden by the naturalist or the man of science. The few and very imperfect ideas, therefore, that can be formed of their zoology, have been merely gathered from partial gleanings made on the confines of European India, and of the neighboring provinces.

In regard to animal life, the country may be divided into three great zones, co-terminant with the mountains, which form the barriers. In the northern zone the river banks and the vast forests of Siberia harbor innumerable troops of reindeer, elks, foxes, bears, gluttons, and several species of martens and squirrels. Along the shores of the Arctic sea, the great polar bear preys on every thing living, and in the ocean are found seals and various kinds of cetacea. In Central Asia, which is composed of high mountains and extensive sandy plains, we find the Bactrian or double-humped camel, the wild horse, several kinds of horse-tailed beeves (whose flowing tails are the ensigns of military rank throughout the East,) the antelope, and the yellow buck. Panthers are found in the western regions, and also a singular species of cat, the manul, the original of the Angora cats. The Indian tiger has been seen as far north as the head waters of the Obi, and the Altaïa mountains. Tigers also abound in Mongolia, where they are hunted every year by the Emperor of China. Troops of several species of dogs, jackals and wolves, prey upon the antelopes, asses and horses. All the mountains are inhabited by the musk animal: the Altaïa by the "argali," or Siberian sheep; the southern mountains by the wild goat; and Caucasus by the egagre and the chamois. The western prolongation of this zone, which extends over Persia and Arabia, is overrun by antelopes and gazelles, lions, panthers, caracals and other sorts of cats, jackals and monkeys. The mountains and table lands produce also the "onager," or wild ass, the original of those beautiful and fleet asses so much esteemed in the East. In the southern zone, however, animal life is the most prolific. Here various species of the antelope and deer are found, and in Thibet the blue antelope, whose horns, which fall annually, have more than once reminded travellers of the fabulous unicorn. There is also the "chitkaru," with four horns. In Begal, is the charming white-spotted axis, and in the forests is found the "jungle cow," the wild original of the domestic beeves of India. Fierce tigers ravage Hindostan and the warm countries east and south. In the same region is found the black-skinned buffalo, with horns turned back, both wild and tame, delighting in the muddy banks of the rivers, lakes and seas. Between the Ganges and the Indus, the forests abound with squirrels, peacocks, pheasants and jungle-cocks. Several species of bears inhabit the forests among the Ghauts. The Elephant and one-horned rhinoceros also inhabit the forests; but it is in the countries south-east of Hindostan that these animals attain their largest size. The tapir is

found between Malacca and China ; and ourangs, gibbins, and various other kinds of monkeys. In the Ganges alone, 250 kinds of fish have been described by Buchanan, which furnish abundance of food for the alligators, with which its waters abound. The seas of India swarm with myriads of the finny tribes of every species, and the testacea contribute many luxuries to the inhabitants. The whole number of known species of birds is 937, of which 621 are peculiar to Asia. Every zone has its peculiar species, and many are of the most beautiful plumage. Gigantic vultures tyranize over the banks of the Ganges, where are likewise found great numbers of eagles, falcons, buzzards and screech-owls. Swarms of paroquets, of every variety of color, inhabit the continent and neighboring islands. The southern countries of Asia produce reptiles, many of which are armed with the most fatal poisons ; they are all hideous to the sight, and some are of prodigious size and muscular strength. Beyond the Alaïa chain, however, they are scarcely ever found. All sorts of insects, some very noxious and destructive, swarm in the southern regions ; and even in Siberia, during its short summers, the mosquito and other troublesome species abound. But the most mischievous of all these winged creatures is the locust, which appears occasionally in the sandy regions of northwestern India, and is found in countless swarms in Arabia and Syria, and often penetrates into southeastern Europe, spreading destruction wherever it goes.

The elephant is pre-eminent among the domestic animals, but it is rarely found in the mountain regions of the north. The camel is found over a far wider range of country. The Bactrian camel is comparatively rare, and seems to be confined to the great deserts of northeastern Asia. The one-humped species, usually misnamed the dromedary, but in fact the real camel, is spread over Arabia, Persia, Western India and northern Africa, where it is the common beast of burden. The dromedary properly so called, or the racing camel, is only a variety of the latter species, of lighter form and better suited for rapid travelling. The other domestic animals of southern and western Asia are horses, asses, buffaloes, beeves, sheep and goats ; of the central and eastern regions, chiefly horses, cattle and sheep ; the "yak" of Thibet and Pamer, and the bushy-tailed bull of Thibet, seem to supply the place of the camel among the mountains. In the rigorous climates farther north, the reindeer furnishes the people with food and transport, and also in one part of the year with dress. In Kamtschatka, and other northeastern regions, dogs are trained to draw sledges over the snow.

Not only the numerical majority of the human race, but also its greatest variety in the species, is found within the limits of Asia. The tribes and nations into which mankind is here divided are very numerous, but of these the five principal races, the Hindoos, the Chinese, the Tartars, the Arabs, and the Persians, seem to have divided among them, as a kind of inheritance, the continent and its adjacent islands. The origin of these races is buried in the remotest antiquity. The Hindoos and Arabs are generally considered as belonging to the Caucasian or white race of mankind. The modern Persians are a very mixed race, formed by the commingling of Persians, Arabs, Turks, Tartars, Mongols, and natives of the Caucasiar isthmus. The Tartars differ entirely from the Hindoos and Arabs in feature, complexion, and form, as in manners and language. The Chinese, according to the institutes of Menu, were originally a military tribe of the

comparatively be called mountainous, is a very hilly country. Two great chains extend along the opposite coasts parallel to each other, or rather diverging, and leaving between them and the sea only a plain of forty or fifty miles in breadth. They rise in few places above 3000 or 4000 feet high; but are very rugged and steep, and the entrance into the interior is only by very narrow and difficult passes. The name of Ghaut, which, through the Teutonic languages, has come to ours in the word *gate*, being applied to these passes, has been gradually extended to the mountains themselves.

The rivers of Hindostan form a feature no less important and celebrated than its mountains. The Himalayah, from its lofty magazines of tempests and snow, pours down a world of waters, which, every where descending its steeps, unite at length in the two great branches of the Indus and the Ganges. These, with their tributaries, even before they reach the plain, present the mass and breadth of great rivers, while they retain the rapidity of mountain torrents.

It is somewhat remarkable that, in so large a region, with so many mountains and waters, there should not be a lake, with the exception of Chilka, on the Coromandel coast, which is a mere salt marsh, like the Mareotis or Manzaleh, and a few very small lakes in the territory of Rajpootana. To find this feature on a great scale, we must penetrate its northern barrier into central Asia.

A brief notice of the following quadrupeds, will be interesting or instructive:—the Rhinoceros, the Tiger, the Ichneumon, and the Antelope.

The Indian one-horned Rhinoceros of the continent is distinct from that of the islands. Thicker and more unwieldy for his size than the Elephant, he exhibits in confinement much of the singular sagacity observed in that gigantic animal. A young one described by M. Cuvier, and which was lately alive in Paris, evinced many such habits. He smelt at every thing, and seemed to prefer sweet fruits, and even sugar itself, to any other food. Like the elephant, he collected and held every thing intended for his mouth with the moveable upper lip; and when he ate hay, he formed it first into little bundles, which he placed between his teeth by means of his tongue. The nature of its hide has been much exaggerated by old writers. The whole body is covered with a very thick tuberculous grayish skin, nearly naked, and disposed in irregular folds, under which it was flesh-colored; over this, particularly on the tail and ears, were scattered a few stiff thick hairs. But it is in a wild state only that the bodily powers of this creature can be fully estimated: and these are frequently displayed in a surprising degree. A few years ago, a hunting party of Europeans, with their native attendants and elephants, met with a herd of seven; apparently led by one, much larger and stronger than the rest. This boldly charged the hunters. The leading elephants, instead of using their tusks as weapons, suddenly wheeled round, and received the thrust of the rhinoceros's horn on the posteriors: the blow brought them and their riders to the ground. No sooner had they risen than it was repeated, and in this manner did the contest continue, until four of the seven were shot, when the rest retreated. This anecdote shows the tremendous power of the rhinoceros, sufficient to overcome the active ferocity of the lion and the ponderous strength of the elephant; but this is only exerted in self-defence. The rhinoceros derives all his food from the vegetable kingdom, and is quiet and peaceable if left to himself.

The Bengal or Royal Tiger, is the scourge of Asia and the Indian islands. Equal in size to the Lion, though generally inferior in strength, it wants not courage or ferocity to attack the king of beasts ; a temerity which generally proves fatal. Ferocity cannot be more horribly developed than in the Tiger ; it may indeed be termed a sanguiverous animal, for it will suck the blood of its victim previously to eating it, and will sieze on any other that may come in sight ; treating it in the same way. Its horrid avidity is such, that, while so engaged, it will almost bury its head and face in the reeking carcase of its prey. According to Marsden, the tigers in Sumatra are so abundant, that whole villages are sometimes depopulated by them. Yet, from a superstitious prejudice, it is with difficulty the natives are prevailed upon, even by large rewards, to use means for their destruction, until revenge for some loss in their own family bursts the shackles of fanaticism under which they habitually sink.

The Indian Ichneumon has some resemblance to the weasel, and is called by the natives *Mangouste*. Its total length, with the tail, is about two feet. It feeds entirely upon small animals, particularly birds, and, for its size, appears as voracious as the tiger. Although capable of being tamed, and even taking pleasure in the caresses of its master, it becomes extremely ferocious at sight of those little animals which constitute its prey. If within reach of a bird, it will spring forward with a rapidity which the eye cannot follow, seize its victim, break its head, and then devour it with the utmost voracity. This animal lives in holes, or burrows, near habitations.

The four-horned Antelopes, (for there are probably two species), are peculiar to India. That which is named Chickara inhabits the forests and hilly tracts along the western provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa. It is a delicate-shaped, wild, and agile little creature, measuring about twenty inches and a half high from the shoulders. Its general color is bright bay above, and whitish beneath. The form of the horns is simple ; the largest pair being three inches long, and the others only three quarters of an inch.

The name of India has always been celebrated in the Western world, not only as a region abounding in rich products, but as an early seat and fountain of civilization and philosophy. Whatever literary talent or application, however, the Hindoos might possess, none of it was turned to history ; of which only some faint traces appear, amid the most extravagant fables. The first authentic notice is afforded by the invasion of Alexander ; but that event, so celebrated in Greek history, was a mere partial inroad, producing no lasting effects. Yet the narratives of the expedition are precious, in so far as they show that the Hindoos were then precisely the same people as now ; divided into castes, addicted to ascetic superstition, religious suicide, and abstruse philosophy. It does not appear that India was then the seat of any extensive empire ; but it was divided among a number of smaller states. The expedition of Seleucus and the embassy of Megas-thenes brought to light the existence of a great empire, of which the capital was Palibothra, on the Ganges ; but the histories neither of the East nor of the West convey any details of the dynasty which reigned in that mighty metropolis. The interposition of the hostile monarchy of the Parthians cut off all communication between Rome and India, though one embassy from the latter country is said to have reached the court of Augustus.

The Mahometan conquest by the Gaznevide dynasty formed the era at

tree has been often mentioned as growing on an island in the Nerbuddah ; and one in Mysore is said to cover an area of 100 yards in diameter.

India produces many of the most interesting forms of animal life. The elephant ranges wild in the deep forests and jungles of the eastern and southern provinces, and is domesticated throughout the peninsula, where it is still used to swell the gorgeous parade of the court, and to form the humblest of drudges. Wild elephants are particularly numerous in Assam, where they move about in large herds ; and from 700 to 1,000 are yearly exported from that province. Its huge rival, the rhinoceros, is also found in the thickest parts of the forests of Bengal, but has never been trained to any useful employment. The camel abounds in the sandy regions of the northwest ; where it is used as the ordinary beast of burden. Deer, of many species and varieties, are found among the mountains and forests ; also antelopes, wild boars, hyænas, jackals, foxes, hares, squirrels, porcupines, hedgehogs, and monkeys, the last being met with in great variety, and multiplied to a vast extent through the superstition of the Hindoos, who consider them as sacred animals. Bears abound in all the wooded mountains ; wolves are also numerous in the northern provinces. The wild dogs of the Himalayas are remarkable animals, in form and color like a fox, though larger ; they hunt in packs, give tongue like dogs, have a very fine scent, and by force of numbers they are said at times to destroy the tiger.

But, of all the animals of India, those of the feline tribe are the most remarkable, as well for their beauty as for their size, strength and fierceness. The lion is found chiefly in the northern provinces, near the borders of the plains ; but the tiger abounds in all the forests and jungles throughout the country, even up to the glaciers of the Himalayas, and is the grand object of pursuit with sportsmen. Leopards, ounces and panthers, of different varieties, are also numerous ; one species of leopard, the chittah or cheetah, is employed for hunting wild deer.

The birds of India are, in many cases, both splendid and curious. Those of the parrot tribe are the most remarkable for beauty, and for the variety of species ; eagles are numerous among the Himalayas, also vultures, hawks, and falcons ; many other birds are common, as herons, cranes, storks, flamingoes, pea-fowl, pheasants, geese, swans, partridges, quails, pigeons, gulls, plovers, wild ducks, and the common domestic fowls ; the jungle-cock of India is believed to be the original parent of the common cocks and hens of Europe.

Reptiles are numerous ; serpents swarm in the gardens, and even intrude into the houses ; some are comparatively harmless, but of others the bite is speedily fatal. Water snakes are so particularly numerous along the coasts, that seamen used to ascertain their approach to land by the appearance of those animals. Alligators abound in the rivers and tanks, and particularly among the creeks of the Sunderbunds, along with a great variety of amphibious animals and fishes ; the shark infests the mouths of the rivers, as well as the sea-coast, and grows to an enormous size.

Agriculture throughout India is in the lowest condition ; the implements used are of the rudest kind, and the cultivator follows the routine of his forefathers, without ever dreaming of improvement.

The great fertility of the soil generally insures a sufficient supply of food ; but so dependent is vegetation, in this hot climate, upon the supply of moisture, that an unusual continuance of dry weather sometimes occasions

alluvial plain or delta at its mouth, and a small portion of the coast of the Gulf of Siam. It is said to be a fertile champaign country, but no geographical details respecting it are known. Cochin-China consists of a long narrow strip of land, extending more than 600 miles along the Chinese Sea, but nowhere exceeds 150 in breadth. It is a series of small transverse valleys, divided by so many spurs from the long range of mountains which forms its western boundaries. The coast is beautiful and grand; the shore is indented with numerous bays, and the mountains, which rise several thousand feet in height, are broken into numerous valleys and ravines. Tonquin expands to a much greater width than Cochin-China, and consists chiefly of a large alluvial plain watered by the Sang-Koi and other rivers. It is the only part of the empire that is rich in minerals, and produces large quantities of gold, silver, copper, and iron.

The forests produce every kind of scented woods and most of the products of British India. Tea also grows between 10° and 16° north latitude. Cambodia produces gamboge, cardamoms, anise-seed, areca, indigo, pepper, sugar-cane, &c. Tonquin yields many kinds of varnish trees, areca, palms, &c. Cotton, rice, and mulberry, are almost universal. There is also a great variety of fine fruits, gingers, and spices. The principal animals are the elephant, rhinoceros, tiger, leopard, buffalo, bear, horse, deer, goat, monkey, baboon, dog, cat, &c.; also, peacocks, parrots, and a variety of other birds of the richest plumage, curlews, plovers, and aquatic birds of all kinds. Alligators infest the large rivers; hooded snakes and several other noxious reptiles infest the land; the sea and rivers abound with fish; and the whole country is swarming with mosquitos and a thousand species of insect life.

The people are of several races. The Tonquinese and Cochin-Chinese are a short, squat, and ill-favored race, in features nearly resembling the Malays. Their countenances exhibit, however, an air of cheerfulness and good humor. They are much in the same state of civilization and comfort as their neighbors. The Cambodians are a distinct race, and speak a language unlike any of their neighbors; but in civilization, customs, religion, &c., they resemble the Siamese. Besides these, there are some Anamese and other races, and many Malays, Chinese, and Portuguese. The almost universal religion is a species of Budhism intermixed with the traditions and tenets of the Hindoos, Chinese, &c. Politically, however, the empire contains but two classes: the people, and the nobility or mandarins. Advancement is open to all; and lately all the great mandarins, chiefs of the five great columns of the empire, were common soldiers.

The government exhibits despotism in its worst form; the only rich man is the king: he has fine palaces, large treasures, excellent fortresses, and vessels far superior to those of the Chinese. His officers are merely his tools, and share but little in his splendor. The nation at large is in the most abject condition; the people are poor, wretched, and filthy in the extreme, and are forced to give more than one-third of their labor, or an equivalent, to the king. The country is disturbed by frequent insurrections and rebellions; and emigration, though punishable as treason, has lately prevailed to a vast extent.

The empire is at present divided into three great civil dominions: Tonquin and Cambodia, which are governed by viceroys, and Cochin-China, which is under the immediate government of the emperor himself. The