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Miscellany.

AFRICAN RHINOCEROS.

Two rhinoceroses were shot by Speelman one of the Hottentots. As the hunting of a rhinoceros is attended with danger, he certainly had some reason to be proud, when he had in one day killed two of these formidable animals.

His account of the affair was, that when they came to the place where the Bushmen expected to find them, the animals had changed their ground; but it was not long before they discovered no fewer than four, feeding quietly on the bushes in another part of the plain. They advanced towards the creatures, at various distances, according to each man's courage, but Speelman came the first within shot, and wounded one mortally. The other people coming up, fired till it had received seven balls, when it fell dead. He then went in pursuit of the other animals, which had fled over the hills, and having discovered one in the middle of the open plain, approached fortunately unperceived, and brought it down with a single ball: nor did he fail with exultation to remark, that he had on that day fired off his gun but twice, and at each time had killed a rhinoceros.

This was not the first rhinoceros which Speelman had shot in the course of his life; and to prove his knowledge of these animals; and to save me the trouble of asking him questions, he voluntarily communicated all that he had learnt by his own experience. Their *smell*, said he, is so keen and nice, that they know, even at a great distance, whether any man be coming towards them; and on the first suspicion of this, take to flight. Therefore it is only by approaching them from against the wind, or from the leeward, that the hunter can ever expect to get within musket shot. Yet, in doing this, he must move silently and cautiously, so as not to make the least noise in the bushes, as he passes through them; otherwise their *hearing* is so exceedingly quick, that they would instantly take alarm, and move far away to some more undisturbed spot. But the dangerous part of the business is, that when they sometimes become furious, and take it into their head to pursue their enemy: and then, if they once get sight of the hunter, it is impossible for him

this we found the second rhinoceros: at which Speelman, with a party of natives, had arrived an hour earlier, to prevent its being cut up before I had seen and examined it. I immediately proceeded to make drawings, both in pen and in profile.

The first view of this beast suggested the idea of an enormous ling, to which, besides in its general form, it bears some continued resemblance in the shape of its skull, and smallness of its eyes, and the proportionate size of its ears; but in its shapeless clumsy legs and feet, it more resembles the hippopotamus and elephant. It is, in fact, in many less obvious particulars closely allied to all these; and by later naturalists, has been well arranged in the same class with them.

Its length over the forehead and along the back from the extremity of the nose to the insertion of the tail, was 11 feet and 2 inches of English measure; but in a direct line, not more than nine feet three inches. The tail, which at its extremity was flattened vertically, measured 20 inches: and the circumference of the largest part of the body, 8 feet 4 inches. On examining its mouth, I found, agreeably to common opinion, no incisive or fore teeth in either jaw: in the upper jaw on each side, were five large grinders and a smaller one at the back; but in the lower, there were six grinders besides the small back teeth.

Burchell's Travels.

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The first view of this beast suggested the idea of an enormous hog, to which, besides in its general form, it bears some continued resemblance in the shape of its skull, and smallness of its eyes, and the proportionate size of its ears; but in its shapeless clumsy legs and feet, it more resembles the hippopotamus and elephant. It is, in fact, in many less obvious particulars closely allied to all these; and by later naturalists, has been well arranged in the same class with them.

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signs of the hunter, it is impossible for him to escape, unless he possess a degree of coolness and presence of mind, which, in such a case, is not always to be found. Yet, if he will quietly wait till the enraged animal make a run at him, and will then spring suddenly on one side to let it pass, he may gain time enough for reloading his gun, before the rhinoceros get sight of him again; which, fortunately, it does slowly and with difficulty. The knowledge of this *imperfection of sight*, which is occasioned perhaps by the excessive smallness of the aperture of the eye (its greatest length being only one inch) in proportion to the bulk of the animal, encourages the hunter to advance without taking much pains to conceal himself; and by attending to the usual precautions just mentioned, he may safely approach within musket shot. This creature seems to take as much pleasure in wallowing in the mud, as the hog. As far as my own experience enables me to speak, I can attest the correctness of Speelman's remarks.

The present animal was a male of a large size, but being nearly cut up when I arrived, I was unable to ascertain its particular dimensions. No hair whatever was to be seen upon it, except at the edge of the ears, and on the extremity of the tail. Our bullets though cast with an admixture of tin to render them harder, were flattened, or bent out of shape, by striking against the bones; but those which were found lodged in the fleshy parts, had preserved their proper form; a fact which shows how little the hardness of this creature's hide corresponds with the vulgar opinion, of its being impenetrable to a musket ball. It is however to be admitted, that bullets of pure lead, fired from too great a distance or with too weak a charge of powder, will sometimes fail to penetrate the skin and flatten; from the animal's side, should they happen to strike one of the thicker parts of the side, or where a coating of mud has dried fast upon it. This skin, when dry and formed into shields, may possibly turn a ball; as it is then become so much harder than when alive. In cutting up this rhinoceros, my people found one bullet more than they had fired: but it appeared to have lain in the flesh a considerable time. This animal therefore had probably formerly lived within the Colony, but having been hunted and wounded by the boors, it had, though in vain, sought refuge beyond the boundary.

On each side of the carcass the Hottentots had made a fire to warm themselves; and round a third fire, not fewer than 24 Bushmen were assembled, most of whom were actively employed the whole night long, in broiling, eating, and talking. I watched them with astonishment; it seemed that their appetite was insatiable; for no sooner had they broiled and eaten one slice

sooner than they boiled and eaten one piece of meat, than they turned to the carcass and cut another, scarcely allowing themselves any time for sleep. Some of the natives whom I had seen at the dance, were among the number of those who assisted at this nocturnal feast.

The meat of the rhinoceros was excellent, and had much of the taste of beef; and although the flesh of this, which was an old animal, was somewhat tough, perhaps on account of being just killed; yet that of the female, being fatter, proved exceedingly well tasted and wholesome. The tongue would have been pronounced a dainty treat, even by an epicure.

I crossed the rocky hills on the west, and descended into a dry extensive plain thinly covered with low bushes. In the middle of