

THE
GUIDE TO KNOWLEDGE.

EDITED BY

W. PINNOCK,

AUTHOR OF

"PINNOCK'S CATECHISMS," "GRAMMAR OF MODERN GEOGRAPHY AND
HISTORY," &c. &c. &c.

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THE WONDERS OF ANIMATED NATURE.



OF THE ELEPHANT.

OF the ELEPHANT, there are several varieties, but all agreeing in their generic and specific distinctions. In size and strength they surpass all quadrupeds, and in sagacity are only inferior to man.

To describe their exact size is very difficult, as they have been seen from seven to fifteen feet high; and no description can convey a just idea of their magnitude, unless the animal itself has been presented to the view. This wonderful quadruped is a native of *Asia* and *Africa*, but is most numerous in the latter. They are found chiefly between the river Senegal and the Cape of Good Hope, and here they abound more than in any other part of the world. In their natural state, ELEPHANTS delight in frequenting the banks of rivers and moist situations, environed with the thickest woods. They always disturb the water before drinking; and often

fill their trunks with it, spouting it out in the manner of a fountain for amusement or revenge.

Though the ELEPHANT is the strongest as well as the largest of all quadrupeds, yet in a state of nature it is neither fierce nor mischievous; but mild and peaceable in its disposition, it neither exerts its force nor strength. In its native deserts this animal is seldom seen alone, but appears to be particularly social and friendly with its kind, the oldest of the troop always appearing as the leader, and the next in seniority bringing up the rear. This order is, however, merely observed when they are upon the march in search of cultivated grounds, where they expect to have their progress impeded by the proprietors of those lands they are going to lay waste. The largest Elephants are found in India. Its colour is that of the mouse. Its skin is so hard, that a sharp sword cannot penetrate through it, especially on the back; the most tender part being under the belly. Although its eyes are peculiarly small,

An ELEPHANT that was kept at *Versailles*, seemed to be sensible of it when any one attempted to make sport of him, and to keep the affront in mind till he found an opportunity for retaliation.

A PAINTER wished to make a drawing of this animal in an unusual attitude, with his trunk elevated, and his mouth open. In order to keep the Elephant in this position, the artist's servant threw fruit into his mouth, but more frequently only made him believe that he was about to do it. Although this greatly irritated the Elephant, he did not attack the servant, but, as if sensible that the painter was the instigator of the deception that had been practised upon him, he directed his eyes towards the latter, and threw out of his trunk such a quantity of water upon him as completely destroyed the drawing.

This Elephant generally availed himself less of his strength than of his ingenuity. He once unbuckled with the greatest calmness and deliberation, a strong leathern strap, which had been fastened round his legs, and as his attendant had tied the buckle round with packthread, and secured it with many knots, the animal very deliberately unloosed them all, without breaking either the strap or the packthread.

ACOSTA relates the following circumstance. A soldier in *Lochin* threw, in sport, the shell of a cocoa-nut at an Elephant. The Elephant felt the affront, but dissembling his resentment, picked up the shell. Some days after, seeing the soldier walking along, he stepped up to him, and returned the compliment, by throwing the same shell in his face. He then walked off, seemingly much pleased at having thus retaliated the affront he had received.

Another soldier refused to give the road to an Elephant and his conductor, at which the Elephant was highly affronted. Some days after meeting the soldier upon the banks of a river, at a time when he had not his keeper with him, he seized him with his trunk, ducked him several times in the water, and then let him go.

In *DELHI*, an Elephant passing along the streets, put his trunk into a tailor's shop, where several people were at work, one of them pricked the end of it with his needle; the animal passed on; but in the next dirty puddle filled his trunk with water, returned to the shop, and spouting every drop among the people who had offended him, and spoiled their work.

An Elephant in *Adasmeer*, in India, often passed through the bazaar, or market, and as he went by a certain herb-woman, always received a handful of greens: at length he was seized with one of his periodical fits of rage, broke his fetters, and running through the market, put the crowd to flight, and among others this woman, who, in haste, forgot a little child she had brought with her. The animal recollecting the spot where his benefactress used to sit, took up the infant gently on his trunk, and placed it in safety on a stall.

MR. BUSBY informs us, that an Elephant having once killed his keeper in a fit of resentment, the wife of the man, who was witness of the terrible scene, took her two children and laying them down at the feet of the animal, said to him—"As you have killed my husband, you may now kill me and my children also." The Elephant immediately grew calm, and, as if struck with remorse, took up the eldest boy with his trunk, placed him upon his back, and from thence forward would suffer no other person to ride him.

The engraving represents an Elephant attacking a Rhinoceros.

OF THE RHINOCEROS.

Of this animal there are two varieties, one with a single horn, the other with two, on its nose. Next to the elephant, it is the

most powerful of all quadrupeds; and the most bulky except the *Hippopotamus*. Its length is commonly twelve feet, its height six or seven, and its circumference is nearly equal to its length. It is a native of the same countries, and inhabits the same forests as the elephant.

Many fabulous accounts have been given of this animal respecting its fierceness, as well as his strength. The one which was shown in London, in 1739, never was out of humour but when ill used; appeared both submissive and attached to his keeper; and seemed perfectly to understand the meaning of his threats. The appetite of this animal, though very young when it left *Bengal*, was so astonishingly great, that it is said the expense of his food and passage amounted to nearly a thousand pounds. The skin of this animal is so hard as to resist the sword and spear, and the shot of hunters. He is a mortal enemy to the Elephant, whom he seldom meets with without a battle; and aims chiefly at the belly, being the softest part, which, if he miss, the elephant is too great a match for him with his trunk and teeth.—(See the engraving.)

The horn of the Rhinoceros sometimes measures nearly four feet in length, by six or seven inches at the base, which is usually of a brown or olive colour. The form of the head greatly resembles that of the hog, but the ears are larger, and stand erect: the eyes, though small, are bright and piercing, and the legs remarkably strong and thick. Like hogs, it is fond of wallowing in marshy places, and lives entirely on vegetable food. The horn is said to possess great medicinal virtues.

The two-horned Rhinoceros is a very scarce animal. It is found only in Africa; and was a long time supposed to be merely a fabulous creature, till observed by DR. SPARRMAN, at the Cape of Good Hope, and described in his travels. The two-horned Rhinoceros has never yet been brought into Europe. Indeed, the history of its tribe is not yet freed from difficulties.

ANCIENT ARGUMENT IN FAVOUR OF UNIVERSAL KNOWLEDGE.

THE great ALFRED, the patriot king of England, had a saying, "That he reputed a man freeborn, and yet illiterate, no better than a beast, a brainless beast, and very sot." Nor would he admit any one into office in his court, however deserving their pretensions in other respects, who was not learned.

APOPHTHEGMS.

It ought always to be steadily inculcated, that virtue is the highest proof of understanding, and the only solid basis of greatness; and that vice is the natural consequence of narrow thoughts, that it begins in mistake, and ends in ignominy.

Honour and justice, reason and equity, go a very great way in securing prosperity to those who use them; and, in case of failure, they secure the best retreat, and the most honourable consolation.

Solon being asked why, among his laws, there was not one against personal affronts, answered,—that he could not believe the world so fantastical as to regard them.

A passionate temper renders a man unfit for advice, deprives him of his reason, robs him of all that is great or noble in his nature, makes him unfit for conversation, destroys friendship, changes justice into cruelty, and turns all order into confusion.

To be able to bear provocation is an argument of great wisdom; and to forgive it, is a proof of a great mind.

What men are deficient in reason, they usually make up in rage.