

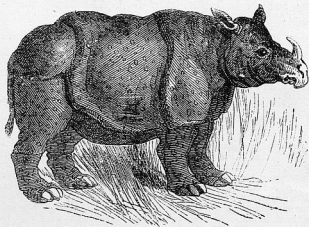
GLEANINGS
IN
NATURAL HISTORY.



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THE RHINOCEROS.

THE word "Rhinoceros" is made up of two Greek words, one of which means a "horn," and the other a "snout." The huge animal to which this name is given belongs to the Order of *pachydermata*, another Greek word, which means "thick-skinned." It has each foot divided into three toes, and is furnished with one or more "horns;" which are not placed like those of the cow, or the elephant, but on its nose. There are several species, the best known of which are the Indian, or one-horned; and the African, or two-horned.



ONE-HORNED RHINOCEROS.

The *one-horned* rhinoceros is a native of India, and particularly of that part beyond the river Ganges. It is a clumsy-looking creature. The upper lip, which is very large, and overhangs the lower, is furnished with strong muscles, and is employed by the animal somewhat as the elephant uses his trunk. Its ears are large, erect, and pointed. The skin, which is rough, is without hair or other covering, and is very thick ; about the neck it is gathered into folds, as also in other parts of its body. It lives in shady forests near to rivers, or in the swampy jungles in which its native country abounds.

Though it has great strength, and is more than a match for the elephant, or the tiger, it is quiet and inoffensive, unless provoked. Its smelling and hearing are singularly acute. Canes and shrubs are its chief food. The flesh somewhat resembles pork in taste, though of a coarser grain and stronger flavour. Some have supposed this species to be the "unicorn" of the Bible ; but this seems rather to have been some kind of wild-ox, an animal which was spread anciently from the Rhine to China, and existed in Asia Minor.

The single-horned rhinoceros was well-known to the ancients, and was introduced into the games of the Roman circus.*

* In these games great numbers of wild beasts were often driven to destroy each other. On one occasion, there were provided no fewer than thirty-two elephants, ten tigers, ten elks, sixty lions, thirty leopards, one hippopotamus, one rhinoceros, forty wild horses, twenty wild asses, and ten camelopards ; with a vast number of deer, goats, antelopes, and other animals. Two thousand gladiators were, at the same time, compelled to engage in mortal combat, still further to gratify the thirst of the Romans for blood. Such were the public shows in which the people delighted at Rome long after the Gospel had been preached there by St. Paul and others.

From the time of the fall of the Roman empire, however, it was lost sight of so completely, that naturalists for many ages doubted whether such an animal had ever existed, or thought that it was no longer to be found. But, when the Portuguese



opened the way to India by the Cape of Good Hope, the rhinoceros again became known ; and many specimens were brought to Europe. The first that appeared in England was in 1684.

The *two-horned* species is a native of Africa. It differs from that found in India in being provided with an additional horn, of a smaller size, near the forehead. Its skin, also, is not thrown into the folds so remarkable in the Indian rhinoceros. A specimen of this animal has lately been brought to England, and is now in the gardens of the Zoological Society of London. We give a sketch of it, along with its keeper. It is a young male, about six feet long, and three feet six inches high. It was caught in Upper Nubia. It is quite tame ; and, at present, is in good health ; its chief food is clover—hay.

The rhinoceros is greatly inferior to the elephant in docility. The skin is used for whips and walking-canes. It is also used by the Japanese for shields. Drinking-cups were formerly made of the horns ; and an ancient author says, that the Roman ladies used them as cases to hold their bottles of perfumes and oils. A coin of the time of Domitian represents a combat between a two-horned rhinoceros and a bear, in which the latter appears to be tossed into the air with as much ease as a bull would toss a troublesome cur.