

INDIA AND THE HINDOOS:

PRESENTED BY
BEING
THE MRS. ISAAC R. HITT,
A POPULAR VIEW C.
- 1831 -

THE GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, GOVERNMENT, MANNERS, CUSTOMS,
LITERATURE AND RELIGION OF THAT ANCIENT PEOPLE;

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS AMONG THEM

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NEW YORK:

CHARLES SCRIBNER,

1851.

standing ready to stamp its ponderous foot upon it so soon as it reaches the ground.

The *Rhinoceros* exceeds the elephant in clumsiness of figure, and is not much inferior in size and weight. The leading feature of interest in its physical structure, is the *horn upon its nose*, which projects, not unfrequently, thirty inches upward. So long as the animal is quiet, this appendage lies loose between the nostrils; but when excited, the muscular tension is so great that it becomes immovably fixed, and can be darted into a tree to the depth of several inches. From the earliest times, this horn has been regarded as an antidote against poison. Goblets made from it were much in use among the Hindoo princes, because, when poisonous liquids were poured into them, the noxious qualities were, it was thought, certain of betrayal, by a brisk effervescence. In some of the northern districts, attempts have been made to render this animal available for carrying travellers and burdens, but with little success. Bishop Heber mentions meeting with one which was so tame as to allow a howdah and driver upon its back. The rhinoceros lives in Bengal, and the lower ranges of the Himalayahs; feeding on coarse grass and other vegetable substances, especially those containing much succulent matter; seeking amidst mud and water protection from the scorching heat; disposed to be at peace with the tiger and its other neighbors, but when provoked, becoming a furious and deadly foe. A few, only, have been brought to the western continent, the ex-

pense of transportation being great, its appetite voracious, and hunger throws it into a paroxysm of rage.

The *Wild Boar* still roams the jungles of India, and to hunt it is one of the field sports to which foreigners are enthusiastically attached ; though the ardor has somewhat abated during later years.

Camels are found in large droves throughout Guzerat, Patna, and Mooltan ; and, like the elephant, are made serviceable to the merchant, the traveller, and the warrior. The East India Company maintain a corps of *Dromedaries*, mounted by two men each, and armed with musketoons and swivels.

Two species of *Bear* are common in India, of which the kind inhabiting the Ghats is hardly exceeded in ferocity of temper by the tiger or hyena ; and the second, or Ursine, which makes its appearance in the forests of Oude, Orissa, the Carnatic and Coromandel, is far more mild and harmless. A northern traveller gives us an account of an escape from the fatal embrace of the former species, which indicates much forethought and ingenuity on the part of his native attendant. I present it in the words of the writer. “Upon gaining the summit of a hill which overhung a precipice, a *bear* started from a recess in a neighboring covert, and advanced, evidently with sinister intentions, towards us. I was about to fire when one of my guides motioned me to desist, giving me to understand that he would attack the enemy unarmed. Almost upon the extreme edge of the precipice, stood a tall tree with vertical branches, very