

RIDPATH'S UNIVERSAL HISTORY

AN ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGIN, PRIMITIVE CONDITION AND ETHNIC DEVELOPMENT
OF THE GREAT RACES OF MANKIND, AND OF THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS IN THE
EVOLUTION AND PROGRESS OF THE CIVILIZED LIFE AMONG MEN
AND NATIONS, FROM RECENT AND AUTHENTIC SOURCES.

WITH A PRELIMINARY INQUIRY ON THE TIME, PLACE AND MANNER
OF THE BEGINNING.

By JOHN CLARK RIDPATH, LL. D.,

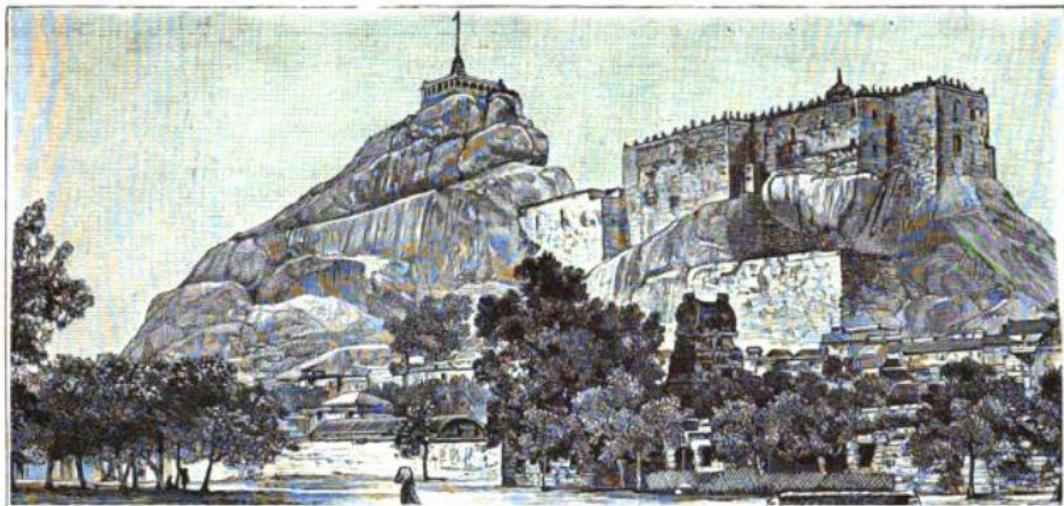
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BOOK VI.—THE INDICANS.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—HOUSE PEOPLE OF ARYA.



T is our purpose in the current chapter to present as much as may be gathered relative to one of the most interesting types in primitive civilization. This is the method of life, the structure of the household, the form of domestic and social economy adopted by the primitive Aryans of India. Since the building of a house for an abode, and the dwelling together therein of one man and one woman with their children in the method of that persistent and glorious fact called the family, constitute the leading feature, the form and substance, of the life of this far-off division of our own race, the caption employed for the present chapter will be the "House People of Arya."

Before entering upon the formal elucidation of the social life of this people, it is desirable to note the features of the country in which the great structure of

Indian civilization was planned and developed. We must not depreciate the influence of physical nature upon man and his institutions. On the contrary, it is frankly conceded that the reactive effect of universal nature on the senses and intellects, and even on the emotions and passions of mankind, is one of the greatest elements in determining the course and character of human development.

The country in which the house builders of ancient Arya were destined, most of all, to display their native dispositions and acquired activities, may well serve as an illustration of the potency, not to say domination, of nature over man.

The name INDIA is of recent origin. If we consult the native tongues of the East, we shall find no single word sufficiently comprehensive to define the country which we are now to consider. The name which in Sanskrit would most nearly describe the vast region which

Reactions of nature on man and his institutions.

Derivation and sense of the name India.

CHAPTER XL.—ANIMAL AND VEGETABLE RESOURCES OF INDIA.



HE Aryans began in India as poets and warriors, and have ended as priests and peasants. The primitive aspect was one of aggression, conquest, energetic activity; the present aspect is one of submission, quiescence, passivity. There is only one point of view from which the energies of the race may be said to be unabated, and that is in the perpetual but timid industry of the people. It is now proper to review briefly the conditions of environment under which the transformation of the India of antiquity into the India of modern times has been effected.

This vast region, a peninsula in its general form and relations to the sea, Slight changes in the environment of the Indicans. has perhaps been less affected in its original conditions of climate and physical character under the great and continuous burden of population than has any other country of like extent on the globe. The traveler, the ethnographer, the historian, is to-day able, as in the times of Alexander or in the times of the Vedic bards, to scrutinize the movements and products of physical nature essentially unchanged and but slightly varying from what they were in the time of the prehistoric Mongolian aborigines.

India has always been a land of vast Vast and varied resources of the country. and varied resources. In the earlier ages of Aryan domination the conquerors were brought into relation rather with the animal life of the peninsula

than with the products of the soil. In the beginning all people must be hunters, warriors, adventurers of the hill and jungle. Here in the valleys of the rivers, in the wooded uplands, and on the slopes of the Himalayas, steep-up to the clouds, they found a variety and abundance of animal life unequalled in any other part of the earth. It is now recognized as a fact by zoölogists that a majority of all the animals, great and small, common to the north temperate belts of the earth have their origin, or at least a native place, in India. Nearly every species of creature, from the domestic fowl to the elephant, may be found, with its pristine habits and in its original abode in the vast wilds of the Indian jungles.

To note particularly the principal animals of this great region would require a separate treatise. Here from the earliest ages the Animal life of India; tigers and leopards.

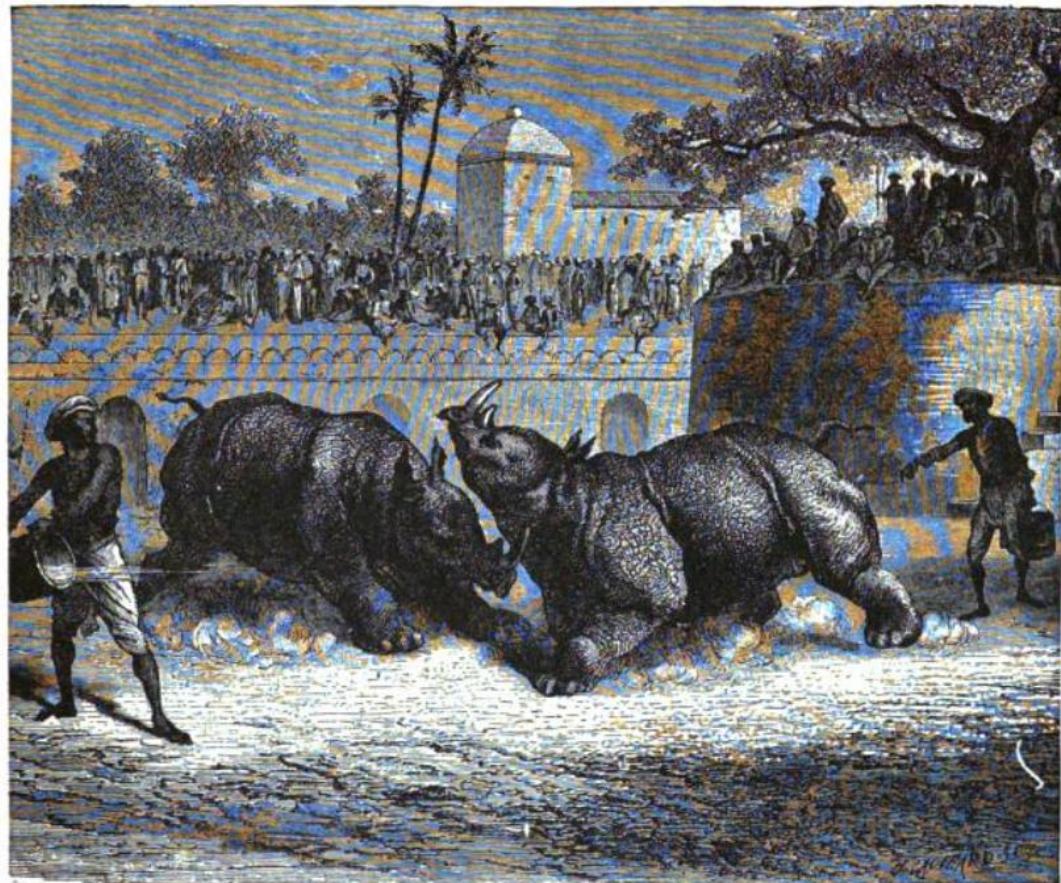
lion has flourished, and from hence the striped tiger has carried the name of Bengal to every spot on the planet where a collection of wild beasts has been established or a traveling menagerie has pitched its tents. To the present day the people, even in thickly settled districts, are in mortal dread of this formidable beast, who from the days of the beginning has been known as a man-eater. Within the last quarter of a century a single tiger has killed hundreds of people before he could be destroyed. In one instance a country having an area of two hundred and fifty square miles and thirteen villages was thrown out of cultivation and abandoned from the ravages of one tiger!

Four varieties of rhinoceros are found in India. Two of the species are unicorns, and two have double horns.

The principal pachyderms and ruminants. They most abound in the valley of the Brahmaputra and in the Sundarbans. Its habitat is mostly in swampy places, and its manner of life like that of swine,

on the slopes of the Himalayas, where some of them range as high as twelve thousand feet above the level of the sea. Here also is found the ibex, even on the highest ranges of the mountains; also the chamois, in the Himalayas, from Assam to Burmah.

It would be vain to enumerate the an-



RHINOCEROS FIGHT AT BARODA.—Drawn by Emile Bayard.

or even the hippopotamus. From the earliest times the wild hog has abounded in the Indian jungles. Its habit is to hover along the edges of settlements and to gratify its predatory habits by plunging into fields and villages. In the deserts of Sindh and Kachheh the wild ass still exists, as in the times of the Aryan migration. Many varieties of wild sheep and wild goats are found

elope and the deer, with its many species, the bison, from the

gaur of the Western Ghats to the gayal of the north-eastern frontier.

In the latter region the bison has been domesticated, and is used by the aboriginal tribes in their sacrifices. In Burmah the buffalo is found, large and fierce. The heads of some bulls captured in modern times

Habits and size of the Indian buffalo.