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MANUAL

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OF THE

ELEMENTS

OF

NATURAL HISTORY.

BY

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TRANSLATED FROM THE TENTH GERMAN EDITION,

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"It is, indeed, remarkable for its clear arrangement, and for the immense quantity of interesting and valuable information it contains, condensed into a small compass. It is, altogether, the best Elementary book on Natural History, in any language."

LAWRENCE'S LECTURES.

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Not  
taken

year 7000lbs. Its skin, nearly an inch thick on the back, is, notwithstanding, sensible to the stings of insects, and commonly of a grey colour. The most important organ of the Elephant is his proboscis, which serves him for respiration, for his very acute sense of smell, for drawing up water, for seizing his food and conveying it into his mouth, and for many other purposes, instead of a hand. He can extend it to the length of six feet, and shorten it again to three. At the extremity, it is provided with a flexible hook, by means of which he can perform various tricks, such as untying knots, unloosing buckles, picking up money, &c. His food consists principally of the leaves of trees, rice, and other grain. He swims with great facility, even through rapid streams. In copulating, he leaps on the female like most other quadrupeds. The young one sucks with the mouth, and not the trunk as many have asserted. About the third or fourth year, the two large tusks, which furnish ivory, appear in both sexes. They are seven or eight feet long, and a single one will weigh as much as 200lbs. It is probable that the Elephant will live 200 years. It is principally used as a beast of burden, as it is able to carry at least a ton, and to drag heavy articles over mountains, &c. Its step consists in a quick shuffling motion of the legs, but so sure that it never stumbles, even on the worst roads.

2. *Africanus*. *E. capite subrotundo, fronte convexa, auriculis amplissimis, rotundatis; dentium molarium corona rhombis distincta.*

(*Abbild. Nat. Hist. Gegenst. Tab. 19. fig. C.*)

This species, a native of the middle and south of Africa, is a domestic animal in the interior only of that Continent; elsewhere it is hunted and killed merely for its flesh, and particularly for procuring ivory.

41. RHINOCEROS. *Rhinoceros. Cornu solidum, conicum, naso insidens.*

1. *Asiaticus*. The One-Horned Rhinoceros—*Rh. dentibus primoribus, utrinque quaternis, inferioribus conicis, superioribus sublobatis; laniariis nullis.*

(*Abbild. Nat. Hist. Gegenst. Tab. 7. fig. B.*)

In the East Indies. The (generally) single horn of this species, as well as the double one of the African, is not attached to the bone, but merely rests upon it.

2. *Africanus*. The Two-Horned Rhinoceros.—*Rh. dentibus primoribus et laniariis nullis.*

(*Abbild. Nat. Hist. Gegenst. Tab. 7. fig. A.*)

In South Africa, at the Cape, &c. For the most part with a double horn; the second small, and placed behind the first.

42. HIPPOPOTAMUS. *Dentes primores superiores remoti, inferiores procumbentes; laniarii inferiores incurvati, oblique truncati.*

1. *Amphibius*. The River-Horse. *Ger. das Nilpferd. Fr. le Cheval marin.* (At the Cape, called Sea Cow.)

(*Buffon. Supplement Vol. III. Tab. 62, 63. Vol. VI. Tab. 4. 5.*) Common in South Africa; formerly also in the Nile. Extremely unwieldy, with a large unshapely head, an immense mouth, thick body, short thighs, &c. A full grown one weighs at least 3500lbs. It feeds on vegetables and fish.

#### VIII. PALMATA.

Mammifera with webbed feet, the Genera being divided (as in the order Digitata,) according to the forms of the teeth into three Families. (A.) *Glires*. (B.) *Feræ*. (C.) *Bruta*.

(A.) *Glires*. With chisel-shaped gnawing teeth.

43. CASTOR. *Pedes postici palmati. Dentes primores utrinque 2.*

1. *Fiber*. The Beaver. *Ger. der Biber. Fr. le Castor.*—*C. cauda depressa, ovata, quasi squamosa.*

(*Abbild. Nat. Hist. Gegenst. Tab. 43.*)

In the Northern World, in lonely spots near lakes and great rivers. It is valuable to trade for its fine fur, and in medicine for the well known castor which is found in both sexes in a particular receptacle at the extremity of the abdomen. These animals, however, are particularly remarkable for the ingenuity with which they construct their permanent residences, in those countries in which they are still found in numbers together, such as the interior of Canada, and above all, for the wonderful skill with which they make dams when necessary. Allowing that there is much exaggeration in the accounts which many travellers have given of the Beaver, yet the coincident testimony of the most unprejudiced observers from various parts of the world, proves that these animals are capable of directing their operations according to circumstances, in a manner far superior to the unvarying mechanical instinct of other creatures.