

THE
PARENTS' CABINET

OF

AMUSEMENT AND INSTRUCTION.


A NEW EDITION.

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"Ah, you should have gone on with him he advised," said Oliver.

"Dark night now came on," continued his "and with it came on the heavy dew, that put the bush and grass from burning. The boy's cow which had hitherto been so steady, now fell halloed and he begged me to do so also—a began to talk about being destroyed by the surging elephants and other wild animals."

"Was your halloo answered?" asked Arthur.

"No; neither halloo nor gun did we hear. I was sorry for the boy—tried to laugh him out of his fears, and persuaded him, while the bushes still burn, to collect sticks and wood for our fire, for I saw clearly that we should have to do so the night where we were. With his help I made a cheerful blazing pile of wood, and spreading our sheepskins, I bade him lie down to sleep, and promised to keep watch till day! The little fellow soon snored upon his sheepskin."

"Did you sleep, uncle?" asked Arthur.

"No; I kept watch for five hours, and did not at all inclined to sleep. I was too anxious about safety. I heard so many noises all around me at first, a hollow tramping, which made me think of hundreds of elephants were crossing the hills to us—and, whenever my fire burnt dim, I heard the short howl of the wolf approaching us."

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"How did you know it was approaching?" asked Oliver.

"Because the second howl was louder and nearer than the first, and each succeeding howl louder still," replied his uncle. "But I soon made these fellows keep their distance. I stirred up the fire, or put fresh wood on it, and the brisk flame made them quickly depart. Then I heard the croaking of the night raven, who was attracted by the smell of the dead elephant—and then a noise came so near, that it awoke my little companion."

"What noise was that?" said Arthur.

"It was a strange noise, something between a chattering and a howl. The boy begged me to heap up more wood and make a large blaze, for he knew by the noise that a hyena was near. The howl of this animal was the most unpleasant noise I had heard. At last day appeared, and we arose and took our guns and some lighted sticks from the fire, and again set off in search of our party. I soon saw that our fire had preserved us from being trampled to death that night, for the ground all around was marked with the fresh foot-prints of the elephants and buffaloes, whose galloping I had heard. We soon had the pleasure of meeting our friends. They had passed the night on one of the hills, not far from us."

"You did not leave the hunter again, did you, uncle?" said Arthur.

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"No, my lad. When we told him of our
from the rhinoceros, he said we were lucky th
gun had not fired, for if the rhinoceros is sl
and wounded, he turns against his enemy, and
the sight of the flames of the burning bus
no effect upon him."

"What sort of an animal is the rhinoc
asked Richard.

"It is in shape more like an enormous ho
any other animal, and is very nearly as la
the elephant—but with a hide so tough and
that leaden musket-balls will not pierce it.
rhinoceros of Africa ——"

"Uncle, the rhinoceros inhabits parts of
interrupted Richard.



"Yes, yes; I know, my dear," said his
"but the rhinoceros of Africa is different in
things from the rhinoceros of Asia. The A
rhinoceros has two sharp-pointed horns gr
from his nose, while that of Asia has only one

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is one point of difference. The other part of the animal that is different is the hide. The African has a hide perfectly smooth, while the rhinoceros of Asia has a hide full of thick folds; but the animal of both countries likes to wallow in the mud, and the sense of smell in both is very keen, and the eye very small."

"What do they eat?" said Arthur.

"Green boughs and bushes, and any kind of vegetable," said his uncle; "and they seem to be able to conquer every animal but the elephant. I should not have escaped so easily from the rhinoceros that rushed past me if he had had a better sight. But this animal can only see in a straight line."

"Was the rhinoceros that came out upon you angry?" asked Oliver.

"I rather think not, for he did not root up the ground with his horns. I think the elephants had alarmed him, and that he was running away from them. It is a curious sight to see how easily these beasts can split open trees with their sharp horns."

"How many elephants did you kill altogether in this hunt?" asked Oliver.

"I did not even kill one," replied his uncle, "but the hunter and his men killed five. The last three were caught in a narrow pass between the hills, where they were quietly feeding on the bushes, and

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the hunters fired so skilfully upon them th
fell dead in a few minutes."

"What did you do with them when the
killed?" asked Arthur.

"We took the ivory tusks, and then we
such parts of the animals as we wanted for foo
his uncle.

"Food," cried Oliver; "what! eat el
meat? I never heard of such a thing
life."

"Very likely," said Uncle John; "and
have eaten elephant-meat—and let me te
that it is very good meat, especially when a
hungry."

"Aye, but it is not so good as beef and r
said Oliver.

"I thought differently when I ate it, youn
said his uncle. "I found it very relishin
took from one of the elephants the trunk
foot, and then opened the body and took
heart, part of which we also meant to eat.
up the whole lot with a strip cut from h
flappy ear, and we left the rest of the body
for the vultures, hyenas, and wolves."

"Pray, uncle, tell me one thing," said
"Did you eat the elephant's flesh raw?"

"No, my dear; I don't think I could e
beef or mutton in that state. We made a

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en we cut the meat into small pieces, which we rust upon a sharp long stick. Then we peppered and salted it, and broiled the meat on the fire. As we had no dishes nor plates, nor table, in that wild place, we stuck the stick firmly into the ground, when the meat was enough cooked, and then we all sat down in a circle around it, and each man with his knife cut off from the stick as much meat as he wanted."

"Ha, ha, ha!" said Oliver, laughing; "I should like to have seen you all—I would gladly have eaten some with you. How funny it must have been!"

"Funny enough," replied his uncle, "but I think it much pleasanter to have a clean plate, and a table and a knife and fork, than to cut off lumps of meat from an upright stick. But hungry men in the wilds of Africa are grateful even for such a meal as this. I did not remain much longer with the hunting-party, but took one of the Hottentots to ride me back to Cape Town, where I remained until a vessel was sailing for England."

The boys all thanked their uncle; and, as their father had not yet come home, they sat down to the table, and began to try to draw the different animals that their uncle had mentioned. Oliver and Richard tried to draw a rhinoceros, and Arthur an elephant; and at last, with the help of Uncle John, they suc-

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ceeded in making outlines somewhat resembling those animals: but not until the rhinoceros that Oliver had drawn, had been rubbed out more than six times, because he could not put the two horns in the right place on the nose.

