

## THE RHINOCEROS.—(RHINOCEROS INDIA AND RHINOCEROS SONDAICUS.)

### HIND. GENDA.

There are two well distinguished varieties of the rhinoceros in India, viz., the greater and the less rhinoceros. The Indian rhinoceros has one horn, which is situated on its nose. Its skin is very thick, of a dull, deep purplish gray, marked with sub-elevated, rounded, and other inequalities, and remarkable for the deep folds which it forms behind and across the shoulders, and before and across the thighs. There are a few stout and stiff hairs on the tail and on the ears. The former inhabits the Eastern Terai, Assam and the Bhutan Duars; the latter is found in the Bengal Sunderbands. The great rhinoceros attains a height of from 4½ to 5 feet; and is from 9 to 10 feet long. The horn measures occasionally as much as 2 feet in length. The small rhinoceros is only from 3½ to 3¾ feet in height, and about 7 or 8 feet long. His horn seldom exceeds 1 foot. These curious animals frequent the swampy ground on the low margins of rivers and reedy tracts on the borders of sluggish streams. They are found too at times in the dense shade of the forest in the neighbourhood of rivers. Their ordinary food consists of herbage and the branches of trees. Tennent is of opinion that this species is the unicorn of Scripture and the Indian ass† of Aristotle. He says that it loves the shady forests, the neighbourhood of rivers, and marshy places; that it brings forth one young at a time, and is very solicitous about it; that it is usually quiet and inoffensive; but when attacked, furious, very swift and dangerous. The hide of the rhinoceros is perhaps thicker than that of any other pachydermatous animal. The horns consist of congregated parallel horny fibres. Shields are often made of the hide and drinking cups of the horn. The vital point of the rhinoceros is the neighbourhood of the eye. The neck and the regions behind the ear and behind the shoulder are protected by great folds of the skin.

\* A highly arched back is the most liable to get galled; and, moreover, a flat back carries a howdah more steadily.

† The *mahout* is also called the *foujdar* and *filband*, according as the speaker may desire to exhibit his respect for the driver, or his knowledge of Persian.

‡ Aristotle, lib. II. c. i., says that some animals are monoceratous and solidungulous, such as the *Indikoronos monokeros*—Strabo, lib. XVI. p. 774, gives a clear description of a rhinoceros seen by himself.