

Zoological Catalogue of the Museum of the Asiatic Society.—By
 J. T. PEARSON, Esq.

To H. TORRENS, Esq.

Secretary to the Asiatic Society.

SIR,

When Curator of the Asiatic Society, I wished to make a catalogue of that portion of the Museum—the Zoological, which was my particular charge,* and to this end got ready a good number of notes, and began to prepare the catalogue; my departure from Calcutta, and afterwards other circumstances, obliged me to put off copying and correcting it. And at last I found, that not only had my arrangement of the Museum been overthrown, but the labels I had attached to the specimens were displaced, probably by some rough treatment. Under these circumstances, my intention of publishing my notes was almost laid aside; but as they may be useful when the Society shall have got a Curator, by saving him a great deal of labour; and as the labels of the osteological specimens were written in ink, they, at all events, could not have fallen off, I have the pleasure of placing a portion of the catalogue at the disposal of the Society; the remainder shall follow as soon as I can prepare it.

In the introductory remarks, I have explained the principles upon which I think such a catalogue should be made: I have therefore nothing to add upon that subject; but as a member of the Society, I must deprecate the changes and innovations in the classification of the objects in the Museum, which I understand to have been made. If every successive Curator be allowed to alter the arrangement at his

* I mention this, because blame has been cast upon former Curators, for their inattention to the Geological and Mineralogical portions of the Museum. Lest it should be thought just to myself, I distinctly state, that I never took charge of more than the *Zoological* portion of the Museum; Mr. J. Prinsep having had the Geological and Mineralogical specimens under his own care: and I must say it will take much better evidence, than any yet brought forward, to make me believe he neglected them in any way; much less to justify the hue and cry that has been raised about them. The confusion spoken of by the Committee of Papers in their late Curatorship report, has probably arisen since he was compelled by his much to be lamented illness to retire from the country; or from innovations which are better calculated for display, than for improvement.

own will, it will be impossible ever to prepare a catalogue to refer to the specimens, and be highly injurious to the institution. The changes made in the system of classification of the birds, by changing that of Vigors for that of Cuvier, are, so far as I can understand, hardly judicious; and I have yet to learn, that the makers are safer guides in ornithology than Vigors and Horsfield.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

J. T. PEARSON,

Member Asiatic Society.

DARJEELING,
11th June, 1840.

Some difficulty was experienced in making a catalogue of the specimens in the Museum of the Asiatic Society previously to the year 1835, owing to there being, in many instances, no record either of the specimens themselves, or of their donors; whenever the name of the latter could be found out, it is given; and in future each specimen should be carefully registered, immediately it is received.

In forming a catalogue of a daily increasing Museum, it is evident it cannot be a systematic one. A numerical plan therefore is adopted, in which the specimens are numbered according to the order in which they come before the Curator. In the cabinet, however, a systematic arrangement of the specimens will, as nearly as possible be followed, and upon each a number placed, referring to the same number in the catalogue. Thus the catalogue will be numerical; the arrangement systematic.

But should it be thought desirable, the Curator can, in each successive edition, add a list of the specimens, arranged according to the system or method followed, as an Appendix.

The general system of classification adopted, is that of "La Règne Animal," on account of its being at present that most in use. But particular branches of Zoology will be classified according to the system best adapted to the present state of the science. In Birds, the classification of Mr. Vigors will be followed, in Insects and Crustacea, that of Latreille; in Mollusca, that of Lamarck; and in Mammalia, Reptiles, and Fishes, that of Cuvier himself.

actions, by Sir E. Home, mentioned under the last specimen, the author has instituted a comparison between the Lamantin and the Dugong, or Duzong. A matter which was settled long before in the "Annales du Museum d'Histoire Naturelle."

No. 25. FAM. Cete.—GEN. Delphinus.

SP. D. Gangeticus. The Gangetic Dolphin.

A Skull.

The Gangetic Dolphin is the *Platanista Gangetica*, of Hardwicke and Gray.

No. 26. SP. Delphinus delphis.—The Porpoise.

A Skull.

In the 12th vol. of the Researches As. Society, mention is made of a presentation by Dr. Wallich, of the cranium of a "Dolphin, found near the Isle of France."

No. 27. ORD. Pachydermata.

28. GEN. Rhinoceros.

29. SP. R. Indicus. The Indian Rhinoceros.

30.

A Skull.

Dr. Wallich presented *five* crania of the Rhinoceros; see Researches vol. 12.

No. 31. SP. Rhinoceros Indicus. The Indian Rhinoceros.

An articulated Skeleton.

This specimen was shot at Baugundee, in Jessore, by Mr. J. H. Barlow, and presented in his name to the Society, 1834.

No. 32. FAM. Proboscidea.

33. GEN. Elephas.

34. SP. E. Indicus.

A Skull.

Nos. 32 and 33 were presented by Dr. Wallich, (see Researches vol. 12) the latter being a divided skull. No. 34, a fine specimen, was presented by the late Dr. J. Adam.

The old trivial name for this species has been, for some reason or other, changed into that of "Asiaticus," a name less definite even than that of Indicus; and not, like it, recommended by time and classical recollections.

- No. 104. SP. *Aristotelis*. The black Saumer, or Rusa Deer.
Horns and part of the Skull.
- No. 105. SP. *Cervus hippelaphus* (?) The great Rusa Deer (?)
A single Horn.
- No. 106. SP. *Cervus muntjak*. The Khyjang.
Horns and part of the Skull.
- No. 107. SP. *Cervus hippelaphus*. The great Rusa Deer.
A single Horn.
- No. 108. SP. *Cervus aristotelis*. The black Saumer or Rusa Deer.
A single horn.
- No. 109. ORD. Pachydermata.
GEN. *Eguus*.
SP. *E. caballus*. The Horse.
A Skull.
- No. 110. GEN. *Rhinoceros*.
SP. *R. Indicus*. The Rhinoceros.
An articulated right hind foot: the os calcis mutilated.
- No. 111. GEN. *Elephas*.
SP. *E. Indicus*. The Indian elephant.
A Scapula.
- No. 112. ORD. Carnassiers.
FAM. Marsupiata.
GEN. *Thylacynus*.
SP. *T. cynocephalus*. Van Diemen's Land Tiger.
A Skull.

This specimen was taken from a stuffed skin presented by Dr. J. Henderson. The dentition of the species having been incorrectly given heretofore, I described it as accurately as the state of the present specimen would admit of (the incisors being wanting) in the 4th vol. of the Journal of the Asiatic Society, page 572. But since my description was written (and in consequence of its having been written) another specimen has been presented to the Society; and it is to be desired that some competent person should describe the position of the incisor teeth from it. I have reason to doubt the accuracy of my conjecture, formed as it was, from the empty sockets only.