

THE  
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

A BOOK OF BEASTS AND BIRDS  
WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED  
WITH PHOTOGRAPHS FROM LIFE  
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hand, has an extremely short tail, a mere stump only ; but it makes up for this by having two large bumps or excrescences of fat hanging down, one from each of its haunches. The lambs of this breed are killed when they are very young, often before birth, and their black, tightly curling wool constitutes the astrachan of commerce. These huge flat tails and fat protuberances are thought to serve as a store of nourishment, just as we see in the case of the humps of the camel ; for in times of scarcity of food and water the tails and bumps gradually grow smaller, while the sheep appear to get but very little thinner in body.

The first thing that is generally noticed about the forty-year-old rhinoceros at the Antwerp Zoological Gardens (Plate XXIV. fig. 3) is the extraordinary roughness of its skin, which stands out on many portions of its body like lumps of burnt clay : but, on looking at the head and neck, we see something even more remarkable, for just in front of the ears are three excrescences which resemble the short antlers of the deer when they first commence to grow, after the annual shedding of the old ones ; whilst on the neck are several spikes of varying length, each growing quite straight upwards, and terminating in two which stand up nearly six inches from the neck. The large rhinoceros, "Jim," which has lived over thirty years in the Regent's Park collection, strange to say, already shows signs of similar excrescences on his neck, so that it is possible that in time we may be the proud possessors of an animal oddity quite as remarkable as the one illustrated.

Variations in colour and markings are by no means the least remarkable things in animal-life, and even amongst the uniformly black and white cattle to be seen in Holland, it is extremely rare to find eight oxen so wonderfully marked as these "sheeted" steers (Plate XXVI. fig. 1), which at one time belonged to Mr. Beresford-Hope, and worked at ploughing and hay-carrying on his farm at Sussex. So evenly were they marked that, to any person not used to seeing them, it would have been an absolute impossibility to distinguish one from the other, or to have sorted them out into their proper positions in the team ; and it was rumoured that over one thousand guineas had been refused for these "sheeted" Dutch oxen, unique in this country, and very difficult ever to match again even in Holland.

And amongst wild animals we find exactly this same peculiarity of markings in the tapirs, of which there are four species in Central and



*Gambier Bolton, Regd.*

FIG. 1.

RODENT'S TEETH, ABNORMAL GROWTH.



*Gambier Boltou, Regd.*

FIG. 2.

WHALE'S ARM AND HAND.



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FIG. 3.

REMARKABLE GROWTH ON AN AGED RHINOCEROS.

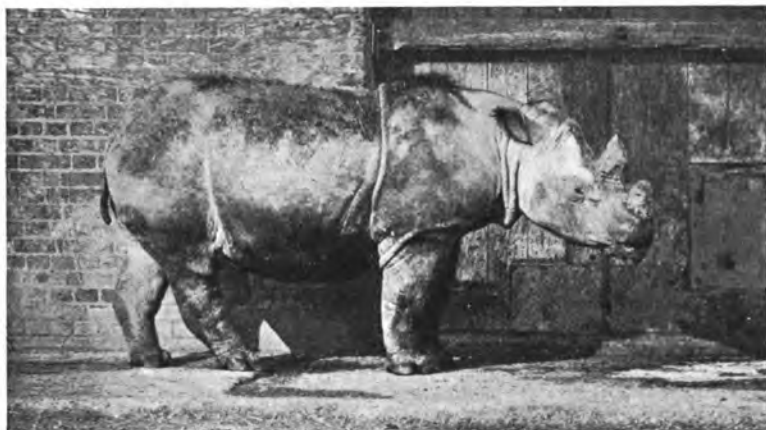
"Far up in Alaska, almost to the coast of the Arctic Ocean, the Indians say that a herd of the mammoths still exists. The story is repeated with such persistency and with such an air of sincerity that some white people believe that it is not a mere hunter's tale. About a month ago this report was brought in again by an Indian hunter to one of the Alaska trading posts. He claimed that he had seen the mammoths running along the desolate shores of the Arctic Ocean. His description of the animals tallied exactly with the mammoths of the museum."

Fortunate indeed will be the person who first finds it and brings a specimen into any civilized part of the world, for its value would be something enormous. In connection with this subject, we must remember that the tendency nowadays is to increase the number of zoological collections of the world, rather than to let them fall off, for it is now at last realized that many of the animals are rapidly becoming exterminated, and that unless attempts are made to keep and breed them in captivity, future generations will only know what they are like from seeing paintings, photographs, and stuffed specimens.

This being the case, great competition invariably takes place among the many zoological societies to secure, at all costs, any rare beast or bird which may be captured; this tending to keep up and increase the prices, which, but for this keen competition, might fall off.

Look at the little hairy-eared rhinoceros (Plate XLIV., fig. 1) from Chittagong, in Upper Burmah, for which it is said that the London Zoological Society paid no less than £1250, the highest price ever paid by them for any animal, simply because in 1872 it was the first specimen ever discovered and brought alive to Europe. It is quite small and ugly-looking even for a rhinoceros; but now that the species is becoming more common the price has fallen off, and it is doubtful if a hairy-eared rhinoceros would fetch a tenth of the money paid for the first specimen.

The pigmy hippopotamus of Liberia, West Africa, is known to exist there, but for some unexplained reason not a single specimen has ever reached Europe alive; and tiny as it is, being only about thirty inches high when full grown, it would be worth a very large sum to any person landing a living specimen in Europe. Of the large white rhinoceros, too, with its double horns, the front one often exceeding 4 feet in height, not a single living specimen has ever been known out of Africa. Rumour, however, says that a thousand pounds each



*Gambier Bolton, Regd.*

HAIRY-EAR'D RHINOCEROS.

FIG. 1.



*Gambier Bolton, Regd.*

EUROPEAN BISON.

FIG. 2

could awaken her. Yet at the sound of the duck-call, she actually opened her great beery-looking eyes, and then gradually raised her head, seeming puzzled at first as to whether the quacking came from the heavens above or from the pond beneath her; but directly the whistle started she turned her head round v-e-r-y s-l-o-w-l-y and faced us, and kept in this position so long as the instrument was played. I had selected a few bars of "Oh, where is my Wandering Boy to-night?" as being appropriate to her special case, and she seemed affected almost to tears, for her juvenile husband was shut off from her, owing to the very severe squashing she had given him a few days previous to our visit, by sitting on top of him, in the most deliberate and murderous fashion, when both were in the swimming-tank together. It was bad for the "boy," as he was only two years old, and weighed but a few hundred-weight, whereas the lady was (small print, please, for a lady's age, Mr. Printer) about five and twenty, and counts her weight by the ton.

The zebras, for whom we had selected the patriotic air, "Stars and Stripes," as a whistle solo, did not respond with that alacrity which we had expected, but pricked up their ears, and, slowly walking towards us, came up to the bars and sniffed at the musician, a suspicious lifting up and down of the hind feet suggesting that it was as well we were on the safe side of the fence; whilst the two wild asses, true to their assinine character, refused to leave the hay they were eating in a far-off corner, merely swinging their great ears to beat time to the suggestive air, "When shall we three meet again?" played slowly on the bagpipes.

We were determined not to fail with our next victim, the big Indian rhinoceros, who stood sulking in a distant corner, with his tail-end turned towards us, and took no notice of our various solos; so with the help of some small boys, who entered keenly into the fun, we prepared a grand "unison" of all four instruments, and the instant the bandmaster gave the signal, and the ear-piercing shrieks of the pipes and whistle, and the deep tones of the "quack, quack" and pheasant-calls united in a friendly chorus, he turned sharply round, pricked up his ears, raised his nose and wicked-looking horn, and rushed down on the band, which fled precipitately, as he came grunting amid a cloud of dust, his great feet crashing on the quivering ground, and an evil look in his wicked little eyes, and we could then realize what a bad two minutes the keeper must have had, who was rescued some years

ago from underneath him, but who still lives to tell the tale of his miraculous escape.

The fat wombats and scaly armadillos were not to be drawn from their heaps of straw at any price, and even the kangaroos and wallabies merely pricked up their ears, gave a glance of curiosity, and went on with their daily work, which appeared to consist of rash attempts to stow away their much-too-large infants in their pouches, which they had quite outgrown, and in spite of the plaintive wailing of the whistle, as it poured forth the somewhat suggestive air, "There's only room for one inside."

But in the apes' house we at last found a really willing listener in the orang utan, who was brought out from his cage, and was placed on the remains of what had once been a wooden chair, but was now minus its back. He was a patient as well as a willing listener, and seemed thoroughly to appreciate our endeavours to soothe him with soft melodies; but whether the airs were lively or solemn appeared to make but little difference to him; all he wanted was music, and he sat solid and stolid, gazing at us from beneath his shaggy eyebrows, his feet tucked underneath him, and hands crossed in quiet enjoyment.\* We ran through our *repertoire*, commencing with "The Dead March in Saul," and winding up with "There'll be a Hot Time in the Old Town to-night." To every one he showed the same air of stolid curiosity and pleasure, although the suggestion that he should ever dream of taking any part in the "hot times" was negated once and for ever by the look of strict but slightly shocked respectability on his face.

The carnivora, in their outside enclosures, received us in different ways. The big lioness was lying at full length, in deep slumber, with her back turned towards us, but the moment the band commenced she sprang up in such a hurry that she had no time for arranging her front paws in the proper position for receiving company, whilst her hind legs remained tucked away beneath her. The pheasant-call was responsible for this, whilst the bagpipes affected her so deeply that she rose, and came close up to the bars, in a half crouching, half frightened condition, which ended in a wild gallop across the enclosure, as a piercing note from the whistle fell upon her ears, and slinking behind the rocks, we saw her, too, no more. Whether in that country which it is said was "created to be the plague of all Foreign Offices" it would be safe to

\* See Plate XVI., fig. 3.

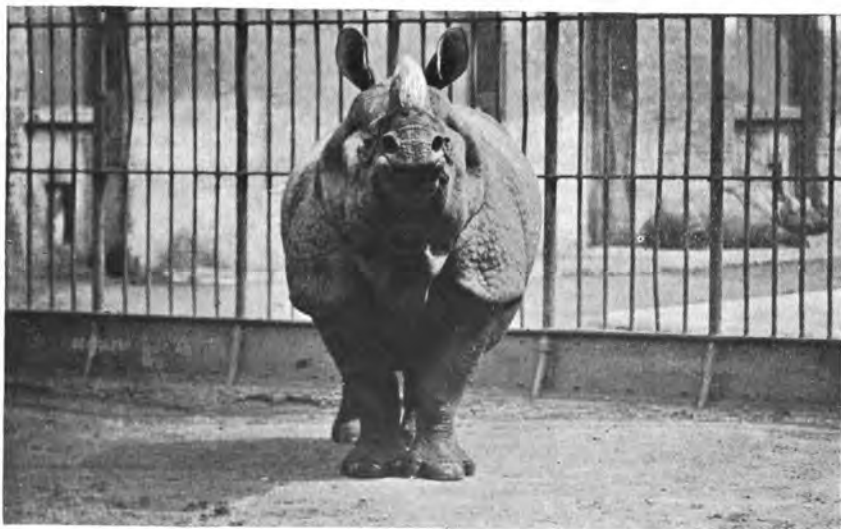




*Gambier Bolton, Regd.*

HIPPOPOTAMUS.

FIG. 1.



*Gambier Bolton, Regd.*

INDIAN RHINOCEROS.

FIG. 2.