

NEW EDITION.

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ILLUSTRATED  
NATURAL HISTORY

COMPRISING

DESCRIPTIONS OF ANIMALS, BIRDS, FISHES,  
REPTILES, INSECTS, ETC.

WITH

SKETCHES OF THEIR PECULIAR HABITS AND CHARACTERISTICS.

BY THE

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(AUTHOR OF "THE ILLUSTRATED NATURAL HISTORY OF MAN."  
"INSECTS AT HOME," ETC., ETC.)

AND OTHER

EMINENT NATURALISTS.

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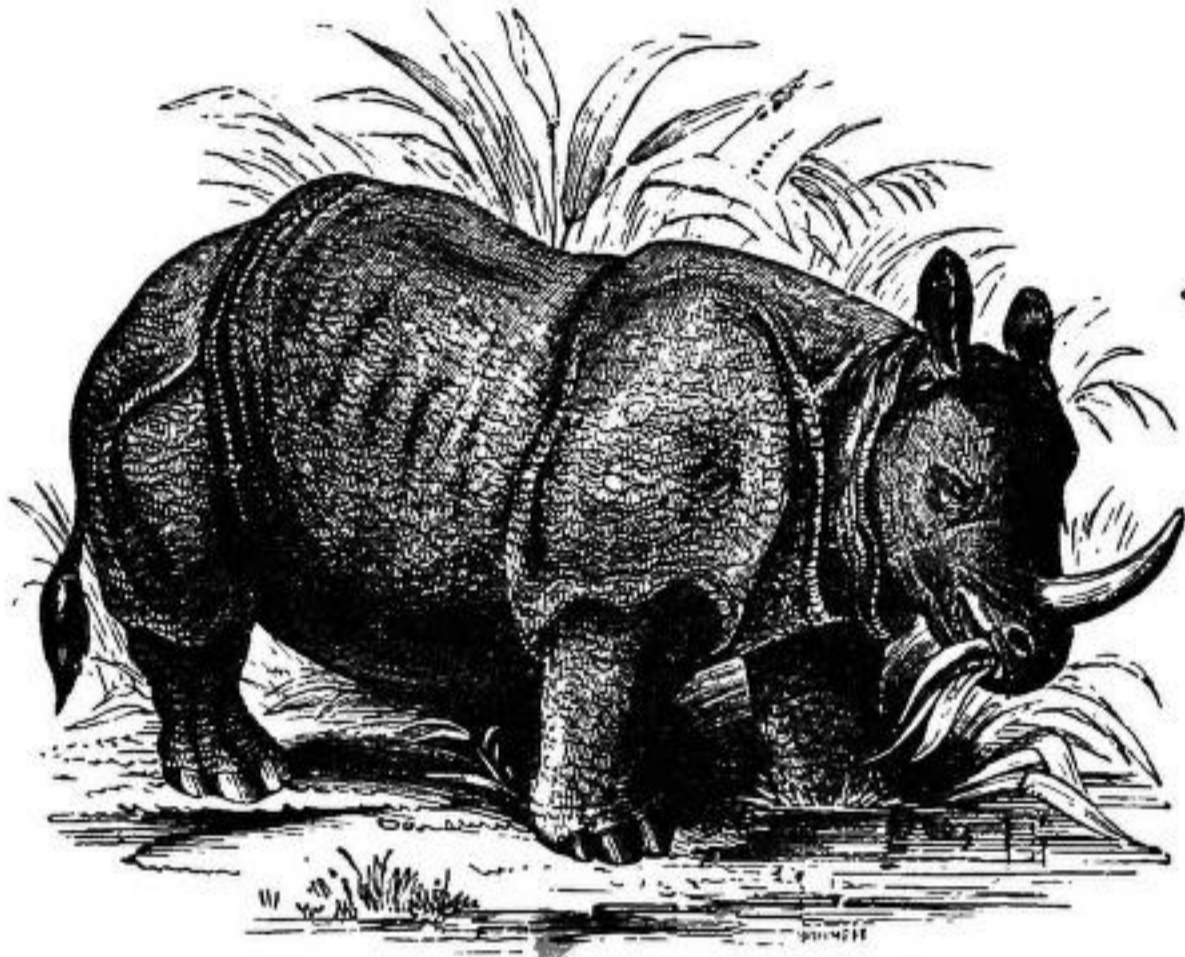
1883.

THE PECCARY is extremely numerous in all parts of Southern America. They go in herds of two or three hundred together; and unite, like the hogs, in each other's defence. They are particularly fierce when their young are attempted to be taken from them. They surround the plunderer, attack him without fear, and frequently make his life pay the forfeit of his rashness. When any of the natives are pursued by a herd in this manner, they frequently climb a tree to avoid them; while the Peccaries gather round the root, threaten with their tusks, and their rough bristles standing erect, as in the hog kind, they assume a very terrible appearance. In this manner they remain at the foot of the tree for hours together; while the hunter is obliged to wait patiently, and not without apprehensions, until they think fit to retire.

The Peccary prefers the hilly and mountainous parts of the country to the lowlands; it seems to delight neither in the marshes nor the mud, like our hogs; it keeps among the woods, where it subsists upon wild fruits, roots, and vegetables; it is also an unceasing enemy to the lizard, the toad, and all the serpent kinds, with which these uncultivated forests abound. As soon as it perceives a serpent, or a viper, it at once seizes it with its fore hoofs and teeth, skins it in an instant, and devours the flesh.

THE RHINOCEROS is an inhabitant of Bengal, Siam, parts of China, the large East India islands, Ethiopia, and found in the low countries reaching near the Cape of Good Hope. It delights in shady forests and the neighborhood of rivers and marshy places. It resembles the swine in being fond of wallowing in the mire; its affection to its young is peculiarly strong, and it brings forth only one at a time: it is quiet and inoffensive, but if provoked, it is furious and very dangerous. Its scent is most exquisite: it feeds on vegetables, and grunts like a hog. The horn of the single-horned animal is placed near the end of the nose, black, smooth, and sometimes three feet and a half long. It serves a double purpose, that of defence and that of grubbing up the ground for the purpose of obtaining substances on which it feeds. The upper lip is long, and hangs over the lower, ending in a point; the ears are large, erect, and pointed; the eyes small and dull; the skin a

naked and rough, lying about the neck in large folds; there is a fold also from the shoulders to the fore legs, and another from the hind part of the back to the thighs. The skin is so thick and



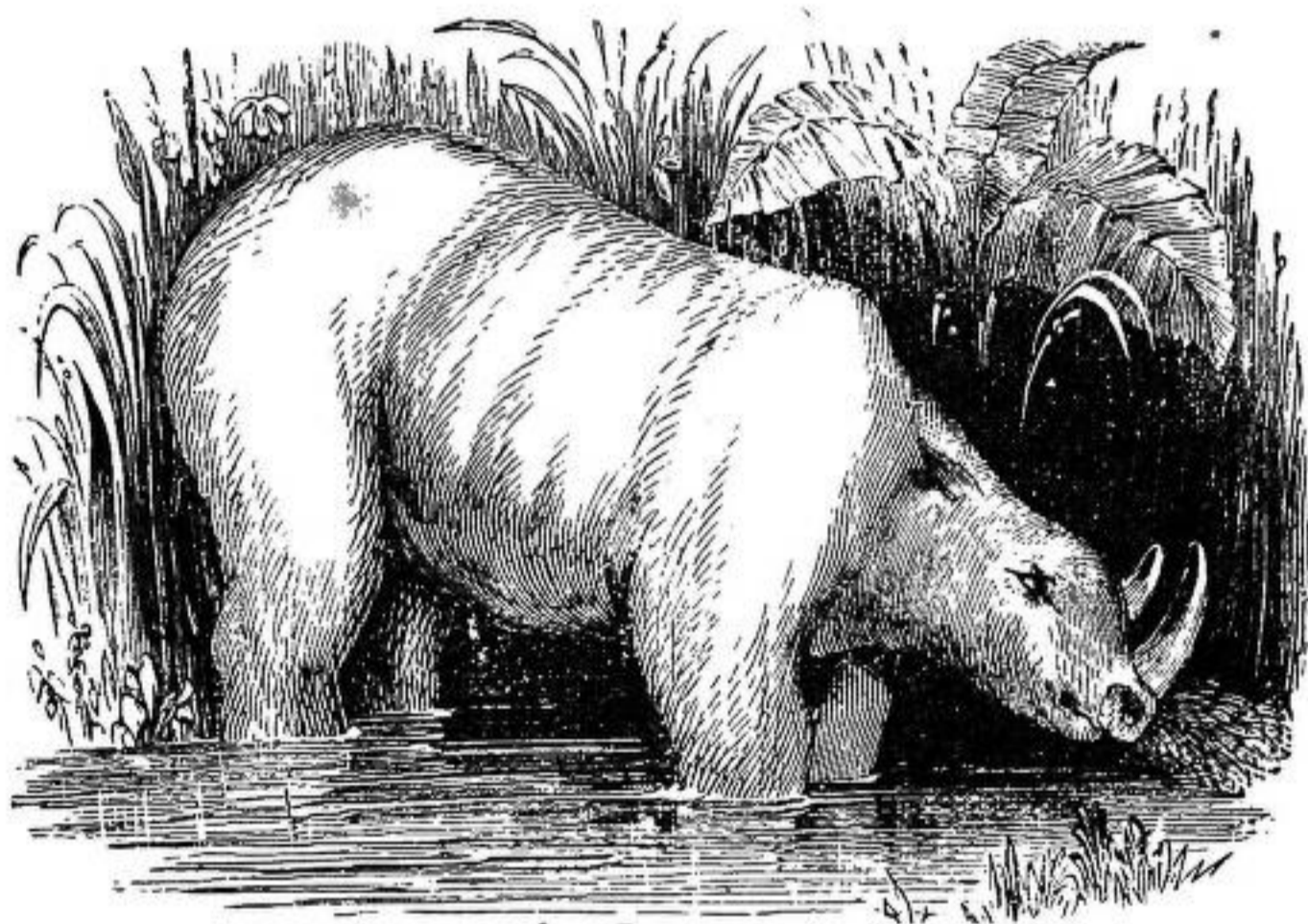
Single-Horned Rhinoceros.

strong as to resist the edge of a scymetar, and even turn off a musket-ball. The belly is low, the legs strong and thick, the hoofs divided into three parts, each pointing forward.

THE RHINOCEROS BICORNIS has two horns; it is found in various parts of Africa, and seems to be the kind which was known to the ancient Romans, and exhibited by them in their public shows and combats of animals. In size it is equal to the single-horned rhinoceros; in its habits and manner of feeding it is the same; but greatly differs in the appearance of the skin. The principal distinction consists in this, that the nose is provided with two horns, one of which is smaller than the other, and placed higher upon the front. These horns are said to be loose when the animal is in a quiet state, but the instant it is enraged, they become firm and immovable, and ready for combat.

Bruce, the celebrated traveller, has furnished an interesting

account of the manners of this animal. On the subject of feeding he says: "That besides the trees capable of most resistance, there are in the vast forests within the rains, trees of a softer consistence, and of a very succulent quality, which seem to be destined for his principal food. For the purpose of gaining the highest branches of these, his upper lip is capable of being lengthened out, so as to increase his power of laying hold with this in the same manner as the elephant does with his trunk: with this lip, and the assistance of his tongue, he pulls down the upper branches



Double-Horned Rhinoceros.

which have most leaves, and these he devours first: having stripped the tree of its branches, he does not therefore abandon it, but placing his snout as low in the trunk as he knows his horns will enter, he rips up the body of the tree, and reduces it to thin pieces as so many laths; when he has thus prepared it, he embraces as much of it as he can in his monstrous jaws, and twists it round with as much ease as an ox would do a root of celery, or any such pot-herb, or garden stuff."

Of the Rhinoceros there are four varieties in South Africa, distinguished by the Bechuanas by the names of the "borèle," or

black rhinoceros, the "keitloa," or two-horned black rhinoceros, the "muchocho," or common white rhinoceros, and the "kobaoba," or long-horned white rhinoceros. Both varieties of the black rhinoceros are extremely fierce and dangerous, and rush headlong and unprovoked at any object which attracts their attention. They never attain much fat, and their flesh is tough, and not much esteemed by the Bechuanas.

Their horns are much shorter than those of the other varieties, seldom exceeding eighteen inches in length. They are finely polished with constant rubbing against the trees. The skull is remarkably formed, its most striking feature being the tremendous thick ossification in which it ends above the nostrils. It is on this mass that the horn is supported. The horns are not connected with the skull, being attached merely by the skin, and they may thus be separated from the head by means of a sharp knife. They are hard, and perfectly solid throughout, and are a fine material for various articles, such as drinking cups, mallets for rifles, handles for turners' tools, etc., etc. The horn is capable of a very high polish. The eyes of the Rhinoceros are small and sparkling, and do not readily observe the hunter, provided he keep to leeward of them. The skin is extremely thick, and only to be penetrated by bullets hardened with solder. During the day, the Rhinoceros will be found lying asleep, or standing indolently, in some retired part of the forest, or under the base of the mountains, sheltered from the power of the sun by some friendly grove of umbrella-topped mimosas. In the evening, they commence their nightly ramble, and wander over a great extent of country. They usually visit the fountains between the hours of nine and twelve o'clock at night, and it is on these occasions that they may be most successfully hunted, and with the least danger. The Black Rhinoceros is subject to paroxysms of unprovoked fury, often ploughing up the ground for several yards with its horn, and assaulting large bushes in the most violent manner. On these bushes they work for hours with their horns, at the same time snorting and blowing loudly; nor do they leave them in general until they have broken them into pieces. All the four varieties delight to roll and wallow

in mud, with which their rugged hides are encrusted. Both varieties of the Black Rhinoceros are much smaller and more active than the white, and are so swift that a horse with a rider on its back can rarely overtake them. The two varieties of the White Rhinoceros are so similar in habits, that the description of one will serve for both, the principal difference consisting in the length and set of the anterior horn; that of the common White Rhinoceros averaging from two to three feet in length, and pointing backwards; while the horn of the long-horned White Rhinoceros often exceeds four feet in length, and inclines forward from the nose.

Both these varieties of Rhinoceros attain an enormous size, being the animals next in magnitude to the elephant. They feed solely on grass, carry much fat, and their flesh is excellent, being preferable to beef. They are of a much milder and more inoffensive disposition than the Black Rhinoceros, rarely charging their pursuer. Their speed is very inferior to that of the other varieties, and a person well mounted can overtake and shoot them.

THE HIPPOPOTAMUS is above seventeen feet long, from the extremity of the snout to the insertion of the tail; sixteen feet in circumference round the body, and seven feet high: the head is four feet long, and nine in circumference. The jaws open about two feet wide, and the cutting-teeth, of which it has four in each jaw, are over a foot long. Its feet in some measure resemble those of the elephant, and are divided into four parts. The tail is short, flat, and pointed; the hide is amazingly thick, and though not capable of turning a musket ball, is impenetrable to the blow of a sabre; the body is covered over with a few scattered hairs of a whitish color. The whole figure of the animal is a cross between that of an ox and a hog, and its cry is a mixture of the bellowing of the one, and the grunting of the other.

It chiefly resides at the bottom of the great rivers and lakes of Africa, the Nile, the Niger, and the Zaire; where it leads an indolent kind of life, and seems seldom disposed for action, except when excited by the calls of hunger. Upon such occasions, three or four of them are often seen at the bottom of a river, near