

O F T I G E R S.

TIGER being a generic name given to several animals of different species, we shall begin with distinguishing them from each other. The leopards and panthers, which are so often confounded, have both been called *Tigers* by most travellers. The ounce, a small species of panther, which is easily tamed, and used for hunting in the East, has been mistaken for the panther, and received the general denomination of *Tiger*. The lynx, and the lion's provider, by the Turks called *Karackoulab*, and by the Persians *Siyabgush*, have sometimes also received the appellation of *Panther* or of *Ounce*. All these animals are common in Africa, and in the southern regions of Asia. But the true tiger is a rare animal, little known to the ancients, and not well described by the moderns. Aristotle makes no mention of the tiger: Pliny only observes of him, that he is an animal of astonishing fleetness*; and adds, that he was much more rarely to be met with than the panther, because Augustus first presented a tiger to the Romans at the dedication of the theatre of Marcellus, while Scæurus the *Ædile* presented 150 panthers †, and afterwards Pompey exhibited 410, and Augustus

* Animal tremendæ velocitatis; *Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. viii. c. 18.*

† *Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. viii. c. 17.*

420, at the public spectacles of Rome. But Pliny gives not a single mark by which the tiger is to be distinguished: Oppian* and Solinus, who wrote after Pliny, appear to have been the first who take notice, that the tiger is characterized by long stripes, and the panther by round patches. This is indeed one of the marks which distinguish the true tiger not only from the panther, but from several other animals which have been called tigers. Strabo † quotes Magasthenus on the subject of the true tiger, who tells us, that, in India, there are tigers twice as large as the lion. Thus the only information we have from the ancients, concerning this remarkable animal, is that he is extremely ferocious and fleet; that his body is marked with long stripes; and that he exceeds the lion in magnitude. The moderns, as Gesner and other naturalists, who mention the tiger, have added nothing to the little that had been observed by the ancients.

All those skins which have short hair and roundish and distinct spots, have been called tigers skins; and travellers, deceived by this false denomination, have indiscriminately named every ferocious animal, thus spotted, by the appellation of *tigers*. The academy of sciences were like-

* See Oppian, lib. i. de venatione, ubi ait: Orynges alios decorari lævis oblongis tigris in instar, alios vero rotundis ut panthera.—Tigres, ait Solinus, bestias insignes maculis notæ, et perniciosas memorabiles reddiderunt, fulvo nitent, hoc solum nigrescentibus segmentis inter-usuratum.

† Strab. lib. xv.

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wife misled by this prejudice; and, to all the spotted animals they dissected, though very different from the genuine tiger, they have given the same denomination.

The most general cause of the multiplication of equivocal and vague terms in natural history has arisen, as shall be more fully shown in the following article, from the necessity of giving names to the unknown productions of the New World. Many animals, merely from some slight resemblances to those of the Old Continent, though very different, both in species and dispositions, have had the same names imposed on them. The error of calling every spotted animal a *tiger*, began in Europe, and was transported to America, where it was doubly augmented. For spotted quadrupeds being discovered in this new country, they were instantly called *tigers*, though they neither belonged to the species of the true tiger, nor to any of those Asiatic or African animals which had falsely received that name. Hence, in the place of one species of tiger, their number has been increased to nine or ten; and, consequently, the history of these different animals has been greatly embarrassed, what belongs to one species being often ascribed to another.

To dispel the confusion arising from these false denominations, especially among the animals which have been commonly called tigers, I shall give a comparative enumeration of quadrupeds, in
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which I shall distinguish, 1. Those which are peculiar to the Old World, and existed not in America upon its first discovery; 2. Those which are peculiar to the New, and were unknown in the Old World; 3. Those which are common to both continents, without being transported by men from the one to the other. For this purpose, we must collect into one view what lies scattered in the works of the first historians of America.

ANIMALS PECULIAR TO THE OLD WORLD.

As the largest animals are best known, and liable to the fewest uncertainties, we shall, in this enumeration, trace them nearly in the order of their magnitude.

Elephants are peculiar to the Old World; the largest are produced in Asia, and the smallest in Africa. They are natives of the warmest regions; and, though they are capable of existing, yet they cannot multiply, in temperate climates. Even in their native country, they do not propagate, after being deprived of their liberty. Though entirely confined to the warm regions of the Old Continent, their numbers are considerable. In America, there is not an animal that can be compared to the elephant, either with regard to figure or magnitude.

The same remark is applicable to the rhinoceros, whose species is much less numerous than that of the elephant. He is peculiar to the deserts

of Africa, and to the forests of the southern regions of Asia; and no American animal has the smallest resemblance to him.

The hippopotamus inhabits the banks of the large rivers of India and Africa. His species is perhaps still less numerous than that of the rhinoceros; and he is not to be found in America, nor in the temperate climates of the Old World.

The camel and dromedary, which are so common in Asia, in Arabia, and in all the eastern regions of the Old Continent, were equally unknown in America as the elephant, the rhinoceros, and the hippopotamus. The appellation of *camel* has been given to the Lama* and Pacos † of Peru, though these animals are so different from the camel, that, by some, they have been called *sheep*, and by others *camels* of Peru, and though the pacos has nothing in common with our sheep, but the wool, and the lama resembles the camel by the length of its neck only. The Spaniards formerly transported real camels to Peru ‡: But the climate of this New World was not favourable to these animals; for, al-

* *Camelus glama*, corpore laevi, topho pectorali; *Linn. Syst.* p. 91. *Camelus pilis brevissimis vestitus; Brisson. Reg. Anim.* p. 56. *Ovis Peruana; Marg. Hist. Brasil.* p. 243.

† *Camelus Pacos*, tophis nullis, corpore lanato; *Linn. Syst. Nat.* p. 91. *Camelus pilis prolixis toto corpore vestitus; Brisson. Reg. Anim.* p. 57. *Ovis Peruana pacos dicta; Marg. Hist. Brasil.* p. 244.

‡ See Hist. Nat. des Indes par Jos. Acosta, p. 44—208. l'Hist. des Incas, tom. ii. p. 266.

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