

Good John Mason 1837. The Book of Nature- From the Last London Ed., to which is
Now Prefixed, a Sketch of the Author's... Hartford, Belknap & Hamersley.
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Harper's Stereotype Edition.

THE
BOOK OF NATURE.

BY
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FROM THE LAST LONDON EDITION.

TO WHICH IS NOW PREFIXED,
A SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR'S LIFE.

COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME.

HARTFORD.
BELKNAP AND HAMERSLEY.
1837.

The SECOND ORDER, BRUTA, OR BRUTE-BEASTS, is distinguished by having no fore-teeth in either jaw. It includes the nine following kinds: rhinoceros, sukotyro, elephant, trichecus,—the morse, walrus, manate or lamantin, the dolphin of the poets of Greece and Rome, by whom it has been celebrated for its love of music, and perhaps not altogether without foundation;—the bradypus or sloth, the myrmecophagus or ant-eater, the manis or pangolin, the dasypus or armadillo, and the platypus or duck-bill, the ornithorhynchus paradoxus of Blumenbach; that curious little quadruped which has hitherto only been discovered in Australia, or the regions in and about New South Wales; and which seems to be a quadruped by its feet, a water-fowl by its bill, and an amphibian by its fondness for water. It is not yet quite certain whether this singular animal suckles its young, or has a mammary organ for this purpose; and if not, it must be discarded from its present situation, though we should be at no small loss to know where else to place it.

The THIRD CLASS OF MAMMALS is denominated FERRÆ OR SAVAGE BEASTS; and is distinguished by having, in every instance, fore-teeth, above and below, the number varying in different kinds, from two to ten; and in possessing a solitary tusk. The order comprises eleven kinds, the names of which are as follows: the phoca or seal, a water-quadruped, whose skin is so useful to us for various purposes; and which, like the stag, is found to shed tears when in trouble: the canis or dog-kind, including the numerous families of wolf, fox, jackal, hyæna: the felis or cat-kind, including a variety of tribes of a somewhat similar appearance, but far mightier, and nobler in their powers, as the lynx, the leopard, the panther, tiger, and lion, all of which have a power of climbing trees, though the weight of the larger species makes them do it very awkwardly, and only to a short height; all of which pitch on their feet in falling; and all of which see better in the night than by day; the viverra, including the ichneumon, and several of the weasels: the mustela, including other species of the weasels, the stoat, polecat, otter, ferret, sable, and ermine; to the two last of which we are indebted for the luxurious dresses that pass under their name. Almost all of the mustelas have a power of secreting and discharging a most fetid and intolerable stench at their will; and many of them do it as a means of defence: and often so effectually that the very beast that pursues them is compelled to relinquish the chase, so completely is he overpowered by its noisome vapour. The remainder of this order are the ursus or bear; the didelphis or opossum; the marcopius or kangaroo, which is now naturalizing in the royal parks of our own country; the talpa or mole; the sorex or shrew; and the erinaceus or hedgehog; which last is capable of being tamed, and is actually tamed by the Calmucs, and made a very useful domestic servant in destroying mice, toads, beetles, and other vermin.

The FOURTH ORDER of mammalian animals is denominated GLIRES, for which we may use the words HIBERNATERS, OR BURROWERS. They are distinguished by having two fore-teeth in each jaw, close to each other, but remote from the grinders; and being without tusks. They all, in a greater or less degree, burrow in the earth, and almost all of them sleep through the whole, or a great part of the winter. To this order, therefore, we can all of us, of our own accord, refer the ten following kinds, which are the whole that are included under it. The hystrix or porcupine; the cavia or cavy; the castor or beaver; the mus genus, comprehending the numerous families of the mouse and rat; the arctomys or marmot; the sciurus or squirrel, some of which have a long flying membrane that enables them to vault from tree to tree, like some species of the lemur; the myoxus or dormouse; the dipus or jerboa, whose form resembles the kangaroo, but whose habits the dormouse; the lepus, comprising the hare and rabbit tribes; and the hyrax or daman: with most of which we are too well acquainted to require any detailed account in so cursory a survey as the present.

The PECORA OR CATTLE kinds form the next or FIFTH ORDER, and comprehend those horned quadrupeds which are most familiar and most useful to us. To this division, therefore, necessarily belong the bos, ovis, capra, and cervus kinds; or, in our own language, the ox, sheep, goat, and deer: and as con-