

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE BEHEMOTH.

The animal denoted by this appellation in the book of Job, has been variously determined by learned men; some of whom, especially the early Christian writers and the Jewish rabbins, have indulged in very extravagant notions. To detail these would be useless, and we shall therefore pass them over in silence.

In Job xl. 17, 18, the sacred writer conveys a striking idea of the bulk, vigor, and strength of the behemoth.

He moveth his tail like a cedar;
The sinews of his thighs are interwoven together.
His ribs are as strong pieces of copper;
His backbone like bars of iron.

The idea of his prodigious might is increased by the account given of his bones, which are compared to strong pieces of brass, and bars of iron. Such figures are commonly employed by the sacred writers, to express great hardness and strength, of which a striking example occurs in the prophecy of Micah: 'Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thy horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass: and thou shalt beat in pieces many people.' Micah iv. 13—so hard and strong are the bones of the behemoth.

He is chief of the works of God.
Ho that made him has fixed his weapon.

Here he is described as one of the noblest animals which the Almighty Creator has produced. The male hippopotamus which Zernighi brought from the Nile to Italy, was sixteen feet nine inches long, from the extremity of the muzzle to the origin of the tail; fifteen feet in circumference; and six feet and a half high; and the legs were about two feet ten inches long. The head was three feet and a half in length, and eight feet and a half in circumference. The opening of the mouth was two feet four inches, and the largest teeth were more than a foot long.

Thus, his prodigious strength; his impenetrable skin; and vast opening of his mouth, and his portentous voracity; the whiteness and hardness of his teeth; his manner of life, spent with equal ease in the sea, on the land, and at the bottom of the Nile,—equally claim our admiration, and entitle him, says Paxton, to be considered as the chief of the ways of God. Nor is he less remarkable for his voracity; of which two instances are recorded by Pliny and Solinus. After he has gorged himself with corn, and begins to return with a distended belly to the deep, with averted steps he traces a great many paths, lest his pursuers, following the lines of the plain track, should overtake and destroy him while he is unable to resist. The second

instance is not less remarkable; when he has become fat with too much indulgence, he reduces his obesity by copious bleedings. For this purpose, he searches for newly cut reeds, or sharp pointed rocks, and rubs him self against them till he makes a sufficient aperture for the blood to flow. To promote the discharge, it is said, he agitates his body; and when he thinks he has lost a sufficient quantity, he closes the wound by rolling himself in the mud.

In compliance with the prevailing opinion, which refers this description to the hippopotamus, we have thought it right to exhibit some of the points of resemblance which have been discovered between that creature and the behemoth of the book of Job. We much doubt, however, the identity of the animals, and are more inclined to think, with Drs. Good and Clarke, that the sacred writer refers to an animal of an extinct genus. Dr. Clarke believes it to have been the *mastodonton* or *mammoth*, some part of a skeleton of which he has carefully examined, and thus described in his commentary on Gen. i. 24. 'The *mammoth* for size will answer the description in verse 19: 'He is the chief of the ways of God.' That to which the part of a skeleton belonged, which I examined, must have been, by computation, not less than *twenty-five* feet high, and *sixty* feet in length! The bones of *one toe* I measured, and found them *three feet* in length! One of the very smallest grinders of an animal of this extinct species, full of processes on the surface, more than an inch in depth, which showed that the animal had lived on *flesh*, I have just now weighed, and found it, in its very dry state, *four pounds eight ounces*, *avoirdupois*: the same grinder of an *elephant* I have weighed also, and find it just *two pounds*. The *mammoth*, therefore, from this proportion must have been as large as *two elephants* and a *quarter*. We may judge by this of its size; *elephants* are frequently *ten* and *eleven* feet high: this will make the *mammoth* *twenty-five* or *twenty-six* feet high; and as it appears to have been a *many-toed* animal, the *springs* which such a creature could make, must have been almost incredible nothing by *swiftness* could have escaped its pursuit. ~~and some to have made it as the proof of his power; and had it been prolific, and not become extinct, it would have depopulated the earth.~~ Creatures of this kind must have been living in the days of Job: the behemoth is referred to here, as if perfectly commonly known.

NOTHING LIKE THE BIBLE.

A TALE FOR BOYS.

The following circumstance occurred in the town of Warrington, and was related

there at a Bible meeting by a gentleman of respectability and veracity, connected with the society.

The circumstance was introduced in the following words: About three weeks ago, two little boys decently clothed, the eldest appeared about thirteen, and the youngest eleven, called at the lodging house for vagrants, in this town, for a night's lodging; the keeper of the house (very properly) took them to the vagrant's office to be examined; and if proper objects to be relieved. The account they gave of themselves was extremely affecting, and no doubt was entertained of its truth. It appears that but a few weeks had elapsed since these poor little wanderers had resided with their parents in London. The typhus fever, however, in one day, carried off both father and mother, leaving the orphans, in the wide world without home and without friends. Immediately after the mournful tribute had been paid to their parents' memory, having an uncle in Liverpool, poor and destitute as they were, they resolved to go and throw themselves upon his protection. Tired, therefore, and faint, they arrived in this town on their way. Two bundles contained their little all. In the youngest boy's was found neatly covered and carefully preserved, a *bible*. The keeper of the lodging house, addressing the little boy, said "you have neither money nor meat, will you sell me this bible? I will give five shillings for it." No; exclaimed he, (the tears rolling down his youthful cheeks.) I'll starve first. He then said, "there are plenty of books to be bought besides this; why do you love this, why do you love this bible so much?" He replied "no book has stood my friend so much as my bible." "Why, what has your bible done for you?" said he. He answered—"When I was a little boy, about seven years of age, I became a Sunday scholar in London; through the kind attention of my master I soon learned to read my bible—this bible, as young as I was, showed me that I was a sinner, and a great one too, it also pointed me to a Saviour; and I thank God that I have found mercy at the hands of Christ, and I am not ashamed to confess him before the world.

To try him still further, six shillings were then offered him for the bible. "No," said he, "for it has been my support all the way from London; hungry and weary, often have I sat down by the way side to read my bible, and have found refreshment from it." Thus did he experience the consolation of the Psalmist, when he said, thy comforts have refreshed my soul." He then asked "what will you do when you get to Liverpool, should your uncle refuse to take you in?" The reply may excite a blush in