

**THE TOWER MENAGERIE:
COMPRISING THE NATURAL HISTORY
OF THE ANIMALS CONTAINED IN THAT
ESTABLISHMENT; WITH ANECDOTES
OF THEIR CHARACTERS AND HISTORY**

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The Tower menagerie: comprising the natural history of the animals contained in that establishment; with anecdotes of their characters and history by Edward Turner Bennett

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EDWARD TURNER BENNETT

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THE
TOWER MENAGERIE.

THE
TOWER MENAGERIE:

CONTAINING
THE NATURAL HISTORY
OF THE
ANIMALS CONTAINED IN THAT ESTABLISHMENT,
WITH
Anecdotes of their Characters and History.

ILLUSTRATED BY
PORTRAITS OF EACH, TAKEN FROM LIFE, BY WILLIAM HARVEY;
AND ENGRAVED ON WOOD BY BRANSTON AND WRIGHT.



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TO
HIS MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY
KING GEORGE THE FOURTH,

THE
MUNIFICENT PATRON OF THE ARTS AND SCIENCES,

This Volume,

IN WHICH IT IS ATTEMPTED TO COMBINE BOTH ART AND SCIENCE

IN THE

ILLUSTRATION OF HIS ROYAL MENAGERIE,

IS,

BY HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS PERMISSION,

HUMBLY INSCRIBED.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE origin of Menageries dates from the most remote antiquity. Their existence may be traced even in the obscure traditions of the fabulous ages, when the contests of the barbarian leader with his fellow-men were relieved by exploits in the chase scarcely less adventurous, and when the monster-queller was held in equal estimation with the warrior-chief. The spoils of the chase were treasured up in common with the trophies of the fight; and the captive brute occupied his station by the side of the vanquished hero. It was soon discovered that the den and the dungeon were not the only places in which this link of connexion might be advantageously preserved, and the strength and ferocity of the forest beast were found to be available as useful auxiliaries even in the battle-field. The only difficulty to be surmounted in the application of this new species of brute force to the rude conflicts of the times consisted in giving to it the wished-for direction; and for this purpose it was necessary that the animals to be so employed should be confined in what may be considered as a kind of Menagerie, there to be rendered subservient to the control, and obedient to the commands, of their masters.

In the theology too of these dark ages many animals occupied a distinguished place, and were not only venerated in their own proper persons, on account of their size, their power, their uncouth figure, their resemblance

to man, or their supposed qualities and influence, but were also looked upon as sacred to one or other of the interminable catalogue of divinities, to whose service they were devoted, and on whose altars they were sacrificed. For these also Menageries must have been constructed, in which not only their physical peculiarities but even their moral qualities must have been to a certain extent studied; although the passions and prejudices of the multitude would naturally corrupt the sources of information thus opened to them, by the intermixture of exaggerated perversions of ill observed facts and by the addition of altogether imaginary fables.

If to these two kinds of Menageries we add that which has every where and under all circumstances accompanied the first dawn of civilization, and which constitutes the distinguishing characteristic of man emerging from a state of barbarism and entering upon a new and social state of existence, the possession of flocks and herds, of animals useful in his domestic economy, serviceable in the chase, and capable of sharing in his daily toils, a tolerable idea may be formed of the collections which were brought together in the earliest ages, and were more or less the subjects of study to a race of men who were careless of every thing that had no immediate bearing upon their feelings, their passions, or their interests.

But as civilization advanced, and the progress of society favoured the developement of mind, when those who were no longer compelled by necessity to labour for their daily bread found leisure to look abroad with expanded views upon the wonders of the creation, the animal kingdom presented new attractions and awakened ideas which had before lain dormant. What was at first