

THE
TRANSMIGRATIONS
of
INDUR,

An Indian Brachman,

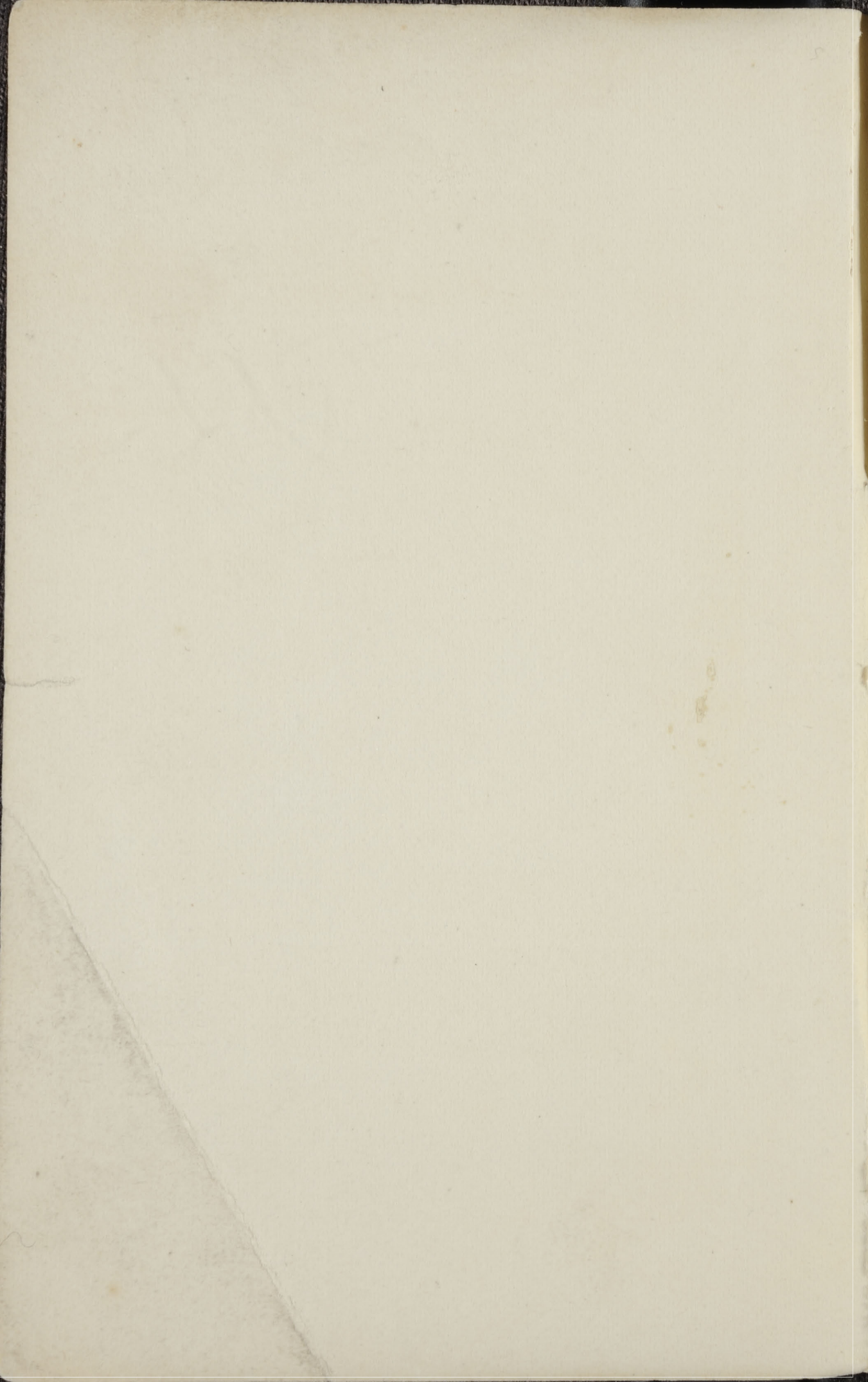
Through the Bodies of an

<i>Antelope,</i>		<i>Whale,</i>
<i>Wild Goose,</i>		<i>Bee,</i>
<i>Dormouse,</i>		<i>Rabbit,</i>
<i>Elephant,</i>		<i>Mastiff,</i>

*and his Return to the
Human Form.*

LONDON :
HOULSTON AND CO.
65, Paternoster-Row.

Price Three-Pence.



FRONTISPIECE.



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OF
INDUR.

See Page 10.

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AN INDIAN BRACHMAN,

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ANTELOPE,
WILD GOOSE,
DORMOUSE,
ELEPHANT,

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AND HIS RETURN TO THE HUMAN FORM.



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THE
TRANSMIGRATIONS OF INDUR.

AT the time when Fairies and Genii possessed the powers which they have now lost, there lived in the country of the Brachmans, a man named Indur, who was distinguished, not only for that gentleness of disposition and humanity towards all living creatures, which are so much cultivated among those people, but for an insatiable curiosity respecting the nature and way of life of all animals. In pursuit of knowledge of this kind, he would frequently spend the night among lonely rocks, or in the midst of thick forests; and there, under shelter of a hanging cliff or mounted upon a high tree, he would watch the motions and actions of all the animals that seek their prey in the night; and remaining in the same spot till the

break of day, he would observe this tribe of creatures retiring to their dens, and all others coming forth to enjoy the beams of the rising sun. On these occasions, if he saw any opportunity of exercising his benevolence towards animals in distress, he never failed to make use of it; and many times rescued the small bird from the pitiless hawk, and the lamb or kid from the gripe of the wolf and lynx.

One day, as he was sitting on a tree in the forest, a little frolicsome monkey, in taking a great leap from one bough to another, chanced to miss its hold, and fell from a great height to the ground. As it lay there unable to move, Indur espied a large venomous serpent advancing to make the poor defenceless creature his prey. He immediately descended from his post, and taking the little monkey in his arms, ran with it to the tree, and gently placed it upon a bough. In the mean time, the enraged serpent pursuing him, overtook him before he could mount the tree, and bit him in the leg. Presently, the limb began to swell, and the effects of the venom became visible over

Indur's whole frame. He grew faint, sick, and pale; and sinking on the ground, was sensible that his last moments were fast approaching. As thus he lay, he was surprised to hear a human voice from the tree; and looking up, he beheld, on the bough where he had placed the monkey, a beautiful woman, who thus addressed him —

“Indur, I am truly grieved that thy kindness to me should have been the cause of thy destruction. Know, that in the form of the poor monkey, it was the potent fairy Perezinda, to whom thou gavest succour. Obligated to pass a certain number of days every year under the shape of an animal, I had chosen this form; and, though not mortal, I should have suffered extreme agonies from the bite of the serpent, hadst thou not so humanely assisted me. It is not in my power to prevent the fatal effect of the poison; but I am able to grant thee any wish thou shalt form respecting the future state of existence to which thou art now hastening. Speak then, before it be too late, and let me shew my gratitude.”

“Great Perezinda!” replied Indur, “since you deign so bounteously to return my service, this is the request that I make:—In all my transmigrations may I retain a rational soul, with the memory of the adventures I have gone through; and when death sets me free from one body, may I instantly animate another in the prime of its powers and faculties, without passing through the helpless state of infancy.”

“It is granted,” answered the fairy. And immediately breaking a small branch from the tree, and breathing on it, she threw it down to Indur, and bid him hold it fast in his hand. He did so, and presently expired.





THE ANTELOPE.

INDUR instantly found himself in a green valley by the side of a clear stream, grazing amid a large herd of *Antelopes*.

He admired his elegant shape, sleek spotted skin, and polished spiral horns; and drank with delight of the cool rivulet, cropped the juicy herb, and sported with his companions. Soon an alarm was given of the approach of an enemy; and they all set off with the swiftness of the wind to the neighbouring immense plains; where they were presently out of the reach of injury.

Indur was highly delighted with the ease and rapidity of his motions; and snuffing the keen air of the desert, bounded away, scarcely deigning to touch the ground with his feet. This way of life went on very pleasantly for some time, till at length the herd was one morning alarmed with noises of trumpets, drums, and loud shouts on every side. They started, and ran first to the right, then to the left, but were continually driven back by the surrounding crowd, which now appeared to be a whole army of hunters, with the king of the country and all his nobles, assembled at a solemn chase, after the manner of the eastern people. And now the circle began to close, and numbers of affrighted animals of various kinds thronged together in the centre, keeping as far as possible from the dangers that approached them from all quarters. The huntsmen were now come near enough to reach their game with their arrows; and the prince and his lords shot at them as they passed and repassed, killing and wounding great numbers.

Indur and his surviving companions,

seeing no other means of escape, resolved to make a bold push towards that part of the ring which was the most weakly guarded; and though many perished in the attempt, yet a few, leaping over the heads of the people, got clear away: and Indur was among the number.

But while he was scouring over the plain, rejoicing in his good fortune and conduct, an enemy swifter than himself overtook him. This was a falcon, who, let loose by one of the huntsmen, dashed like lightning after the fugitives; and alighting upon the head of Indur, began to tear his eyes with his beak, and flap his wings over his face. Indur, terrified and blinded, knew not which way he went; and, instead of proceeding straight forwards, turned round, and came again towards the hunters. One of these, riding full speed with a javelin in his hand, came up to him, and ran the weapon into his side. He fell down, and with repeated wounds was soon dispatched.



THE WILD GOOSE.

WHEN the struggle of death was over, Indur was equally surprised and pleased on finding himself soaring high in the air, as one of a flight of *Wild Geese*, in their annual migration to breed in the arctic regions.

With vast delight he sprung forward on easy wing through the immense fields of air, and surveyed beneath him extensive tracts of earth perpetually varying with plains, mountains, rivers, lakes, and woods. At the approach of night, the flock light-

ed on the ground, and fed on the green corn or grass; and at daybreak they were again on the wing, arranged in a regular wedge-like body, with an experienced leader at their head. Thus for many days they continued their journey, passing over countries inhabited by various nations, till at length they arrived in the remotest part of Lapland, and settled in a wide marshy lake, filled with numerous reedy islands, and surrounded on all sides with dark forests of pine and birch. Here, in perfect security from man and hurtful animals, they followed the great business of breeding and providing for their young, living plentifully upon the insects and aquatic reptiles that abounded in this sheltered spot.

Indur with great pleasure exercised his various powers, of swimming, diving, and flying; sailing round the islands, penetrating into every creek and bay, and visiting the deepest recesses of the woods. He surveyed with astonishment the sun, instead of rising and setting, making a complete circle in the heavens, and cheering the earth with a perpetual day. Here

he met with innumerable tribes of kindred birds varying in size, plumage, and voice, but all passing their time in a similar manner, and furnished with the same powers for providing food and a safe retreat for themselves and their young. The whole lake was covered with parties fishing or sporting, and resounded with their loud cries; while the islands were filled with their nests, and new broods of young were continually coming forth and launching upon the surface of the waters.

One day, Indur's curiosity having led him at a distance from his companions to the woody border of the lake, he was near paying dear for his heedlessness; for a fox, that lay in wait among the bushes, sprang upon him, and it was with the utmost difficulty that by a strong exertion he broke from his hold, not without the loss of some feathers.

Summer now drawing to an end, the vast congregation of waterfowl began to break up; and large bodies of them daily took their way southwards, to pass the winter in climates where the waters are never so frozen as to become uninhabitable

by the feathered race. The wild geese, to whom Indur belonged, proceeded with their young ones by long daily journeys across Sweden, the Baltic Sea, Poland, and Turkey, to Lesser Asia, and finished their journey at the celebrated plains on the banks of the Cayster, a noted resort for their species ever since the age of Homer, who in some very beautiful verses has described the manners and actions of the various tribes of aquatic birds in that favourite spot.

“ Not less their number than the embodied
cranes
Or milk-white swans on Asia’s watery plains,
That o’er the windings of Cayster springs
Stretch their long necks, and clap their rustling
wings.
Now tower aloft, and course in airy rounds;
Now light with noise; with noise the field re-
sounds.”

Here they soon recruited from the fatigue of their march, and enjoyed themselves in the delicious climate till winter. This season, though here extremely mild, yet making the means of sustenance somewhat scarce, they were obliged to make

foraging excursions to the cultivated lands in the neighbourhood. Having committed great depredations upon a fine field of young wheat, the owner spread a net on the ground, in which Indur, with several of his companions, had the misfortune to be caught. No mercy was shewn them, but, as they were taken out one by one, their necks were all broken.





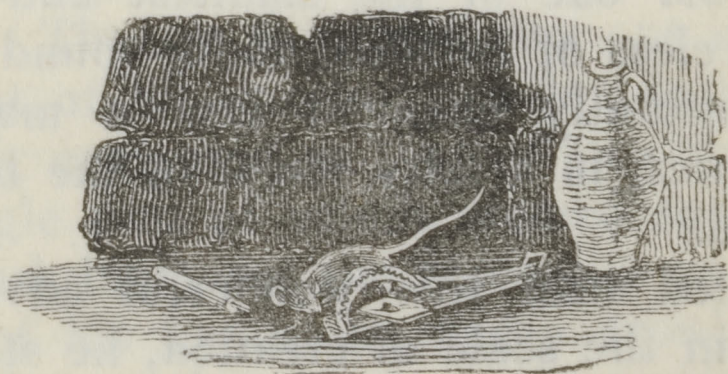
THE DORMOUSE.

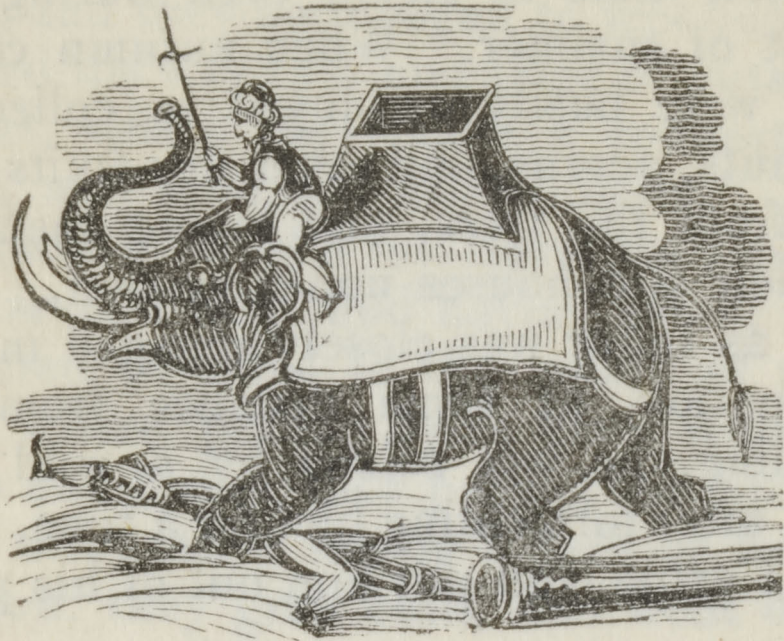
INDUR was not immediately sensible of the next change he underwent, which was into a *Dormouse*, fast asleep in a hole at the foot of a bush.

As it was in a country where the winter was pretty severe, he did not awake for some weeks; when a thaw having taken place, and the sun beginning to warm the earth, he unrolled himself one day, stretched, opened his eyes, and not being able to make out where he was, he roused a female companion whom he found by

his side. When she was sufficiently awakened, and they both began to feel hungry, she led the way to a magazine of nuts and acorns, where they made a comfortable meal, and soon fell asleep again. This nap having lasted a few days, they awakened a second time, and having eaten, they ventured to crawl to the mouth of their hole, where, pulling away some withered grass and leaves, they peeped out into the open air. After taking a turn or two in the sun, they grew chill, and went down again, stopping up the entrance after them. The cold weather returning, they took another long nap, till at length, spring being fairly set in, they roused in earnest, and began to make daily excursions abroad. Their winter stock of provisions being now exhausted, they were for some time reduced to great straits, and obliged to dig for roots and pignuts. Their fare was mended as the season advanced, and they made a nest near the bottom of a tree, where they brought up a young family. They never ranged far from home, nor ascended the higher branches of the tree, and passed great part

of their time in sleep, even during the midst of summer. When autumn came, they were busily employed in collecting the nuts, acorns, and other dry fruits that fell from the trees, and laying them up in their storehouses under ground. One day, as Indur was closely engaged in this occupation, at some distance from his dwelling, he was seized by a wild cat, who, after tormenting him for a time, gave him a gripe, and put him out of his pain.





THE ELEPHANT.

FROM one of the smallest and most defenceless of animals, Indur found himself instantly changed into a majestic *Elephant*, in a lofty forest in the Isle of Ceylon.

Elated with this wonderful advancement in the scale of creation, he stalked along with conscious dignity, and surveyed with pleasing wonder his own form and that of his companions, together with the rich scenery of the ever-verdant woods, which perfumed the air with their spicy

odour, and lifted their tall heads to the clouds.

Here, fearing no injury, and not desirous to do any, the gigantic herd roamed at large, feeding on the green branches which they tore down with their trunks, bathing in deep rivers during the heat of the day, and reposing in the depths of the forests, reclined against the massy trunks of trees by night.

It was long before Indur met with any adventure that could lead him to doubt his security. But, one day, having penetrated into a close entangled thicket, he espied, lurking under the thick covert, a grim tiger, whose eyes flashed rage and fury. Though the tiger was one of the largest of his species, yet his bulk was trifling compared to that of an elephant, a single foot of which seemed sufficient to crush him; yet the fierceness and cruelty of his looks, his angry growl, and grinning teeth, struck some terror into Indur. There was little time, however, for reflection; for when Indur had advanced a single step, the tiger, setting up a roar, sprung up to meet him, attempt-

ing to seize his lifted trunk. Indur was dexterous enough to receive him upon one of his tusks, and exerting all his strength, threw the tiger to a great distance. He was somewhat stunned by the fall, but recovering, renewed the assault with redoubled fury. Indur again, and a third time, threw him off; after which, the tiger, turning about, bounded away into the midst of the thicket. Indur drew back, and rejoined his companions, with some abatement in the confidence he had placed in his size and strength, which had not prevented him from undergoing so dangerous an attack.

Soon after, he joined the rest of the herd in an expedition beyond the bounds of the forest, to make depredations on some fields of maize. They committed great havoc, devouring some, but tearing up and trampling down a great deal more; when the inhabitants, taking the alarm, assembled in great numbers, and with fierce shouts and flaming brands drove them back to the woods. Not contented with thus repulsing them, they were resolved to make them pay for the mischief

they had done, by taking some of them prisoners.

For this purpose they inclosed a large space among the trees with strong posts and stakes, bringing it to a narrower and narrower compass, and ending at last in a passage only capable of admitting one elephant at a time. This was divided into several apartments, by strong cross-bars, which would lift up and down. They then sent out some tame female elephants bred to the business, who approaching the herd of wild ones, inveigled the males to follow them toward the inclosures.

Indur was among the first who was decoyed by their artifices; and with some others following heedlessly, he got into the narrowest part of the inclosure, opposite to the passage. Here they stood a while, doubting whether they should go further. But the females leading the way, and uttering their cry of invitation, they ventured at length to follow. When a sufficient number was in the passage, the bars were let down by men placed for that purpose, and the elephants were fairly caught in a trap. As soon as they were

sensible of their situation, they fell into a fit of rage, and with all their efforts endeavoured to break through. But the hunters, throwing nooses over them, bound them fast with strong ropes and chains to the posts on each side, and thus kept them without food or sleep for three days; when, being exhausted with hunger and fatigue, they gave signs of sufficient tameness. They were now let out, one by one, and bound each of them to two large tame elephants with riders on their backs, and thus without resistance were led away close prisoners. They were then put into separate stables, and by proper discipline were presently rendered quite tame and gentle.

Not long after, Indur, with five more, was sent over from Ceylon to the continent of India, and sold to one of the princes of the country.

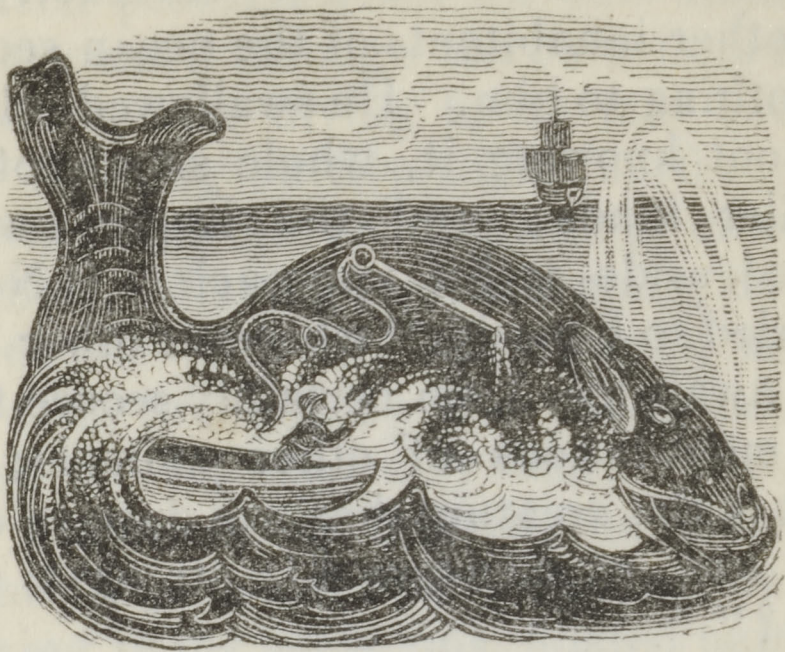
He was now trained to all the services elephants are there employed in; which were to carry people on his back in a kind of sedan or litter; to draw cannon, ships, and other great weights; to kneel and rise at command, make obeisance to

his lord, and perform all the motions and attitudes he was ordered. Thus he lived a long time, well fed and caressed, clothed in costly trappings on days of ceremony, and contributing to the pomp of eastern royalty.

At length a war broke out, and Indur came to be employed in a different scene. After proper training, he was marched, with a number of his fellows, into the field, bearing on his back a small wooden tower, in which were placed some soldiers with a small field-piece. They soon came in sight of the enemy, and both sides were drawn up for battle. Indur and the rest were urged forwards by their leaders, wondering at the same time at the scene in which they were engaged, so contrary to their nature and manners. Presently all was involved in smoke and fire. The elephants advancing, soon put to flight those who were drawn up before them; but their career was stopped by a battery of cannon, which played furiously against them. Their vast bodies offered a fair mark to the balls, which presently struck down some, and wounded others. Indur

received a shot on one of his tusks, which broke it, and put him to such pain and affright, that, turning about, he ran with all speed over the plain; and falling in with a body of their own infantry, he burst through, trampling down whole ranks, and filling them with terror and confusion. His leader having now lost all command over him, and finding him hurtful only to his own party, applied the sharp instrument he carried to the nape of his neck, and driving it in with all his force, pierced his spinal marrow, so that he fell lifeless to the ground.





THE WHALE.

IN the next stage of his existence, Indur, to his great surprise, found even the vast bulk of the elephant prodigiously exceeded; for he was now a *Whale* of the largest species, rolling in the midst of the arctic seas.

As he darted along, the lash of his tail made whirlpools in the mighty deep. When he opened his immense jaws, he drew in a flood of brine, which, on rising to the surface, he spouted out again in a rushing fountain, that rose high in the air

with the noise of a mighty cataract. All the other inhabitants of the ocean seemed as nothing to him. He swallowed, almost without knowing it, whole shoals of the smaller kinds; and the larger swiftly turned aside at his approach. "Now," he cried to himself, "whatever other evils may await me, I am certainly secure from the molestations of other animals; for what is the creature that can dare to cope with me, or measure his strength with mine?"

Having said this, he saw swimming near him a fish not a quarter of his length, armed with a dreadful row of teeth. This was a grampus, which, directly flying upon Indur, fastened on him, and made his great teeth meet in his flesh. Indur roared with pain, and lashed the sea, till it was all in a foam; but could neither reach nor shake off his cruel foe. He rolled over and over, rose and sunk, and exerted all his boasted strength; but to no purpose. At length the grampus quitted his hold, and left him not a little mortified with the adventure.

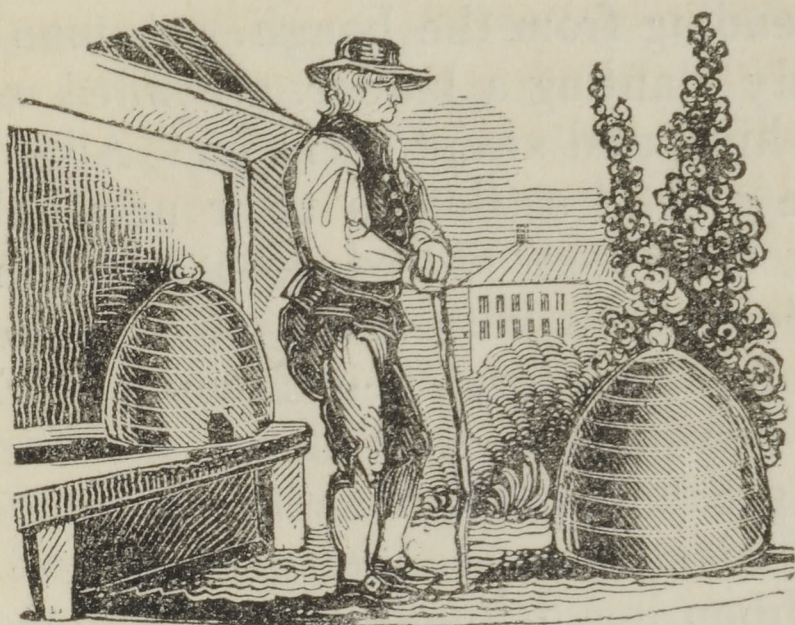
This was however forgotten, and Indur

received pleasure from his new situation, as he roamed through the boundless fields of ocean, now diving to its very bottom, now shooting swiftly to its surface, and sporting with his companions in unwieldy gambols. Having chosen a mate, he took his course with her southwards, and in due time brought up two young ones, of whom he was extremely fond. The summer season being arrived, he more frequently than usual rose to the surface, and basking in the sunbeams, floated unmoved with a large part of his huge body above the waves.

As he was thus one day enjoying a profound sleep, he was awakened by a sharp instrument penetrating deep into his back. Instantly he sprung away with the swiftness of lightning, and feeling the weapon still sticking, he dived into the recesses of the deep, and stayed there till want of air obliged him to ascend to the surface. Here another harpoon was plunged into him, the smart of which again made him fly from his unseen foes; but, after a shorter course, he was again compelled to rise, much weakened by the loss of blood,

which, gushing in a torrent, tinged the waters as he passed. Another wound was inflicted, which soon brought him almost lifeless to the surface; and the line fastened to the first harpoon being now pulled in, this enormous creature was brought, an unresisting prey, to the side of a ship, where he was soon quite dispatched, and then cut to pieces.





THE BEE.

THE soul of this huge carcass had next a much narrower lodging, for Indur was changed into a *Bee*, which, with a great multitude of its young companions, was on flight in search of a new settlement, their parents having driven them out of the hive, which was unable to contain them all.

After a rambling excursion, the queen, by whom all their motions were directed, settled on the branch of a lofty tree. They all immediately clustered round her,

and soon formed a large black bunch, depending from the bough. A man presently planting a ladder, ascended with a bee-hive, and swept them in. After they were quietly settled in their new habitation, they were placed on a stand in the garden along with some other colonies, and left to begin their labours. Every fine morning, as soon as the sun was up, the greatest part of them sallied forth, and roamed over the garden and the neighbouring fields in search of fresh and fragrant flowers. They first collected a quantity of gluey matter, with which they lined all the inside of their house. Then they brought wax, and began to make their cells, building them with the utmost regularity, though it was their first attempt, and they had no teacher. As fast as they were built, some were filled with liquid honey gathered from the nectaries of flowers; and as they filled the cells, they sealed them up with a thin covering of wax. In other cells, the queen bee deposited her eggs, which were to supply a new progeny for the ensuing year. Nothing could be a more pleasing sight, than

to behold on a sunshiny day the insects continually going forth to their labour, while others were as constantly arriving at the mouth of the hole, either with yellow balls of wax under their thighs, or full of the honey which they had drawn in with their trunks for the purpose of spouting it out into the cells of the honeycomb.

Indur felt much delight in this useful and active way of life, and was always one of the first abroad at the dawn, and latest home in the evening. On rainy and foggy days they stayed at home, and employed themselves in finishing their cells, and all the necessary work within doors; and Indur, though endued with human reason, could not but admire the readiness with which he and the rest formed the most regular plans of work, all corresponding in design and execution, guided by instinct alone.

The end of autumn now approaching, the bees had filled their combs with honey; and nothing more being to be got abroad, they stayed within doors, passing most of their time in sleep. They ate a little of

their store, but with great frugality; and all their meals were made in public, none daring to make free with the common stock by himself.

The owner of the hives now came, and took them one by one into his hand, that he might judge by the weight whether or no they were full of honey. That in which Indur was, proved to be one of the heaviest; and it was therefore resolved to take the contents. For this purpose, one cold night, when the bees were all fast asleep, the hive was placed over a hole in the ground, in which were put brimstone matches set on fire. The fumes rose into the hive, and soon suffocated great part of the bees, and stupefied the rest, so that they all fell from the combs. Indur was among the dead.





THE RABBIT.

HE soon revived in the form of a young *Rabbit*, in a spacious warren.

This was like a populous town; being everywhere hollowed by burrows running deep under ground, and each inhabited by one or more families. In the evening the warren was covered with a vast number of rabbits, old and young, some feeding, others frisking about, and pursuing one another in wanton sport. At the least alarm, they all hurried into the holes nearest them, and were in an instant safe

from enemies, who either could not follow them at all, or if they did, were foiled in the chase by the numerous ways and turnings in the earth, communicating with each other, so as to afford easy means of escape.

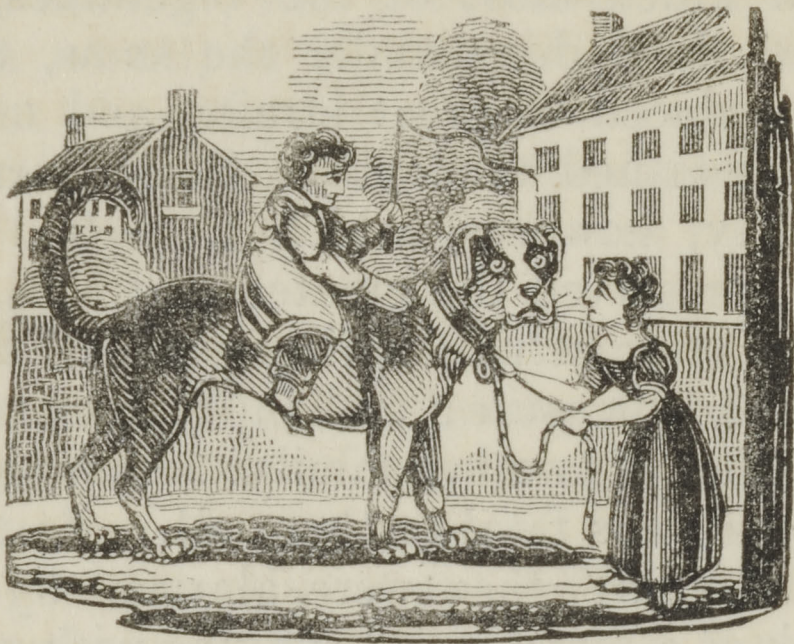
Indur delighted much in this secure and social life; and taking a mate, was soon the father of a numerous offspring. Several of the little ones, however, not being sufficiently careful, fell a prey either to hawks and crows, continually hovering over the warren, or to cats, foxes, and other wild quadrupeds, who used every art to catch them at a distance from their holes. Indur himself ran several hazards. He was once very near being caught by a little dog trained for the purpose, who kept playing round for a considerable time, not seeming to attend to the rabbits, till having got near, he all at once darted into the midst of them. Another time, he received some shot from a sportsman who lay on the watch behind a hedge adjoining the warren.

The number of rabbits here was so great, that a hard winter coming on,

which killed most of the vegetables, or buried them deep under the snow, they were reduced to great straits, and many were famished to death. Some turnips and hay, however, which were laid for them, preserved the greater part.

The approach of spring renewed their sport and pleasure; and Indur was made the father of another family. One night, however, was fatal to them all. As they were sleeping, they were alarmed by the attack of a ferret; and running with great speed to the mouth of their burrow to escape it, they were all caught in nets placed over their holes. Indur with the rest was dispatched by a blow on the back of the neck, and his body was sent to the nearest market-town.





THE MASTIFF.

His next change was into a young *Mastiff*, brought up in a farm-yard.

Having nearly acquired his full size, he was sent as a present to a gentleman in the neighbourhood, who wanted a faithful guard for his house and grounds. Indur presently attached himself to his master and all his family, and shewed every mark of a noble and generous nature. Though fierce as a lion whenever he thought the persons or properties of his friends invaded, he was as gentle as a lamb at other

times, and would patiently suffer any kind of freedoms from those he loved. He permitted the children of the house to lug him about, ride on his back, and use him as roughly as their little hands were capable of; never, even when hurt, shewing any displeasure further than by a low growl. He was extremely indulgent to all the other animals of his species in the yard; and when abroad would treat the impertinent barking of little dogs with silent contempt. Once indeed, being provoked beyond bearing, not only by the noise, but by the snaps of a malicious whelp, he suddenly seized him in his open mouth; but when the bystanders thought that the poor cur was going instantly to be devoured, they were equally diverted and pleased at seeing Indur go to the side of a muddy ditch, and drop his antagonist unhurt into the middle of it.

He had, however, more serious conflicts frequently to sustain. He was accustomed to attend the servant on market-days to the neighbouring town, when it was his office to guard the provision cart, while the man was making his purchases

in the shops. On these occasions, the boldest dogs in the street would sometimes make an onset in a body; and while some of them were engaging Indur, others would be mounting the cart, and pulling down the meat-baskets. Indur had much ado to defend himself and the baggage too; however, he never failed to make some of the assailants pay dearly for their impudence; and by his loud barking, he summoned his human fellow-servant to his assistance, in time to prevent their depredations.

At length his courage was exerted on the most important service to which it could be applied. His master returning home late one evening, was attacked near his own house by three armed ruffians. Indur heard his voice calling for help, and instantly flew to his relief. He seized one of the villains by the throat, brought him to the ground, and presently disabled him. The master, in the mean time, was keeping off the other two with a large stick; but had received several wounds with a cutlass; and one of the men had presented a pistol, and was just on the

point of firing. At this moment Indur, leaving his vanquished foe on the ground, rushed forward, and seizing the man's arm, made him drop the pistol. The master took it up; on which the other robber fled. He now advanced to him with whom Indur was engaged, and fired the pistol at him. The ball broke the man's arm, and thence entered the body of Indur, and mortally wounded him. He fell, but had the satisfaction of seeing his master remain lord of the field; and the servants now coming up, made prisoners of the two wounded robbers. The master threw himself by the side of Indur, and expressed the warmest concern at the accident which had made him the cause of the death of the faithful animal that had preserved his life. Indur died licking his hand.



CONCLUSION.

So generous a nature was now no longer to be annexed to a brutal form. Indur, awaking as it were from a trance, found himself again in the happy region he had formerly inhabited, and recommenced the innocent life of a Brachman. He cherished the memory of his transmigrations, and handed them down to posterity, in a relation from which the preceding account has been extracted for the amusement of the young reader.

THE END.

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