

high, which, though sandy, contains some beds of millstone. The body of the Rhinoceros had been buried in coarse gravelly sand, near this hill, and the nature of the soil, which is always frozen, had preserved it. The soil near the Viloui never thaws to a great depth, for, although the rays of the sun soften the soil to the depth of two yards in the more elevated sandy places, in the valleys, where the soil is half sand and half clay, it remains frozen at the end of summer half an ell below the surface. Without this intense cold the skin of the animal and many parts of it would long since have perished. The animal could only have been transported from some southern country to the frozen north at the epoch of the Deluge, for the most ancient chronicles speak of no changes of the globe more recent, to which we could attribute the deposit of these remains and of the bones of elephants which are found dispersed all over Siberia.*

In this extract the author refers to a memoir previously published by himself, in the "Commentarii" of the Academy of St. Petersburg. This memoir, written in Latin, and entitled "Upon some Animals of Siberia," has never been translated. After some general considerations, the author thus relates the circumstances attending the discovery of the fossil Rhinoceros, with some official documents affirming their correctness, and the manner in which the facts were brought under his notice by the Governor of Irkutsk, General Bril: "The skin and tendons of the head and feet still preserved considerable flexibility, imbued as it were with humidity from the earth; but the flesh exhaled a fetid ammoniacal odour, resembling that of a latrine. Compelled to cross the Baikal Lake before the ice broke up, I could neither draw up a sufficiently careful description nor make sketches of the parts of the animal; but I made them place the remains, without leaving Irkutsk, upon a furnace, with orders that after my departure they should be dried by slow degrees and with the greatest care, continuing the process for some time, because the viscous matter which incessantly oozed out could only be dissipated by great heat. It happened, unfortunately, that during the operation the posterior part of the upper thigh and the foot were burnt in the overheated furnace, and they were thrown away; the head and the extremity of the hind foot only remained intact and undamaged by the process of drying. The odour of the softer parts, which still contained viscous matter in their interior, was changed by the desiccation into one resembling that of flesh decomposed in the sun.

"The Rhinoceros to which the members belonged was neither large for its species nor advanced in age, as the bones of the head

* "Pallas's Voyage," vol. iv., pp. 130-134.