

animals of the New World were much smaller than those of the Old. This great diminution in size, whatever may be the cause, is a primary kind of degeneration, which could not be made without having a great influence on the figure of the animal, and we must not lose sight of this effect in comparing them together.

The largest is the tapir, which though not bigger than the ass, can only be compared with the elephant, rhinoceros, and hippopotamus; he claims the first place for size in the New Continent, as the elephant does in the Old. Like the rhinoceros, his upper lip is muscular and projecting; and, like the hippopotamus, he often enters the water. In some respects he represents them all three, and his figure, which partakes more of the ass than of any other animal, seems to be as degraded as his stature is diminished. The horse, the ass, the zebra, the elephant, the rhinoceros, and the hippopotamus, had no existence in America; neither was there an animal in this New Continent which could be compared with them, either with respect to size or figure. The tapir appears to have some affinity to the whale, but he is so mixed, and approaches so little to any one of them, that it is not possible to attribute his origin to the degradation of any particular