

THE BOOK OF JOB

IN

P O E T R Y ;

OR,

A S O N G I N T H E N I G H T .

BY

THE REV. HENRY W. ADAMS, M.A.,
OF THE DIOCESE OF MASSACHUSETTS.

HONORARY MEMBER OF THE NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY, MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF
CONVOCAATION OF TRINITY COLLEGE, HARTFORD, CONN., ETC.

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domestic animal, and consider the wild, taller, more dignified, spirited, and agile mountain animal in his untamed and scornful freedom. The head, more arched than that of the common ass, has a finer appearance; the neck is longer, and its bend is more graceful and majestic. Its mane is short, composed of dark, woolly hair. From the mane to the tail runs along a stripe of dark color, and bushy coarseness. The hair, soft and silky, like the texture of the camel's, is of a silver gray, and in some places of a flaxen color, and white under the belly. Untamed, migrating over vast mountain ranges, in fleet and lawless troops of thousands, led by chosen leaders and guides, and controlled by instincts peculiarly their own, God asks Job if he could create such creatures; if he could tame them; and establish the laws that controlled them; or if he had held them as captives, and then loosed their bands, and let them range, in wildness, and boundless freedom, in great multitudes, over barren deserts and mountains, making the wilderness their house, and the barren land their dwellings. The meaning seems to be this: if Job could not make the wild ass, nor send him forth free, nor give him his instincts and habits, how could he expect to comprehend him who had done all these things? By this method of reasoning the Almighty sought to induce Job to submit to a power which he could not understand.

PICTURE NO. XIII. PAGE 319

The Unicorn.

Will the Unicorn be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib?

JOB xxxix. 9.

There is great difference of opinion among biblical commentators, respecting the animal referred to by the term Unicorn. Some suppose it to mean the antelope; others the wild buffalo; others again the rhinoceros; while some regard it as referring to a one-horned animal, resembling a

horse, as to his body, fierce, wild, and untamable; having a head like a stag, feet like an elephant, tail like a wild boar, a loud voice and terrible roar, and possessing a black horn, about two cubits long, and projecting from the middle of the forehead. I am more inclined to this opinion than to any other. One reason for this conclusion, which I have not seen expressed by any writer, is that God is demonstrating to Job his great power, wisdom, and skill in the creation. He is therefore referring to the most extraordinary animals, having inexplicable qualities and instincts, not possessed by any others; being intermediate links or mongrels between a lower and higher species, but belonging to neither the one, nor the other; as the ass, the ostrich, behemoth, and the leviathan. The Reem of the bible therefore, or the Unicorn of Job, best fulfils this design, being a connecting link between the stag and horse, as the ostrich is between the fowl and quadruped, but subject to the instincts and laws of neither. However as the latest authorities maintain that this remarkable animal is the rhinoceros, I have represented him as such in the picture. In size, strength, fierceness, untamableness, and intractable lawlessness, as well as in the formidable use of his horn, he fulfils the description of the Unicorn in a very satisfactory manner. The design of the Almighty in introducing this animal, and pressing Job with sundry questions concerning him, was to make him feel his own insignificance, and to show him the utter uselessness of attempting to fathom the doings of Jehovah, whether in the works of creation, or in the administration of his government over the moral world. The end which he seemed to have in view was to convince Job of his duty to acquiesce in all his doings, as wise, just, and good, whether he could comprehend them or not.

PICTURE NO. XIV. PAGE 323.

The Ostrich.

Gavest thou . . . wings and feathers unto the ostrich?
which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in