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THE HEREFORD MAP AND THE LEGEND
OF ST. BRANDAN.

A LECTURE DELIVERED BEFORE THE AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, MARCH 14, 1892,

BY

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Mr. President and Members of the American Geographical Society :

History should give us not only the narrative of the rise and fall of empires : not only the story of the material events which have marked the progress of the human race : not only the story of the outward change and growth of civilizations. It should also tell us of the processes through which the human mind has passed to arrive at its present state of knowledge and modes of thought. It should give us the narrative of the changes of ideas and the growth of knowledge among men. There is, then, a history for every science. And one who would be well instructed in any

songs, and, having collected troops of friends, to feast upon their flesh, mingled with that of their flocks, believing it is more honorable that their parents should be consumed by them than by worms." And elsewhere it is said that the Essedones make drinking cups of the skulls of their friends.

In the centre of Plate 1 are pictured two birds with the words, "*The Avalerions. One pair in the world.*" This happy pair, as you see, are figured with their backs turned towards each other, one of them roosting on the Dedalian Mountains. The pair of avalerions, according to the old books, lived sixty years and then laid two eggs, on which they sat sixty days and nights. As soon as the young were hatched it was the custom that the parent birds, instead of caring farther for these children of their old age, should fly to the sea, accompanied by a funeral procession of all other birds, where the parent birds proceeded to drown themselves, and the other birds returned and nursed the young avalerions till they could fly.

Above the avalerions are *The Pygmies*—men a cubit high. As you see, they are "Perched on Alps," the *Montes Indiae*, but pygmies still. They seem to have shields for defence, but no means of offensive warfare. And as they were placed in the extreme east, they can hardly have been the progenitors of Mr. Stanley's African pygmies.

On Plate 3, near the top, is pictured *The Rhinoceros*. More slender and gaunt than our idea of the animal. The description is this: "In India lives the rhinoceros whose color is yellowish. One horn upon his nose he uses as a dagger when he fights against elephants.

Being equal in length, but with shorter legs, he naturally aims at the belly, which only, he understands, is penetrable by his blows."

There seems to have been no change in the mode of warfare between these animals in the last six hundred years. It is curious that elsewhere the author gives a picture of an elephant and says that their teeth *are believed* to be ivory.

Above the rhinoceros is *The Sphinx*. She is stated to be "A bird in the wing, a snake in the foot and a girl in the face." She is placed near the highest mountains of Ethiopia.

And below the rhinoceros is another horned animal, *The Monoceros*. This animal is stated to be of an extremely susceptible nature. For the legend reads that "Before the Monoceros is placed a virgin, who, as he comes, bares her breast to him, on which he, abandoning all ferocity, lays his head, so that, having gone to sleep, he is taken as defenceless."

Spenser, you remember, portrays a similar effect of beauty upon the lion.

"Soon as the royal Virgin he did spy,
With gaping mouth at her ran greedily,
To have at once devour'd her tender coise.
But to the prey when as he drew more nigh
His bloody rage assuaged with remorse,
And, with the sight amazed, forgot his furious force.

"Instead thereof he kiss'd her weary feet,
And lick'd her lily hands with fawning tongue,
As he her wronged innocence did ween.
O! how can beauty master the most strong!"

This power of beauty not only masters the monoceros, but brings upon him sleep and captivity. He is to be classed among the Samsons of the world.

On Plate 1, at the bottom, to the right, is yet another curious horned animal, *The Eale*.

"The Eale lives in India, has the body of a horse and the tail of an elephant. His color is black, and he has the head of a goat, with horns more than a cubit long, which are not fixed but movable according to the exigency of battle. And when he fights with one he bends the other back."

The artist intended to depict him with one of his back-action horns turned away from the battle. But it needs the legend to give the idea.

On Plate 2, to the left of the rhinoceros, are represented *the Salamander*, "a venomous dragon" with a red body and tail, and *the Mandrake*, which is stated to be "an herb of wonderful virtue."

With such an idea of the mandrake as is here depicted, we can understand how Shakespeare should make Juliet speak of

"Shrieks, like mandrakes torn out of the earth,
That living mortals, hearing them, run mad."

Such was the legend of the mandrake. But, as it was an herb of wonderful virtue against poisons, it must be had. So they tied a dog to the stalk and made him pull it up; and thus made the dog run the risk of being driven mad by the mandrake's shriek.

Above the salamander is a representation of a building which one would hardly recognize as one of the pyramids. The pyramids in those days were called Joseph's Granaries. Sir John Mandeville, writing about 1350, says: "Beyond Babylon, above the flood of Nile, towards the desert between Africa and Egypt, are the garners of Joseph that he caused to be made



PLATE 3.



PLATE I.