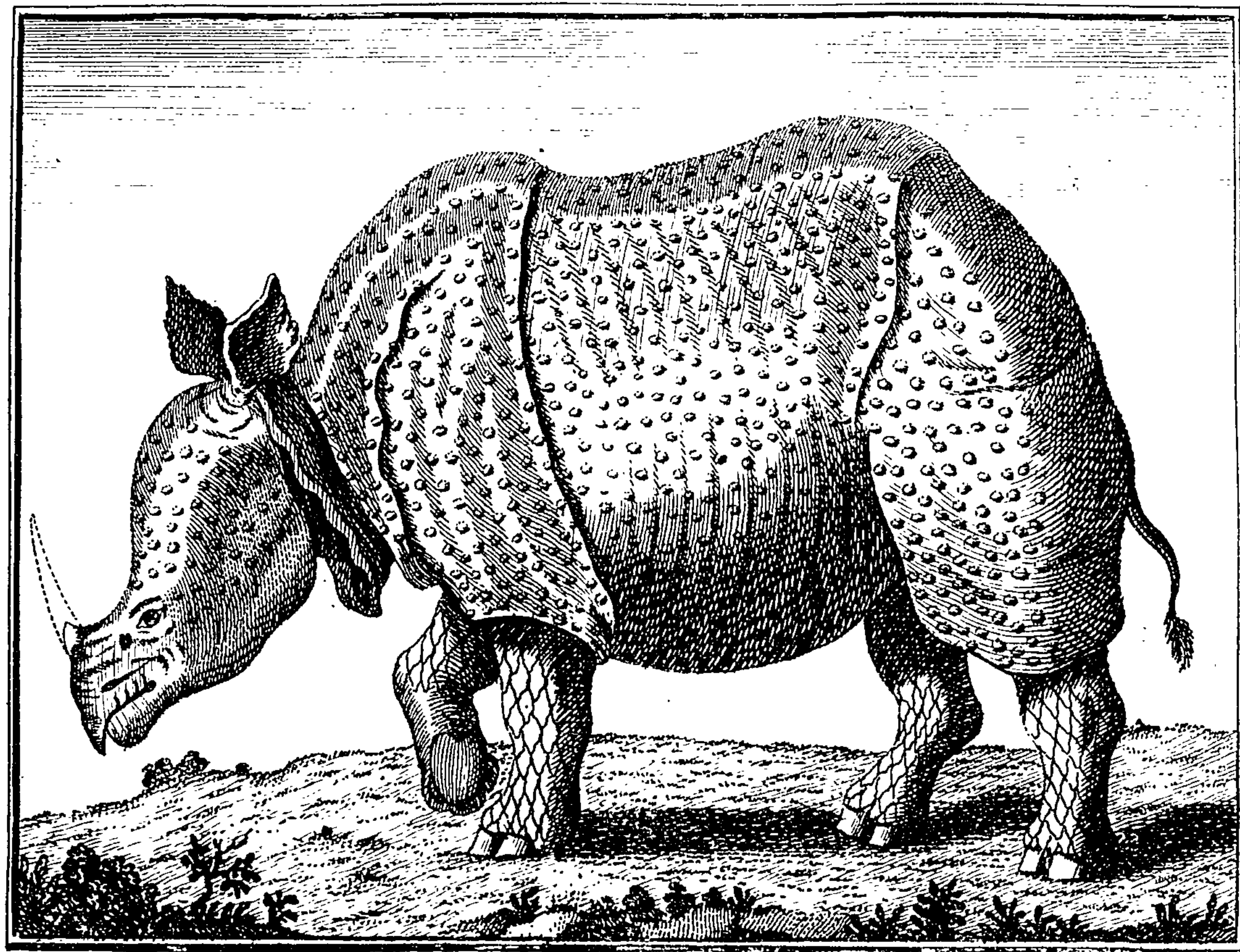


THE
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The Rhinoceros.

“ pure, plain and full style. Not ill at *controversies*, more happy at
“ *comments*, very good in his *characters*, better in his *sermons*, best
“ of all in his *MEDITATIONS*.”

PHYSICO - THEOLOGY.

I.

An ACCOUNT of the RHINOCEROS.

MR. EDWARDS, describing the RHINOCEROS, says, that it is generally accounted the next four-footed beast in magnitude to the elephant ; but his legs are much shorter, and he has a horn on his snout or nose, which sufficiently distinguishes him from all other animals. The shape and form of the creature is best seen by the *print*, which accurately represents it. The snout seems designed to turn up the earth, in order to find out the roots of plants ; it is very pliable, and ends in a point, which it can turn upwards, downwards, or sideways. The whole animal is covered with a thick, rough, chapped skin, of an ash-colour ; with plates and folds in all such parts as are necessary to allow the creature motion, falling one over another backward. It has no knobs all over it's body, as expressed in some figures, except on the hinder quarters, which receive it's weight when the animal first lies down, and there the knobs on the skin are very large. The tail has a few black hairs at it's end ; and there are also a few scattered hairs on the ears : but on the other parts there are none. The horn is different from that of all other animals we are acquainted with ; and is not hollow on the inside, but solid. The creature rolls himself in the dirt, like a hog ; and the old ones are so strong, that they will toss up a large bull ; as was seen in the amphitheatre at Rome.

The RHINOCEROS very rarely attacks mankind, unless he is provoked, or meets with a person in a red garment. When he attacks a man he lays hold of the middle of his body, and throws him over his head with such force, that he is almost always killed with the fall. This done, he comes and licks him ; and his tongue is so rough and hard, that it brings off the flesh from the bones : for this purpose his tongue is covered with a rough membrane, resembling a file : and, as we have animals here, which make a grateful repast upon thistles, whose small points are agreeable to the nervous filaments of the tongue ; so the RHINOCEROS eats with pleasure the branches of trees, bristled all over with the largest thorns. “ I
“ have frequently given him, says M. la Compte, those whose
“ points were very sharp and long ; and it was wonderful to see,
“ with what greediness and dexterity he immediately licked them
“ up, and chewed them in his mouth without the least seeming
“ inconveniency. Sometimes, indeed, his mouth would be a little
“ bloody, but that seemed to render the taste more agreeable ; and
“ these

“ these small wounds to appearance, made no other impression on his tongue than the particles of salt and pepper make on ours.”

When the RHINOCEROS is seen running along it is pretty easy to avoid him, because he cannot turn about very readily ; so that when he is about eight or ten feet distant, a man need only go on one side, and then he will be out of his sight, his eyes being so small ; that he can see nothing but what is directly before him ; which is the reason why he always runs in a right line when he pursues his prey ; overturning whatever lies in his way ; for scarce any thing will stop his progress, or make him turn aside.

The RHINOCEROS, called by the Indians *Abadu*, is found in the Island of Java, and is frequent in the kingdoms of Bengal and Patana. There is another kind with two horns, which are natives of Africa, and may be seen in plenty at the Cape of Good-Hope. The ancients have frequently mentioned this animal, but without giving an exact description of it. Pliny contents himself with saying, that it has a horn on it's nose ; that it sharpens it upon a stone before it engages with the elephant, there being a natural antipathy between these two creatures, and that they are nearly of the same bigness ; but that the *Rhinoceros* has shorter legs, and that the skin is of the colour of the box-tree. Ælian, who has given a detail of very common animals, did not think it necessary to describe the RHINOCEROS, because all the world had seen it in the shews which the emperors exhibited for the amusement of the people. Strabo says, that he saw the RHINOCEROS at Alexandria, but is as superficial in his relation as Pliny ; though he cites Artemidorus. Dio Cassius only tells us, that these creatures appeared for the first time at Rome in the triumph of Augustus.

Though the greatest part of the body of the RHINOCEROS is wrapped in armour, and those who attack him are exposed to great danger, yet the Indians hunt him as they do other animals ; because his carcass is of great use to them. The Moors eat his flesh, however hard it may be. His horn is not less curious than useful. When it is cut through the middle, on each side appear the figure of a man, small birds, and the like, whose out-lines are marked by little white strokes, as in the Ægyptian flints. Most of the Indian kings drink out of cups made of this horn, because it sweats at the approach of all kinds of poison. At the Cape too they have cups made of it, which are mounted in gold and silver : when wine is poured into it, it will rise a ferment, and seem to boil ; but, when mixed with poison, the horn cleaves in two : an experiment, says Dr. Brooke, which has been seen by thousands of people. The people of Java also set a great value on this animal, because there is no part of it but what is useful in medicine. They are persuaded, that there cannot be a better antidote against poisons of all kinds than it's horn, and they attribute to it the same qualities as the ancients did to that of the unicorn : indeed it is generally thought that the *Unicorn* was the same animal with the RHINOCEROS, and many learned commentators suppose that in Deuteronomy xxxiii. 17.

and.

and other passages of scripture, where our translators have rendered the Hebrew word *Unicorn*, the *Rhinoceros* is meant.

“ I am heartily sorry, says Topfall, that so strange an outside,
“ as by the figure you may perceive, yielding, no doubt, through
“ the omnipotence of the Creator, an answerable inside, and in-
“ finite testimonies of worthy and memorable virtues comprised in
“ it, should, through men’s ignorance of it’s nature, lie enfolded
“ and obscured before the reader’s eye. For he who shall but
“ cast his eyes over our history of common and smaller animals,
“ and consider how large a treatise we have written for the illus-
“ tration of their natures and conditions, cannot fail to expect
“ some rare and uncommon matter, as much unknown to his
“ mind, concerning the qualities of the RHINOCEROS, as the
“ outward shape and picture of him appeareth admirable. But,
“ reader! as thou art a man, so thou must consider, that since
“ Adam went out of paradise, there never was any one able per-
“ fectly to describe the universal condition of all sorts of beasts;
“ and it hath been the design of the Almighty himself; for the
“ instruction of man concerning his fall and natural weakness, to
“ keep him as well from the knowledge of many divine, as of
“ many human things: that so he might learn the difference be-
“ twixt his present and his original state of perfection; and con-
“ sider, how great a loss the fall in paradise was to him, who,
“ before that time, knew both God, himself, and all the creatures;
“ but, since that time, neither knoweth God as he ought to
“ know him, nor himself, nor the creatures §!”

If in our reflexions on the animal world, we are less frequent than in the former part of our work, the judicious will see that we forbear those reflexions, because they are less necessary, as we hope our preceding method will induce the reader to make them for himself. Every thing in the creation of God is calculated to give us high ideas of the goodness, wisdom, and power of the Creator: and every truly religious heart will immediately suggest such ideas, especially upon a contemplation of more extraordinary objects; which being the only ones we shall produce, we shall have no doubt of their good effects upon serious minds; and we recommend to parents particularly this mode of instruction to their children.

§ See Topfall’s history of four-footed beasts.

II.

REMARKS on the PROHIBITION to eat the BLOOD of ANIMALS, in GEN. IX. By Mr. VOLTAIRE.

IN Gen. ix. 9, 10. we are told that God made an alliance with Noah, and with the beasts of the field; and yet he permitted Noah, ver. 3, to eat of every thing that had life and motion, excepting only the *blood* of the creature; which he was prohibited: to which God adds, ver. 5. *And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hands of every beast will I require it.*

We