

RELATION
OF THE
VOYAGE
TO
SIAM,

Performed by Six

JESUIT

Sent by the FRENCH KING to
INDIES and CHINA, in the Year 1685,
WITH THEIR

ASTROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS,
and their REMARKS of Natural Philosophy, Geo-
graphy, Hydrography, and History.

Published in the Original, by the express Orders
of His most Christian Majesty.

And now made English, and Illustrated with
SCULPTURES.

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for a certain quantity of Tobacco and Brandy, to surrender that Country to them, and to withdraw farther up into the Continent. This agreement was made about the year 1653, and since that time they have taken a great deal of pains to make a firm settlement on the Cape. They have at present there a great Town and a Fort with five Bastions which commands all the Road. The air is very good, the Soil excellent, and Corn grows there as well as in *Europe*; they have planted Vines which yield a most delicate Wine.

The different
Animals that
are to be
found on the
Cape.

Wild Game they have every where in abundance. Our Officers returned from Hunting and Fowling with wild Goats, Antelopes, Pheasants and abundance of Partridges as big as the Wood-hens of *France*, and there are four sorts of them. The Oxen and the Sheep are got farther up amongst the wild Natives of the Country; but that is a Traffic which the Company reserves to themselves, who buy them up for a little Tobacco, and sell them again to the Inhabitants of the Cape, and to Strangers that put in there for fresh Provisions. We saw Sheep there that weighed fourscore pound weight, and were very good meat.

They have there also Civit-cats, many Wildcats, Lyons and Tygers which have very pretty skins and especially huge great Apes that comes sometimes in Troops down from the *Table-land* into the Gardens of private Persons, and carry away their Melons and other fruit. Nine or ten Leagues from the Cape *Eastward* there is a Chain of Hills full of Lyons, Elephants, and Rhincceroses of a prodigious bigness. Men of credit who have travelled there assured me that they had found the foot-trace
of

of an Elephant two foot and a half in diameter; and that they had seen several Rhinoceroses as high and big as an ordinary Elephant. All that I can say as to that, is that I have seen the two horns which that Beast carries on its Nose, fastned together as they are naturally, of a bigness and weight that inclined me to believe that what they told me of it was true. The Lieutenant of the Castle who went on that Progress, told me that the Rhinoceros being in rage runs his greatest Horn into the Ground and continues to run a kind of Furrow with it, till he come up with him that has smitten him. The skin of that Beast is so hard, that it is Musquet-proof, unless one take his time to hit it, when it shews its Flank, the only place of its body where fire-arms or halbards, that the Travellers carry, can wound it. There are Horses and Asses there of extraordinary beauty. The first have a very little head, and pretty long Ears. They are covered all over with black and white streaks that reach from their back to their belly about four or five fingers broad and are very pretty to look on, I saw the skin of one that had been killed, which my Lord Ambassador bought to carry with him into *France* as a very curious thing. As for the Asses, they are of all colours, they have a long blew list on the back that reaches from head to tail, and the rest of the body like the horse, full of pretty broad streaks, blew, yellow, green, black and white, all very lively.

Stags are so plentiful there that they are seen feeding in Flocks like Sheep, and I heard the Commanders Secretary say, and the Commander himself too, that they had seen ten thousand of them together in a Plain which they found in a Wood.

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There

A prodigious
Elephant.A property of
the Rhinoceros.

FIG: VII.



In the Progress they made which lasted five Months, they advanced as far North-ward as the Tropick; that is to say, they discovered two hundred Leagues of the Country, keeping always within ten or twelve Leagues of the Western Ocean.

The Governor of the Cape made a Progress up into the Country.

The Commander *Vanderstel* was there in Person, accompanied with fifty eight Men well Armed. His *Calesh* came after him and forty Waggon with twenty eight Horses, three hundred Sheep, and a hundred and fifty Oxen. These last carried the Baggage and drew the Waggon, and the Sheep served for food to the Travellers. He set out with his Company from the Cape of *Good-hope* about the latter end of *May*, which is the Winter time in that Country, and he chose that season, that he might not want Water and Forrage in the Desarts which it behoved him to cross over. They discovered some different Nations the eight and twentieth Degree of Latitude, who live in a pleasant Countrey abounding in all sorts of Fruits and Animals. Before they got thither, they found many Desarts and Mountains one of which was so high, that the Commander assured us they were forty days in mounting up to the top of it. They were all both Man and Beast like to have been killed with thirst, and were many times in danger of being devoured by the wild beasts which they met in Troops. He had much ado to save himself from a Rhinoceros of a huge bigness that was within three steps of him ready to tear him in pieces, had he not escaped it by flinging himself to one side, and getting out of sight of the Beast, which fought about for him a long while to have rent him.

The danger he was in of losing his life.

But