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# NATURAL HISTORY

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## Four-footed ANIMALS.

### Of the RHINOCEROS.



THE *Rhinoceros*, so called by the *Greeks*, from the Horn on the Nose, is by many (and with great Probability) taken for the true *Unicorn* of the Antients.

The *Hebrew* Name, which in our Translation we render *Unicorn*, is by the *Septuagint*, *St. Jerome*, *Tertulian*, and others translated *Rhinoceros*. Thus where the Almighty questions *Job*, chap. xxxix. 9. Numquid volet *Rhinoceros* servire tibi, &c. *Will the Rhinoceros be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy Crib? Canst thou bind the Rhinoceros with his Band in the Furrow? or will he harrow the Valleys after thee? Wilt thou trust him because his Strength is great? or wilt thou leave thy Labour to him? Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy Seed, and gather it into thy Barn? Also where Balaam willing to give Balak some Notion of the God of the Israelites, tells him, Numb. xxii. 22. Deus eduxit illum de Ægypto, cujus fortitudo similis est Rhinocerotis: God brought them out of Egypt:*

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*He has, as it were, the Strength of a Rhinoceros.* And he thinks this Simile carries with it such a strong Idea of his Power, that he repeats it in the next Chapter. Likewise *Moses*, where he maketh it an Emblem of Strength, in his Blessing of *Joseph*, Deut. xxxiii. 17. *Cornua Rhinocerotis, Cornua illius, &c. His Horns are like the Horns of the Rhinoceros; with them he shall push the People together, to the Ends of the Earth.* From these and several other Places of Scripture, as likewise from the general Account of the Antients, we may gather, that this Creature, whether called *Rhinoceros* or *Unicorn*, was the strongest Animal then known, and the *Rhinoceros* remains so to this Day; (not excepting even the *Elephant*) whereas those who have so wonderfully multiplied *Unicorns* (not to mention their absurd and contradictory Descriptions) have not so much as pretended their Force to come near that of the *Rhinoceros*.

To convince the Curious then, that the *Rhinoceros* is the Unicorn of the Antients, and particularly that so often mentioned in Scripture, it remains to prove, that it may very justly be taken for a *Monoceros*, or one-horned Creature.

Those who have bestowed two on it, either place one on the Nose, and the other between the Shoulders, on the Fore-part of the Back, or both on the Nose.

The first to which our common Prints seem to have given the only Foundation, make the additional Horn a very little one, which being fixt on an immoveable Part, can be of no Service to the Creature, either for Offence or Defence, the great End for which Nature bestows them: Besides, the Prints appear all to be copied from one, which seems to be that of *Albert Durer*, in 1515. for there is so exact a Resemblance (even in some of the minutest Particulars) between that and *Gesner's*, *Johnson's*, *Barlow's*, &c. that were they taken from different *Rhinoceroses* (as they must, if not taken from one another) we might

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conclude Nature, in this Creature, had forgot that agreeable Variation which she stamps on every Individual: Besides, as then the Credit of this Horn seems to depend intirely on one Print, (no tolerable Author having taken Notice of it) may not we much safer impute it to the Draughtsman as a Blunder, than to suppose so many Writers (several of which had seen the Creature) as *Pliny*, *Ælian*, *Oppian*, *Brontius*, &c. could all be so blind as not see, or so disingenuous as not to mention it.

The others, who make it to have two Horns on the Nose, ground their Opinion on a Coin of *Domitian*, on the Reverse of which is a *Rhinoceros* with two Horns on his Nose, and that Epigram of *Martial* on the same *Rhinoceros*, concluding with these Lines,

*Namque gravem gemino cornu sic extulit ursum,  
Factat ut impositas taurus in astra pilas.* Lib. 1. Epig. 22.

What *Martial* mentions by his *Gemino Cornu*, Dr. *Grew* confesses he don't understand: *Politanus* applies it to the Bull, and the Translator of *Gesner* would have it to be taken figuratively for a strong Horn; but however this Phrase of *Martial* may be explain'd away, *Domitian's Rhinoceros* bears both his Horns still, none as yet having made any Attempt against either of them: If then we suppose, (which may very well clear up all the Doubts) that in the Time of *Domitian*, when *Martial* wrote, there was one taken, which had two Horns on his Nose, and for the Greatness of the Rarity, was by *Domitian* stamp'd on his Coin, and by *Martial* celebrated in his Epigram: If this be the Case, (which is highly probable) no Man, who considers the Nature of Things, will from this infer, that all *Rhinoceroses* have two Horns, no more than if he had seen a Bull without any, lay it down as a Proof, that the whole Species were without Horns.

But to conclude, should we allow the Print right, yet that additional Horn is so small, and stands in such a Place, as not to come in



any Competition with the Horn on his Nose: So that even then this Creature might be justly esteemed an *Unicorn*, and in *Domitian* and *Martial's Rhinoceros*, plainly appears only a Redundancy in an Individual, which is incapable of being charged upon the Species.

This Creature is found in many Parts of *Asia*, as *Bengal*, *Patana*, *Jacatra*, &c. 'Twas not known to the *Greeks* in the Time of *Aristotle*, nor to the *Romans* before *A. U. C.* 666 or 85 Years before *Christ*, when *Pompey the Great*, in his publick Spectacles, shew'd one at *Rome*. (This, says *Pliny*, was the first ever seen there). *Augustus*, when he Triumph'd for *Cleopatra*, showed another; *Domitian* exhibited in the Amphitheatre two, both taken Notice of by *Martial*; *Antoninus Pius*, among his Gifts to the People, gave a *Rhinoceros*; *Heliogabalus* had the last, mentioned to be seen at *Rome*. Whether any appeared in *Europe*, from that Time till after 1500, is uncertain. About the Time *Albert Durer* did his Print, which was in 1515, *Emanuel King* of *Portugal* received one from the *Indies*: This was the same *Gesner* is reported to have seen at *Lisbon*: And in the Years 1684 and 1685, there was one in *England*, which was the last, and perhaps the first ever seen here, till this now brought over.

From the Account here given, this seems to be the scarcest Species of Four-footed Animals; for when in the *Roman Shows*, they would bring in 4 or 500 *Lions*, as many *Tigers*, *Leopards*, &c. we never find more than one *Rhinoceros*, and that perhaps but in a Number of Years.

This wonderful Creature, when at full Growth, is said to be near as big as the *Elephant*, being full as long, but not so high; it's Skin so thick and hard, that no Weapon will pierce it, of Colour like the Rind of a Box-tree, which differs not much from an *Elephant's*; 'tis all over rough, and looks as if scabby, which is probably caused by the Pores being so very large; has very little Hair; the Legs are short and thick, the Skin of them being more regularly marked, than



that on the rest of the Body, appears like Scales; his Skin is so loose as to hang over his Legs like Trowsers, and lies in several Folds on his Body; the three largest are, one that goes round his Neck above his Shoulders, another below them, and the third about his Loins; these, and all the rest of the Folds, draw out in certain Movements of the Body, and those Parts of the Skin which fold up, are smooth and of a Flesh-colour: When he lifts up his Head, all those under his Throat come out, and the Skin is tight; in like Manner, when lying down, he stretches out his Legs, those Parts which appear like Trowsers, become streight: There is a continual Oil or Grease perspiring through the Skin, which Nature affords to keep it supple, and prevent it from Chopping; the Want of this, when the Creature is old, but especially in stuffed Skins, may be the Cause of that extraordinary Roughness which we find upon them, and which carries the Appearance of Scales or Shells.

The Head very much resembles that of a *Hog*, as do also the Ears and Eyes, and in short, the whole Creature, tho' Dr. *Charleton* classes it with the *Deer* Kind; the Eyes, which are very small, are at a greater Distance from the Ears, than in any other Quadruped; just above the Nostrils, grows the famous Horn, which in this present Animal is not yet come out, bending a little towards the Crown of the Head, but not so high, one of which, in the Musæum of the Royal Society, is thus described by Dr. *Grew*. " 'Tis in Colour and Smoothness like those of a Bull, almost a Yard along, at the Base about half a Foot over, and there surrounded with a Garland of black and stubby Bristles; 'tis sharp pointed, a little crooked backwards, like a Cock-spur, and quite through solid." *Brontius* says, the Horn is black, gray, and sometimes white, which last is very rare, and sells much dearer than the others.

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The Under-jaw is shorter than the Upper, and from the Upper-lip descends a musculous Substance, which, as a Proboscis, assists the Creature more easily to convey the Food into his Mouth; this he dilates or contracts, as his Use or Necessity requires.

His Teeth are small, and his Tongue said to be so rough and sharp, as to lick a Man to Death, by raking away the Flesh from the Bone. The Tail of this *Rhinoceros* that is now shown, is like a Rat's, but flatter, without Hairs, which must alter very much in its Growth, to resemble that belonging to the Royal Society, which Dr. Grew says is of a large one full grown, and gives the Description in the following Words, "The Dock is about half an Inch thick, and two Inches broad, like an Apothecary's Spatula, of what Length the whole uncertain, this being only Part of it, tho' it looks as if cut off near the Buttock, 'tis about nine Inches, black and very rough on the two Edges, and there only grow very black and shining Hairs, a Foot long, stubborn, and of the Thickness of a smaller Shoemaker's Thread, yet not round like other Hairs, but rather flattish, like so many little Pieces of Whale-bone.

The Feet, (says Mr. Ray) are Quadrisulc, or divided into four Partitions.

In the Musæum of the Royal Society, is the entire Skin of a young *Rhinoceros* stuffed, which Dr. Grew very accurately describes, in the following Manner, "'Tis a Yard long, and almost a Foot over, his Head nine Inches long, almost eight over at the Top, his Snout broadish, as of a Calf, his Eyes little, as those of a Hog, about three Fourths of an Inch long, they stand low, not above three Inches above his Nose-end, his Ears also like a Hog's, his Legs as the *Hippopotamus*, rateably short, about ten Inches long, his Tail five and a half, flat as that of the *Castor*, but not so broad, near the Buttocks an Inch and half, at the End half an Inch.

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“ The said Skin is every where thick, and very hard, excepting only his Ears, which are softer, and extreme thin; it hath about ten Plicæ or Folds, two under the Nether-jaw, one on the Breast, in the Figure of the Letter V. on the Neck one of each Side, one between the Shoulders semicircular, on the Back two transversely extended to the Bottom of the Sides, with two more streight ones, carried obliquely on the Buttocks.

“ The lower Part of his Forehead and Snout cover'd with a Kind of hard Crust, his Ears naked and smooth, all the other Parts rough, with round scaly Crusts, on the Back, Sides and Belly lesser, near one Fourth of an Inch over, on the Nether-chap and Shoulders bigger, on his Buttocks and Legs, the biggest about half an Inch over; his Hair is black, short, and fine, so few, that there are not many more than Scales or Shells, growing for the most Part out of the Centre of the Shell, so that it is almost naked; his Dock is also naked on both Sides, but on the Edges there grows a considerable Quantity of longer and thicker Hair: The Animal being very young, had no Horn, nor so much as any Sign of it.

“ In *Piso's* Figure, which he hath added to *Brontius's* Description, and which, he says, was taken from the Life, the Eyes are placed very low, as they are also in this Skin, but the Cloven-feet in the same Picture I do not find here, peradventure the Skin not being well taken off the Feet.

There is likewise a Piece of the Skin tann'd, very thick, to be seen among the fore-mentioned Curiosities: The *Indians*, they say, make Bottles of it; but whether the *Vas Rhinocerota*, used by the old *Romans* in their Baths, to drop Oil on the Body of the Persons bath'd, was one of these Bottles, or a Vessel with a long Spout, we won't presume to determine.

*Oppian*



*Oppian* denies any Distinction of Sexes among them, because, says he, all that were ever found, were Males: But this is far from a Proof. *Pliny* and *Solinus* say, they generate like *Elephants*, *Camels*, or *Lions*: *Brontius* has fixt this Point from a Story we shall relate presently.

This Creature delights much in moorish Grounds, and wallowing in the Mud; when at Liberty its Food is Grass, Herbs, and Tops of Boughs: Whether it chews the Cud, or no, is doubted; tho' it seems very plain to me, (says Mr. Ray) it doth not, for altho' it divide the Hoof into two, or rather four Parts, and is horn'd, yet by the Horn's Situation, Solidity and Duration, taken together, it differs from the Horns of all other Creatures, as well from those that fall off, as those that do not; nor doth it make any Thing towards it, that it is not carnivorous, but feeds on Grass, Herbs, and Fruits, since the Horse, who eats the same Food, chews not the Cud. That great one, which was shewn about *England*, in 1684 or 1685, was fed with Hay, Turnip-tops, and Corn, of which last, he eat a Bushel and a half every Day: Those who looked after him being ask'd, Whether they ever perceived him to chew the Cud? answered, No. Moreover, seeing that not only in the Head, Snout, Grunting, &c. he resembles the *Swine*, but also in Rowling himself in Mire, why mayn't he also in not chewing the Cud?

This which is here now, they say, eats only Hay and Rice, and drinks about six Gallons of Water daily.

Most Authors, who mention this Creature, report there is a natural Enmity between the *Rhinoceros* and the *Elephant*; that before he enters the Combat, he whets his Horn against a Stone, and that he always aims his Horn at the *Elephant's* Belly (knowing it to be the tenderest Part) endeavouring to rip it up; in which he is mostly successful, yet sometimes, they say, the *Elephant* advantageously



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tageously seizing him with his Trunk, pierces him through with his Teeth: This Contest, they conjecture, is for their Pasture. *Gesner* relates, that when the *Rhinoceros*, which was at *Lisbon*, was brought into the Presence of an *Elephant*, the *Elephant* run away from him. This Creature is not easily provoked, but when once enraged, hardly any Thing can stand before him; *Martial* relates, that he would so long suffer the Fury of the Beasts let out upon him in the Amphitheatre, that the Spectators almost despaired of seeing him fight with them, but when thoroughly provoked, he not only tost a *Bear*, but a *Bull*.

*Brontius* also tells a very remarkable Story of the Fury of this Beast, when enraged: *Theodore Femming* (says he) Secretary of our City, with two Companions, was lately riding in a Wood, where coming to a marshy Place, they found a *Rhinoceros*, with her Cub; (for this Animal, like the *Hog*, delights to wallow in the Mire) who, as soon as she saw them, rose up, and slowly went away towards the thickest Part of the Wood, driving her young one before her, but this she did in a very tender Manner, pushing it along with her Nose; in the mean Time, one of the Company over-rash, rides after the Beast, and drawing his Sword, struck the *Rhinoceros* several Times on her Hinder-parts, but the Strokes only made white Streaks on her Buttocks, not being able to enter for the Thickness of her Hide: This the Creature bore very patiently, till she had secured her Cub in a safe Place, among the thick Bushes, when turning suddenly, with a great Snorting and Crashing of her Teeth, made furiously at him, and had certainly laid hold of him, had not the Horse been wiser than his Master, which turning short, ran away with him directly towards his Companions; the enrag'd Beast follow'd him with all her Might, and with a great and horrible Noise, overthrowing Trees, or whatever opposed her Passage; at Length they reached the Place where he left his Companions, whom the *Rhinoceros* seeing, immediately left pursuing of him, and

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made at them, who, to avoid her Fury, slip'd behind two very large Trees, hardly two Foot asunder; between which the Creature seeing them, made directly at them; but how it happened, whether thro' the Stupidity of the Beast, or their better Fortune, she attempted to come at them no other Way than thro' that narrow Space, and tho' she made the Trees shake like Reeds, yet their vast Thickness withstood all her Force; at Length, while the Creature was making a strong Effort against one of the Trees, they presented their Pieces close to her Head, fired, and happily shot her into the Brain; upon which this great, furious Creature fell down dead.

From this Behaviour of the *Rhinoceros*, *Pierius* makes him the Hieroglyphic of a Man hard to be provoked, and as hard to be appeased.

They are very unsociable (tho' not rapacious) Creatures, never herding together, nor with any other Beasts, and tho' they do no Injury, yet all carefully avoid them, except the *Tiger*, of whose Friendship with the *Rhinoceros*, *Brontius* says, I'll tell you something wonderful: Wherever the *Rhinoceros* chiefly abides, there you shall generally find a *Tiger*; being curious to know, says he, the Reason of this, I ask'd the *Indians*, who told me, the *Tiger* being a ravenous Creature, and a great Devourer of Flesh, which often caused violent Crudities in his Stomach, followed the *Rhinoceros*, who only feeds on Herbage, to eat his Dung, which he takes as Physick to cure himself; but this is only a feigned Friendship between them, for the female *Rhinoceros*, while she is bringing up her Cubs, won't suffer a *Tiger* to come within a great Distance of her: I myself saw early one Morning, as I was walking by the River-side, a young *Rhinoceros*, with his Hinderparts gnaw'd off, not even then quite dead; and asking the *Moors* (for I had two of them Servants with me) what could have done it, they told me it was done by some *Tiger*; besides, the *Rhinoceroses*, whenever



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ever they find a *Tiger* following them, keep their Eye upon him, snort, grunt, and seem very uneasy, which is no great Sign of Friendship; hence the *Indians* have a Proverb among themselves, when Relations or intimate Acquaintance entertain Suspensions of one another, that they had contracted the Friendship of the *Rhinoceros* and *Tiger*: And as the Dung is of such Service to this Creature, so it is also to Man, for that, the Water, Blood, Flesh, Skin, Teeth, &c. are used with Success against Poison, and various Diseases, but above all, the Horn is famous for its Virtues; of this they make Cups, which are reported to take away all the noxious Qualities of any Liquor put into them, as likewise to communicate a medicinal Virtue to whatever stands in them some Time: In the Collection of the *Royal Society*, is a large oval Box, said to be made out of one of these Horns.

*Piso*, in his Annotations on *Brontius* says, that in the Year 1630, he had sent him from the *Indies*, a Stone very ponderous, being not an Inch long, and weighing two Ounces, which was taken out of the Brain of a *Rhinoceros*; but of what Virtue it might be, he could not tell, having not yet experienced it.

Little can be said concerning the Longivity of this Creature, but as it comes very near the *Elephant* in Bulk, and feeds on the same Food, it may probably live as long, which is reputed to be two Hundred Years.

There is a great Difference (says *Linschotten*) among the *Rhinoceroses*, as to their Value, which the *Indians* can discern, and is supposed to arise from the different Herbage they feed upon, which gives them more or less Virtue, some being sold for an hundred Times more than others.

This *Rhinoceros*, from which the Figure was taken, was brought over in the *Lyell*, Captain *Acton*, from *India*, the Beginning of June 1739. and was begun to be publickly shown in *London* the same Month, at  
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two Shillings and Six-pence each Person; 'tis a Male, and judg'd to be about three Years old, having as yet no Horn, only an Excrecence in the Place where it is to come out; they say it was taken in *Patna*, and brought down to our *India Company's* Settlement in *Bengal*, where a Drawing in *Indian Ink*, was made of it by *Thomas Gregory-Warren*, Gunner of *Fort William*, 1738. which we have seen.

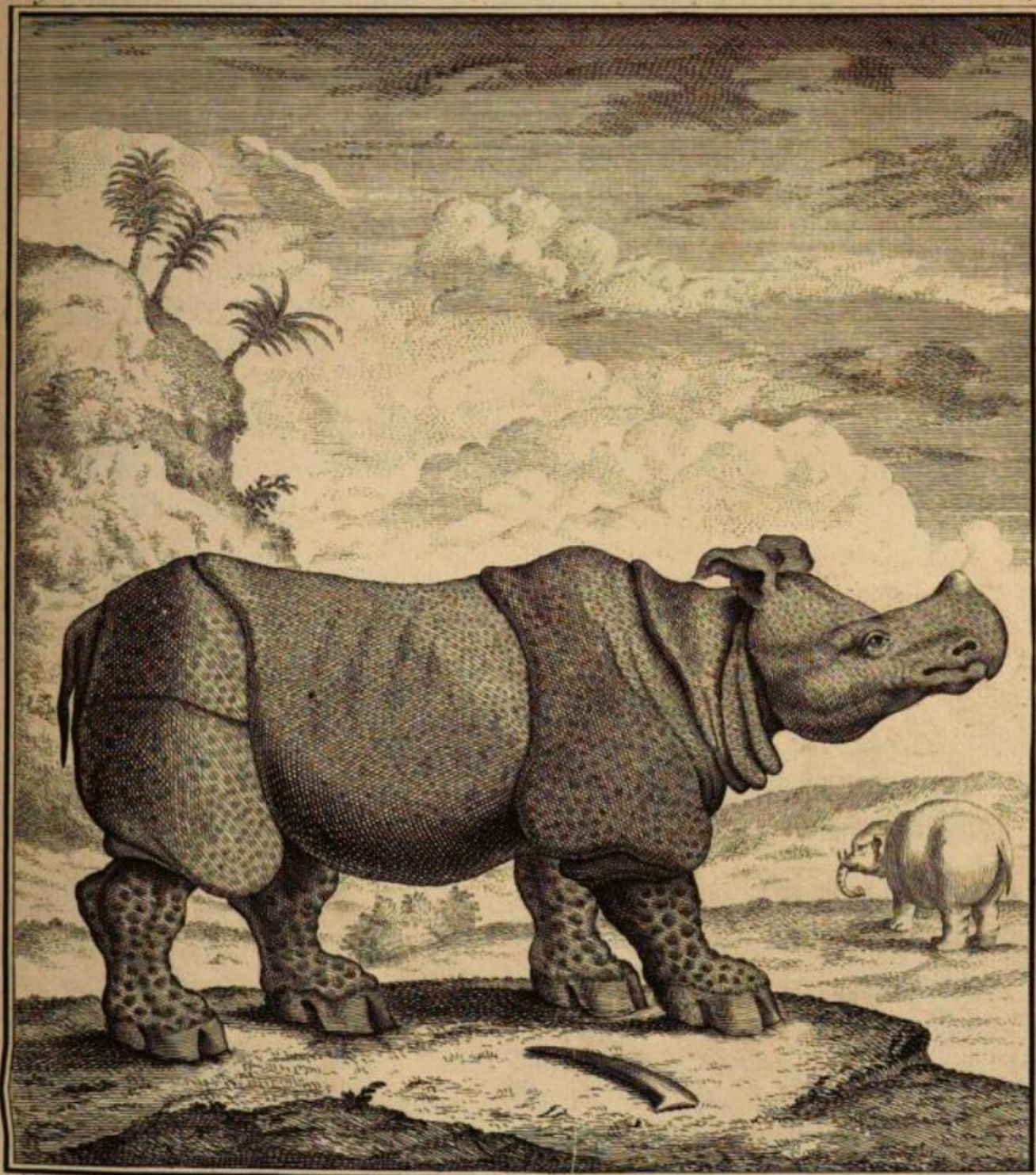
We shall conclude with taking Notice, that the *Nasus Rhinocerotis* of the *Romans*, was a proverbial Expression, for a Way of Ridiculing, either by turning or wrinkling up the Nose, implying, that the Weapon with which they assaulted their Adversary, was the same: This Manner of Scoffing was unknown to the antient *Romans*, but in *Domitian's* Time was so mightily in Vogue, that both old and young practis'd it; whence *Martial*,

*Majores nunquam rhonchi; juvenesque, senesque,  
Et pueri nasum Rhinocerotis habent.*

Our Fathers never scoff'd, but now,  
All, their *Rhinoceros-Noses* show.







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