

studies, "Tufton Street" (No. 32A), and "Ludgate Hill" (No. 58G) are very attractive, while in "King Charles in Whitehall" (No. 42) the artist has once again allowed his fancy to call up old associations. "New York from Brooklyn" (No. 35) is impressionistic in its suggestion of towering masses of buildings rising through a mist, and they are indicated so slightly and so picturesquely that they might almost be clusters of Gothic spires or the pinnacles of some fairy palace instead of sky-scrapers. The "Archway of the Quadrangle of St. John's College, Oxford" (No. 57) is another interesting architectural study, this time revelling in elaborate ornamental detail.

But in etching, too, Mr. Walcott tackles archaeological and historical material, not contenting himself with merely copying nature. He has studied and visualised the remains of ancient Rome, such as the "Baths of Caracalla" (Nos. 33 and 37), and the "Basilica Maxentius" (No. 45), and gives an echo of life in those times in "Nero," a "Performance in the Colosseum," and "In the Days of Justinian," while, perhaps, the noblest of these historical compositions is the "Sack of a Sicilian Temple" (No. 46), with its monumental silhouette of the portico effectively contrasted with the disorderly, scuffling mass of figures engaged in removing the loot—the glory and the shame of ancient days thus effectively combined to call up a vision of the past!

THE RHINOCEROS in ANCIENT CHINA

THERE has recently been added to the famous collection of Mr. Eumorfopoulos a specimen of antique pottery which is of peculiar interest not only to antiquarians, but to zoologists. It is the statuette of a rhinoceros, measuring 5ins. in height and 11½ins. from tip to tail. By the courtesy of Mr. Eumorfopoulos a photograph is here reproduced. The figure is made of red pottery, very hard and stony, overlaid with a composition of lighter texture; the latter is much corroded. According to the report of the Chinese from whom it was purchased, it was discovered in the dried-up bed of a river near Changtifu in the province of Honan. Things being as they are in China, the conjecture is permissible that the term "river-bed" may be a discreet pseudonym, and that in this case, as in many others, the treasure-trove has come to light as the result of iconoclastic modern ideas getting the better of the ancestral piety which, until recent years, allowed the graves of bygone generations to remain inviolate. A good many ancient tombs have been rifled in Honan and Shensi in the course of railway and road construction since 1907.

Oriental experts, whose judgment in such matters is usually reliable, agree in declaring this pottery figure to be of venerable antiquity, dating it back to the earliest days of the Chow dynasty, which ruled China from about 1100 B.C. to within 250 years of the Christian Era. This places it at once in a category distinct from the clay figures of the Tai g and Sung dynasties, from Honan and Shensi, of which numerous specimens have found their way into the hands of collectors in this country during the last twenty years. Were it one of these, it would still be remarkable as the only representation of a rhinoceros that has ever been found in China; but its origin might possibly have been ascribed, like that of the sculptured ostriches in the mausolea of the Tang emperors, to the dim knowledge of the world beyond the borders of the Middle Kingdom, which the scholars and artists of the Golden Age had acquired first from the writings of early Buddhist pilgrims from India and later from the Tribute missions of neighbouring States. Assuming, however, that the experts are correct and that it is a product of Chow dynasty days (in other words, older than the oldest written records that exist in China), it must have been the work of a native artist and of purely indigenous origin. Even in the latest days of the Chow dynasty the primitive arts were still rigidly localised, and inaccessible by foreign influences of the kind which, emanating some centuries later from the Roman Orient, left their mark on the records and monuments of the Han, Tang and Sung dynasties. This rhinoceros statuette should, therefore, possess peculiar interest for zoologists.

In his erudite work on "Chinese Clay Figures" and the history of defensive armour (Chicago Field Museum of Natural History, Vol. XIII, No. 2, 1914) Mr. Berthold Laufer deals exhaustively with the question of the geographical distribution of the Asiatic rhinoceros in ancient times; and he proves by valid evidence that at least one of the three species survived in China proper, south of the Yangtze, until comparatively recent days. For example, the writings of one Li Shi-chen, who compiled a treatise on Materia Medica in 1578 from sources dating back to the fifth century, establish the fact that the two-horned rhinoceros (the Sumatra variety) was common in south-western China during the Chow period, its skin being widely used in the making of armour. Later, with the rapid development of agriculture, it disappeared from Kweichow and Hunan, but continued to exist farther south, in Yunnan and Szechuan, until the thirteenth century, and probably later. It may, therefore, reasonably be concluded that the maker of this pottery figure had a working knowledge of the animal, either from having seen it in the flesh or got a clear idea of its appearance from native hunters. Then arises the

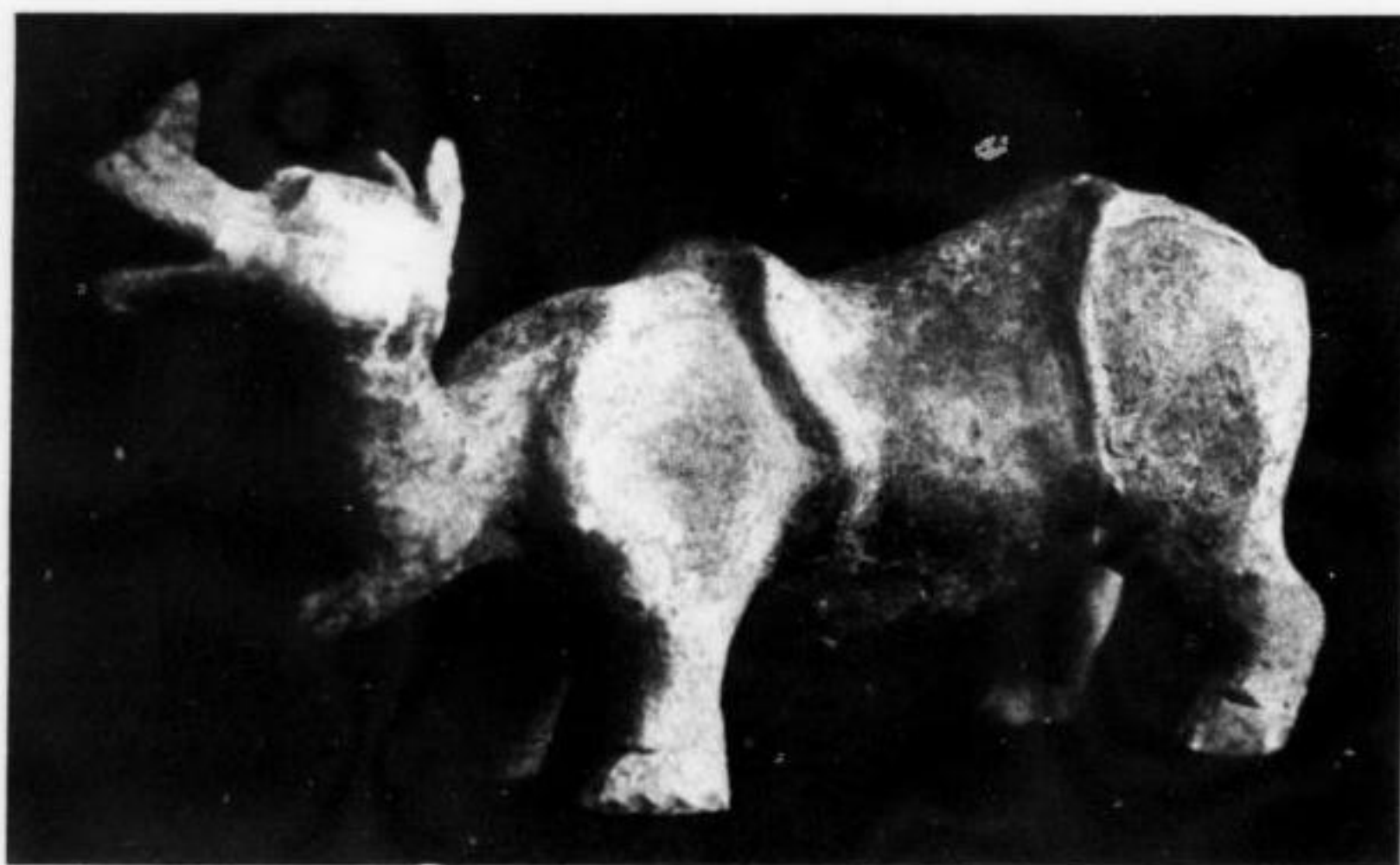
perplexing question, how comes it, if the rhinoceros had its habitat in China proper at least until the end of the Chow period (250 B.C.), that, so far as we know, it has never been portrayed in any Chinese scroll or temple decoration, and that the statuette acquired by Mr. Eumorfopoulos is the only one of its kind so far discovered? The single case of its use in ancient Chinese art cited by Mr. Laufer is that of a Shang period wine-kettle, described in the "Catalogue of Bronzes" (A.D. 1107), the handle of which is decorated with two rhinoceroses, identifiable chiefly by the eye of faith. Mr. Laufer's solution of this perplexing question, *viz.*, "that the animal lacks the æsthetic qualities of form which tempt the brush of the painter," is far from convincing. Furthermore, how are we to account for the fact that, in the illustrated reproductions of ancient dictionaries (such as the "Erh Ya" and "T'u Shu") published during the Tang and Sung periods the rhinoceros always appears as a nondescript monster, evolved by the imagination of the artist either from the ox, the pig or the deer? How comes it that a craftsman working 1,500 or 2,000 years earlier could produce, as in this pottery figure, a much more accurate representation of the beast? The illustrators of these reprints of ancient works were, of course, scholars and artists, more concerned with the words of the classical commentators of their texts than with the form and habits of wild beasts. But, making due allowance for this fact, it is still difficult to account for the absence of the rhinoceros from the annals and monuments of ancient Chinese art, especially as the animal must have been seen and discussed by scholars and officials from time to time long after it had ceased to exist in its wild state in Central China. In the annals of the post-Chow dynasties several cases are recorded of living specimens having been sent with other tribute to the Court of China by vassal or friendly States, such as Malaya, Tonking and Assam.

The most natural explanation of the matter would seem to be that during the thousand years or so which elapsed between the end of the Chow dynasty and the Tang period all memory of the beast which had formerly provided the nation's fighting men with armour passed, like so many other things, into oblivion; and that, having been forgotten, it was gathered, with the dragon, the unicorn and the flying horse, into the goodly fellowship of fabulous monsters. It remains, nevertheless, a mystery that, unlike its fellow-monsters, it should have been completely ignored by successive generations of artists and craftsmen.

For myself, who make no claim to be a scientific zoologist, this noteworthy apparition from Honan revives certain memories, and suggests, *sotto voce*, certain fantastic speculations. It reminds me of something which I saw, without giving it much attention at the time, one evening in the year 1907, when dining with the Governor of Fengtien at his residence in Moukden—to wit, the pad of a recently killed amphibious animal of considerable size. This, I gathered, had been brought back with some bones as a trophy of the chase, and to convince the incredulous, by a native hunter from somewhere in the neighbourhood of Lake Hinka. It is not the sort of country which one would advise even the hardiest of sportsmen to visit—witness the tragic tale of the journeyings in that region by Père de la Brunière,

as told by James in "The Long White Mountain." I remember thinking at the time that, in the remote fastnesses of the vast, trackless wilderness of swamps and great lakes which lies between the Sungari and the Amur and further south, the rhinoceros and the tapir (and, for that matter, the Dragon of the Prime) might have found long ago an impregnable stronghold. In my mind's eye I saw them there disporting themselves as comfortably undisturbed as if there were no human beings on this planet. An absurd idea? Perhaps, but one which, in any case, no one can possibly disprove.

J. O. P. BLAND.



THE EUMORFOPOULOS RHINOCEROS.