

A NEW
HISTORY
OF
E T H I O P I A.
BEING A
Full and Accurate DESCRIPTION
OF
The Kingdom of Abessinia,
Vulgarly, though Erroneously called the
EMPIRE of PRESTER JOHN.
IN FOUR BOOKS.

Wherein are Contained

- I. An Account of the Nature, Quality and Condition of the Country, and Inhabitants ; their Mountains, Metals and Minerals ; their Rivers, (particularly of the source of the *Nile* and *Niger* ;) their Birds, Beasts, amphibious Animals, (as the River Horse and Crocodile ;) Serpents, &c.
- II. Their Political Government ; the Genealogy and Succession of their Kings ; a description of their Court, and Camp ; their Power and Military Discipline ; their Courts of Justice, &c.
- III. Their Ecclesiastical Affairs ; their Conversion to the Christian Religion, and the Propagation thereof, their Sacred Writings, their Sacraments, Rites, Ceremonies, and Church Discipline ; the decree of the *Romish* Religion, their Contentions with the Jesuits, their Separation from the Greek Church, &c.
- IV. Their private Oeconomy, their Books and Learning ; their common Names, their Dyet, Marriages, and Polygamy, their Mechanick Arts, and Trades, their Burials, their Merchandise and Commerce, &c.

Illustrated with Copper Plates.

By the Learned *Job Ludolphus*, Author of the *Ethiopic Lexicon*.

Made English, by *J. P. Gapt.*

L O N D O N,
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St. Paul's Church-yard, 1682.

on the Ant-heap, as fast as the Emmets creep into their treacherous Palmes, they lick 'em off with great comfort to their Stomachs: and there they will lie till there is not an Emmet left. They are also pernicious to fruit and Apples, and will destroy whole Fields and Gardens, unless they be carefully look'd after. For they are very cunning, and will never venture in till the return of their Spies, which they send always before; who giving Information, that all things are safe, in they rush with their whole Body, and make a quick dispatch. Therefore they go very quiet and silent to their Prey; and if their young ones chance to make a noise, they chastise them with their fists, but if they find the Coast clear, then every one hath a different noise to express his joy. Nor could there be any way to hinder them from further Multiplying, but that they fall sometimes into the ruder hands of the wild Beasts, which they have no way to avoid, but by a timely flight, or creeping into the clefts of the Rocks. If they find no safety in flight, they make a virtue of necessity, stand their ground, and filling their Paws full of Dust or Sand, fling it full in the Eyes of their Assailant, and then to their Heels again.

But there is another sort of Creature very harmless, and exceeding sportive, call'd in the *Ethiopic Language Fonkes*, in the *Amharc Dialect Guereza*, (which is a kind of *Marmoset*) and in *Latine Cercopitheculus*. Of which the following Rhime is common in several parts of *Ethiopia*.

*I put no Man to pain,
I eat not his Grain,
They hate me in vain.*

They are varie-Colour'd, and skie-Colour'd mixt with gray: *India* breeds them white, and beautiful; but so tender, that unless they be wrapt very warm, and carry'd in your bosome, they cannot be brought into these Parts. Whether it be the *Calli-triches*, or *Fair-hair* of the Ancients, I leave to others to judge. Of them, after a Discourse of *Apes*, thus *Plinie*, The *Calli-tricks* differ in the shape of the whole Countenance. The Beard is in the midst of the face, the Tayl is broad in the fore-part; This Creature they say, lives no where but in the *Ethiopian Climate* where it was bred. *Solinus* hath the same words, only adding; *To catch these is easie, to bring away very difficult.*

Besides these, *Gregory* nam'd to me another sort of Beast, both

both Strong and Fierce, call'd *Arwebaris*, from the Arabic *Harib*, or *Harshaw*; which signifies with one Horn. This Beast resembles a *Goat*, but very swift of Foot; whether it be the *Monoceros* of the Ancients, which as *Jeromimus Lupus* reports, is found in *Habessinia*, I leave to the Scrutinie of others. Many skilful Authors look'd upon this Four-footed Beast as a kind of *Chimera*, considering the idle Relations as if it could not be taken alive; that it was a Beast compos'd of two Creatures of different Forms: as if Writers were framing Fables concerning some Errour of Nature. However the *Portugals* tell us, that the Report was not altogether vain. For one of them was seen by *John Gabriel*, whom we have already nam'd, in the Province of the *Agami*, in the Kingdom of *Damota*; it was a Beast with a fair Horn in the Fore-head, five Palmes long, and of a whitish Colour, about the bigness and shape of a middle siz'd Horse, of a Bay Colour, with a Black Main and Tayl, but short and thin (though some have been seen with longer and thicker) a lively Creature, haunting the thickest Woods, and seldom appearing in the Fields. And lest there should be any doubt of the Truth of the thing, there was a young *Colt* brought to one of the Fathers of the Society, who was an Eye-witness of the reality of the thing. Moreover, several *Portugueses*, who were banish'd by the Emperour *Adamas Sagbed*, into a certain high Rock in the Province of *Nanina*, which is a part of *Gojam*, have attested, that they saw several such *Unicorns* feeding in the Woods that lay under the said Mountain. From whose Relations *John Bermudes*, and *Lodowick Marmolius* made their Reports concerning (1) this Beast. The Description of the *Portugueses* seems most agreeable to Truth: For what the Ancient and Modern Writers have written concerning (1) *Unicorns* are so confus'd, that some things have reference to the *Monoceros*; other things to the (m) wild *Stag*, or wild *Goat*, somethings to the wild *Indian Ajs*; and other things in reference to the *Groinland-Whale*, or

(1) Plin. L. 8. c. 39. Solin. in *Polybius*. l. 30. d. 43.

(i) In his Relation Translated into English; *Tit. a short Relation of the River Nile.*

(k) By Bochart in *Hierozolco*. L. 3. c. 26.

(l) At large by Bochart, in the place already cited.

(m) In the relation of *Paulus Venetus* concerning the *Unicorn* in *Java the left.*

L. 3. c. 15.

Nahrwhale; so many Beasts were required to form this Chimera; however there is no question to be made, but that there are many Unicorns up and down the World. Only there is still some Controversie remaining, what those Beasts should be, of which the Scripture makes mention; in regard that all Interpreters, after the Seventy Seniors, agree, that the Hebrew

Numb. 23. 22. & 24. 8. **Rim**, or **Reem**, was a Beast altogether unknown to the Israelites. The Ethiopic Interpreter, whether ignorant of that Beast in Ethiopia, or believing some other Creature to be thereby understood, renders the Greek *Monokeros*, the

L. 3. c. 27. & 1. 6. c. 12. **Beast with one Horn**. The most famous Bochart tells us, That the Arabian *Rim*, is a sort of wild Goat, or which seems more probable to me, a kind of wild Bear. The Word *Dek* in the Arabic, and *Deb* in the Hebrew Language, are the two words that signify a Bear: yet is that Beast unknown in

L. 8. c. 36. & L. 9. c. 28. those Parts. Pliny also Affirms, That there are no Bears in Africa; But as for Boars, Harts, and Goats they are granted to breed there, as in other places; contrary to Plinies Opinion: unless he may be thought to speak only of *Afruta* properly so call'd.

CHAP. XI.

Of Creatures Amphibious, and those that live only
and breed in the Water.

The River-Horse, whence his Name: the Behemoth of Job: pernicious to Men; and Men; frightened with fire; why taken. The Crocodile. Job's Leviathan. The Angueg described. Many Fish. The wonderful Nature of the Torpedo. A cure for Feavers, and the Cough: touch'd with a wand it waxes num'is self.

WE shall now Treat of Amphibious Creatures, and such as live altogether in the Water. Among which, the first is that Monstrous Beast call'd *Hippopotamos*, or the *River-Horse*: in the Ethiopic Language *Bihat*, in the *Amharic Dialect*, called *Gomari*, (n) a vast

(n) So correct Bochart in Hieroz. l. 5. c. 15. for *Bicht* and *Gomar*.