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Thermometer birds display close ties to their reptilian ancestry in that they are the only birds whose young require no parental care after hatching.



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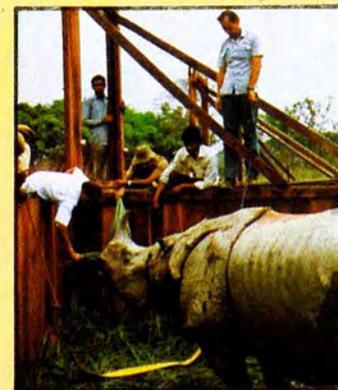
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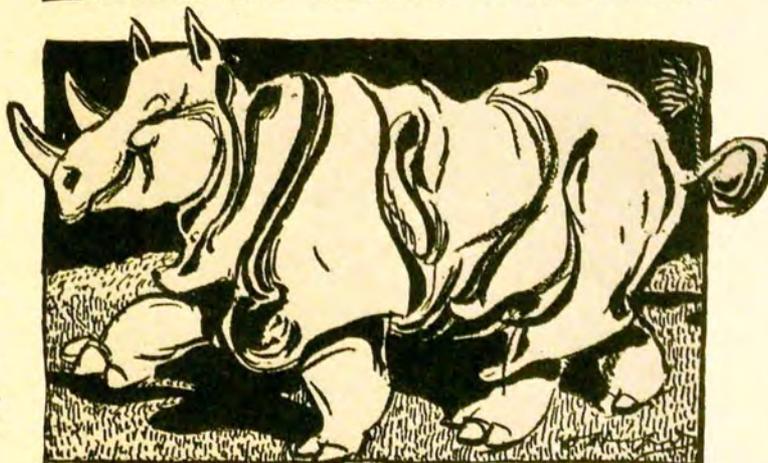
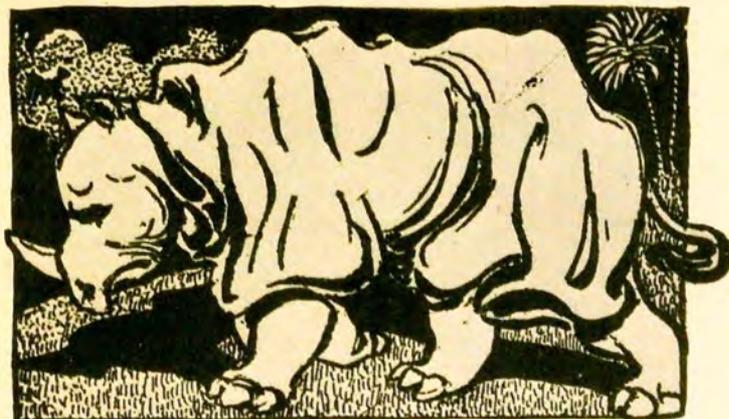
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The Rhinoceros.

So this is the Rhi-no-ce-ros!
I won-der why he looks so cross.
Per-haps he is an-noyed a bit
Be-cause his cloth-ing does not fit.
(They say he got it read-y made!)
It is not that, I am a-fraid.
He looks so cross be-cause I drew
Him with one horn in-stead of two.

Well, since he cares so much for style,
Let 's give him two and see him smile.



Oliver Herford (1863-1935) was an illustrator whose whimsicality was firm yet delicate. Here is an unchanged reproduction of his original script and illustration.

Togetherhness

Ants do it. Bees do it. In fact a number of other tiny invertebrates do it. But now naturalists are agog at the fact that even mammals do it! 'It', is living together in large social groups as one big organised family ruled by a 'Queen Mother'.

The mammals in question are mole rats, East African rodents that live subterranean existences with the young animals doing duty as workers, housekeepers and providers of food, the older ones as producers of young and a solitary, fertile female who presides over all. A family may consist of over 80 individuals and the queen, when she patrols her underground domain, demands obeisance. Workers bow low so that she is able to crawl over them, lesser

females give her a nose kiss, possibly to permit her to make sure no one else is ovulating.

Researchers studying family groups confirm that the removal of the queen from the colony sets into motion a mini-war among the other females who begin to develop nipples and grow larger. Contenders may also fight one another for supreme status, till one individual wins. Now all is at peace again.

Though other mammals, notably dog packs and mongooses, restrict breeding by other members of a family group, they do not exhibit social control anywhere near the scale observed by mole rats. Moreover, other animals do not surrender their breeding rights without a fight whereas among mole rats, once her position is established, the queen's orders go totally uncontested.