

rhinoceros. Moreover, those who best know the rhinoceros, finding in former authors the denomination of *ass of the Indies*, have taken it, without reflection, for that of a peculiar animal; and in fact, from the name, we should conclude that this animal was solid footed. There is a full description of an ass of the Indies by Ctesias,(1) but we have seen above that it was taken from the bas-reliefs of Persepolis; it should not pass for any thing in the actual history of the animal.

When there was also a description still less exact, which mentioned an animal with a single horn with many lines, a third species was made out, with the name of *monoceros*. These sort of twofold accounts are the more common with ancient naturalists, because almost all those whose works remain to us were simple compilers; but even Aristotle himself has frequently mixed facts borrowed from others with those which he himself has observed; so that in fact the art of criticism was as little known then by naturalists as by historians, which is saying a great deal.

After all these reasonings, all these digressions, it results, that all the great animals that are known in the old continent were known to the ancients, and that the animals described by the ancients, and not now known, were fabulous: it also results, that very little time elapsed before all the great animals of the three first known parts of the globe were known by the people who frequented the coasts.

We may thence conclude that we have not even any large species to discover in America. If there were any, there exists no cause why we should not have been acquainted with them; and in fact, for a

(1) Ælian, Anim. iv. 52; Photius, Bibl. p. 154.