THE

ANNUAL REGISTER,

OR A VIEW OF THE

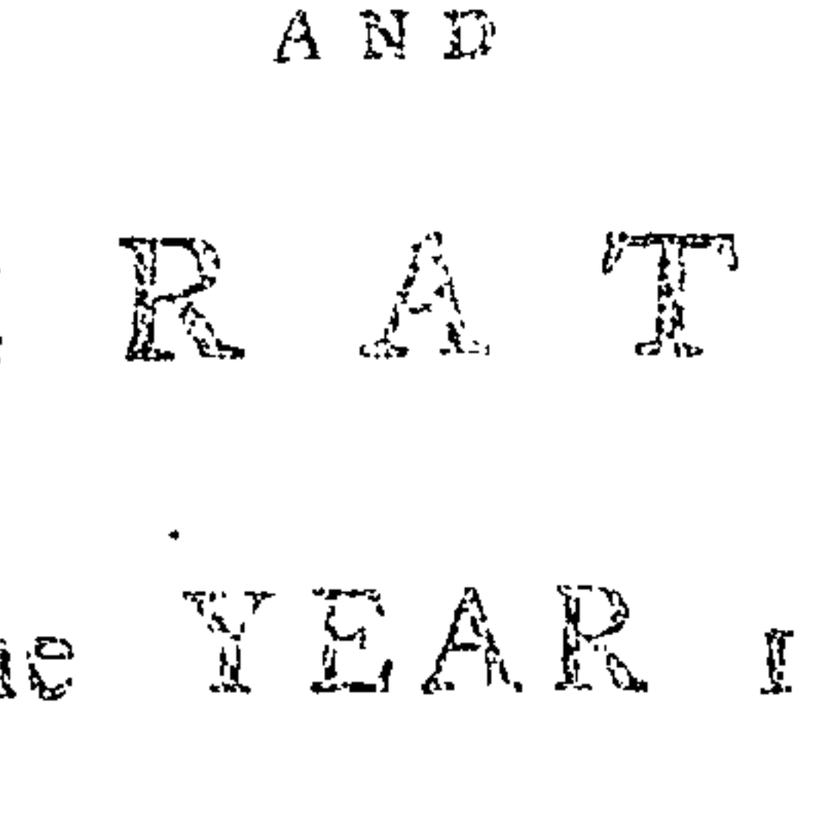
HISTORY,

POLITICKS,

AND

LITERATURE,

For the YEAR 1767.



LONDON:

Printed for J. DODSLEY, in Pall-mall, 1768.

too much exficcation; the latter being, from their general ſtructure and conſtitution, made fit to bear, and live in, the water; the former, by their conſtitution and forms, to breathe, and dwell, in the air.

But it may be aſked, why eels and water ſnakes are capable of living longer in the air than the other kinds of fiſh? this is anſwered, by conſidering the providential care of the great creator for theſe and every one of his creatures: for, ſince they were capable of locomotion by their form, which they need not be if they were never to go on ſhore, it ſeemed neceſſary that they ſhould be rendered capable of living a conſiderable time on ſhore, otherwiſe their loco-motion would be in vain. How is this provided for? why in a moſt convenient manner; for this order of fiſhes have their branchiæ well covered from the external drying air, and are alſo furniſhed with a ſlimy mucus, which hinders their becoming criſp and dry for many hours, and their very ſkins always emit a mucous liquor, which keeps them ſupple and moiſt for a long time; whereas the branchiæ of other kinds of fiſh are much expoſed to the air, and want the ſlimy matter to keep them moiſt. Now, if, when any of theſe is brought out of the water, it was laid in a veſſel without water, he might be kept alive a conſiderable time, by only keeping the gills and ſurface of the ſkin conſtantly wet, even without any water to ſwim in.

Before I diſmiſs the firſt part of my diſcourſe, I muſt beg your patience, while I mention ſomething that relates to a family among the fiſh kinds, which is of a middle nature between the phocæ, and the real fiſhes of the ſea, in one peculiar reſpect. This is the claſs of the phocenæ, or porpuſſes, of which there are ſeveral ſpecies; and theſe have lungs, and therefore are forced to come up to the ſurface to breath at very ſhort intervals; but, when brought on ſhore, have no progreſſive locomotion. So that, having lungs, they reſemble the phocæ, and, in every other reſpect, the real fiſhes of the ſea.

Blaſius, in his Anatome Animalium, page 288, gives an account of one of theſe taken and brought on ſhore alive; the people let him lie, to ſee how long he could live out of the water; and he continued alive only about ſeven or eight hours, and exhibited a kind of hiſſing voice.

From what has been ſaid, it will, I hope, appear rational, that theſe are the only two orders that can properly be deduced from the claſs of amphibious animals; and that the genus's of either order are very few in the animal world.

A letter from James Parſons, M. D. F. R. S. to the right honourable the Earl of Morton, preſident of the Royal Society; on the double horns of the rhinoceros.

My Lord;

WHEN I had the honour of laying my natural hiſtory of the rhinoceros before this learned ſociety in 1743, which is printed in number 470, page 523, of the Tranſactions, I had not an opportunity of ſhewing a double horn

horn to the members; I have therefore taken this firſt occaſion to entertain the preſent members with a ſight of a noble ſpecimen of the horns of an African rhinoceros, brought from the Cape of Good Hope, by my curious and worthy friend William Maguire, eſquire, among many other curioſities; preſuming that few of the ſociety have ever ſeen a pair of the like kind. But what renders this ſubject the more particular, and worthy of obſervation, is, that by means of knowing there is a ſpecies of this animal, having always a double horn upon the noſe, in Africa, Martial's reading is ſupported againſt the criticiſm of Bochart, who changed the true text of that poet, in an epigram upon the ſtrength of this animal; for when Domitian ordered an exhibition of wild beaſts, as it was the cuſtom of ſeveral emperors, the poet ſays: The rhinoceros toſs'd up a heavy bear with his double horn:

Namque gravem gemino cornu ſic extulit urſum.

and as Bochart knew nothing of a double horn, he changed this line both in reading and ſenſe thus:

Nomque gravi geminum cornu ſic extulit eurum.

as if two wild bulls were toſſed up into the air, by the ſtrong horn of the rhinoceros.

Mr. Maittaire adopted the notion of a ſingle horn, but was of opinion that the *geminum eurum* of Bochart ought to have been plural, *geminos euros*, as being more elegant; and he was followed by Doctors Mead and Douglas, with this difference, that theſe changed the *euros* for *urſos*, as imagining they were rather bears than bulls, that were thrown up by this noble animal.

Our then worthy preſident Martin Folkes, eſquire, had ſeen my account of this ſubject, at the end of which, I endeavoured, however preſumptuouſly, to defend Martial's reading againſt Bochart and the other eminent perſons mentioned; and deſired I would let it be read and printed, which I very readily agreed to, as his requeſt did me much honour.

Before my paper was printed, Mr. Maittaire and Doctor Douglas died; and the learned Doctor Mead was the ſurviving critic, upon this line, of the three. Upon this occaſion, therefore, I have a double pleaſure; firſt, in amuſing the preſent gentlemen with a moſt curious ſpecimen in natural hiſtory; and, ſecondly, in remembering in this place, the nice candor and generoſity of Dr. Mead upon that ſubject. For, about four months after the paper was printed, he received a preſent of ſeveral curious ſhells, ſeeds, &c. and with them the bones of the face of a young rhinoceros, with two horns *in ſitu*, all intire, by a captain of an African trader, who brought them from Angola.

As ſoon as he ſaw the horns, he ſent to invite me to breakfaſt, and there, in company, ingenuouſly gave up his paſt opinion, and declared for Martial; and, indeed, I muſt add to the praiſe of that great man, that, as I was happy in being frequently at his houſe, I was witneſs to many ſuch inſtances of the moſt diſintereſted candour

candour and generosity, where any part of science was the topic, among his select friends.

This anecdote I thought proper to mention upon the present occasion; nor can too much be said to his honour, among all lovers of philosophical learning. I am

Your lordship's
most obedient servant,
James Parsons.

P. S. The dimensions are as follows; viz. The length of the anterior horn, measuring with a string along the convex fore part, is 20 inches; perpendicular height 11; circumference 21 ½ at the base; the posterior horn is in perpendicular height 19 ½; circumference round the base 18; length of both bases together upon the skull bones 14; and the weight of both together is 14 pounds 10 ounces.

The rhinoceros of the year 1739, described in the transactions, was three years old; and the horn not three inches high; and hence by comparing that with this, one may imagine this to be many years old, perhaps above twenty; and that this animal lives to a great age.

It is also plain that the horns are perpetual, as are those of oxen.

Letter to the president of the royal society, containing a new manner of measuring the velocity of wind, and an experiment to ascertain to what quantity of water a fall of snow is equal.

Kirknewton, May 13, 1766.

My lord,

I SHOULD think myself most unworthy of the honour which your lordship and the royal society have done me, if the notice

which you was pleased to take of my letter upon the late comet, did not make me more careful to observe whatever I thought might tend to improve the knowledge of nature, which is a capital part of the laudable design of the society.

Your lordship knows, that my situation exposes me to every blast that blows, and affords a fair opportunity for measuring the velocity of the wind (the force of which I am, so often, obliged to feel). I have attempted to determine this by letting light downy feathers fly in the wind (the method, I understand, used by the ingenious Dr. Derham); but cannot say, in all the trials I have made (though I have let fifty of these feathers fly, one after the other, at a time), that I have ever seen above one, or two at most, upon which I could have founded a calculation. The velocity of the wind near the earth is very unequal, upon account of the frequent interruptions it meets with from hills, trees, and houses; and even in open plains; the surface of the earth, though much smoother than it commonly is, must reflect and interrupt such a fluid as the air, and occasion great irregularity in the velocity of its current: this is the reason, when a feather is let fly with the wind, why it seldom, if ever, describes a strait line, but moves sometimes in a kind of spiral, now high, and then low, sometimes to the right, and then again to the left; and why two feathers let fly at once, seldom, if ever, keep together, or describe similar lines.

But, at some considerable distance from the earth, the velocity of the wind seems to be regular and steady: nothing can be more