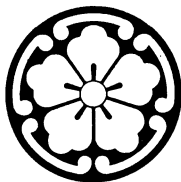


ITINERARIA ASIATICA

THAILAND
VOLUME II

LA THAÏLANDE
TOME II



TACHARD

A relation of the

VOYAGE TO SIAM

Performed by six Jesuits
sent by the French King,
to the Indies and China in the year 1685

With an introduction to the 1981 edition

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There are not so many Lyons nor Tygers as Stags, but yet there is a great many of them, and I can easily believe it because of the vast number of those Beasts skins wherein they Trade at the Cape. They keep not so close to the Woods, but that they come sometimes to places inhabited, where they set upon any thing they meet, and even upon Men themselves. There happened an instance of this while we were there, and the Commissary-General told us it. Two Men walking at a distance from their habitations perceived a Tyger, one fired at it and missed it, upon which it made a spring at him and brought him to the ground: the other seeing in what extreme danger his Comrade was, fired at the Tyger and wounded his Friend in the thigh; The Tyger in the mean time having received no hurt, left his prey, and made after this Man; the first getting up again came in, in the nick of time and killed the Tyger. They say that this Beast hath such an instinct that amongst an hundred Men it will single out him that fired at it, and leave all the rest. A month before, the like accident almost happened of a Lyon who tore to pieces a Man and his Servant, pretty near the habitations, and was afterwards killed himself.

At the Cape we took a great many excellent Fish. Amongst others Mulletts, and of those fish which in France they call *Dorades*, or *Gilt-heads* and are far different from the Dolphin which is much bigger and better deserves that name, because of its yellowish colour and golden specks, that make it pass for one of the loveliest Fish that swims in the Sea. We took also great numbers of Soals, and some Cramp-fish. The Cramp-fish is an ugly Fish,

Several sorts of Fish at the Cape.



of an Elephant two foot and a half in diameter, and that they had seen several Rhinoceroses as high and big as an ordinary Elephant. All that I can say as to that, is that I have seen the two horns which that Beast carries on its Nose, fastned together as they are naturally, of a bigness and weight that inclined me to believe that what they told me of it was true. The Lieutenant of the Castle who went on that Progress, told me that the Rhinoceros being in rage runs his greatest Horn into the Ground and continues to run a kind of Furrow with it, till he come up with him that has smitten him. The skin of that Beast is so hard, that it is Musquet-proof, unless one take his time to hit it, when it shews its Flank, the only place of its body where fire-arms or halberds, that the Travellers carry, can wound it. There are Horses and Asses there of extraordinary beauty. The first have a very little head, and pretty long Ears. They are covered all over with black and white streaks that reach from their back to their belly about four or five fingers broad and are very pretty to look on, I saw the skin of one that had been killed, which my Lord Ambassador bought to carry with him into *France* as a very curious thing. As for the Asses, they are of all colours, they have a long blew list on the back that reaches from head to tail, and the rest of the body like the horse, full of pretty broad streaks, blew, yellow, green, black and white, all very lively.

Stags are so plentiful there that they are seen feeding in Flocks like Sheep, and I heard the Commanders Secretary say, and the Commander himself too, that they had seen ten thousand of them together in a Plain which they found in a Wood.

F

There

A prodigious Elephant.

A property of the Rhinoceros.