

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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More Early Animal Figures.

THERE is no better history of the rhinoceros, covering the knowledge of this animal in antiquity, than the essay contributed by Dr. Barthold Laufer to vol. xiv. of the Anthropological Series of the Field Museum

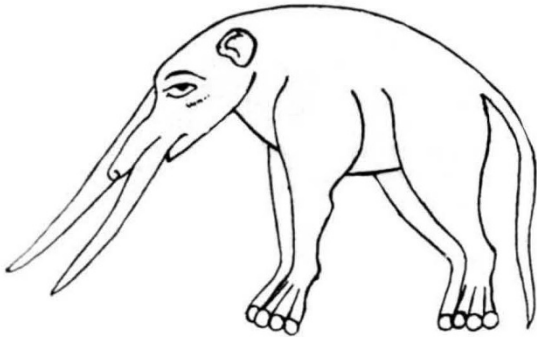


FIG. 1.—Elephant, from a Latin bestiary of the latter part of the 12th century.

(1914). It is illustrated by numerous figures copied after early designs.

Two recent popular articles in English magazines deserve notice in this connection. One is by W. P. Pycraft, on the "Ancient Briton War-Horse," which appeared in the *Illustrated London News* for October 31 and November 28 of last year. The other is on



FIG. 2.—Giraffe, from a tomb at Thebes. Middle dynastic.

"Mediæval Ideas of the Elephant," by E. D. Cuming, in the *Field* for April 3 of this year.

One of the figures illustrating the latter article is here reproduced (Fig. 1), and we may also quote the following passage:—

"About few animals did our ancestors weave more curious and fantastic legends than they built up round the elephant. This animal captured their imagination,

and no traveller's tale concerning it could be too marvellous to ensure acceptance."

In Figs. 2 and 3 are shown copies of two early Egyptian representations of the giraffe. The first of these is from manuscript 29,817 of the British Museum, already published in a coloured plate of



FIG. 3.—Giraffe, from an incised palette at Hierakonpolis. Early dynastic.

Wilkinson's "Ancient Egyptians," vol. i. The second is from an incised slate palette found at Hierakonpolis, figured by Quibell in "Memoirs of the British Exploration Fund." The probable period to which it may be assigned is early dynastic, or roughly, circa 5000 B.C.

G. R. EASTMAN.  
American Museum of Natural History.

The Magnetic Storm and Solar Disturbance of June 17.

THE argument appears to me to drift again towards the old wrangle whether a particular solar disturbance has contributed to this or that particular magnetic storm. This is to me all the more surprising as for years past it has been urged that to connect the two phenomena in this direct way was to be deprecated and scientifically unsound; Fathers Cortie and Sidgreaves taking up a particularly uncompromising attitude in this respect.

I had the sun under telescopic as well as spectroscopic observation for many hours on twenty-seven out of the thirty days of last June, being prevented from doing so only on June 10, 23, and 29.

I submit that the mere telescopic appearance of a spot outbreak is not a safe index and criterion as to its activity, and consider that spectroscopic evidence should accompany ordinary direct visual observation. Now there was plenty of such evidence during the greater part of June, though spots were, at least at the beginning of the month, not very abundant. With June 12, however, things began rapidly to improve in this respect, a period of most intense activity being initiated by that most extraordinarily short-lived and superlatively active outbreak in abnormal low latitude (north) for the present phase of the activity period. The unprecedentedly rapid growth of this outbreak, which was really of an "explosive" intensity, was almost matched by an extraordinarily rapid decay, so much so that in spite of the magnitude the outbreak attained at its