

Buto, a narrow gorge, in which a multitude of bones were heaped up, which he was informed were remains of winged serpents, that were seeking to penetrate into Egypt in spring, and that the ibises had arrested their passage. But he does not say that he had witnessed their combats, or that he had seen those winged serpents in their entire state. The whole of his testimony, therefore, reduces itself to this, that he had observed a heap of bones, which may very well have been those of the multitude of reptiles and other animals which the inundation destroyed every year, and whose bodies it would naturally carry to the places where it was stopped, to the borders of the desert, and which must by preference have accumulated in a narrow gorge.

However, it is equally from this idea of the combats of the ibis with serpents, that Cicero gives that bird a horny and strong beak \*. Having never been in Egypt, he imagined that this must have been the case by mere analogy.

I am aware that Strabo says somewhere, that the ibis resembles the stork in form and size †, and that this author ought to have known it well, since he asserts that in his time the streets and

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\* *Avis excelsa, cruribus rigidis, corneo proceroque rostro.* Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. i.

† Strabo, lib. xvii.