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NOTES ON

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# THE NAGA TRIBES,

IN COMMUNICATION WITH ASSAM;

BY



JOHN OWEN.

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it is probably the common Indian species, *M. pentadactyla*, which is included in Dr. Walker's catalogue. Zoology  
of the Na-  
ga ranges.

### PACHYDERMATA.

*Elephas indicus*.—The hills abound in wild elephants. Pachy-  
dermata. Habitat—usually near rivers, where a peculiar kind of Terrar grass occurs. They move in large herds, which are decidedly timorous of man. The Nagas eat their flesh, taking the animals by means of pitfalls. Occasionally, too, they are caught both by the stockade method, and by means of trained tame ones; but fifty per cent. of them, die soon after capture. “From seven hundred to a thousand elephants are exported from Assam every year, but the speculation is very precarious. About twice as many as are exported generally die during the process of training, and if to this sum, we add the great number of these animals which are annually killed by the hill tribes for their tusks, we may form some faint idea of the vast multitudes that usually roam in the forests.” They are peculiar, however, to the hills, or very nearly so. The young, from two to two and a half feet high have often been brought to me, but I was never able to keep them alive more than five or six days.

The rhinoceros does not inhabit the hills, the natives procuring parts of the skin of this animal, which is held in high estimation for

Zoology  
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ga ranges.

Pachy-  
dermata.

breastplates, by barter with the people of the plains.

Wild hogs are exceedingly abundant, and their traces are to be met with everywhere. Tame pigs are also bred, in great numbers in the Naga village, passing the night under the *machans* (or raised houses,) and finding their own subsistence in the jungle. Both wild and tame occasion much inconvenience where there is any cultivation. Notwithstanding that the mode of life of the tame race so nearly resembles that of the wild, it is curious that the former are very degenerated, being much smaller, and they also vary in colour as usual among domesticated animals, being either black, white, or pied. They are never emasculated. The Naga mode of killing these animals is worthy of remark: the pig is held fast, and a pointed piece of wood is driven into the spiral chord immediately behind the skull.

#### RUMINANTIA.

Rumi-  
nantia.

*Cervidæ* or Deer. The *Saumer*, or *Elk* of Europeans *Cervus hippelaphus*,—or perhaps, from the magnitude of its horns, it may be the Himalayan *Jerów* (*C. Aristotelis*),—occurs in large herds, more particularly about the vicinity of the brine-springs. Neither the spotted nor the hog deer (*C. axis* and *C. porcinus*) appear to inhabit the hills. The Muntjac, or barking deer, is very numerous; but no species of