

XIII.—*On a pair of Abnormal Deer Horns.*—By F. FINN, B.A., F.Z.S.,
Deputy Superintendent, Indian Museum.

[Received May 28th; Read June 5th, 1902.]

I am indebted to His Highness the Maharajah of Cooch Behar, and to Mr. David Ezra (who procured me the loan of them) for the opportunity of exhibiting the very remarkable pair of antlers figured below.

As will be seen they resemble those of the Sambhar (*Cervus unicolor*) in general appearance and in their rough and deeply furrowed surface; but the terminations are much more branched than is usual in this species, which has only two terminal tines. In the present specimen there are no less than five terminal points, and the two horns are not at all alike, the branch representing the longer terminal tine in the normal horn being palmate or flattened in the left horn of this pair. (See figure on page 135.)

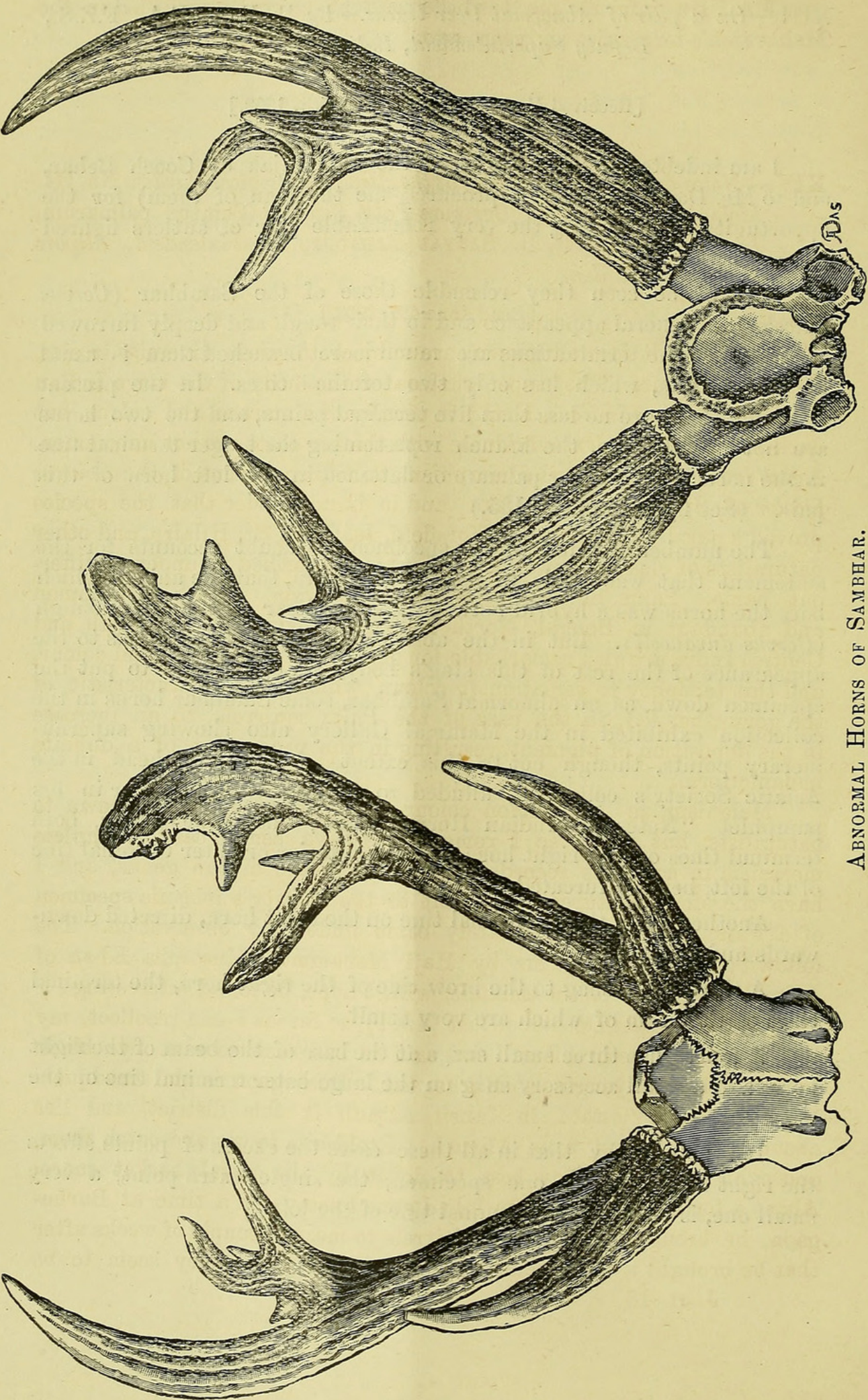
The number of points in this specimen no doubt accounts for the statement that was made to me by Mr. Ezra, that the animal which bore the horns was a hybrid between the Sambhar and the Barasingh (*Cervus duvauceli*). But in the absence of any information as to the appearance of the rest of this stag's body, I am inclined to put the specimen down as an abnormal Sambhar, some Sambhar horns in the collection exhibited in the Mammal Gallery also showing supernumerary points, though not to this extent. A very fine head in the Asiatic Society's collection, alluded to by Mr. W. L. Sclater in his pamphlet "Notes on Indian Horned Game," has nine points, both terminal tines of the right horn and the anterior or outer terminal tine of the left, being bifurcated.

Another has a third terminal tine on the right horn, directed downwards and backwards.

A third has a snag to the brow tine of the right horn, the terminal tines of the beam of which are very small.

A fourth has three small snags at the base of the beam of the right horn, and a small accessory snag on the large outer terminal tine of the left.

It is noteworthy that in all these cases the excess of points affects the right horn; but in one specimen, the single extra point, a very small one, is on the inner terminal tine of the left.



ABNORMAL HORNS OF SAMBHAR.

Mr. Ezra informs me that the present animal was killed in the Maharajah's territories six years ago.

XIV.—*Notes on Animals observed at the Alipore Zoological Garden. No. III. Melanic specimens of Common Palm Squirrel (Sciurus palmarum, Linn.)—By RAI R. B. SANYAL BAHADUR, Superintendent, Alipore Zoological Garden.*

[Read June 4th, 1902.]

Squirrels, it is well known, are subject to great diversity in size, form and colour. The upper surface of the body of the large Indian Squirrel (*Sciurus indicus*, Erxl.) is usually of a maroon red colour, but darker, almost black individuals with thicker coats are not uncommon. Apart from their seasonal dimorphism, no two specimens of the *Sciurus bicolor* of Sparrmann are alike; and it is no wonder that the species proved a puzzle to Desmarest, Horsfield, Is. Geoff. St. Hilaire, and other naturalists of classic repute, each of whom described it under a different name. Palm Squirrels (*Sciurus palmarum*, Linn.) so common and abundant in Bengal, North-Western Provinces, the Punjab, and Central India, are also remarkable for great diversity of form and colour, and this tendency to variation in colour, which is so characteristic of the genus, has led, in the case of the Palm squirrels, to an increase in the deposition of pigment, resulting in the production of a definite melanic form.

Melanism as a common colour phenomenon is well known to naturalists, but as far as I remember, I have seen no case of complete melanism in squirrels recorded in the literature of the genus, and I have therefore ventured to exhibit to the Society a melanic specimen of a Palm squirrel which lately came under my observation. The following notes sent to me by Haji Mahammud Mustapha Khan of Aligarh, the donor of the animals, will, I hope, be found interesting:

"Some time in December last [1901], so far as I can recollect, my bearer came to me in Aligarh and said he had seen four or five black squirrels in the jungle at Burhegaon. Burhegaon is the headquarter village of my estate, in Tahsil Atrauli in this district, and lies about 25 miles east from Aligarh. I told him to try and catch them, and explained to him how best to do it by the usual basket snare. About a fortnight later, when I had gone to stay for a time at Burhegaon, he brought one of the squirrels to me. A couple of weeks after that he brought a second one. So far as I can judge they seem to be



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