

became convinced that it was only a variety\*: this specimen is now in the British Museum, and has been well figured by Mr. Wolf in the first part of Mr. D. G. Elliot's magnificent 'Monograph of the Felidæ.' The black variety, also figured in the same plate, is well known though rare; and according to Dr. v. Frantzius it has occurred within our limits near the Rio San Juan, in the north of Costa Rica<sup>2</sup>.

The same writer informs us that in Costa Rica the Jaguar inhabits the depths of the forests, especially those of the mountains, as on the Dota and Candelaria ranges, and even ascends, as on the Volcano of Irazu, to an altitude of 8000 feet. Occasionally it approaches the settled districts, when hunting parties are at once organized; for it is very destructive to the cattle. "El Tigre" is pursued and brought to bay by trained hounds, when the hunters attack it with lances in preference to firearms, which they distrust from their liability to miss fire in the moist atmosphere of the virgin forests<sup>2</sup>.

In Nicaragua the late Mr. Belt met with Jaguars; and he was assured by the natives that an active warfare was carried on between them and the *Wari* or Peccaries. From what he learned he did not believe that in Central America the Jaguar ever made unprovoked attacks on mankind, but that when wounded it became very savage and dangerous†.

In Guatemala Messrs. Godman and Salvin tell me that Jaguars are very generally distributed over the country wherever large tracts of primæval forest are to be found. Throughout their travels, however, they never actually met with one, though not unfrequently tracks were seen in the mud at the side of a pool or stream where an animal had gone to drink. When passing the village of Quirigua, in the lower portion of the Motagua valley, they purchased a fine fresh skin that had been taken from a "Tigre" killed a few days previously; and in a similar manner the presence of Jaguars was traced in many parts of the country, the practice of the natives being to stretch the skin of a freshly killed animal on the ground before their ranchos until dry, or to hang it before their doors to tempt a passing traveller to purchase it. Once, in the Costa Grande of the Pacific coast, Mr. Salvin counted in an Indian's rancho nine Jaguars' skulls, which had been taken from animals killed during the previous year or two. Throughout this district, where vast tracts of forest spread over the whole country, Jaguars are doubtless very numerous and do a considerable amount of injury to the cattle which are reared in many haciendas. In Vera Paz, especially in the forests which lie between Coban and the confines of Peten, and also eastwards to the Gulf of Honduras, Jaguars would seem to be equally abundant, as several skins were obtained at Choctum and other places situated in the forest north of Coban; and "Tigre" skins are not unfrequently brought for sale to the Indian market of the latter town, where a native woman may be seen sitting with a small basket of beans of the wild cacao, some

\* Cat. Carn. &c. Mamm. Brit. Mus. p. 12.

† 'Naturalist in Nicaragua,' pp. 30, 144.