

from the apparent disproportion of the bill and the seemingly clumsy shape of the birds of this genus, his appearance is not only graceful, but his movements, as he glides from perch to perch, are light and sylph-like; so much so, as to have suggested to an intelligent friend who witnessed them, the specific name I have ventured to assign to him. He keeps himself in beautiful plumage; his lighter colours being strikingly vivid, and the deep black of his upper surface, in particular, being always bright and glossy. For this fine condition he seems to be much indebted to his fondness for bathing. Every day he immerses himself in cold water with apparent pleasure, even in severe weather; and in no respect, indeed, does he appear to suffer by the transition from his own warm climate to our uncongenial atmosphere.

"Besides a hollow clattering noise, he utters at times a hoarse and somewhat discordant cry, when he happens to be hungry, and to see his food about to be presented to him; on such occasions he stands erect, raising his head in the air, and half opening the bill as he emits this cry. These are the only sounds I have heard him utter, and in neither can I say that I have detected any similarity, or even approach to the word Toucan, as has sometimes been asserted, and from whence the trivial name of the genus has been supposed to originate. Neither have I been able to verify another observation which has been advanced respecting these birds, that the bill is compressible between the fingers in the living bird. The bill, notwithstanding the lightness of its substance, is firm, and capable of grasping an object with much strength. The mode in which Mr. Broderip describes his Toucan as having broken the limbs of the bird which he was about to devour, by 'a strong lateral wrench,' sufficiently shows that the bill is not deficient in power. Indeed, I observe that my bird generally takes what is offered him, rather by the sides than by the point of his bill; and I suspect that much of the powers of that member are centred in this lateral motion. The serration of the edges also may be supposed to tend to these peculiar powers.

"I have not allowed it to be indulged in that disposition to animal food, which so strikingly belongs to this family; I find, in fact, that it thrives sufficiently well upon a vegetable diet, and I fear that if it should once be allowed any other, it would be difficult to restrain its inclination for it within moderate limits. Eggs are the only animal food with which it has been supplied since it came into my possession. Of these it is particularly fond; and they are generally mixed up in his ordinary food, which consists of bread, rice, potatoes, German paste, and similar substances. He delights in fruits of all kinds. During the period when these were fresh, he fed almost exclusively on them; and even in the winter months he exhibits great gratification in being offered pieces of apples, oranges, or preserved fruits of any description. These he generally holds for a short time at the extremity of his bill, touching them with apparent delight with his slender and feathered tongue, and then conveying them by a sudden upward jerk to his throat, where they are caught and instantly swallowed. His natural propensity for preying upon animals, although not indulged, is still strongly conspicuous: when another bird approaches his cage, or even a skin or preserved specimen is presented to him, he exhibits considerable excitement. He raises himself up, erects his feathers, and utters a hollow clattering sound, which seems to be the usual expression of delight in these birds; the irides of his eyes at the same time expand, and he seems ready to dart upon his prey, if the bars of his cage permitted his approach.

"Since the cold weather has commenced, he has been brought into a room with a fire, and the unusual light seems to have interfered with his general habits; he does not go to rest so early or as regularly as was his custom; and he sometimes feeds even at a late hour. During the warmer months, however, when he was more free from interruption, his habits were singularly regular. As the dusk of the evening approached, he finished his last meal for the day, took a few turns, as if for exercise after his meal, round the perches of his cage, and then settled himself on the highest perch, disposing himself almost at the moment he alighted on it with his head drawn in between his shoulders, and his tail turned vertically over his back. In this posture he generally remained about two hours, in a state between sleeping and waking; his eyes for the most part closed, but opening on the slightest interruption. At such times he would allow himself to be handled, and would even take any favourite food that was offered him, without altering his posture further than by a gentle turn of the head. He would also suffer his tail to be replaced by the hand in its natural downward posture, and would then immediately return it again to its vertical position. In these movements the tail seemed to turn as if on a hinge that was operated upon by a spring. At the end of about two hours he began gradually to turn his bill over his right shoulder, and to nestle it among the feathers of his back, sometimes concealing it completely within the plumage, at other times leaving a slight portion of the culmen exposed. At the same time he drooped the feathers of his wings and those of the thigh-coverts, so as to encompass the legs and feet; and thus nearly assuming the appearance of an oval ball of feathers, he secured himself against all exposure to cold."

The figures are of the natural size.