

and breed in captivity; and lastly, that their cry is a kind of reiterated whistling, procuring for them the name of 'Oiseaux Prédicateurs' (Preaching Birds).

"The same author asserts, from the report of Hernandez, that they have a habit of boring trees, but this is impossible. The mistake must have arisen from the fact of their having been seen at holes of trees, and thence abstracting the eggs or young of the Woodpecker or Parrot.

"Their physiognomy is neither sad nor serious, as Buffon affirms. They have simply an air of restlessness and mistrust.

"Fernandez and Nieremberg affirm that these birds prey upon fish, but I do not think this, although I consider it very likely that they may sometimes feed upon frogs, toads, and such like.

"Buffon supposes that they are erratic rather than migratory birds. On this subject I can say nothing, except that the large species is stationary, and according to all appearances the others are the same."

Humboldt states that he never observed the Toucan throw its food into the air before swallowing it, and adds that, having once seized it with the point of its enormous beak, it has merely to elevate it by throwing back the head and allow it to drop down the throat.

The following extract is from Edwards' 'Voyage up the Amazon':—

"Most noticeable of all these birds, both for size and peculiarity of form, are the Toucans. There are many varieties, appearing at different seasons; but the Red-billed (*R. erythrorhynchus*) and the Ariel (*R. Ariel*) are the largest and most abundant, seen at every season, but towards autumn particularly, in vast numbers throughout the forest.

"Their large beaks give them a very awkward appearance, more especially when flying; yet, in the trees, they use them with as much apparent ease as though they were, to our eyes, of a more convenient form. Alighted on a tree, one usually acts the part of sentinel, uttering constantly the loud cry *Tucano*, whence they derive their name. The others disperse over the branches in search of fruit.

"We had been told that these birds were in the habit of tossing up their food to a considerable distance, and catching it as it fell; but as far as we could observe, they merely threw back the head, allowing the fruit to fall down the throat. We saw, at different times, tamed Toucans, and they were never seen to toss their food, although almost invariably throwing back the head. This habit is rendered necessary by the length of the bill and the stiffness of the tongue, which prevent their eating as do other birds.

"All the time, while feeding, a hoarse chattering is kept up, and at intervals they unite with the noisy sentry, and scream a concert that may be heard a mile.

"Having appeased their appetites, they fly towards the deeper forest, and quietly doze away the noon. Often in the very early morning a few of them may be seen sitting silently upon the branches of some dead tree, apparently awaiting the coming sunlight before starting for their feeding-trees.

"The nests of the Toucans are represented in works of Natural History as being constructed in the