

## INTRODUCTION.

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many of the works more recently published. The species observed by me during my travels in Brazil, which extended from the 13th to the 23rd degrees of south latitude, or from Bahia to Rio de Janeiro, were *Ramphastos Toco*, *R. Ariel*, *Pteroglossus Wiedi*, and *Pt. maculirostris*."

Mr. Waterton remarks, that "While the *Cotingas* attract your attention by their superior plumage, the singular form of the Toucan makes a lasting impression on your memory.

"There are three species of Toucans in Demerara, and three diminutives which may be called Toucanets. The largest of the former frequents the Mangrove-trees on the sea coast. It is never seen in the interior till you reach Machauchia, where it is found in the neighbourhood of the river Tacatoa; the other two species are very common. They feed entirely on the fruits of the forest, and though of the Pie kind, never kill the young of other birds or touch carrion.

"The larger is called *Bouradi* by the Indians (which means *nose*), the other *Scirou*. They seem partial to each other's company, and often resort to the same feeding-tree, and retire to the same shady noon-day retreat. They are very noisy in rainy weather at all hours of the day, and in fair weather at morn and eve. The sound the *Bouradi* makes is like the clear yelping of a puppy dog, and you fancy he says '*Pia-po-o-co*,' and thus the South American Spaniards call him *Piapoco*. All the Toucanets feed on the same trees on which the Toucan feeds, and every species of this family of enormous bill lays its eggs in the hollow trees. They are social but not gregarious. You may sometimes see eight or ten in company, and from this you may suppose they are gregarious, but upon a closer examination you find it is only a dinner party which breaks up and disperses towards roosting time. You will be at a loss to conjecture for what end nature has overloaded the head of this bird with such an enormous bill; it cannot be for the offensive, as it has no need to wage war with any of the tribes of animated nature, for its food is fruits and seed, and those are in superabundance throughout the whole year in the regions where the Toucan is found. It cannot be for the defensive, as the Toucan is preyed upon by no bird in South America, and were it obliged to be at war; the texture of the bill is ill-adapted to give or receive blows, as you will see by dissecting it.

"The flight of the Toucan is by jerks; in the action of flying it seems incommoded by this huge disproportionate feature, and the head seems as if bowed down to the earth by it against its will. If the extraordinary size and form of the bill expose the Toucan to ridicule, its colours make it amends. Were a specimen of each species of Toucan presented to you, you would pronounce the bill of the *Bouradi* the most rich and beautiful one. It is worthy of remark, that all these brilliant colours of the bill are to be found in the plumage of the body and the bare skin round the eye."

I now give the account published by Azara, a man of great acumen and research, who studied closely the animals of South America, and whose works will always be held valuable.