

by referring to the engraving—the anterior part of the body is seen to rest entirely upon their outer edge; and that part of the hands thus subjected, as it were, to an unusual pressure, is, in these creatures, supplied with an efficient callous pad to protect the outer phalanges from injury.

The prevailing color is a deep gray, with a very broad band of black running from the neck downward on each side of the body; its habits are slothful and solitary; and it sleeps during the greater part of the day. It lives entirely upon ants, to procure which it opens their hills with its powerful crooked claws, and draw its long flexible tongue, which is covered with glutinous saliva, lightly over the swarms of insects who flock from all quarters to defend their dwellings. It is a native of Brazil and Guiana.

It seems almost incredible that so robust and powerful an animal can procure sufficient sustenance from ants alone; but this is nothing strange to those who are acquainted with the tropical parts of America, and who have seen the immense quantities of these insects, which swarm in all parts of the country to that degree that their hills often almost touch one another for miles together. The favorite resort for the great ant-eaters is the low swampy savannas, along the banks of rivers, and stagnant pools.

The enormous claws of the forelegs are terrible weapons. Waterton records an instance of their power in his "Wanderings," and in Brown's "Canoe Life in Guiana" there is a similar account. He says: "We had not gone many miles before the guide lost the path, and we all scattered to look for it. In doing so, I almost walked on the top of a sleeping ant-bear, which, springing up, sat on its hind legs, and grasped at me with its huge fore claws. I sprang quickly to one side, and thus escaped. Thinking that it was good eating, I shot it, but the Indians said that it was not wholesome food, although, from the great interest they took in seeing it killed, I thought it was." (Waterton says that its flesh is good eating.)

These large ant-eaters are very dangerous customers, and have been known to kill men. Williams told me that an Indian, living near Roraima, was hunting in the forest to the north of that mountain with some others, armed with his long blow-pipe. In returning home, considerably in advance of the rest of the party, it is supposed that he saw a young ant-eater, and, taking it up in his arms, was carrying it home, when its mother gave chase, overtook, and killed him; for, when his companions came up, they found him lying dead on his face in the embrace of the ant-bear, one of its large claws having entered his heart. In the struggle he had managed to stick his knife behind his back into the animal, which bled to death, but not before the poor fellow had succumbed to its terrible hug. It was evident that he had only heard the ant-eater coming when it was close upon him, and in turning round to look, his blow-pipe got caught across the path in front of him; then, as he turned to run, it formed a bar to his progress, and he fell over it as the animal seized him. So firmly had the animal grappled him that to separate it from the corpse the Indians had to cut off its fore legs.

It is very rarely that an opportunity offers to observe in this country the habits of one of these curious creatures, but recently an ant-bear was brought here alive from South America, and on the passage gave birth to two young, which the writer afterward saw, and watched with great interest their movements about the mother. The poor creature fared badly on the voyage to the United States, as the sailors were ignorant of the nature of the animal, and its curious appearance impressed them with such a feeling of aversion that no one could be found to approach the family of compulsory immigrants and they were only kept alive by the boiled eggs that were tossed them by some of the more humane of the crew. The little ones, as we saw them, were about a month or six weeks old, and were perfect images of the mother, with the exception that the tail was not so large in proportion to the body, and the curious color markings were not so pronounced as in the adult. As we approached the cage, nothing could be seen but a bunch of coarse grizzly hair; but a word from the owner, and the enormous tail of the parent was raised, and the young were seen. She was lying on her side, the young embracing her abdomen, after the fashion of young monkeys, and over all came the tail of the mother, shutting and inclosing them like a lid, forming effective protection. As she clumsily rose the young scrambled over and attained a position on her back, clinging to her with their long claws, their bushy tails in air, lost in the voluminous folds of the mother's, that

covered them even now as a canopy, being equally protective.

At a word from the keeper, she came laboriously toward us, walking upon the outside of her sharply clawed feet, and the long noses of the entire family were presented and rubbed against our hands with every demonstration of friendliness.

The tongue is extremely long, and below its roots are two large glands that emit a glutinous secretion that is so effective in conveying the swarms of ants to its mouth. They were fed exclusively upon hard boiled eggs, upon which we were informed they thrived. The climate, however, is against them, and since our first visit one of the young has died, and the other will probably follow.

In the accompanying illustration the position of the young on the mother's back is shown, where they presented an amusing spectacle.

The little ant-eater occurs also in Brazil and other countries of South America. Its habits are similar to those of its more powerful species.

Von Sack, in his "Voyage to Surinam," gives an interesting account of the tame ones in his possession; and, after describing their characters, he tells us that the inhabitants of that country aver that when captured these animals cannot be induced to eat, and only lick their paws after the fashion of a bear. "When I obtained the first," he says, "I sent to the forest for a nest of ants, and during the interim I put into its cage some eggs, hone, milk, and meat, but it refused to touch any of them. At length the ant's nest arrived; but the animal, did not pay the slightest attention to it either. By the shape of its fore paws, which resemble nippers, and differ very much from those of all the other species of ant-eaters, I thought that this little creature might perhaps live on the nymphæ of wasps, etc. I therefore brought it a wasp's nest, and then it pulled out with its nippers the nymphæ from the nest and began to eat them with great eagerness, sitting in the posture of a squirrel. I showed this phenomenon to many of the inhabitants, who all assured me that it was the first time they had ever known that species of animal to take any nourishment. The ants with which I tried it were the large termites upon which fowls are fed here." According to Von Sack and most observers, the tail is employed as a prehensile organ. It is larger than the body, very stout and broad at its origin, thickly clothed with short hairs, and much attenuated toward the extremity. Generally speaking, the fur displays a thick, soft, shining, woolly texture. The female, it is said, produces a single young one at a birth, although it is furnished with four mamma.

In the Old World the ant-eaters are represented by the aard-vark and spiny ant-eater (*Echidna hystrix*), the latter a curious creature with a long, slender, toothless bill, with a palate armed with rows of strong sharp spines; the tongue is similar to that of the great ant-eater of South America, while the body is covered with quills like a porcupine. It is common in various parts of Australia, Port Moresby, New Guinea, and quite recently a new species has been discovered in Northern New Guinea.

The aard-vark, a South African ant-eater, is a strange-looking creature, and a very distinctive character is seen in the head, which was long-pointed ears; while the tail, being of moderate length, not so long as the body, is very thick, rounded at the root, and densely clothed with hair. Altogether it is a stout, heavy animal, the large bones of the neck, in particular, demonstrating its strength in the cervical region. The fur, which is very scanty, is generally of a grayish-brown color. The permanent teeth of the adult, twenty in number, have a simple form and structure, being made up of rootless cylinders, those in front displaying a slightly flattened aspect at the sides. It is rather larger than the common badger, attaining a length of upward of four feet. Its habits are nocturnal, and it constructs large subterranean burrows with extraordinary rapidity. It appears to live entirely upon ants, and for this purpose the tongue is largely developed, and armed with a glutinous secretion. It is not so long, however, as in the true ant-eaters, while it is at the same time more flattened and attenuated. The aard-vark invariably fixes his retreat near to some large ants' nests, which he ventures only to attack after dark. He is a timid creature, and does not move far from his burrow; and when attacked, should he succeed in gaining access to his abode, it is next to impossible to get him out, for it is said he can burrow faster than his enemies can dig. According to those who have witnessed its method of procuring food, the aard-vark, having approached an ant-hill,