

Sir Woodbine Parish, and now in the Museum of the College of Surgeons. If we add to these osseous organs the muscles, tendons, and integuments which covered them, we must admit that the tail of the *Megatherium* could not be less than two feet in diameter. It is probable that, like the Armadillo, it employed the tail to assist in supporting the enormous weight of its body; it would also be a formidable defensive organ when employed, as is the case with the Pangolins and Crocodiles. The fore-feet would be about three feet long and one foot broad. They would form a powerful implement for excavating the earth, to the greatest depths at which the roots of vegetables penetrate. The fore-feet rested on the ground to their full length. Thus solidly supported by the two hind-feet and the tail, and in advance by one of the fore-feet, the animal could employ the fore-foot left at liberty in clearing away the earth, in digging up the roots of trees, or in tearing down the branches; the toes of the fore-feet were, for this purpose, furnished with large and powerful claws, which lie at an oblique angle relatively to the ground, much like the burrowing talons of the mole.

The solidity and size of the pelvis must have been enormous; its immense iliac bones are nearly at right angles with the vertebral column; their external edges are distant more than a yard and a half from each other when the animal is standing. The femur is three times the thickness of the thigh-bone of the Elephant, and the many peculiarities of structure in this bone appear to have been intended to give solidity to the whole frame, by means of its short and massive proportions. The two bones of the leg are, like the femur, short, thick, and solid; presenting proportions which we only meet with in the Armadilloes and Anteaters; burrowing animals with which, as we have said, its two extremities seem to connect it.

The anatomical organisation of these members denotes heavy, slow, and powerful locomotion, but solid and admirable combinations for supporting the weight of an enormous sedentary creature; a sort of excavating machine, slow of motion but of incalculable power for its own purposes. In short, the *Megatherium* exceeded in dimensions all existing Edentates. It had the head and shoulders of the Sloth, the feet and legs combined the characteristics of the Anteaters and Sloths, of enormous size, since it was at least twelve feet long when full grown, its feet armed with gigantic claws, and its tail at once a means of supporting its huge body and an instrument of defence. An animal built with such massive proportions could evidently neither creep nor run; its walk would be excessively slow. But what necessity was there for rapid movement in a being only