

our own, in the sense in which we have taken it. But we fear it cannot claim in any sense a higher character. It is clear that the author's knowledge of natural history is superficial, and that of botany, in particular, excessively narrow; and hence his narrative often loses its value, as well as much of its interest, from the absence of precision in the facts recorded. For example, we are told that near Para, a tree which is very plentiful produces a substance intermediate between camphor and turpentine; that it is called white pitch, and when melted up with oil is used for pitching boats. But the use of the information falls to zero, when we find that the author omits to state the scientific name of the tree in question. So again we are told that in the "Campos" occur low branching trees, bearing a profusion of yellow flowers; a piece of information which we must take leave to say is worthy of a school-boy. The same remark applies to such events as the author having found, near Barra, by the water-side, "a small fruit about the size of a Cherry, of an acid taste," which an umbrella bird he had with him swallowed whole. How extremely interesting!

Surely Mr. Wallace can do something better than this. If not he must be contented to have his travels, however much admired by indulgent friends, disregarded by the public, and soon consigned to oblivion. The volume is, however, agreeably written, and the very thing for a book-club, which is perhaps, after all, as much as its author intended it for. We must, however, in common fairness give an extract, in order to show Mr. Wallace's style of painting men and things; for which purpose we select a few paragraphs from his account of the Uaupés Indians.

"The principal food of these Indians is fish, and when they have neither this nor any game, they boil a quantity of peppers, in which they dip their bread. At several places where we stopped this was offered to our men, who ate with a relish the intensely burning mess. Yams and sweet Potatoes are also abundant, and with Pacovas form a large item in their stock of eatables. Then they have the delicious drinks made from the fruits of the Assaí, Baccába, and Patawá Palms, as well as several other fruits.

"The large saíbas and white ants are an occasional luxury, and when nothing else is to be had in the wet season they eat large earth-worms, which, when the lands in which they live are flooded, ascend trees, and take up their abode in the hollow leaves of a species of Tillandsia, where they are often found accumulated by thousands. Nor is it only hunger that makes them eat these worms, for they sometimes boil them with their fish to give it an extra relish.

"They consume great quantities of Mandioca in making caxiri for their festas, which are continually taking place. As I had not seen a regular dance, Senhor L. asked the Tushaúa to make some caxiri and invite his friends and vassals to dance, for the white stranger to see. He readily consented, and, as we were to leave in two or three days, immediately sent round a messenger to the houses of the Indians near, to make known the day and request the honour of their company. As the notice was so short, it was only those in the immediate neighbourhood who could be summoned.

"On the appointed day numerous preparations were taking place. The young girls came repeatedly to fill their pitchers at the river early in the morning, to complete the preparation of the caxiri. In the forenoon they were busy weeding all round the malocca, and sprinkling water, and sweeping within it. The women were bringing in dry wood for the fires, and the young men were scattered about in groups, plaiting straw coronets or arranging some other parts of their ornaments. In the afternoon, as I came from the forest, I found several engaged in the operation of painting, which others had already completed. The women had painted themselves or each other, and presented a neat pattern in black and red all over their bodies, some circles and curved lines occurring on their hips and breasts, while on their faces round spots of a bright vermilion seemed to be the prevailing fashion. The juice of a fruit which stains of a fine purplish black is often poured on the back of the head and neck, and, trickling all down the back, produces what they no doubt consider a very elegant dishabille. These spotted beauties were now engaged in performing the same operation for their husbands and sweethearts, some standing, others sitting, and directing the fair artists how to dispose the lines and tints to their liking."

## Notices of Books.

*A Narrative of Travels on the Amazon and Rio Negro, with an Account of the Native Tribes, and Observations upon the Climate, Geology, and Natural History of the Amazon Valley.* By A. R. Wallace. Reeve and Co., 8vo, pp. 541.

Those who like good gossip about small personal adventures, wild animals shot or observed, insects captured and then lost again, the domestic manners of colonists, and the general aspect of a country, as it strikes a not over-well trained eye, will we think find Mr. Wallace's new book quite to their taste—as it is to