A Narrative of Travels on the Amazon and Rio Negro; with an Account of the Native Tribes, and Observations on the Climate, Geology, and Natural History of the Amazon Valley. By Alfred R. Wallace. With a Map and Illustrations. Reeve & Co.

Filled with an earnest desire of beholding with his own eyes the luxuriance of animal and vegetable life said to exist in tropical lands, this patient and laborious traveller broke through having come on board in the afternoon he southern after Liverpool, the vessel anchored opposite the next morning took the ship with a fair wind up river, which for fifty miles could only be sun eyes of the voyagers the city of Para sur­ and Observations on the Climate, Geology, and Alfred R. Wallace . With a Map and Illus­

"We had gone in shore at a sugar estate to wait for the tide, when the agent told us that we had better put out further into the stream, as the piroroco beat there. Though thinking he only wished to frighten us, we judged it prudent to do as he advised; and while we were expecting the tide to turn, a great wave came suddenly rushing along, and breaking on the place where our canoe had been at first moored. The wave having passed, the water was as quiet as before, but flowing up with great rapidity. As we proceeded down the river, we saw everywhere signs of its devastations in the uprooted trees which lined the shores all along, and the high mud-banks where the earth had been washed away. In winter, when the spring-tides are highest, the 'piroroco' breaks with terrific force, and often sinks and dashes to pieces boats left inadvertently in too deep water.

The ordinary explanations given of this phenomenon are evidently incorrect. Here there is no meeting of salt and fresh water, neither is the stream remark­ably narrowed where it commences. I collected all the information I could respecting the depth of the river, and the shoals that occur in it. Where the bore first appears, there is a shoal across the river, and below that, the stream is somewhat contracted. The tide flows up past Pari with great velocity, and entering the Guaná river comes to the narrow part of the channel. Here the body of tidal water will be deeper and flow faster, and coming suddenly on the head waters of the one stream, in the same manner as of the other, the distance to be traversed is not less than ten thousand miles. Planned and arranged with their usual judgment and sagacity, the American Expedition consisted of but a small and select party; for had it been on a larger scale it must have broken down with its own weight.

This has been too often the case in our own experience, and wherever large and costly Expeditions have been sent out by Government, failure has been the rule and not the exception, while the modest and untrammeled explorations of private individuals, in some few cases assisted by a public grant, but not impeded by Government instructions, have often been crowned with success. Most of the Government Arctic Expeditions, from that of Sir John Franklin to the present day, have been failures, when loss of life and treasure is considered. Rae, with but scanty means, all but proved the existence of the North-west Passage, and Ingle­field, in a four months' trip, penetrated further to the north than had ever before been done in that direction. The losses incurred by most of the great Expeditions sent by Government to explore the interior of the Amazon, and which appear in the recollection of all; as are also the successes of Mungo Park, of Lander, of Livingston, of Os­

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poured on them in such swarms as to render necessary a resort to the usual protection of the locality—and after a few days' residence, Mr. Wallace says,—

"We found them more tormenting than ever, rendering it quite impossible for us to sit down to read or write after sunset. The people here all use cow-dung burnt at their doors to keep away the 'praga,' or plague, as they very truly call them, it being the only thing that has any effect. Having now got an Indian to cook for us, we every afternoon sent him to gather a basket of this necessary article, and just before sunset we lighted an old earthen pan full of it at our bedroom door, in the verandah, so as to get as much smoke as possible, by means of which we could, by walking about, pass an hour pretty comfortably. In the evening every house and cottage has its pan of burning dung, which gives rather an agreeable odour; and as there are plenty of cows and cattle about, this necessary of life is always to be procured."

This interesting book is rendered doubly valuable by the sound notices which it contains of the physical geography, geology, zoology, climatology, vegetation and aborigines of the Amazon Valley, together with various vocabularies, a map and other illustrations.

Returning to England in the brig Helen from these shores,—the brig took fire and went down with all the traveller's hard-earned treasures, leaving him and the crew to buffet the waves of the Atlantic in leaky boats, and with scant provisions, for ten days and nights. When he was at last rescued by the ship Jordeson, about 200 miles from the Bermudas, Mr. Wallace, with truly characteristic coolness, tells us—

"It was now, when the danger appeared past, that I began to feel fully the greatness of my loss. With what pleasure had I looked upon every rare and curious insect I had added to my collection! How many times, when almost overcome by the ague, had I crawled into the forest and been rewarded by some unknown and beautiful species! How many places, which no European foot but my own had trodden, would have been recalled to my memory by the rare birds and insects they had furnished to my collection! How many weary days and weeks had I passed, upheld only by the fond hope of bringing home many new and beautiful forms from those wild regions; every one of which would be endeared to me by the recollections they would call up—which should prove that I had not wasted the advantages I had enjoyed, and would give me occupation and amusement for many years to come! And now everything was gone, and I had not one specimen to illustrate the unknown lands I had trod, or to call back the recollection of the wild scenes I had beheld! But such regrets I knew were vain, and I tried to think as little as possible about what might have been, and to occupy myself with the state of things which actually existed."

After all these vicissitudes the reader will be glad to learn—as he may in another column of our journal—that Mr. Wallace, undismayed at his perils by land and sea, is about to start in H.M. brig Frolic, for a long pilgrimage to the Islands of the Eastern Archipelago.