

from their want of cleanliness, carried their infants on their backs. The thighs and legs of the infants were bound at certain distances by broad strips of cotton cloth, and the flesh, strongly compressed beneath the ligatures, was swelled in the interstices. It is generally to be observed, that the Caribs are as attentive to their exterior and their ornaments, as it is possible for men to be, who are naked and painted red. They attach great importance to certain configurations of the body; and a mother would be accused of culpable indifference toward her children, if she did not employ artificial means to shape the calf of the leg after the fashion of the country. As none of our Indians of Apure understood the Caribbee language, we could obtain no information from the cacique of Panama respecting the encampments that are made at this season in several islands of the Orinoco for collecting turtles' eggs.

Near Encaramada a very long island divides the river into two branches. We passed the night in a rocky creek, opposite the mouth of the Rio Cabullare, which is formed by the Payara and the Atamaica, and is sometimes considered as one of the branches of the Apure, because it communicates with that river by the Rio Arichuna. The evening was beautiful. The moon illumined the tops of the granite rocks. The heat was so uniformly distributed, that, notwithstanding the humidity of the air, no twinkling of the stars was observable, even at four or five degrees above the horizon. The light of the planets was singularly dimmed; and if, on account of the smallness of the apparent diameter of Jupiter, I had not suspected some error in the observation, I should say, that here, for the first time, we thought we distinguished the disk of Jupiter with the naked eye. Towards midnight, the north-east wind became extremely violent. It brought no clouds, but the vault of the sky was covered more and more with vapours. Strong gusts were felt, and made us fear for the safety of our canoe. During this whole day we had seen very few crocodiles, but all of an extraordinary size, from twenty to twenty-four feet. The Indians assured us that the young crocodiles prefer the marshes, and the rivers that are less broad, and less deep. They crowd together particularly in the Caños, and we may say of them, what Abdallatif says of the crocodiles of the