

Lower Orinoco, that the capuchin and cacajao monkeys (*Simia chiropotes*, and *Simia melanocephala*) place themselves in a circle, and, by striking the shell with a stone, succeed in opening it, so as to take out the triangular nuts. This operation must, however, be impossible, on account of the extreme hardness and thickness of the pericarp. Monkeys may have been seen rolling along the fruit of the *bertholletia*, but though this fruit has a small hole closed by the upper extremity of the columella, nature has not furnished monkeys with the means of opening the ligneous pericarp, as it has of opening the covercle of the *lecythis*, called in the missions "the covercle of the monkeys' cocoa."* According to the report of several Indians, only the smaller rodentia, particularly the cavies (the *acuri* and the *lapa*), by the structure of their teeth, and the inconceivable perseverance with which they pursue their destructive operations, succeed in perforating the fruit of the *juvia*. As soon as the triangular nuts are spread on the ground, all the animals of the forest, the monkeys, the manaviris, the squirrels, the cavies, the parrots, and the macaws, hastily assemble to dispute the prey. They have all strength enough to break the ligneous tegument of the seed; they get out the kernel, and carry it to the tops of the trees. "It is their festival also," said the Indians who had returned from the harvest; and on hearing their complaints of the animals, one may perceive that they think themselves alone the lawful masters of the forest.

One of the four canoes, which had taken the Indians to the gathering of the *juvias*, was filled in great part with that species of reeds (*carices*), of which the blow-tubes are made. These reeds were from fifteen to seventeen feet long, yet no trace of a knot for the insertion of leaves and branches was perceived. They were quite straight, smooth externally, and perfectly cylindrical. These *carices* come from the foot of the mountains of Yumariquin and Guanaja. They are much sought after, even beyond the Orinoco, by the name of 'reeds of Esmeralda.' A hunter preserves the same blow-tube during his whole life, and boasts of its lightness and precision, as we boast of the same qualities in

* 'La tapa del coco de monos.'