

France and Germany, one had a considerable influence on the direction of our travels, and on our succeeding operations. When I left Paris with the intention of visiting the coast of Africa, the expedition for discoveries in the Pacific seemed to be adjourned for several years. I had agreed with captain Baudin, that if, contrary to his expectation, his voyage took place at an earlier period, and intelligence of it should reach me in time, I would endeavour to return from Algiers to a port in France or Spain, to join the expedition. I renewed this promise on leaving Europe, and wrote to M. Baudin, that if the government persisted in sending him by Cape Horn, I would endeavour to meet him either at Monte Video, Chile, or Lima, or wherever he should touch in the Spanish colonies. In consequence of this engagement, I changed the plan of my journey, on reading in the American papers, in 1801, that the French expedition had sailed from Havre, to circumnavigate the globe from east to west. I hired a small vessel from Batabano, in the island of Cuba, to Portobello, and thence crossed the isthmus to the coast of the Pacific; this mistake of a journalist led M. Bonpland and myself to travel eight hundred leagues through a country we had no intention to visit. It was only at Quito, that a letter from M. Delambre, perpetual secretary of the first class of the Institute, informed us, that captain Baudin went by the Cape of Good Hope, without touching on the eastern or western coasts of America.

We spent two days at Corunna, after our instruments were embarked. A thick fog, which covered the horizon, at length indicated the change of weather we so anxiously desired. On the 4th of June, in the evening, the wind turned to north-east, a point which, on the coast of Galicia, is considered very constant during the summer. The Pizarro prepared to sail on the 5th, though we had intelligence that only a few hours previously an English squadron had been seen from the watch-tower of Sisarga, appearing to stand towards the mouth of the Tagus. Those who saw our ship weigh anchor asserted that we should be captured in three days, and that, forced to follow the fate of the vessel, we should be carried to Lisbon. This prognostic gave us the more uneasiness, as we had known some Mexicans at Madrid, who, in order to return to Vera Cruz, had embarked three times