

of Madrid and Lisbon, commissioners of the boundaries were sent to the Orinoco, the Amazon, and the Rio Plata.

The little that was known, up to the end of the last century, of the astronomical geography of the interior of the New Continent, was owing to these estimable and laborious men, the French and Spanish academicians, who measured a meridian line at Quito, and to officers who went from Valparaiso to Buenos Ayres to join the expedition of Malaspina. Those persons who know the inaccuracy of the maps of South America, and have seen those uncultivated lands between the Jupura and the Rio Negro, the Madeira and the Ucayale, the Rio Branco and the coasts of Cayenne, which up to our own days have been gravely disputed in Europe, can must not a little surprised at the perseverance with which the possession of a few square leagues is litigated. These disputed grounds are generally separated from the cultivated part of the colonies by deserts, the extent of which is unknown. In the celebrated conferences of Puente de Caya the question was agitated, whether, in fixing the line of demarcation three hundred and seventy Spanish leagues to the west of the Cape Verde Islands, the pope meant that the first meridian should be reckoned from the centre of the island of St. Nicholas, or (as the court of Portugal asserted) from the western extremity of the little island of St. Antonio. In the year 1754, the time of the expedition of Iturriaga and Solano, negotiations were entered into respecting the possession of the then desert banks of the Tuamini, and of a marshy tract which we crossed in one evening going from Javita to Caño Pimichin. The Spanish commissioners very recently would have placed the divisional line at the point where the Apoporis falls into the Jupura, while the Portuguese astronomers carried it back as far as Salto Grande.

The Rio Negro and the Jupuro are two tributary streams of the Amazon, and may be compared in length to the Danube. The upper parts belong to the Spaniards, while the lower are occupied by the Portuguese. The Christian settlements are very numerous from Mocoa to the mouth of the Caguan; while on the Lower Jupura the Portuguese have founded only a few villages. On the Rio Negro, on the contrary, the Spaniards have not been able to rival