

quainted at the sources of the Guainia, is remarkable from its being isolated in the plain that extends to the south-west of the Orinoco. Its situation with regard to longitude might lead to the belief that it stretches into a ridge, which forms first the strait (*angostura*) of the Guaviare, and then the great cataracts (*saltos, cachoèiras*) of the Uaupe and the Jupura. Does this ground, composed probably of primitive rocks, like that which I examined more to the east, contain disseminated gold? Are there any gold-washings more to the south, toward the Uaupe, on the Iquiare (*Iguari, Iguari*), and on the Yurubesh (*Yurubach, Uru-baxi*)? It was there that Philip von Hutten first sought *El Dorado*, and with a handful of men fought the battle of *Omaguas*, so celebrated in the sixteenth century. In separating what is fabulous from the narratives of the *Conquistadores*, we cannot fail to recognize in the names preserved on the same spots a certain basis of historic truth. We follow the expedition of Hutten beyond the Guaviare and the Caqueta; we find in the Guaypes, governed by the cacique of *Macatoa*, the inhabitants of the river of Uaupe, which also bears the name of *Guape, or Guapue*; we call to mind, that Father *Acunha* calls the *Iquari (Quiquiare)* 'a gold river'; and that fifty years later Father *Fritz*, a missionary of great veracity, received, in the mission of *Yurimaguas*, the *Manaos (Manoas)*, adorned with plates of beaten gold, coming from the country between the Uaupe and the Caqueta, or *Jupura*. The rivers that rise on the eastern declivity of the Andes (for instance the *Napo*) carry along with them a great deal of gold, even when their sources are found in trachytic soils. Why may there not be an alluvial auriferous soil to the east of the *Cordilleras*, as there is to the west, in the *Sonoro*, at *Choco*, and at *Barbacoas*? I am far from wishing to exaggerate the riches of this soil; but I do not think myself authorized to deny the existence of precious metals in the primitive mountains of *Guiana*, merely because in our journey through that country we saw no metallic veins. It is somewhat remarkable that the natives of the Orinoco have a name in their languages for gold (*carucuru* in *Caribbee*, *caricuri* in *Tamanac*, *cavitta* in *Maypure*), while the word they use to denote silver,