

pressed us to depart, in order to reach the island of Dapa, where the pig was to be killed and roasted during the night. We had scarcely time to examine in the convent (convento) the great stores of *mani* resin, and cordage of the chiquichiqui palm, which deserves to be more known in Europe. This cordage is extremely light; it floats upon the water, and is more durable in the navigation of rivers than ropes of hemp. It must be preserved at sea by being often wetted, and little exposed to the heat of the tropical sun. Don Antonio Santos, celebrated in the country for his journey in search of lake Parima, taught the Indians of the Spanish Rio Negro to make use of the petioles of the chiquichiqui, a palm-tree with pinnate leaves, of which we saw neither the flowers nor the fruit. This officer is the only white man who ever came from Angostura to Grand Para, passing by land from the sources of the Rio Carony to those of the Rio Branco. He had studied the mode of fabricating ropes from the chiquichiqui in the Portuguese colonies; and, on his return from the Amazon, he introduced this branch of industry into the missions of Guiana. It were to be wished that extensive rope-walks could be established on the banks of the Rio Negro and the Cassiquiare, in order to make these cables an article of trade with Europe. A small quantity is already exported from Angostura to the West Indies; and it costs from fifty to sixty per cent less than cordage of hemp. Young palm-trees only being employed, they must be planted and carefully cultivated.

A little above the mission of Davipe, the Rio Negro receives a branch of the Cassiquiare, the existence of which is a very remarkable phenomenon in the history of the branchings of rivers. This branch issues from the Cassiquiare, north of Vasiva, bearing the name of the Itinivini; and, after flowing for the length of twenty-five leagues through a flat and almost uninhabited country, it falls into the Rio Negro under the name of the Rio Conorichite. It appeared to me to be more than one hundred and twenty toises broad near its mouth. Although the current of the Conorochite is very rapid, this natural canal abridges by three days the passage from Davipe to Esmeralda. We cannot be surprised at a double communication between the Cassiquiare