

and the Rio Negro. when we recollect that so many of the rivers of America form, as it were, *deltas* at their confluence with other rivers. Thus the Rio Branco and the Rio Jupura enter by a great number of branches into the Rio Negro and the Amazon. At the confluence of the Jupura there is a much more extraordinary phenomenon. Before this river joins the Amazon, the latter, which is the principal recipient, sends off three branches called Uaranapu, Manhama, and Avateparana, to the Jupura, which is but a tributary stream. The Portuguese astronomer, Ribeiro, has proved this important fact. The Amazon gives waters to the Jupura itself, before it receives that tributary stream.

The Rio Conorichite, or Itinivini, formerly facilitated the trade in slaves carried on by the Portuguese in the Spanish territory. The slave-traders went up by the Cassiquiare and the Caño Meë to Conorichite; and thence dragged their canoes by a *portage* to the *rochelas* of Manuteso, in order to enter the Atabapo. This abominable trade lasted till about the year 1756; when the expedition of Solano, and the establishment of the missions on the banks of the Rio Negro, put an end to it. Old laws of Charles V and Philip III\* had forbidden under the most severe penalties (such as the being rendered incapable of civil employment, and a fine of two thousand piastres), "the conversion of the natives to the faith by violent means, and sending armed men against them;" but notwithstanding these wise and humane laws, the Rio Negro, in the middle of the last century, was no further interesting in European politics, than as it facilitated the *entradas*, or hostile incursions, and favoured the purchase of slaves. The Caribs, a trading and warlike people, received from the Portuguese and the Dutch, knives, fish-hooks, small mirrors, and all sorts of glass beads. They excited the Indian chiefs to make war against each other, bought their prisoners, and carried off, themselves, by stratagem or force, all whom they found in their way. These incursions of the Caribs comprehended an immense extent of land; they went from the banks of the Essequibo and the Carony, by the Rupunuri and the Paraguamuzi on one side, directly south towards the Rio Branco; and on the other, to the south-west, following the

\* 26 Jan. 1523 : and 10 Oct. 1618.