

Orinoco. Father Gurilla himself, whom Bouguer met at Carthagena, confessed that he had been deceived; and he read to Father Gili, a short time before his death, a supplement to his history of the Orinoco, intended for a new edition, in which he recounts pleasantly the manner in which he had been undeceived. The expedition of the boundaries, under Iturriaga and Solano, completed in detail the knowledge of the geography of the Upper Orinoco, and the intertwinings of this river with the Rio Negro. Solano established himself in 1756 at the confluence of the Atabapo; and from that time the Spanish and Portuguese commissioners often passed in their canoes, by the Cassiquiare, from the Lower Orinoco to the Rio Negro, to visit each other at their head-quarters of Cabruta* and Mariva. Since the year 1767, two or three canoes come annually from the fort of San Carlos, by the bifurcation of the Orinoco to Angostura, to fetch salt and the pay of the troops. These passages, from one basin of a river to another, by the natural canal of the Cassiquiare, excite no more attention in the colonists at present than the arrival of boats that descend the Loire by the canal of Orleans, awakens on the banks of the Seine.

Although, since the journey of Father Roman, in 1744, precise notions have been acquired in the Spanish possessions in America, both of the direction of the Upper Orinoco from east to west, and of the manner of its communication with the Rio Negro, this knowledge did not reach Europe till a much later period. In 1750, La Condamine and D'Anville † were still of opinion that the Orinoco was a

* General Iturriaga, confined by illness, first at Muitaco, or Real Corona, and afterward at Cabruta, received a visit in 1760 from the Portuguese colonel Don Gabriel de Souza y Figueira, who came from Grand Para, having made a voyage of nearly nine hundred leagues in his boat. The Swedish botanist, Loeffling, who was chosen to accompany the expedition of the boundaries at the expense of the Spanish government, so greatly multiplied in his ardent imagination the branchings of the great rivers of South America, that he appeared well persuaded of being able to navigate, by the Rio Negro and the Amazon, to the Rio de la Plata. (*Iter*, p. 131.)

† See the classical memoir of this great geographer in the *Journal des Savans*, March 1750, p. 184. "One fact," says D'Anville, "which cannot be considered as equivocal, after the proofs with which we have been