

branch of the Caqueta coming from the south-east, and that the Rio Negro issued immediately from it. It was only in the second edition of his *South America*, that D'Anville (without renouncing that intercommunication of the Caqueta, by means of the Iniricha (Inirida), with the Orinoco and the Rio Negro) describes the Orinoco as taking its rise at the east, near the sources of the Rio Branco, and marks the Rio Cassiquiare as bearing the waters of the Upper Orinoco to the Rio Negro. It is probable that this indefatigable and learned writer had obtained information on the manner of the bifurcation from his frequent communications with the missionaries,\* who were then the only geographers of the most inland parts of the continents.

Had the nations of the lower region of equinoctial America participated in the civilization spread over the cold and alpine region, that immense Mesopotamia between the Orinoco and the Amazon would have favoured the development of their industry, animated their commerce, and accelerated the progress of social order. We see everywhere in the old world the influence of locality on the dawning civilization of nations. The island of Meroë between the Astaboras and the Nile, the Punjab of the Indus, the Douab of the Ganges, and the Mesopotamia of the Euphrates, furnish examples that are justly celebrated in the annals of the human race. But the feeble tribes that wander in the savannahs and the woods of eastern America, have profited little by the advantages of their soil, and the interbranchings of their rivers. The distant incursions of the Caribs, who went up the Orinoco, the Cassiquiare, and the recently furnished, is the communication of the Rio Negro with the Orinoco; but we must not hesitate to admit, that we are not yet sufficiently informed of the manner in which this communication takes place." I was surprised to see in a very rare map, which I found at Rome (Provincia Quitensis Soc. Jesu in America, auctore Carolo Brentano et Nicolao de la Torre; Romæ, 1745), that seven years after the discovery of Father Roman, the Jesuits of Quito were ignorant of the existence of the Cassiquiare. The Rio Negro is figured in this map as a branch of the Orinoco.

\* According to the Annals of Berredo, it would appear, that as early as the year 1739, the military incursions from the Rio Negro to the Cassiquiare had confirmed the Portuguese Jesuits in the opinion that there was a communication between the Amazon and the Orinoco. *Southey's Brazils*, vol. i, p. 658.