

superior of the Spanish missions was forced to remain near the flying camp of the troop of ransomers till the arrival of the Portuguese Jesuit Avogadri, who had gone upon business to Grand Para. Father Manuel Roman returned with his Salive Indians by the same way, that of the Cassiquiare and the Upper Orinoco, to Pararuma,* a little to the north of Carichana, after an absence of seven months. He was the first white man who went from the Rio Negro, consequently from the basin of the Amazon, without passing his boats over any portage, to the basin of the Lower Orinoco.

The tidings of this extraordinary passage spread with such rapidity that La Condamine was able to announce it† at a public sitting of the Academy, seven months after the return of Father Roman to Pararuma. "The communication between the Orinoco and the Amazon," said he, "recently averred, may pass so much the more for a discovery in geography, as, although the junction of these two rivers is marked on the old maps (according to the information given by Acunha), it had been suppressed by all the modern geographers in their new maps, as if in concert. This is not the first time that what is positive fact has been thought fabulous, that the spirit of criticism has been pushed too far, and that this communication has been treated as chimerical by those who ought to have been better informed." Since the voyage of Father Roman in 1774, no person in Spanish Guiana, or on the coasts of Cumana and Caracas, has admitted a doubt of the existence of the Cassiquiare and the bifurcation of the

* On the 15th of October, 1774. La Condamine quitted the town of Grand Para December the 29th, 1743 ; it follows, from a comparison of the dates, that the Indian woman of Pararuma, carried off by the Portuguese, and to whom the French traveller had spoken, had not come with Father Roman, as was erroneously affirmed. The appearance of this woman on the banks of the Amazon is interesting with respect to the researches lately made on the mixture of races and languages : it proves the enormous distances through which the individuals of one tribe are compelled to carry on intercourse with those of another.

† The intelligence was communicated to him by Father John Ferreyro, rector of the college of Jesuits at Para. (*Voy. à l'Amazone*, p. 120. *Mem. de l'Acad.* 1745, p. 450. *Caulin*, p. 79.) See also, in the work of Gili, the fifth chapter of the first book, published in 1780, with the title: "Della scoperta delle comunicazione dell' Orinoco col Maragnone."