

with armour of massy gold.” Gonzales Pizarro, in searching for these treasures, discovered accidentally, in 1539, the cinnamon-trees of America, (*Laurus cinnamomoides*, *Mut.*); and Francisco de Orellana went down the Napo, to reach the river Amazon. Since that period expeditions were undertaken at the same time from Venezuela, New Grenada, Quito, Peru, and even from Brazil and the Rio de la Plata,* for the conquest of El Dorado. Those of which the remembrance have been best preserved, and which have most contributed to spread the fable of the riches of the Manaos, the Omaguas, and the Guaypes, as well as the existence of the *lagunas de oro*, and the town of ‘the gilded king’ (Grand Patiti, Grand Moxo, Grand Paru, or Enim), are the incursions made to the south of the Guaviare, the Rio Fragua, and the Caqueta. Orellana, having found idols of massy gold, had fixed men’s ideas on an auriferous land between the Papamene and the Guaviare. His narrative, and those of the voyages of Jorge de Espira (George von Speier), Hernan Perez de Quesada, and Felipe de Urre (Philip von Hutten), undertaken in 1536, 1542, and 1545, furnish, amid much exaggeration, proofs of very exact local knowledge.† When these are examined merely in a geographical point of view, we perceive the constant desire of the first *conquistadores* to reach the land comprised between the sources of the Rio Negro, of the Uaupès (Guape), and of the Jupura or Caqueta. This is the land which, in order to distinguish it from *El Dorado de la Parime*, we have called *El Dorado des Omaguas*.‡ No doubt the whole country between the Amazon and the Orinoco was vaguely known by the name of *las Provincias del Dorado*; but in

* Nuño de Chaves went from the Ciudad de la Asumpcion, situate on the Rio Paraguay, to discover, in the latitude of 24° south, the vast empire of El Dorado, which was everywhere supposed to lie on the eastern back of the Andes.

† We may be surprised to see, that the expedition of Hutten is passed over in absolute silence by Herrera (dec. 7, lib. 10, cap. vii, vol. iv, p. 238). Fray Pedro Simon gives the whole particulars of it, true or fabulous; but he composed his work from materials that were unknown to Herrera.

‡ In 1560 Pedro de Ursua even took the title of *Governador del Dorado y de Omagua*. (Fray Pedro Simon, vol. vi. chap. x, p. 430.)