

the Arui, and has taken the name of Parima. To follow this metamorphosis in its progressive development, we must compare the maps which have appeared since the voyage of Raleigh till now. La Cruz, who has been copied by all the modern geographers, has preserved the oblong form of the lake Cassipa for his lake Parima, although this form is entirely different from that of the ancient lake Parima, or Rupunuwini, of which the great axis was directed from east to west. The ancient lake (that of Hondius, Sanson, and Coronelli) was also surrounded by mountains, and gave birth to no river; while the lake Parima of La Cruz and the modern geographers communicates with the Upper Orinoco, as the Cassipa with the Lower Orinoco.

I have stated the origin of the fable of the lake Cassipa, and the influence it has had on the opinion that the lake Parima is the source of the Orinoco. Let us now examine what relates to this latter basin, this pretended 'interior sea,' called *Rupunuwini* by the geographers of the sixteenth century. In the latitude of four degrees or four degrees and a-half, (in which direction unfortunately, south of Santo Thomé del Angostura to the extent of eight degrees, no astronomical observation has been made) is a long and narrow Cordillera, that of Pacaraimo, Quimiropaca, and Ucucamo; which, stretching from east to south-west, unites the group of mountains of Parima to the mountains of Dutch and French Guiana. It divides its waters between the Carony, the Rupunury or Rupunwini, and the Rio Branco, and consequently between the valleys of the Lower Orinoco, the Essequibo, and the Rio Negro. On the north-west of the Cordillera de Pacaraimo, which has been traversed but by a small number of Europeans (by the German surgeon, Nicolas Hortsman, in 1739; by a Spanish officer, Don Antonio Santos, in 1775; by the Portuguese colonel, Barata, in 1791; and by several English settlers, in 1811), descend the Noeapra, the Paraguamusi, and the Paragua, which fall into the Rio Carony; on the north-east, the Rupunuwini, a tributary stream of the Rio Essequibo. Toward the south, the Tacutu and the Urariquera form together the famous Rio Parima, or Rio Branco.

This isthmus, between the branches of the Rio Essequibo and the Rio Branco (that is, between the Rupunuwini on