

fortress of Paria, the Indian village of Uriaparia (no doubt below Imataca, on a point where the inundations of the delta prevented the Spaniards from being able to procure firewood), Caroa, in the province of Carora; the rivers Caranaca (Caura?) and Caxavana (Cuchivero?); the village of Cabritu (Cabruta), and the Raudal near the mouth of the Meta (probably the Raudal of Cariven and the Piedra de la Paciencia). As the Rio Meta, on account of the proximity of its sources and of its tributary streams to the auriferous Cordilleras of new Grenada (Cundinamarca), enjoyed great celebrity, Herrera attempted to go up this river. He there found nations more civilized than those of the Orinoco, but that fed on the flesh of *mute dogs*. Herrera was killed in battle by an arrow poisoned with the juice of curare (yierva); and when dying named Alvaro de Ordaz his lieutenant, who led the remains of the expedition (1535) to the fortress of Paria, after having lost the few horses which had resisted a campaign of eighteen months.

Confused reports which were circulated of the wealth of the inhabitants of the Meta, and the other tributary streams that descend from the eastern side of the Cordilleras of New Grenada, engaged successively Geronimo de Ortal, Nicolas Federmann, and Jorge de Espira (George von Speier), in 1535 and 1536, to undertake expeditions by land towards the south and south-west. From the promontory of Paria, as far as Cabo de la Vela, little figures of molten gold had been found in the hands of the natives, as early as the years 1498 and 1500. The principal markets for these amulets, which the women used as ornaments, were the villages of Curiana (Coro) and Cauchieto (near the Rio la Hacha). The metal employed by the founders of Cauchieto came from a mountainous country more to the south. It may be conceived, that the expeditions of Ordaz and Herrera served to increase the desire of drawing nearer to those auriferous countries. George von Speier left Coro (1535), and penetrated by the mountains of Merida to the banks of the Apure and the Meta. He passed these two rivers near their sources, where they have but little breadth. The Indians told him that, farther on, white men wandered about the plains. Speier, who imagined that he was not far from the banks of the Amazon,