

AMERRIQUES, AMERIGHO VESPUCCI, AND AMERICA.

By JULES MARCOU.

INTRODUCTION.

The Amerriques tribe of Indians, now few in number, are confined to their mountains, called Sierra Amerrique, which form the cordillera between Lake Nicaragua and the Mosquito coast, in the province of Chontales, Nicaragua.

By a combination of circumstances, not rare, in what pertain to the first discoveries made in the New World, the name of *Amerrique* was not printed or perhaps even written in documents until 1872, when the late Thomas Belt, a naturalist of genius, during an exploration of Nicaragua, heard of the name and used it in his excellent and very remarkable book "The Naturalist in Nicaragua," London, 1874. De Humboldt says: "Les pays découverts les premiers sont aujourd'hui oubliés et presque déserts." (See "Examen critique de l'histoire de la géographie du nouveau continent," vol. III, p. 381, Paris, 1839.)

SIERRA AMERRIQUE AND THE AMERRIQUES.

I quote all I have been able to gather on the subject:

"At a short distance to the west (of Fairbairn's ranch, 2 leagues from Libertad, Nicaragua), rise the precipitous rocks of the Amerrique range, with great perpendicular cliffs, and huge isolated rocks and pinacles. The name of this range gives us a clue to the race of the ancient inhabitants. In the highlands of Honduras, as has been noted by Squiers, the termination of *tique* or *rique* is of frequent occurrence in the name of places, as *Chaparristique*, *Lapaterrique*, *Llotique*, *Ajuterique*, and others. The race that inhabited this region were the Leuca Indians. . . . I think that the Leuca Indians were the ancient inhabitants of Chontales, . . . and that they were partly conquered, and their territories encroached upon by the latter before the arrival of the Spaniards." Now the Chontales Indians are confined to the western part of the province of that name (departamento de Chontales), west of the cordillera or Amerrique range; while all the eastern part, as far as the Mosquito coast (Reserva Mosquita), is inhabited by uncivilized Indians

called *Caribisi* or *Caraĩbs*, and also *Amerriques*, *Carcas*, and *Ramas* Indians—*tribus de aborigenes no civilizados*—as they are called on maps of Nicaragua.

On Fairbairn's Ranch: "There are many evidences of a large Indian population having lived at this spot, and their pottery and fragments of their stones for bruising maize have been found in some graves that have been opened." - - - "There are many old Indian graves, covered with mounds of earth and stones." (See "The Naturalist in Nicaragua," p. 154.) At page 324, Belt refers again to the cordillera, saying: "About noon we came in sight of the Amerrique range, which I recognized at once, and knew that we had reached the Juigalpa district."

As regards gold, Belt, the engineer of the Chontales Gold Mining Company, during his four years' residence in Nicaragua, was particularly well posted as to the location of the mines; and he says: "Gold mining at Santo Domingo is confined almost entirely to auriferous quartz lodes, no alluvial deposits having been found that will pay for working. - - - The gold does not occur pure, but is a natural alloy of gold and silver, containing about three parts of the former to one of the latter. - - - The small town of Libertad is the principal mining centre of Chontales. There are a great number of gold mines in its vicinity."

The absence of paying *placers*, or auriferous alluvial gravels, in the valleys of the Rios Mico and Carca, the two main affluents of the Rio Blewfields, shows that they had been worked out in the old Indian time.

The following letter from Mr. Belt, written a short time before his premature death,* is interesting, because it gives his impression after reading my first paper on the "Origin of the name America," published in the Atlantic Monthly for March, 1876:

LONDON, April 8, 1878.

M. JULES MARCOU,
Salins, Jura, France:

MY DEAR SIR: I am much obliged to you for your kind letter and the copy of your most ingenious speculation respecting the origin of the name "Amérique."

The Amerrique range in Nicaragua was well known to me, and the curious coincidence with the name of the continent had often struck me, but only as a coincidence.

I hope your suggestion will receive the attention it deserves, and that the origin of the name will be thoroughly inquired about. Should it turn out as you believe, you will have cleared up a most interesting point.

I am, dear sir, yours very truly,

THOMAS BELT.

In 1887, by a happy circumstance, I was able to communicate with Senator Don José D. Rodriguez, of Managua (Nicaragua), who lived for

*Thomas Belt, born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1832, died at Kansas City (Kansas), the 21st of September, 1878.

many years in the district of Chontales, and who was also a personal friend of Thomas Belt. Here are extracts from two of his letters to me :

WASHINGTON, D. C., *December 29, 1887.*

- - - The word *Amerrique* is pronounced as Mr. Thomas Belt wrote it by the natives of the tribe, with whom I have conversed. These Indians seem to have been formerly a powerful tribe. At a distance from the sierra (range), in the level ground, there are extensive spaces which were at one time cemeteries and undoubtedly belonged to these Indians.

It is certain that towards the south other tribes inhabited that region. It is, moreover, easy to note that they kept up, from a very ancient date, a communication with the Atlantic coast, cultivating probably friendly relations with the once war-like tribe of the Moscos, who held the country from about Laguna de Caratasca (Honduras) and the Cape Gracias à Dios to a little south of the Laguna de Perlas and the rio Blewfields.

At the present day the Amerriques are few in number, but I do not feel able, at the moment, to give any sufficient reason for the fact. They are not molested by any one and they live at their ease in their mountains, but it is evident that no long time will elapse before they disappear entirely, perhaps by absorption into other tribes. - - - Mr. Thomas Belt, to whom you refer, must have had occasion to know the mountains and the Indians of that name during a journey which he made over the cordillera to Matagalpa and Segovia. I served under the order of that gentleman in the mines of Chontales, and enjoyed the honor of his friendship and confidence.

WASHINGTON, *January 12, 1888.*

- - - I can assure you that the insinuation, ascribed to Mr. Peralta, that the name *Amerrique* was invented by my deceased friend, Mr. Thomas Belt, is an entirely gratuitous one. The mountain range and the tribe of the Amerriques have existed in Nicaragua for centuries which it is beyond our power to determine; and these facts may be verified at any moment. Moreover, Mr. Belt was a serious person, who would never have lent himself to a deception.

This protest of Senator J. D. Rodriguez was brought out by the position taken by a few opponents, who claimed that because the map-makers have not inscribed the name *Amerrique* on any of the maps known until now, the name *Amerrique* applied to a chain of mountains of Nicaragua was created out of Mr. Belt's "inner consciousness." Don Manuel M. de Peralta, minister of Costa Rica at Washington, wrote a letter to the President of the Republic of Nicaragua, Don Ad. Cárdenas, asking if there really is in "el departamento de Chontales" a chain of mountains known by the name of *Amerique*, *Amerrique*, or *Americ*. The answer not only confirmed the existence of the Sierra *Amerrique*, but also of a tribe of Indians called "los Amerriques"; and that the spelling of the name was as Mr. Belt wrote it: *Amerrique*, with two *r*'s.

From those well-authenticated facts, we can be fully confident that there are still in existence the remnants of an Indian tribe calling themselves *Amerriques*, formerly powerful, and extending over a great part of the ground between the Lake of Nicaragua and the Atlantic coast.

The mountains to which they are now confined are called *Amerrique* range, or Sierra *Amerrique*; and they have occupied for centuries the richest gold area of the region. The gold mines are numerous and are worked even to this day, on a great scale, round Libertad, Santo Domingo, and Juigalpa, where great quantities of the precious metal have been and are still extracted. The name Juigalpa (Huzgalpa) means the country of gold; and the name of the Mosquito coast in the Indian language is Tauzgalpa, or Taguzgalpa. *Galpa* means gold, so that the true name of the country between the Cape Gracias á Dios to the Rios Rama and San Juan, instead of being Mosquito coast or Mosquita, is, according to the aborigines, *Gold Coast*.

Now let us see about the first explorations by European navigators of the coast of the central part of the New World.

FIRST VOYAGE OF VESPUCCI.

From the beginning we are confronted by the most contested of Vespucci's voyages, May, 1497, to October, 1498. Las Casas, Herrera, Charlevoix, Robertson, Tiraboschi, Muñoz, Navarette, and Washington Irving declare that the author of the "Quatuor Navigaciones" has forged his first voyage. Alexander de Humboldt, after calling his so-called first voyage *prétendu*, tries to show an *alibi* for Vespucci, who, according to his opinion, was then in Sevilla and at San Lucar superintending the arming of a fleet for the third voyage of Cristoforo Colombo, from April, 1497, to May, 1498; and accordingly in a material impossibility of having then accomplished his first voyage, which finally he calls "*problematic* voyage of a contested date,"* admitting as proved that the date of May 10 or 20, 1497, is false.

F. A. de Varnhagen is the only person who has accepted and maintained by excellent arguments and proofs drawn from the three historians, Pierre Martyr d'Anghiera, Oviedo and Gomara, the authenticity of the first voyage. After a careful study of all the objections, I have come to the same conclusion with Varnhagen, who correctly says, that "if the first voyage is not true, all fall to the ground;" and also, "if we admit that Vespucci has been guilty of not telling the truth in regard to such an important voyage, then we must treat him as a forger and an imposter, and accept nothing of all that he says in his four voyages." In fact, if the first voyage is a fable, or even only "*problematic*," Vespucci is a fabulist and an imposter who can not be trusted. But I do not believe it is the case. Vespucci, according to the great admiral, Cristoforo Colombo, was a good man (*es mucho hombre de bien*), unfortunate in his commercial enterprise, but eagerly looking out to get a reputation of being a great discoverer and traveler, what I have called him before, a *tan fino*, in Italian (*Nouvelles recherches*, p. 80, Paris, 1888.)

* *Examen critique*, vol. iv, p. 292.

According to Varnhagen the chiefs of this expedition of 1497 were V. Y. Pinson and J. D. de Solis; they first saw the land in the vicinity of the Cape Gracias à Dios, and after two days' sailing, in following a sandy coast, they stopped at a small harbor near the Laguna de Caratasca, Honduras. They met there a great many Indians of the Caraïbes type, some of whom possessed a few gold ornaments, which they got from some neighboring tribes. As we know now that the Amerriques Indians had relations with the Caraïbes of the coast as far as the Laguna de Caratasca, we have here the first contact of the Spaniards with the Indians possessing a little gold on the coast of Central America; and it is possible that the name *Amerrique* was then spoken of as a tribe of Indians and a country rich in gold, for it is the only gold area of that part of the coast of Honduras.

THE LAST VOYAGE OF COLOMBO.

Cristoforo Colombo in his fourth and last voyage sighted the Cape Gracias à Dios the 14th of September, 1502, followed all along the Mosquito coast, until he stopped at Quiriviri (Huerta Island), now Booby Island, opposite the Indian village of Cariaï at the mouth of the Rio Rama. He staid there ten days, from the 25th of September until the 5th of October. There he repaired his vessels and let his crews recruit after their very fatiguing navigation from Cuba.

The Indians were friendly and there was a great deal of communication and intercourse between them and the one hundred and fifty seamen composing the crews of his four caravels (schooners). Colombo in his *Lettera rarissima* says that at Cariaï he heard of gold mines in the province of Ciamba; that he took with him two Indians who conducted him to another place called Carambaru, where the aborigines are always naked and carry round their necks mirrors in gold, which they declined to exchange on any account. At Cariaï, the Indians named several places where gold mines existed; the last named being Veragua, 25 leagues distant.

As de Humboldt says, that letter is not clear; it is written in a melancholy mood, and characterized by many obscurities and want of order, due to many injustices and deceptions to which Colombo was subjected at the end of his life. Colombo was then an old man, almost infirm, when he wrote the letter at Jamaica, the 7th July, 1503, just after returning from the rich gold region of Veragua; being badly treated by the governor, Ovando, his mind was more or less affected by his suffering, and it is not strange if he did not give all the details and all the names of the countries rich in gold, as well as the names of the Indian tribes with which he came in contact.

However, from his letter, we can say almost to a certainty that Cariaï was at the mouth of the Rio Rama, that Colombo heard there of the tribe of Amerriques as possessing a good deal of gold, which the Spaniards were so anxious to get; that he took with him two Indians with

whom he went to Carambaru, another land. Carambaru in all probability, as we shall see if we consult a map of the coast, was at or near the mouth of the Rio Blewfields and there he found Indians wearing round their necks mirrors in gold which they declined to trade away.

Those Indians can not be any others than the Amerriques, who then inhabited the gold area of the province of Ciamba, occupying all the *placeres* of the Rios Mico and Carca, the two main affluents of the Rio Blewfields. Being not successful in his endeavor to get their gold mirrors, Colombo was not well disposed to speak much of those Indians, and he did not give their name nor the name of the country from which they got the gold, speaking only of the province of Ciamba and the village of Carambaru, without localizing the area of gold in the Sierra Amerrique, as he did for Veragua.

But because Colombo did not write the name Amerrique in his letter to the King and Queen of Spain it does not follow that he did not hear it; and it would be against all that we know of discoverers of gold regions if the name Amerrique was not heard and afterwards repeated by Colombo and the one hundred and fifty men of his crews. If Colombo is the only man who ever wrote anything about that eventful and difficult voyage, all his hundred and fifty companions spoke at their return of what they saw and heard during the voyage; and it is to them, and probably also to Colombo, that is due the spread among the people of the name *Amerrique* as a country rich in gold and of Indians of that name possessing gold mirrors as their only article of dress. The name passed from mouth to mouth, first among seamen, and then it penetrated into the continent of Europe so fast that in less than twelve years the name *Amerrique* was generally used to designate the New World, according to a contemporary, John Schoener, of Bamberg.

That the name came from the masses of the people and not from the few scholars who could read and write Latin is admitted by everybody. Officially the name was "Las Indias" and "New World." Until 1520 we do not possess a single map with the name *America*, and if any existed with that name, they have been lost and destroyed, since their number must have been extremely limited; and they can not be quoted as having spread the name among the people, who then did not know how to read, for we must always have in mind that it was the beginning of the sixteenth century and that the number of people able to read and write was very small and formed a special class far above the common people and having only occasional contact with the masses.

In résumé, Colombo and his one hundred and fifty companions saw Indians on the Mosquito coast wearing gold mirrors round their necks and otherwise naked. They had long talks with them in regard to countries and peoples where the gold existed in their neighborhood. We know now that those Indians were the Amerriques Indians, that they live still in the most productive gold area of that region, and that the Sierra Amerrique is, according to Thomas Belt, the most conspicuous

land-mark between Lake Nicaragua and the Atlantic coast. After the last voyage of Colombo of 1503 the name *Amerrique* spread so fast in Europe among the sailors and common people that in 1515 it was generally adopted and used to designate the New World. Such are facts which seem well established.

Now we come to the singular and rather mysterious christening of the New World at St. Dié, in Lorraine.

CONFUSION OF VESPUCCI'S CHRISTIAN NAME.

The Christian name of Vespucci is an example of confusion unique in history. Being an Italian, it was to be expected that his first name would be given exactly by his countrymen; on the contrary, they are the authors of all the confusions. As far back as 1503, or 1504 at most, the Italians Lorenzo Pier Francisco di Medicis, of Florence, and Giovanni del Giocondo, of Verona, call Verpucci *Albericus*, a Christian name well known; and even since, until a few years ago, Italians, and more especially Florentins, have persisted in calling him *Alberico* and even *Albertutio*. I made diligent researches to know exactly Vespucci's Christian name. In a country like Tuscany and its capital Florence, where so many erroneous and forged documents have appeared on Vespucci in manuscripts, letters, printed books, and even inscriptions engraved on marble that I was obliged to be very careful before accepting any name that it should be well authenticated by indisputable documents. After many researches I did not find anything certain until the appearance of the first letter of Vespucci to Laurentio Petri de Medicis, with the name *Albericus Vesputius*, in 1504 or 1505. And in my second paper, "Nouvelles Recherches sur l'Origine du nom d'Amérique" (Bulletin Soc. de Géographie, p. 66, Paris, 1888), I say: "As long as the Christian name of Vespucci has not been submitted to a very minute and exact control, we must remain in doubt as to which is the true one, *Alberico* or *Amerigo*." - - - "The question has a certain importance, although its solution does not touch the vital and most important part of the origin of the name America, which remains undecided between the poetical license of Jean Basin and the indigenous name in the New World of *Amerrique*. The decision of this point will involve Vespucci more or less according to the help which he may have given, perhaps without knowing it, to the christening at St. Dié."

It is true that I inclined then toward *Alberico* instead of *Amerigo* for the Christian name of Vespucci, and in my second paper I have given reasons which seemed to sustain that view; saying, however, several times in speaking of *Amerigo*, that it was either his true Christian name, or only a surname or nickname.

Diligent researches were continued to find proof if *Amerigo* was truly an Italian Christian name; for a learned Italian friend, who then lived at Florence, wrote me that the name, unknown to him as a Christian name, even after the celebrity given the name by Vespucci, was not used in Italy.

HAMERICUS IN DANTE AND AMERIGO IN MACHIAVELLI.

My son, Dr. Philippe B. Marcou, succeeded last year (1888) in finding twice the name *Hamericus* and *Amerigo*; first in Dante Allighieri, "De Vulgaris eloquentia," liber secundus, caput vi, and in the *Comedia* di Nicolo Machiavelli, in his *Opere*, vol. nono, Milano, 1805, where he has, as his first personage, *Amerigo, vecchio Padrone*, and as his last, *frate Alberigo*; besides he speaks at page 45 of the same volume in *Novella piacevolissima di Nicollo Machiavelli*, of a "figliuola d' Amerigo Donati." In Danté we have two provençal poets of the name *Hamericus*, written with an *h*, as a family name written in provençal or *langue d'oc*, "Aimeric." Even now the name Emeric is a family name in Provence.

Danté inhabited Provence for some time, and was well acquainted with two Provençal poets, Emeric of Belinoi and Emeric of Péguilain; and in translating the family name of Emeric into *Hamericus*, its Latin form, it does not follow that he regarded Emeric as the Provençal name of the Florentine Amerigho; and we can not quote Danté as having translated the name Amerigho or Amerigo into *Hamericus*.

AMERIGO IN SPAIN IN 1495.

A short time after I received a letter from Don Márcos J. de la Espada, the most learned Americanist of Spain, and who knows more about the Archiyes de Indios than anybody else. The letter, dated Madrid, 22 de Marzo de 1889, says: "Por el consta que Amerigo Vespucci se llamaba y se llamaba *Amerigo* en las libros de cuentas y despachos de armadas á Indias perde el año de 1495."

The oldest document made public in Spain before this was a receipt dated January 12, 1496, with only the name Vespuche, and no Christian name. The first time we have the Christian name of Vespucci, in well-authenticated documents, is in the two letters of Cristoforo Colombo of the 5th and 25th of February, 1505, written two years after the return of Colombo from his last voyage. Now since the discovery of Señor de la Espada we have the Christian name Amerigo in 1495, consequently before any of the voyages of Vespucci to the New World, and before the fourth voyage of Colombo to Nicaragua and Veragua. It is most important, for the *Libros de gastos de armadas* of the archives *de la casa de contractation* at Sevilla, are justly regarded as an excellent authority for everything relating to the first voyages of discoveries of the New World or Las Indias.

AMERIGHO IN THE ARCHIVES OF MANTOVA IN 1492.

Lately I have received from Rome a paper: "Come veramente si chiamasse il Vespucci, e se dal nome di lui sia venuto quello del Nuovo Mondo, nota del socio Gilberto Govi" (*Rendiconti della R. accademia dei Lincei*, vol. iv, pp. 297-307, seduta del 18 nov. 1888, Roma, 4to). The author, Signor G. Govi, has the good fortune to publish the only

Sivilia

1492-30. Xbre yhs

R^{me} In xpo p^{re} ac d^{omi}ne Dopo l'edebit rachimandaroni inf. Espira v. 20. s. (come di q^{ue} parte)
 circa q^{ue} v^{er}o v^{er}o in p^{re}no il mag^{gi}or d^{omi}no salimbey fmbasciadore dello s^{an}to s^{an}to d^{omi}no
 p^{re} agranata e p^{re} molto m^uchharicho & io d^{omi}no sono r^uchante alle interchuse ho fatto
 q^{ue} p^{re}odi uer^o a v. & s. p^{re} forte m^uchharicho come haue^{re} adu^{er}o d^{omi}no p^{re} p^{re}na alchoru^{er}
 dua charlinij & quali uer^o uer^o d^{omi}no d^{omi}no in d^{omi}no salimbey & tanto m^uchharicho in
 comm^ussione sua p^{re}na & r^uchmandony a v. & s. laqual^{is} duo f^uer^o d^{omi}no
 p^{re} p^{re}no uer^o in Sivilia die xxx decembris m^{il}l^{en}o cccc^o lxxxvii

£ v R^{me} Dis

Set. D^{omi}no m^uchharicho m^uchharicho m^uchharicho
 d^{omi}no florentino in
 Sivilia

truly authentic letter of Vespucci that had yet been found in Italy. It was discovered by Signor Davari conservatore dell 'archivio Gonzaga di Mantova, and although very short—only seven lines—is most important for it is wholly written by Vespucci, who was, as I have said before, an excellent calligraphist. The date is: *Sybilie die xxx decembris M^oCCCC^oLXXXII* (Sevilla, the 30 Dec., 1492), and consequently before the return of Colombo from his first voyage. The very distinct signature is:

Ser. Amerigho Vespucci mer-
chante fiorentino for
Sybilia.

I have received a photograph of the letter and its address, by the courtesy of an Italian friend; and I here give the *fac-simile* of it, as well as of the signature to a letter of Vespucci to the Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo, dated Sevilla, 9 December, 1508, which was published in *fac-simile* by the Spanish Government in 1878. Those two letters are the only authentic ones we possess; and the signatures are too important in the question of the origin of the name America not to be carefully studied.

Now we have, without any possible doubt, the Christian name of Vespucci, written by himself *Amerigho* with only one *r* and an *h* at the last syllable, in 1492; and *Amerigo* with only one *r* and no *h* in the *Libros de cuentas y despachos de armadas a Indias* in 1495.

Gilberto Govi* thinks that it is the Italian Fra Giovanni del Giocondo, who translated and changed too freely *Amerigho* into *Alberico*. It is only a personal opinion, without any base to rest upon, for the original letter of Vespucci to Lorenzo Pierfrancesco de Medicis is unknown. Generally, translators do not alter and change the signatures of authors; and so long as we have no positive proof to the contrary, we must say that Vespucci used for his Christian name, in 1502 or 1503, the name *Alberico* or *Alberigo*. But as his second letter to Piedro Soderini, written in 1504, is signed *Amerigo*, it is evident that he did not make use of the name *Alberico* for any length of time. There are certainly strong suspicions that he made use of it, not only in his first letter to Medicis, but also because Gomara, a Spanish historian of great reputation, in his General History of the Indies of 1551, uses both names, saying *Americo* or *Alberico* Vespucci, showing that in Spain the name of Al-

*Govi died suddenly at Rome, in June, 1889, a few months only after his communication to the Accademia dei Lincei. He was a physicist-mathematician of talent.

berico must have been known quite well during the first part of the sixteenth century, although we do not know a single example of the name having been used in any official authentic Spanish document relating to Vespucci.

COSMOGRAPHIÆ INTRODUCTIO.

Thanks to the discoveries and researches of Alex. de Humboldt, D'Avezac, and a few others, we know a great deal about the *Cosmographiæ Introductio* of the Vosgian gymnasium of St. Dié, in which is found the first announcement of the name America as the name of the New World. The interested reader will find all the descriptions, dissertations, and conclusions of the extraordinary value attached to this now very celebrated small quarto volume in the "Examen critique," by Alex. de Humboldt, 5 vols., Paris, 1839; "Martin Hylacomilus Waltzemuller," by D'Avezac, Paris, 1867; and "Nouvelles recherches sur l'origine du nom d'Amérique," by Jules Marcou, Paris, 1888, in Bulletin Soc. géographie.

The only addition to our knowledge about the printing press of St. Dié, is that it was removed in 1512 to Strasburg, from whence, very likely, it came; and that the same types used for the *Cosmographiæ Introductio* were used at Strasburg in 1512 and 1513 to finish the printing of the Ptolemy's Geography of 1513, two-thirds of it having been printed at St. Dié between 1505 and 1510, as D'Avezac has proved. So, instead of calling it the Strasburg's Ptoléme, it ought to be called the Vosgian Gymnasium Ptoléme, or at least the St. Dié and Strasburg's Ptoléme.

M. Ed. Meaume has lately proved the existence of a fourth edition, or more properly speaking, fourth issue, of the *Cosmographiæ Introductio* of St.-Dié, which had been considered by d'Avezac and Mr. H. Harisse as an amalgamated copy, composed with parts taken from the first and third issue or edition. (See "Recherches critiques et bibliographiques sur Améric Vespuce et ses voyages," par Ed. Meaume, Chapitre iii, "La *Cosmographiæ Introductio*, étude bibliographique sur les quatre premières éditions—Saint-Dié, 1507, p. 83, in "Mémoires de la Société d'Archéologie, Lorraine," 3^{ème} série, vol. xvi, Nancy, 1888.)

The late M. Meaume thought that this reprint or last issue was made in 1508, although dated, like the third edition, 29th August, 1507. It is very probable that Waltzemüller (Zlacomylus) tried a second time to place secretly his name as the author of the book instead of the collective name of the Vosgian Gymnasium; but being promptly detected, the issue was stopped at once, just as Gauthier had stopped the distribution of the first issue. This explains the great rarity of the fourth issue or edition. Only four copies are now known: the one called the Chartener's copy of Metz, now in the possession of M. Langlard, of Nancy; the second copy, described by Mr. Harisse in his "Bibliotheca Americana Vetustissima," under No. 47, p. 92, belonging to the Lenox's

Library of New York; the third copy is in the Mazarine Library in Paris (an incomplete copy, having only the first thirty-eight leaves); and the fourth copy is preserved in the city library of Besançon.

After having been deterred twice from naming himself as the sole author of the St. Dié book, Waltzemüller got up a special edition of his own, which he had printed at Strasburg in 1509. Very likely these proceedings caused an estrangement and a final breach between the *castigator* (proof-reader) Zlacomylus and the Vosgian Gymnasium, and this was the main reason for the stopping of the St.-Dié's Ptolemy edition, and its transfer to Strasburg in 1512, where it was issued at last in 1513.

“LE QUATTRO GIORNATE.”

After his success with the publication of his first letter to Lorenzo Pierfrancesco de Medicis, Vespucci took special precautions to have all his voyages well known in different parts of Europe. In his letter to Soderini, of 1504, he speaks of a book written by him under the title “Le Quattro Giornate,” which was never published, and the manuscript of which had escaped all researches until this day. But he wrote a résumé of it, dated Lisbonne, September 4, 1504, taking special care to address it, first, to the King of Spain; second, to his friend the Gonfalonier of Florence; and third, to King René, duc of Lorraine.

The copy addressed to Ferdinand of Spain was never published, and until now has not been found in the archives of Spain. Probably it was written in Spanish, and with a dedication to the King. The copy addressed to Soderini was published in 1506, at Pescia, near Florence, by Piero Paccini, under the title, “Lettera di Amerigo Vespucci delle isole nuovamente trovate in quatro suoi viaggi,” in an Italian rather incorrect, containing a quantity of Spanish words and phrases, as might be expected from a man like Vespucci, who had lived at least twelve years in Spain or among Spaniards. It was dedicated to His Magnificence Signor Pietro Soderini, Perpetual Gonfalonier of the Illustre Republic of Florence, but without the name, giving only his title of “Magnifice Domine,” and “Vostra Mag.”

The third copy was addressed to René, King of Sicily and Jerusalem and Duc of Lorraine. It was published in 1507, at St. Dié, by the *Gymnasium Vosagense*, under the title “Quattuor Americi Vesputii Navigationes,” in Latin, translated by the Canon Jean Basin, from a French version. That French version was never published, or, if published, no copy of it has ever been found; and the manuscript is unknown, very likely lost and destroyed. It is dedicated to the “Illustriissimo Renato Jherusalem et Sicilio Regis;” but for some unexplained reason the dedication to Soderini was copied entirely, with only the name of the good King René put instead of “Magnifice Domine,” and “T. M.” (tua majestas) instead of “Vostra Mag.,” which has been re-rendered by the translator from Italian into French as “Vestra Majestas” or “Votre Majesté.” It has been the custom to say that Jean Basin

made the change, in his Latin version, as a sort of poetical license. But it is very doubtful, for King René received the French manuscript, and very likely the person who sent it made the dedication, as it is the custom when you address Royalty. Besides, René gave the manuscript to his secretary, Gaultier Lud, and finally Lud delivered it to Jean Basin; and it is too much to suppose that Jean Basin took upon himself to alter the manuscript to such an extent, for it would have raised protests from both Lud and the good and honest King René.

Who did send the manuscript to King René is not known with certainty. Alexander de Humboldt thought it was Vespucci himself, and everything favors the same conclusion. Vespucci was desirous of notoriety as a great traveller and discoverer. He addressed his first letter to a Medicis, after placing the relation of his third voyage in the hands of the King, Don Manuel of Portugal; and he addressed his second letter first to the King, Don Ferdinand of Spain, and second to the Perpetual Gonfalonier of Florence, instead of Lorenzo Pierfrancesco de Medicis, who was dead. Evidently Vespucci sought the good opinions of the great of the earth, and to acquaint them with what he did as a navigator and discoverer. Not knowing French, he had his manuscript translated, and the translator did it literally, only by an oversight of Vespucci he wrote the dedication to the illustrious King René, and substituted for *Vostra Mag.*, "Votre Majesté." Very likely Vespucci intended to make some changes in the term of the dedication used for Soderini, but by some mistake or misunderstanding, or from being at some distance from the translator,—if the translation was made in Florence, which is probably the case.* Vespucci was not able to see that the dedication to King René was correct, and the elegant poet, Jean Basin, simply translated into Latin the French version without any explanation or rectification, not knowing if Vespucci really had occasion to know King René in his youth.

No trace of a correspondence between Vespucci and King René has been found. We are reduced to conjecture. Vespucci was interested to enrol among his admirers such an important personage as the good King René, known as a Meccenas and a seeker for geographical news, for it is known that he had sent Ringman twice to Italy in order to control the texts of Ptoleme and procure the best copies it was possible to collect. There is no doubt that Vespucci was well informed of what was going on in the world. He knew that Lorenzo Pierfrancesco de Medicis was dead, and that his first letter had been published in Latin in Paris; and he wanted his second letter to be also published in Latin in central Europe.

It is possible that King René received the French translation of the four voyages of Vespucci from another source; only then it is difficult

* The translation of the second letter of Vespucci into French was made at Florence, by some one well acquainted with the family of Vespucci, for the translator has added that Soderini and he were pupils at the school kept by the uncle of Vespucci; a fact which is not indicated in the Italian edition.

to account for the position taken by Jean Basin and the whole Vosgian Gymnasium, that Vespucci was the discoverer of the New World, a position which can not have been taken lightly and without the knowledge and consent of King René. It was well known that Cristoforo Colombo was the discoverer; and the members of the Vosgian Gymnasium can not have ignored the fact, because the first voyage of Colombo had been published not only in Paris, but also in Strasburg in 1497; and Ringman, who had inhabited Paris and had been twice in Italy, must have been well acquainted with all the history of the first voyage of Colombo.

The reference of the discovery of the New World to Vespucci by the Vosgian Gymnasium of St. Dié in 1507 is a very suspicious act, which can not be explained, except that a conspiracy existed after the death of Colombo to reduce, and even obliterate, the great celebrity attached to his memory, and that Vespucci was a party to, or at least helped secretly, the undertaking. The members of the Vosgian Gymnasium were not in a position to decide so bluntly, as they did, that Vespucci was the discoverer of the New World; and it is impossible to explain the position they have taken, without supposing that they had recourse to underhand influences, and a special desire to create a rival and an adversary to Colombo.

The second letter of Vespucci is written in a very careful way, in order to escape all associations with any of the other navigators. He has taken a special care not to name a single commander or chief of the expeditions in which he was engaged, and any one not well acquainted with all the first voyages to the New World will easily be deceived, and be led to believe that he was in command himself. As I have said before, his two published letters are the work of a very shrewd man, a *tan fino* in Italian. It is unique in maritime voyages that a man who was a subordinate does not give the name of the chief of his expeditions. That he may have passed over one of those names may be understood and regarded as a forgetfulness of no great consequence, but that all four are passed silently over is a case of willful negligence.

Vespucci certainly addressed the manuscripts of his voyages to the Kings of Spain and Portugal, to a Medicis and to the Perpetual Gonfalonier of Florence; and it is reasonable and natural to suppose that he did send them also to King René, Duc of Lorraine. The other supposition, that King René received the French translation of the four navigations of Vespucci from another source can not be accepted, unless it was proved by authentic facts and documents, which is not the case.

Humboldt says: "Vespucci was in correspondence with René II" * Unhappily nothing has been found yet in the archives of Lorraine on the subject, and we are reduced to probabilities and inductions.

* Examen Critique, Vol. IV, p. 107.

AMERIGE, AMERICUS, AND AMERICA.

However this may be decided, the Vosgian Gymnasium published in April, 1507, a Latin translation of the résumé of the four voyages of Vespucci, and in the introduction, *Cosmographiæ Introductio*, is the christening of the New World under the name of *America*, in honor of Americus (*Amerige*) Vespuccius, who discovered it.

It took many years to prove that Vespucci was not the discoverer of the *terra firma* of the New World and consequently had no valid claim to its name, and the numerous and voluminous discussions and controversies on this subject have lasted until this century.

Jean Basin, the translator from the French into Latin of the "Quatuor navigationes" of Vespucci, instead of retaining the word *Amerige* for the Christian name of Vespucci, as it was in the manuscript, turned it into *Americus*. He knew perfectly well that it was a very free translation, not easy to accept without an explanation, and consequently he took the precaution to print in two places of this small book the word *Amerige* very conspicuously opposite *Americus*, in order to show that by *Americus* he means the Christian name of Vespucci. The French translator from the original Italian text did not translate *Amerigo* by *Americ*, or *Emeric*, or *Aïmeric*, but by *Amerige*; it was only in 1515, when a French translation by Mathurin Du Redouer of the third voyage of Vespucci appeared in Paris, that *Amerigo* was translated into *Emeric* and not *Amerige*; and strange to say, Redouer translated it from the celebrated collection of Vicenza of 1507, in which the Christian name of Vespucci is *Alberico*; showing what confusion Vespucci and his friends had already created by using indiscriminately the word *Amerigo* and *Alberico*, two different names in Florence, where Machiavelli in his *Comedia* uses both for two entirely different personages called *Amerigo* and *Alberigo*.

TRIPLE ERRORS IN THE CHRISTENING OF ST. DIÉ.

The Vosgian Gymnasium first attributed the discovery of the New World to Vespucci in 1507, two years after the death of Colombo, and during the life of Vespucci, who did not die until 1512. Vespucci did not rectify the error, and no document exists which shows any steps taken by him to decline the honor. This absence of protestation on his part has a tendency to sustain the idea that it was he who suggested to King René and the Vosgian Gymnasium that he was the discoverer of the New World, for both René and the Gymnasium knew beyond any possible doubt the great discovery of 1492 by Cristoforo Colombo, and the only excuse in their favor which can be given is, that Vespucci claimed to have discovered the *terra firma*, the discoveries of Colombo being confined to the islands, and that he succeeded in impressing on those far away Lorrainers that fallacious idea.

As to the christening of the New World with the name *Americus*, in honor of Americus Vespuccius, the Vosgian Gymnasium has gone out of all rules, not only in giving the Christian name of a traveller or navigator to a great country, but also in spelling his name, transforming *Amerige* or *Amerigo* into *Americ*. It is a well known rule that names given to any great country newly discovered are either the family name, if in honor of the discoverer, or the Christian name of some members of royal reigning families. We can quote: "Strait of Magellan, Hudson Bay, Vancouver Island, Juan Fernandez Island, Colombia and Columbia, Washington, Van Diemen Land or Tasmania; Cook, Laperouse, Torres, and Davis Straits; Baffin Bay, Parry Islands, Kerguelen Islands, Heard Islands, Crozet Islands, Tristan do Cunha Island, Kermadec Island, Bougainville Island, Lord Howe Island, Fernando do Noronha Island, Grinnell Land, Wilkes Land, etc.; and on the other side: Carolina, Maryland, Virginia, Georgia, Victoria, Philippine Islands, Queen Charlotte Islands, Charlestown, Charles River, Cape Charles, Jamestown, James River, Isabel Island, Port Adelaide, Terre Louis Philippe, Franz Joseph Land, etc.

If the explanation of the Vosgian Gymnasium is accepted the only exception to the rule is a continent covering a hemisphere,—that is to say the greatest geographical fact existing, and that in the face of a fact admitted by everybody, even the Vosgian Gymnasium in the Ptoléme of 1513, that Cristoforo Colombo discovered the New World.

The name Amerigo, or Amerigo, or Amerige, which are the three variations in spelling known until 1507, would give in Latin: *Amerigonius*, *Amerighius*, *Amerigo*, or even *Amerige*, but not *Americus*. Jean Basin, in making such a *lapsus lingæ*, must have been influenced and entirely directed by the aboriginal name of *Amerrique*, which reached Europe four years before, and had time to spread as a name of a country and a tribe of Indians rich in gold, for in 1503 Colombo and his one hundred and fifty seamen returned from Cariai and Carambaru on the Mosquito Coast. Being assured by some one, perhaps directly by Vespucci himself, or indirectly through Laurent Phrisius (Fries) of Metz, an attaché to the service of the Duc of Lorraine; the canon Jean Basin,—an enthusiast like all poets, and a master in the art of eloquence and fine writing,—perceiving the analogy between the christian name of Vespucci, *Amerigo*, and more especially *Amerige*, and the somewhat popular name of *Amerrique*, Basin thought that a part of the New World was already named after the Christian name of Vespucci, and instead of proposing to call the New World *Vespuccia*, as he ought to have done, he called it *America*. A poetical creation due to a too great imaginative power. Beside the erroneous notion of the discovery of the New World by Vespucci, Basin committed another error, that the name *Amerrique* must be derived from *Amerige*, creating a confusion which was absolutely inexplicable, without the knowledge we have now of the existence of a tribe of Indians called *Amerriques*, inhabiting a coun-

try rich in gold, and carrying round their necks mirrors of gold at the time of Colombo's visit in 1502.

The Vosgian Gymnasium is responsible for the christening, but it is certain that no one of the other members, except Basin, had any enthusiasm about it, or even any sympathy with it, for no one of them uses the word *America* in any of their publications. The proof-reader (*castigator*) Martin Hylacomylus (Waltzemüller) wrongly credited as the God-father of the New World, was not a partisan of the name *America*, for he does not use it in any of his publications, not even on his map of the New World of the Ptoleme of 1513, called only *Terra nove*, without the name *America* anywhere. The canon Gauthier Lud, secretary of the Duc of Lorraine, did not use it in his: *Speculi orbis declaratio*, etc., 1507, and Ringmann, the Vosgian poet and professor of cosmography (geography) at St. Dié and afterward at Basel, never quoted it.

The only publication in which the name *America* is found, after the proposition of the Vosgian Gymnasium in 1507, is in the "Globus mundi," 1509, Strasburg, without name of author, but which is attributed to Jean Basin, the translator of the "Quatuor Navigationes," and the true God-father of the New World, and there it is found only *once* in the chapter *De Descriptio Terræ*.

IN 1515 THE NAME AMERICA IS ALREADY POPULAR.

John Shœner, of Bamberg, in his "Luculentissima quædam terræ totius descriptio, etc.," published in 1515, makes the important and significant remark that the name *America* was already accepted, used, and popular. How can the name have been popular in 1515, when it has been impossible to find it printed on a single map, and in no other books than the small and extremely rare pamphlets of the *Cosmographiæ Introductio* and the *Globus mundi*? To be sure, some maps with the name *America* may have existed then; but not one of them has reached us, all having been destroyed, for the preservation of maps is more difficult than the preservation of pamphlets, especially when the maps are on a large scale. Only during the first quarter, and even half, of the sixteenth century all the printed maps were small, on account of the material difficulties in their engraving and the writing of names on them; and their preservation was facilitated by their publication in books in which they were inserted, like the Ptolemeys. Large-scale maps existed then in manuscript, and besides the map of Juan de la Cosa of 1500, the map of Sebastian Cabot of 1544, and many others now existing in the archives of Europe, we know with certainty that many more have been destroyed or lost, among them all the maps of Vespucci and the first map of Sebastian Cabot.

The only dated map we possess now with the name *America*, is the one of Apianns (Pierre Bienewitz), inserted in the "Polyhistor" of Solinus, 1520. The Ptoleme of 1522, of Strasburg, gave the same map, with the name *America*. Laurent Frisius or Phrisius of Metz, is the

editor, and at the reverse of the folio numbered 100, he names Martin Ilacomylus as the author of the map, and even of all the maps of that new edition. But Ilacomylus had been dead for some time, and it is almost certain that the name America was not put there by him, but more likely by Laurent Phrissius himself, who was probably the medium between Vespucci, Pierre Martyr d'Anghiera, and the Duc of Lorraine.

It is plain that the name America can not have been popular in 1515, except that it has passed from mouth to mouth among illiterate people, as the masses were then. Shoener was a contemporary, well acquainted with the discoveries of the New World, and it is impossible to accept the idea that its popularity was an error on his part.

VESPUTIA AND CABOTIA.

Let us make a few suggestions in order to show the absolute impossibility of referring to the christian name of Vespucci the origin of the name America. If the rule to give the family name of the discoverer to a new country had been followed—although Vespucci was not the discoverer—Jean Basin and the Vosgian Gymnasium would have called the New World *Vesputia*. Does any one entertain for an instant the idea that the proposition of the Vosgian Gymnasium would have stood any chance of being accepted, or even been the object of any discussion? or controversy? The proposition to call the northern part of the New World *Cabotia*, in honor of Cabot, although sustained by the well proved fact that Sebastian Cabot first discovered North America—at least scientifically, for the Norsemen certainly anticipated his discovery by several centuries—was never accepted and not even discussed.

AMERIGIA AND ALBERICIA.

If we say that the Vosgian Gymnasium and its leader Jean Basin, in the matter of christening the new continent, were conscious that it was well to diverge from the rule of using family names, and that it was best to use the Christian name—although without a single precedent, even in antiquity—why did they choose a name so different from the christian name of Vespucci, for if they followed the orthography of the different names before them, they ought to have called the New World *Amerigia* (for Amerige), *Amerigonia* (for Amerigo), or *Albericia* (for Albericus). To write those names and pronounce them aloud suffices to show that they were not likely to be used by a majority of those who were accustomed in one way or another, as traders, seamen, adventurers, colonists, statesmen, or religious men, to speak of the new continent.

POETICAL LICENSE OF JEAN BASIN.

The assimilation of the Christian name of Vespucci, Amerige or Amerigho, to the gold-mirror Indians Amerriques, or their country Sierra Amerrique, is simply a fiction, in which Jean Basin took the name of an Indian tribe and of a country of the New World and placed

it on Vespucci, either as a poetical license or as a sort of joke without any consequence.

Unhappily the matter has been taken very seriously, more so than the originator even thought of; for the Vosgian Gymnasium took very quietly the correction that Vespucci was not the discoverer, and they were prepared to do the same as to their naming of America from Amerigho Vespucci; only the matter was considered as too trifling by those interested in the question, such as the son of Colombo, to require a correction. The attribution of the discovery to Cristoforo Colombo was considered sufficient; and that the name of Amerrique has nothing to do with Vespucci was so evident and such a matter of course that nobody cared to correct the vagary of a Vosgian poet.

The name Amerrique continued to be used among the people, just like the names Chrysé, El Dorado, Quivira, etc., and the map makers wrote the name America as they pleased, on many places of the new continent, without following in the least the proposition of the Vosgian Gymnasium, which passed entirely unnoticed until found out more than three centuries after by Alexander de Humboldt. If the geographers who constructed maps during the sixteenth century had thought that the New World was named from the Christian name of Vespucci, as that name varied according to the numerous pamphlets of his third voyage and his "Quatuor Navigationes" into Alberico, Amerigo, Amergio, Almerigo, Albertutio, Damerigho, Armenico, Morigo, some of them would have certainly used such names as Albericia, Amerigia, Amerigouia, Amergia, Almerigia, Albertutia, Armenica, Morigia. But the name *America* is *ne varietur*, without a single case of different spelling, showing that *Amerrique* was in general circulation, and that they made use of it without thinking if it was in honor of Vespucci or not. "Le mot était dans l'air," as the French say for all popular expression, and all the variations of the Christian name of Vespucci have not the slightest influence on it.

Little by little the aboriginal name of *Amerrique* and its derivative *America* took possession, first of the maps, and afterwards of all the chancelleries and state departments of all Europe, the Spanish one included, without much thought about the injustice committed toward Colombo, or any desire on their part to raise Vespucci above the very small position he occupied as third-rate navigator.

The whole is an example of a sort of process of infiltration, coming from the masses where it unconsciously originated, entirely outside of the doing of a few Latiuists lost in their books and manuscripts, and which eventually covered half of the earth's surface, carrying *pêle-mêle* partisans and adversaries of Colombo and Vespucci, sure that in the end truth will prevail over all false pretensions, obscurities, and errors.

After all the incorrect reference of the name of the New World to Amerigho Vespucci has lasted a little less than four centuries, even less than the forgetfulness which has kept in the background the discov-

eries of the Norsemen Bjarni and Leif Ericksen, at the end of the tenth century; a small number of years when compared to the past human history and its great future. The fourth centenarian anniversary of the greatest event for the human race will be celebrated without the feeling that the name of the New World is derived from a third-rate navigator, without any claim to such an honor and to the detriment and great injustice of the great discoverer, Colombo; but that it originated simply from a tribe of Indians and a mountain range of the new continent itself. The name Amerrique is equal to and of as much poetical beauty as Niagara, Ontario, Canada, Monongahela, Mississippi, Missouri, Arkansas, Alabama, Dakota, Mexico, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Cuba, Panama, Veragua, Chimborazo, Peru, Venezuela, etc.

VESPUCCI CHANGES THE SPELLING OF HIS CHRISTIAN NAME.

When Vespucci received a copy of the "Cosmographiæ Introductio" of St. Dié, at the end of 1507, he must have been more than gratified; for not only in it he is qualified as the discoverer of the New World, which very likely he wanted to be, but more, the name of *Amerrique* was attributed to him, and that name was extended to the whole of the new country. An ambitious man has seldom seen his desires so well fulfilled.

If Vespucci had been "es mucho hombre de bien" as Colombo thought, he would have taken proper steps to correct the very great errors committed by the Vosgian Gymnasium, and referred to Cristoforo Colombo as the true discoverer of the New World; but notwithstanding that Vespucci lived five years more, he did nothing of the kind, and instead we see he did all he could to sustain the scheme of naming the New World after him, by correcting the orthography of his Christian name. Until then he wrote *Amerigho*, as is proved by his letter of 1492, the earliest authentic autograph of him that we possess, while his other letter of the 9th of December, 1503, addressed to the Archbishop of Toledo, he signs *Amerriigo*, with a double *r* and the suppression of the *h*. (See page 657.) That modification in the orthography of his Christian name is "the end of the ear which sticks out" (*le bout de l'oreille qui perce*). Seeing the analogy of *Amerigho* and *Amerrique*, he did all he could to bring his name as near as possible to the aboriginal name, without identifying it entirely; for a complete identification might have been detected at once, for there were still alive quite a number of Colombo crews of one hundred and fifty seamen; and very cunningly he signed himself *Amerriigo*, with a most attractive and prominent flourish (paraph), using it until his death in 1512, as is seen in two or three other signatures of him after 1508, preserved in the Casa de Contractation at Sevilla, and all written with the double *r* and the dropping of the *h*.

The Spanish historian J. B. Muñoz, is the first who has observed the double *r* in the signatures found by him in Spain; that strange and unique spelling attracted his attention, without his being able to assign

any reason for it. Muñoz was convinced that some intentional falsification existed in regard to the voyages of Vespucci; and he was as well as the other historian, M. F. de Navarrete, a believer in some sort of fraud on the part of the Florentine. Alexander de Humboldt not knowing what to do with the double *r*, thought it might be "a proof of erudition" on the part of Vespucci, quoting the opinion of Professor von der Hagen of Berlin that "when in Italian Vespucci uses the double *r* in signing *Amerrigo*, it is by assimilation of two consonants, it is *Amerrigo* for *Amelrigo* (name of a bishop of Como in 865)." The main difficulty in accepting such an explanation is that Vespucci did not use it when he wrote in Italian and to Italians, as is proved by his letter of Mantova, but only to Spaniards and in Spanish. After the many researches of all sorts made in the archives and in published books and documents, it is certain that the spelling of Amerigo with two *r*'s is subsequent to the christening of St. Dié in 1507. It is the most damaging discovery made against Vespucci, which can not be satisfactorily explained in any other way than to bring his Christian name as near as possible to the Indian name of *Amerrique*.

SCHOENER VERSUS VESPUCCI.

By a strange occurrence, not rare however in the first discoveries of lands and aborigines of the new continent, the name of the Indian tribe and of their country was not printed in any pamphlet or book or written on any map that we know of. It escaped the researches of all the Americanists; even of Alexander de Humboldt, and it seems that everything conspired to make good the triple errors of Jean Basin, accepted and consolidated by Vespucci as much as he safely could.

It may be that Vespucci wrote on some manuscript map *Tierra di Amerriques*, and that it was read *Tierra di Amerigo*, as Schoener has accused him of doing in 1535. Johannes Schoener, born in 1477, at Carlstadt, Lower Franconia, in Bavaria, died at Nuremberg in 1547. He was an excellent geographer and well acquainted with all the discoveries made during his time, as is amply proved by Dr. Franz Wieser, in his important book: "*Magalhaes-Strasse und Austral-Continent auf den Globen des Johannes Schoener*," Innsbruck, 1881. Certainly Schoener can not be considered as a detractor of Vespucci. He seems to have acted with great honesty of purpose, saying only the truth of what he heard about him; for in 1515, in his "*Luculentissima*," etc., he is very friendly to Vespucci, saying that he discovered the New World in 1497 and that the name *America* was generally accepted and already in great use. But when he was convinced of the great injustice done to Cristoforo Colombo, the true discoverer, he did not hesitate to say that he knew that Vespucci had written his name upon some maps.

There is no doubt that maps made by Vespucci existed at that time; for we know of their existence through his contemporaries Pierre Martyr d'Anghiera and his nephew and heir, Juan Vespacci. Only, as I have said before, it may be that instead of writing *Tierra di Amerigo*

upon them, he wrote *Tierra di Amerriques*, and that Jean Basin and others made the mistake which led Schoener to make the accusation. I believe that there is no reasonable doubt that there was some sort of shrewd underhand practice by some one in the whole matter of the attribution of the discovery of the New World to Vespucci, and in the maintenance of the name Americ as his Christian name, when it is Amerigho. Without going so far as to regard Vespucci as an impostor, it is difficult not to admit that he was a great diplomatist, what we call now a shrewd politician, a *tan fino* in Italian, and that there are reasons enough to consider him as a sort of mystificator.

COLOMBO AND VESPUCCI.

Cristoforo Colombo has the honesty and simplicity of a seaman who has passed all his life before the mast; believing easily that others were "hombre de bien," if they had the reputation of being honest merchants.

Amerigho Vespucci has been during the greatest part of his life a "fiorentino merchant," as he called himself, educated for the trade at Florence and accustomed to all the little underhand ways of traders. He was considered at Sevilla as an "hombre de bien" in trade, and his failure of success as a merchant confirms that view to a certain extent.

Unfortunate in his speculations, he took at the end of his life to seamanship, as an astronomer, chart maker, captain, and pilot, and finally he was appointed piloto major. He never had command of a single expedition, and was after all a very secondary man in Spain or Portugal where there were such great navigators as Colombo, Vasco de Gama, Pinson, de la Cosa, Hojeda, Pedro de Ledesma, de Solis, Juan and Sebastiano Caboto, Diego de Lepe, the Cortereal, Cabral, de Bastidos, Vergara, Coelho, etc.

But it is evident that ambition to be known as a great discoverer and a navigator of renown took hold of Vespucci, soon after entering into his new life; and he addressed his voyages to the King of Spain, the King of Portugal, a Medicis in Paris, the perpetual gonfalonier of Florence, and finally to the good René, King of Sicily and Duc of Lorraine. The style of Vespucci is rather diffuse and pretentious, "*à visé à l'effet*," according to de Humboldt. He leans constantly towards exaggeration, and boasts of having received patent letters from the King of Portugal. The most exhaustive researches into the books, which are all preserved in the archives of the Torre do Tombo, containing all the patent letters delivered by the kings of Portugal, have failed entirely to show any trace of these; and even the name of Vespucci has never been found in a single document in Portugal.

Everything pertaining to Vespucci, as a traveller and a navigator, must be received with some apprehension that it is either much exaggerated or even untrue. We must remember that Vespucci was a Florentine, a friend of a Medicis and of Soderini; a trader until forty-eight years

old; that he was living during a period when it was possible to be a cheat and at the same time regarded as a "*hombre de bien*." It was a time which it is difficult to understand now, because the society of the fifteenth century lived among troubles of all sorts, which influenced all the ideas and relations of men; and the honesty of men during that period can not be compared with our actual ideas on the subject. With Cristoforo Colombo everything is clear and explained easily, while on the contrary with Amerigho Vespucci everything is obscure, or even clashes with well-known facts, and all the time his defenders or friends are obliged to have recourse to suppositions and to throw the blame upon others without the slightest proof and against plain facts. It is going too far to say with de Humboldt that Vespucci is "the victim of a concourse of fortuitous circumstances," and of "the exaggerations of unskillful and dangerous friends," for it is evident that Vespucci himself did all he could to create those circumstances, and during his life he never did anything to correct his "unskillful and dangerous friends" of St. Dié, Strasburg, and Metz.

A name for a continent covering a whole hemisphere can not come as a spontaneous generation, and as Pasteur says, "spontaneous generation" does not exist in nature nor in philology. There is always a source and a base, and until the re-discovery of a tribe of Indians called Amerriques, formerly powerful, and who have always lived in a country rich in gold and close to the coast explored first by Colombo and afterward by Vespucci, it was impossible to give a rational and satisfactory explanation of the christening of the New World. A writer has said with great pertinence, "The attribution of the name America to Vespucci has been respected especially because there was no other solution to oppose to it."

After almost four centuries it is impossible to expect that every fact should be sustained by authentic documents and indisputable proofs. Many of the archives have been destroyed, and we are reduced often—too often—to suppositions and probabilities. That the publication of the "*Cosmographiæ Introductio*" of St. Dié was directed against the reputation of Cristoforo Colombo is an undeniable fact, and that some secret lay at the bottom of it is plain enough. Nothing is truly known as to how the French manuscript came into the hands of King René, nor what part Vespucci took in the matter. We are reduced to inferences from the known facts of Vespucci sending his accounts of his voyages in all directions. His admirers and partisans are obliged to make more suppositions and have given less probable explanations than his adversaries, and the custom adopted of throwing upon others all the manifest and glaring errors in order to take off all blame from Vespucci is only a "*dessein coupable d'agrandir artificieusement le mérite de Vespucci*,"* at the expense of the veracity and knowledge of some of his contemporaries.

*Examen critique, vol. v, p. 187

The name was not "accidentally created in the Vosges,"* as de Humboldt thought; but the application to Vespucci of the indigenous name *Amerrique* was wrongly made there. The name is not a creation of the Vosgian Gymnasium, but only an erroneous assimilation to the Christian name of a man having some similarity with it, against all the rules of priority of discovery and of naming a great country in using the Christian name of a Piloto instead of his family name. After the mistake had been made Vespucci took care to make it good by altering the autography of his Christian name, changing his signature of 1492, *Amerigho*, into *Amerrigo* after 1507 and until his death.

All the discussions among Americanists come entirely from their ignorance of the existence of a tribe of Indians who call themselves *Amerriques*, and who inhabit the Sierra *Amerrique* and the country rich in gold, between Lake Nicaragua and the Mosquito coast. They were confronted by such difficulties that it is a true chaos of dates, names, pretensions of all sorts, patriotic rivalries, and futile explanations unworthy of the characters and profound science of some of their number. If Varuhagen and d'Avezac, and more especially de Humboldt, had known the existence of the *Amerriques*, the Sierra *Amerrique*, and the gold region of the vicinities of Cariai and Carambaru, of the *lettera rarissima* of Colombo, they would have given a very different explanation, and instead of giving such weak and inadequate reasons as they did they would have thrown a great deal more light upon the matter than I have been able to do, for I have no pretention of being an Americanist, and even less a scholar, being only a practical travelling geologist.

RÉSUMÉ.

We have the following authentic facts:

(1) On the 30th of December, 1492, Vespucci wrote a letter from Sevilla, preserved at Mantova, in the Archives Gonzaga, signed *Amerigho* Vespucci, merchant florentino in Sybilia.

(2) In the last voyage of Cristoforo Colombo he staid from the 25th of September to the 5th of October, 1502, with his 150 companions, at Cariai (Rio Rama) and Carambaru (Rio Blewfields) among Indians wearing gold mirrors round their necks. The localities of the mouth of the Rios Rama and Blewfields are so near the country occupied now by the the *Amerrique* Indians and the Sierra *Amerrique*, and the proved existence there of an area of gold mines, altogether make it certain that Colombo and his 150 seamen heard the name *Amerrique* and used it at their return to designate some of the Indian tribes and a country rich in gold.

(3) First letter of Vespucci to Lorenzo Pier Francisco di Medicis, published at Paris, in 1504 or 1505, with the name *Albericus* Vesputius.

(4) Second letter of Vespucci to Pietro Soderini, published at Pescia, near Florence, in 1506. with the name *Amerigo* Vespucci.

*Examen critique vol. v, p. 175.

(5) Jean Basin, of St. Dié, uses the names of *Amerige* and *Americus* in translating from the French into Latin the second letter of Vespucci, entitled, *Quatuor navigationes*; and the Vosgian Gymnasium proposes in 1507 to name the New World *America*, in honor of its discoverer *Amerige* Vespucci.

(6) On the 9th of December, 1508, Vespucci wrote a letter to the Archbishop of Toledo, lately published in fac-simile by the Spanish Government, signed *Amerigo* Vespucci, *Piloto mor* (major).

(7) From 1508 until 1512, the date of his death, two or three signatures of Vespucci have been found in Spain, all written with the double *r* and without the letter *h*, *Amerigo* instead of *Amerigho* of 1492, showing a willful alteration in the spelling of his Christian name, after the christening of the New World in his honor, at St. Dié, in 1507.

(8) In 1515, Shoener says that the name *America* is generally used to designate the New World.

(9) The first map, with an authentic date, on which the name *America* has been found, is the map of Apianus, in the Polyhistor of Solinus in 1520.

(10) In 1533, twenty-one years after the death of Vespucci, Schoener, an astronomer and geographer of good standing and just reputation, accuses Vespucci of having written his name on charts; but he did not say how the name was spelled. The Americanist Henry Harrisse thinks that Shoener "had fastened on the memory of Vespuccius the odious charge of having artfully inserted the words *Terra di Amerigo* in charts which he has otherwise altered."* Vespucci may have inserted *Terra di Ameriques*, an exact name, very closely allied to the new spelling of his Christian name *Amerigo*, and which has led Schoener to make the accusation. The exact expressions used by Schoener are: "*Americus Vesputius maritima loca Indiæ superiores ex Hispaniis navigio ad occidentem perlustrans, eam partem quæ superioris Indiæ est, credidit esse Insulam quam a suo nomine vocari instituit*" (In: *Joanis Schoeneri Carolostadii opusculum geographicum ex Diversorum libris, etc., etc., Norica, Novembris xxxiii*).

No maps made by Vespucci have been found, although we know that he made some.

One thing is certain, it is that Vespucci did not discover the New World, and another fact is also certain, that *Amerique* is an indigenous name. From the central part of the continent, just about the middle, the name *Amerique* or *Amérique* in French or *America* in Latin extended first southward and then northward, until finally we have the *Three Americas*.

Geographically the name *Amerique* has never varied, the Latin name *America* and the French *Amérique* have always been spelled without any changes among the letters on all the maps and charts; while, on the contrary, the Christian name of Vespucci had varied from *Amerigho* to

* *Bibliotheca Americana Vetustissima*, p. 304.

Amerigo, according to his own signature, and has taken all the forms and combinations imaginable between Albericus and Morigo.

To conclude, I shall quote a sentence taken from the life of Louis Pasteur: "All new discoveries bring into the ideas generally used until then, a change which is accepted by some with joy, while others resist, because it deranges all their old habits." (*M. Pasteur, Histoire d'un savant*, etc., p. 341, Paris, 1883); which applies exactly to this case. Almost all Americans and all the Spaniards have accepted with joy the idea that the New World was not named for Vespucci, who has no claim whatever to such an honor, but that the beautiful name of *Amerrique* belongs to a tribe of Indians and to a range or sierra of the central part of the continent, discovered and first explored by Cristoforo Colombo. A few Americanists, disturbed in their old habit of proclaiming in books, in pamphlets, or in speeches, that the new continent has been called after Amerigo Vespucci, do not like it, for it is disagreeable to them to see all they have published or said replaced by something more rational and natural, of which they had not the smallest idea, or even thought of for one instant, and their resistance is natural enough. I expected it from the time I wrote my first paper on the *Origin of the Name America*, published in March, 1875, in *the Atlantic Monthly*; and nothing that has been said by a few critics and reviewers in the United States, in Italy, and in Germany has surprised me. But time will show who is right and I trust fully to the good sense of the people.

The name of the New World was taken from the mountain range and Indian tribe at the center of the continent, and brought into general use by the people who had been there, and the people will now see who has the correct view as to the origin of the name.

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