

With this view, he set sail from Porto Rico, and directed his course, as it is said, northward, near the Lucayo isles; and after having sailed to the twenty-sixth degree north latitude, and then, steering westward, to his no small joy he discovered——

*Fred.* The well?

*Fath.* No; but, on the contrary, an extensive and beautiful country, which we now know to be a part of the continent of North America, and to which Ponce gave the name of Florida; either because it bore a very flourishing aspect, or because the time of the year when he discovered it, that is, just before Easter, upon Palm Sunday, was called in Spain by that name. Thus did an important discovery originate in a ridiculous whim.

The attention of the Spaniards was now turned towards another part of the globe, with which they had hitherto been unacquainted. They had reason to believe that there existed a country in that hemisphere, where the rich empire of Mexico lies; but as yet no one had attempted to discover it. This attempt is now about to be made; and an astonishing man will soon appear upon the stage, whose name I have hitherto concealed from you.

*Some.*