

of the yet uncomprehended continent of the north, — the Mississippi and the St. Lawrence, — which at the west were so closely connected that tidal waves arising in Lake Michigan sometimes overflowed the dividing ridge. The early explorers of the Great Lakes are known to have passed, during the spring freshets, in their canoes from one valley to the other, by that route which enables the modern Chicago to discharge its sewage into the Gulf of Mexico instead of the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

The striking experiences of the Spaniards at the south served to draw their attention from a due examination of the north-



REINEL CHART, 1503.

[After the Sketch in Kretschmer's *Atlas*, ix. 2.]

ern shores of the Gulf of Mexico; so that Pineda in 1519, in finding a great river flowing from the north, which we now identify with the Mississippi, was not prompted to enter it in search of gold, "because it is too far from the tropics," as the Spanish cosmographer Ribero afterwards expressed it in a legend on his map of 1529. Moreover, this metal was not associated in their minds with such low regions as this river apparently drained; and the white and turbid flow of its waters well out into the gulf, as La Salle later noticed, seems to have raised no conception of the vast area of its tributary watershed. Almost two centuries were to pass before its channel was to be