

'Since, however, nothing certain is yet known, it seems best, in order to make sure concerning their expedition, to send two caravels on the track of this French fleet. One caravel should be sent to the islands of Cape Verde, to ascertain whether the fleet has passed that way; for some point out that they may intend to go to the river Plate or to the Amazon. This caravel could go and return quickly, and having learned they have not passed the Cape Verde islands, we shall be sure they have gone to Bacallaos.'

This memorandum having been sent to the Cardinal of Seville, he replied as follows:

TALAVERA, June 10, 1541.

'I have read two or three times the decision of the Councils of State and of the Indies with reference to the fleet which it is said France is sending to the Lories, and after carefully considering their lordships' deliberations, see nothing to add to them.

'I am, however, persuaded that the French are thinking neither of the river Plate nor of the Bahama Channel, where it would be no use for them to found colonies and put themselves in a position to prey upon our ships, since this would be breaking the truce between France and Spain, which all men ought reasonably to hope will still continue a few years.

'To me it seems that their motive is that they think from what they have learned that these provinces [of Canada, Hochelaga, and Saguenay] are rich in gold and silver, and they hope to do as we have done [in Mexico and Peru], but in my judgment they are making a mistake, for with the exception of the fisheries, this whole coast as far as Florida is utterly unproductive. In consequence they will waste their efforts, or at best return with the loss of most of their people and the greater portion of all they have taken from France.' ¹

In accordance with the memorandum of the Council of the Indies, two caravels were despatched in search of Cartier in the summer of 1541. That for the Cape Verde islands left the Guadalquivir on August 26, and a month later reached those islands, where it learned that four French ships had sailed west-south-west. Proceeding in the same direction, the caravel was forced by bad weather to take refuge in

¹ Buckingham Smith, *op. cit.*, 109-11; Baxter, *op. cit.*, 350-54.