

sider whether it would be well to send a caravel after the said fleet to see what it does, and to what region it goes, so that some intelligence may be had thereof, in order to take such steps as the occasion requires.' <sup>1</sup>

On June 26, 1541, the Cardinal of Toledo replied to this letter as follows:

'We saw the report which your Majesty caused to be sent to us respecting what has been learnt concerning the fleet which the King of France is sending to the Indies. Here all that your Majesty wrote upon the matter was discussed and debated not only with the Cardinal and the members of the Councils of State and of the Indies, but also with trustworthy persons of much experience in such matters; and especially with the Marques del Valle [Cortés]; and with their approval such resolutions were adopted as your Majesty will see in the memorandum drawn up by the members of the Council of the Indie, which will accompany this.' <sup>2</sup>

*Resolutions of the Council of State and of the Indies concerning what was presented to them relating to the Fleet sent out by France.*

'It is agreed that if this report is true, that the first land whither they went is distant 760 leagues from St. Malo in Brittany, where the fleet was fitted out, it can be no other land than that which is entered from Bacallaos, a land the Bretons claim to have discovered long ago, since to that region the distance is exactly 760 leagues, and there is no other land on the map on this side or beyond Florida which is that distance away. It is believed this must be the place, and by adding the other 600 leagues, which they say must be traversed beyond Newfoundland, the Bahama Channel is reached, which is the best position they could seize, on the outbreak of war, to inflict injury upon the vessels from the Indies, since most of these come through the said Bahama Channel. This indeed must be their main object in making a settlement upon that coast; for although the land is unproductive, this route is of the greatest importance for their purpose. If this is the case, it is clear they intend to colonise within your Majesty's line of demarcation.

<sup>1</sup> Simancas, *Estado, Castilla*, leg. 54, ff. 31-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, leg. 51, ff. 22-6.