

voyage, no allusion is made to Fuca or his straits. Had such a voyage as Fuca's actually been made, this second expedition would certainly have availed itself of the knowledge thus gained. Instead of doing so, the record of that voyage conclusively shows that the commander must have been utterly ignorant of Fuca and his alleged voyage; and this proves, also, that he could have had no secret institutions on the subject. In viewing the matter critically, it must be admitted that the evidences against the authenticity of the voyage, though entirely of a negative character, greatly outweigh the one circumstantial evidence in its favor—the fact that a passage much similar to the one described actually exists a few miles to the north of the location fixed in the narrative. Juan de Fuca's voyage was probably a myth.

The third and last mythical passage to receive popular credence and engage the attention of geographers and explorers for years was the River of Kings, the Rio de los Reyes of Admiral Fontè. Like the narratives of Maldonado and Fuca, this did not reach the public until many years had elapsed from the time assigned to the voyage, and this fact alone is almost conclusive evidence of its manufactured character. Such a voyage as any of these would have been made public soon after its completion, so eager were the learned men of the time to gain all the information possible on these subjects. It was natural for a person inventing such a tale to assign a date so far back that he need have no fear of a personal contradiction.

A magazine entitled *Monthly Miscellany, or Memoirs of the Curious*, was published in London in 1708, containing a long account of a voyage alleged to have been made in 1640, sixty-eight years previously, from the Pacific to the Atlantic and return, through a system of rivers crossing North America about the fifty-third parallel. The man who is credited with making this wonderful voyage is Admiral Pedro Bartolomè de Fontè, of the Spanish Marine. According to the account given in this magazine, Admiral Fontè was instructed by the Viceroy of Peru to explore the Pacific Coast of North America for a passage leading into the Atlantic, and to intercept some Boston vessels which the Viceroy had learned had sailed upon the same errand on the Atlantic Coast. He sailed from Callao in April, 1640, with four vessels. At Cape San Lucas he dispatched one of these to explore the Gulf of California, and with the remaining three continued up the coast. In latitude 53 degrees, after sailing a long distance among islands, which he christened the "Archipelago de Lazarus," he observed the mouth of a great river, which he decided to enter. One of his vessels was sent further up the coast, under the command of Captain Bernardo, while with the other two he ascended the stream, whose great proportions won from him the title of "Rio de los Reyes," or "River of Kings." This he followed in a northeasterly direction a long distance, finally reaching its source in an immense lake, which he named "Lake Belle." This was the country of a wealthy and civilized nation, whose chief town, on the south shore of the lake, was called Conasset, and who entertained the

strangers who had so unexpectedly come among them in a most hospitable manner. This lake was evidently on the summit of the divide between the waters of the two oceans, for flowing from it in an opposite direction from the river he had ascended was another large stream, which he called "Parmentier." Leaving his vessels at Conasset, he descended the Parmentier until he entered another lake, upon which he bestowed his own name, from which he passed through a narrow strait into the Atlantic Ocean. This last passage he named "Strait of Ronquillo," in honor of the captain of one of his vessels. Thus, through a continuous waterway of rivers and lakes, he had passed through the entire continent of North America. When that story was written the author little dreamed that in the latitude assigned to this wonderful passageway the continent was more than five thousand miles in width. Having entered the Atlantic the Admiral soon encountered the Boston vessel which it was feared had designs upon the Spanish possessions in the Pacific. The captain of the colonial craft was Nicholas Shapley, and on board was its owner, one Seymour Gibbons, whom Fontè described as "a fine gentleman, and major-general of the largest colony in New England, called Maltechussets." Fontè decided to treat these strangers as peaceful traders, and the representatives of these two nations indulged in a series of mutual entertainments which appear to have given the Admiral great satisfaction. He then returned to the Pacific by the route he had come, finding his vessels waiting for him in good condition in Lake Belle, the inhabitants of Conasset having refrained from molesting them. At the mouth of the River of Kings he was joined by Bernardo, who had an equally wonderful tale to relate. He, too, had discovered a great river, in latitude 61 degrees, and had ascended it to its source in a large lake. These he called "Rio de Haro" and "Lake Velasco." From the lake he ascended another stream in canoes as high as the seventy-ninth parallel, but observing the land "still trending north, and the ice rested on the land, he became satisfied "that there was no communication out of the Atlantic Sea by Davis' Strait; for the natives had conducted one of his seamen to the head of Davis' Strait, which terminated in a fresh lake, of about thirty miles in circumference, in the eightieth degree of north latitude; and there were prodigious mountains north of it." He therefore returned to the Pacific to rejoin his commander. Fontè was satisfied from the report that the Straits of Anian did not exist, and returned to Peru to report that fact and the wonderful river route he had discovered through the continent.

This whole story is utterly absurd, in the light of our present knowledge of geography, but was far from being so at the time it was promulgated. Yet it contains enough inconsistencies and palpable errors to have even then condemned it in the eyes of a critical reader. The statement that in 1640, only ten years after Boston was founded, the people of that struggling colony were searching for the Straits of Anian is too improbable for belief. This English historian should have known, also,