

the capital, situated three hundred toises below, in a valley luxuriantly planted with coffee and European fruit-trees. Travellers are accustomed to halt near a fine spring, known by the name of Fuente de Sanchorquiz, which flows down from the Sierra on sloping strata of gneiss. I found its temperature 16.4° ; which, for an elevation of seven hundred and twenty-six toises, is considerably cool, and it would appear much cooler to those who drink its limped water, if, instead of gushing out between La Cumbre and the temperate valley of Caracas, it were found on the descent towards La Guayra. But at this descent on the northern side of the mountain, the rock, by an uncommon exception in this country, does not dip to north-west, but to south-east, which prevents the subterranean waters from forming springs there.

We continued to descend from the small ravine of Sanchorquiz to la Cruz de la Guayra, a cross erected on an open spot, six hundred and thirty-two toises high, and thence (entering by the custom-house and the quarter of the Pastora) to the city of Caracas. On the south side of the mountain of Avila, the gneiss presents several geognostical phenomena worthy of the attention of travellers. It is traversed by veins of quartz, containing cannulated and often articulated prisms of rutile titanite two or three lines in diameter. In the fissures of the quartz we find, on breaking it, very thin crystals, which crossing each other form a kind of network. Sometimes the red schorl occurs only in dendritic crystals of a bright red.* The gneiss of the valley of Caracas is characterized by the red and green garnets it contains; they however disappear when the rock passes into mica-slate. This same phenomenon has been remarked by Von Buch in Sweden; but in the temperate parts of Europe garnets are in general contained in serpentine and mica-slates, not in gneiss. In the walls which enclose the gardens of Caracas, constructed partly of fragments of gneiss, we find garnets of a very fine red, a little transparent, and very difficult to detach. The gneiss near the Cross of La Guayra, half a league from Caracas, presented also vestiges of

* Especially below the Cross of La Guayra, at 594 toises of absolute elevation.