

the volcano of Cotopaxi is a cone, more than one thousand eight hundred toises above the basin of Honda, and it rises from a table-land, the elevation of which is more than one thousand five hundred toises above the valley of the Magdalena. In all the colossal mountains of Quito, of the province of los Pastos, and of Popayan, crevices and valleys without number intervene. It cannot be admitted, under these circumstances, that the noise was transmitted through the air, or over the surface of the globe, and that it came from the point at which the cone and crater of Cotopaxi are situated. It appears probable, that the more elevated part of the kingdom of Quito and the neighbouring Cordilleras, far from being a group of distinct volcanoes, constitute a single swollen mass, an enormous volcanic wall, stretching from south to north, and the crest of which presents a superficies of more than six hundred square leagues. Cotopaxi, Tunguragua, Antisana, and Pichincha, are on this same raised ground. They have different names, but they are merely separate summits of the same volcanic mass. The fire issues sometimes from one, sometimes from another of these summits. The obstructed craters appear to be extinguished volcanos; but we may presume, that, while Cotopaxi or Tunguragua have only one or two eruptions in the course of a century, the fire is not less continually active under the town of Quito, under Pichincha and Imbabura.

Advancing northward we find, between the volcano of Cotopaxi and the town of Honda, two other systems of volcanic mountains, those of los Pastos and of Popayan. The connection between these systems was manifested in the Andes by a phenomenon which I have already had occasion to notice, in speaking of the last destruction of Cumana. In the month of November 1796 a thick column of smoke began to issue from the volcano of Pasto, west of the town of that name, and near the valley of Rio Guaytara. The mouths of the volcano are lateral, and situated on its western declivity, yet during three successive months the column of smoke rose so much higher than the ridge of the mountain that it was constantly visible to the inhabitants of the town of Pasto. They described to us their astonishment when, on the 4th of February, 1797, they observed the