

health of the inhabitants, from cape Codera as far as the lake of Maracaybo.

Among the rivers which descend north-east toward the coast of Porto Cabello, and La Punta de Hicacos, the most remarkable are those of Tocuyo, Aroa, and Yaracuy. Were it not for the miasmata which infect the atmosphere, the valleys of Aroa and of Yaracuy would perhaps be more populous than those of Aragua. Navigable rivers would even give the former the advantage of facilitating the exportation of their own crops of sugar and cacao, and that of the productions of the neighbouring lands; as the wheat of Quibor, the cattle of Monai, and the copper of Aroa. The mines from which this copper is extracted, are in a lateral valley, opening into that of Aroa; and which is less hot, and less unhealthy, than the ravines nearer the sea. In the latter the Indians have their gold-washings, and the soil conceals rich copper-ores, which no one has yet attempted to extract. The ancient mines of Aroa, after having been long neglected, have been wrought anew by the care of Don Antonio Henriquez, whom we met at San Fernando on the borders of the Apure. The total produce of metallic copper is twelve or fifteen hundred quintals a year. This copper, known at Cadiz by the name of Caracas copper, is of excellent quality. It is even preferred to that of Sweden, and of Coquimbo in Chile. Part of the copper of Aroa is employed for making bells, which are cast on the spot. Some ores of silver have been recently discovered between Aroa and Nirgua, near Guanita, in the mountain of San Pablo. Grains of gold are found in all the mountainous lands between the Rio Yaracuy, the town of San Felipe, Nirgua, and Barquesimeto; particularly in the Rio de Santa Cruz, in which the Indian gold-gatherers have sometimes found lumps of the value of four or five piastres. Do the neighbouring rocks of mica-slate and gneiss contain veins? or is the gold disseminated here, as in the granites of Guadarama in Spain, and of the Fichtelberg in Franconia, throughout the whole mass of the rock? Possibly the waters, in filtering through it, bring together the disseminated grains of gold; in which case every attempt to work the rock would be useless. In the Savana de la Miel, near the town of Barquesimeto, a shaft has been sunk in a black shining slate resembling