

by the Guaricoto Indians on the left bank of the Orinoco, and then we advanced straight toward the south. The river is so broad that the mountains of Encaramada appear to rise from the water, as if seen above the horizon of the sea. They form a continued chain from east to west. These mountains are composed of enormous blocks of granite, cleft and piled one upon another. Their division into blocks is the effect of decomposition. What contributes above all to embellish the scene at Encaramada is the luxuriance of vegetation that covers the sides of the rocks, leaving bare only their rounded summits. They look like ancient ruins rising in the midst of a forest. The mountain immediately at the back of the Mission, the *Tepupano** of the Tamanac Indians, is terminated by three enormous granitic cylinders, two of which are inclined, while the third, though worn at its base, and more than eighty feet high, has preserved a vertical position. This rock, which calls to mind the form of the *Schnarcher* in the Hartz mountains, or that of the *Organs* of Actopan in Mexico,† composed formerly a part of the rounded summit of the mountain. In every climate, unstratified granite separates by decomposition into blocks of prismatic, cylindrical, or columnar figures.

Opposite the shore of the Guaricotos, we drew near another heap of rocks, which is very low, and three or four toises long. It rises in the midst of the plain, and has less resemblance to a tumulus than to those masses of granitic stone, which in North Holland and Germany bear the name of *hünenbette*, beds (or tombs) of heroes. The shore, at this part of the Orinoco, is no longer of pure and quartzose sand; but is composed of clay and spangles of mica, deposited in very thin strata, and generally at an inclination of forty or fifty degrees. It looks like decomposed mica-slate. This change in the geological configuration of the shore extends

* *Tepu-pano*, 'place of stones,' in which we recognize *tepu* 'stone, rock,' as in *tepu-iri* 'mountain.' We here perceive that Lesgian Oigour-Tartar root *tep* 'stone' (found in America among the Americans, in *teptl*; among the Caribs, in *tebou*; among the Tamanacs, in *tepuiri*); a striking analogy between the languages of Caucasus and Upper Asia and those of the banks of the Orinoco.

† In Captain Tuckey's Voyage on the river Congo, we find represented a granitic rock, *Taddi Enzazi*, which bears a striking resemblance to the mountain of Encaramada.