

Nile,\* "that they swarm like worms in the shallow waters of the river, and in the shelter of uninhabited islands."

On the 6th of April, whilst continuing to ascend the Orinoco, first southward and then to south-west, we perceived the southern side of the *Serrania*, or chain of the mountains of Encaramada. The part nearest the river is only one hundred and forty or one hundred and sixty toises high; but from its abrupt declivities, its situation in the midst of a savannah, and its rocky summits, cut into shapeless prisms, the *Serrania* appears singularly elevated. Its greatest breadth is only three leagues. According to information given me by the Indians of the Pareka nation, it is considerably wider toward the east. The summits of Encaramada form the northernmost link of a group of mountains which border the right bank of the Orinoco, between the latitudes of  $5^{\circ}$  and  $7^{\circ} 30'$  from the mouth of the Rio Zama to that of the Cabullare. The different links into which this group is divided are separated by little grassy plains. They do not preserve a direction perfectly parallel to each other; for the most northern stretch from west to east, and the most southern from north-west to south-east. This change of direction sufficiently explains the increase of breadth observed in the Cordillera of Parime towards the east, between the sources of the Orinoco and of the Rio Paruspa. On penetrating beyond the great cataracts of Atures and of Maypures, we shall see seven principal links, those of Encaramada or Sacuina, of Chaviripa, of Baraguan, of Carichana, of Uniama, of Calitamini, and of Sipapo, successively appear. This sketch may serve to give a general idea of the geological configuration of the ground. We recognize everywhere on the globe a tendency toward regular forms, in those mountains that appear the most irregularly grouped. Every link appears, in a transverse section, like a distinct summit, to those who navigate the Orinoco; but this division is merely in appearance. The regularity in the direction and separation of the links seems to diminish in proportion as we advance towards the east. The mountains of Encaramada join those of Mato, which give birth to the Rio Asiveru or Cuchivero; those of Chaviripe are prolonged by the granite chain of the Corosal, of Amoco, and

\* Description de l'Egypte, translated by De Sacy.