

between the five great tributary streams of the Orinoco and the Amazon; the Guaviare, the Inirida, the Rio Negro, the Caqueta or Hyapura, and the Putumayo or Iza.

The Meta, the Guaviare, the Caqueta, and the Putumayo, are the only great rivers that rise immediately from the eastern declivity of the Andes of Santa Fé, Popayan, and Pasto. The Vichada, the Zama, the Inirida, the Rio Negro, the Uaupe, and the Apoporis, which are marked in our maps as extending westward as far as the mountains, take rise at a great distance from them, either in the savannahs between the Meta and the Guaviare, or in the mountainous country which, according to the information given me by the natives, begins at four or five days' journey westward of the missions of Javita and Maroa, and extends through the Sierra Tuhuny, beyond the Xiè, towards the banks of the Issana.

It is remarkable that this ridge of the Cordilleras, which contains the sources of so many majestic rivers, (the Meta, the Guaviare, the Caqueta, and the Putumayo,) is as little covered with snow as the mountains of Abyssinia from which flow the waters of the Blue Nile; but, on the contrary, on going up the tributary streams which furrow the plains, a volcano is found still in activity, before you reach the Cordillera of the Andes. This phenomenon was discovered by the Franciscan monks, who go down from Ceja by the Rio Fragua to Caqueta. A solitary hill, emitting smoke night and day, is found on the north-east of the mission of Santa Rosa, and west of the Puerto del Pescado. This is the effect of a lateral action of the volcanos of Popayan and Pasto; as Guacamayo and Sangay, situated also at the foot of the eastern declivity of the Andes, are the effect of a lateral action produced by the system of the volcanos of Quito. After having closely inspected the banks of the Orinoco and the Rio Negro, where the granite everywhere pierces the soil; when we reflect on the total absence of volcanos in Brazil, Guiana, on the coast of Venezuela, and perhaps in all that part of the continent lying eastward of the Andes; we contemplate with interest the three burning volcanos situated near the sources of the Caqueta, the Napo, and the Rio de Macas or Morona.

The little group of mountains with which we became ac-