

The present inhabitants of those countries, particularly in the hot region, so little comprehend the possibility of cutting hard stones, (the emerald, jade, compact feldspar and rock-crystal,) that they imagine the green stone is soft when taken out of the earth, and that it hardens after having been moulded by the hand.

The natural soil of the Amazon-stone is not in the valley of the river Amazon. It does not derive its name from the river, but like the river itself, the stone has been named after a nation of warlike women, whom Father Acunha, and Oviedo, in his letter to cardinal Bembo, compare to the Amazons of the ancient world. What we see in our cabinets under the false denomination of Amazon-stone, is neither jade, nor compact feldspar, but a common feldspar of an apple-green colour, that comes from the Ural mountains and on lake Onega in Russia, but which I never saw in the granitic mountains of Guiana. Sometimes also this very rare and hard Amazon-stone is confounded with the hatchet-nephrite (*beilstein*)* of Werner, which has much less tenacity. The substance which I obtained from the hands of the Indians, belongs to the *saussurite*,† to the real jade, which resembles compact feldspar, and which forms one of the constituent parts of the *verde de Corsica*, or *gabbro*.‡ It takes a fine polish, and passes from apple-green to emerald-green; it is translucent at the edges, extremely tenacious, and in a high degree sonorous. These Amazon stones were formerly cut by the natives into very thin plates, perforated at the centre, and suspended by a thread, and these plates yield an almost metallic sound if struck by another hard body.|| This fact confirms the connection which we find, notwithstanding the difference of fracture and of specific gravity between the *saussurite* and the siliceous basis of the *porphyrschiefer*, which is the *phonolite* (*klingstein*). I have

* Punamustein (jade axinien). The stone hatchets found in America, for instance in Mexico, are not of *beilstein*, but of compact feldspar.

† Jade of Saussure, according to the system of Brongniart; tenacious jade, and compact tenacious feldspar of Haüy; some varieties of the *variolithe* of Werner.

‡ Euphotide of Haüy, or *schillerfels* of Raumer.

|| M. Brongniart, to whom I showed these plates on my return to Europe, very justly compared these jades of Parime to the sonorous stones employed by the Chinese in their musical instruments called *king*.