thrice exceeding the height of Mont Blanc, belong only to the longitudinal chain which bounds the basin of the Pacific Ocean, from 55° south to 68° north latitude, that is to say, the Cordillera of the Andes. The only insulated group that can be compared with the snowy summits of the equinoctial Andes, and which attains the height of nearly 3000 toises, is the Sierra de Santa Marta; it is not situated on the east of the Cordilleras, but between the prolongation of two of their branches, those of Merida and Veragua. The Cordilleras, where they bound the Caribbean Sea, in that part which we designate by the name of Coast Chain of Venezuela, do not attain the extraordinary height (2500 toises) which they reach in their prolongation towards Chita and Merida. Considering separately the groups of the east, those of the shore of Venezuela, of the Parime, and Brazil, we see their height diminish from north to south. The highest summits of each group are the Silla de Caracas (1350 toises), the peak of Duida (1300 toises), the Itacolumi and the Itambe * (900 toises). But, as I have elsewhere observed, it would be erroneous to judge the height of a chain of mountains solely from that of the most lofty summits. The peak of the Himalayas, accurately measured, is 676 toises higher than Chimborazo; Chimborazo is 900 toises higher than Mont Blanc; and Mont Blanc 653 toises higher than the peak of Nethou.‡ These differences do not furnish the relative average heights of the Himalayas, the Andes, the Alps and the Pyrenees, that is, the height of the back of the mountains, on which arise the peaks, needles, pyramids, or rounded domes. It is that part of the back where passes are made, which furnishes a precise measure of the minimum of the height of the great chains. In comparing the whole of my measures with those of Moorcroft, Webb, Hodgson, Saussure, and Ramond, I estimate the average height of the top of the Himalayas, between the

* According to the measure of MM. Spix and Martins, the Itambe de Villa de Principe is 5590 feet high.

† The Peak Iewahir, lat. 30° 22′ 19″; long. 77° 35′ 7″ east of Paris. Height 4026 toises, according to MM. Hodgson and Herbert.

‡ This peak, called also peak of Anethou or Malahita, or eastern peak of Maladetta, is the highest summit of the Pyrenees. It rises 1787 toises, and consequently exceeds Mont Perdu by 40 toises.