

New Grenada, has doubtless contributed to foster those illusions. It cannot be doubted that the gold-washings of New Grenada furnished, in the last years of public tranquillity, more than 18,000 marks of gold; that Choco and Barbacoa supply platinum in abundance; the valley of Santa Rosa, in the province of Antioquia, the Andes of Quindiu and Gauzum, near Cuença, yield sulphuretted mercury; the table-land of Bogota (near Zipaquira and Canoas), fossil-salt and pit-coal; but even in New Grenada, subterranean labours, on the silver and gold veins, have hitherto been very rare. I am far, however, from wishing to discourage the miners of those countries: I merely conceive that for the purpose of proving to the old world the political importance of Venezuela, the amazing territorial wealth of which is founded on agriculture and the produce of pastoral life, it is not necessary to describe as realities, or as the acquisitions of industry, what is, as yet, founded solely on hopes and probabilities, more or less uncertain. The republic of Columbia also possesses on its coast, on the island of Marguerita, on the Rio Hacha, and in the gulf of Panama, pearl fisheries of ancient celebrity. In the present state of things, however, fishing for these pearls is an object of as little importance as the exportation of the metals of Venezuela. The existence of metallic veins on several points of the coast cannot be doubted. Mines of gold and silver were worked at the beginning of the conquest at Buria, near Barquesimeto, in the province of Los Mariches, at Baruta, on the south of Caracas, and at Real de Santa Barbara, near the Villa de Cura. Grains of gold are found in the whole mountainous territory between Rio Yaracuy, the Villa de San Felipe and Nirgua, as well as between Guigue and Los Moros de San Juan. M. Bonpland and myself, during our long journey, saw nothing in the gneiss granite of Spanish Guiana to confirm the old faith in the metallic wealth of that district; yet it seems certain, from several historical notices, that there exist two groups of auriferous alluvial land; one between the sources of the Rio Negro, the Uaupes and the Iquiare; the other between the sources of the Essequibo, the Caroni, and the Rupunuri. Hitherto only one working is found in Venezuela, that of Aroa: it fur-