

its name from the Turkish word *altor* or *altyn*, in the same manner the Cordilleras may have been termed "Copper-country," or *Anti-suyu*, on account of the abundance of that metal, which the Peruvians employed for their tools. The Inca Garcilasso, who was the son of a Peruvian princess, and who wrote the history of his native country in the first years of the conquest, gives no etymology of the name of the Andes. He only opposes *Anti-suyu*, or the region of summits covered with eternal snow (*ritiseca*), to the plains or *Yuncas*, that is, to the lower region of Peru. The etymology of the name of the largest mountain chain of the globe cannot be devoid of interest to the mineralogic geographer.

The structure of the Cordillera of the Andes, that is, its division into several chains nearly parallel, which are again joined by knots of mountains, is very remarkable. On our maps this structure is indicated but imperfectly; and what La Condamine and Bouguer merely guessed, during their long visit to the table-land of Quito, has been generalized and ill-interpreted by those who have described the whole chain according to the type of the equatorial Andes. The following is the most accurate information I could collect by my own researches, and an active correspondence of twenty years with the inhabitants of Spanish America. The group of islands called Tierra del Fuego, in which the chain of the Andes begins, is a plain extending from Cape Espiritu Santo as far as the canal of San Sebastian. The country on the west of this canal, between Cape San Valentino and Cape Pilaes, is bristled with granitic mountains covered (from the Morro de San Agueda to Cabo Redondo) with calcareous shells. Navigators have greatly exaggerated the height of the mountains of Tierra del Fuego, among which there appears to be a volcano still burning. M. de Churruca found the height of the western peak of Cape Pilaes (lat. 52° 45' south) only 218 toises; even Cape Horn is probably not more than 500 toises* high. The plain extends on the northern shore of the Straits of Magellan, from the Virgin's Cape to Cabo Negro;

* It is very distinctly seen at the distance of 60 miles, which, without calculating the effects of terrestrial refraction, would give it a height of 498 toises.