

and Chillo are situated eastward of those hills; and those of Quito, Iñaquito, and Turubamba lie westward. The equator crosses the summit of the Nevado de Cayambe and the valley of Quito, in the village of San Antonio de Lulumbamba. When we consider the small mass of the knot of Assuy, and above all, of that of Chisinche, we are inclined to regard the three basins of Cuenca, Hambato, and Quito, as one valley (from the Paramo de Sarar to the Villa de Ibarra) 73 sea leagues long, from 4 to 5 leagues broad, having a general direction N. 8° E., and divided by two transversal dykes one between Alausi and Cuenca (2° 27' south latitude), and the other between Machache and Tambillo (0° 40'). Nowhere in the Cordillera of the Andes are there more colossal mountains heaped together, than on the east and west of this vast basin of the province of Quito, one degree and a half south, and a quarter of a degree north of the equator. This basin, which, next to the basin of Titicaca, is the centre of the most ancient native civilization, touches, southward, the knot of the mountains of Loxa, and northward the table-land of the province of Los Pastos.

In this province, a little beyond the villa of Ibarra, between the snowy summits of Cotocache and Imbabura, the two Cordilleras of Quito unite, and form one mass, extending to Meneses and Voisaco, from 0° 21' north lat. to 1° 13'. I call this mass, on which are situated the volcanoes of Cumbal and Chiles, the knot of the mountains of Los Pastos, from the name of the province that forms the centre. The volcano of Pasto, the last eruption of which took place in the year 1727, is on the south of Yenoj, near the northern limit of this group, of which the inhabited table-lands are more than 1600 toises above sea-level. It is the Thibet of the equinoctial regions of the New World.

On the north of the town of Pasto (lat. 1° 13' N.; long. 79° 41'), the Andes again divide into two branches, and surround the table-land of Mamendoy and Almaguer. The eastern Cordillera contains the Sienega of Sebondoy (an alpine lake which gives birth to the Putumayo), the sources of the Jupura or Caqueta, and the Paramos of Aponte and Iscanse. The western Cordillera, that of Mamacondy, called in the country Cordillera de la Costa, on account of its proximity to the shore of the Pacific, is broken by the great