

Sacoboni to north-west, and divides the waters between the Pacific and the Caribbean Sea; they flow from the northern declivity into the Rio Cauca, and from the southern declivity, into the Rio de Patias.

The tripartition of the Andes (N. lat. $1\frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$ — $2\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$) resembles that which takes place at the source of the Amazon in the knot of the mountains of Huanuco and Pasco (lat. 11° S.); but the most western of the three chains that bound the basins of the Amazon and the Huallaga, is the loftiest; while that of Choco, or the shore, is the least elevated of the three chains of New Grenada. Ignorance of this tripartition of the Andes in that part of South America near the Rio Atrato and the isthmus of Panama, has led to many erroneous opinions respecting the possibility of a canal that should connect the two seas.

The eastern chain of the Andes of New Grenada* preserves its parallelism during some time with the two other chains, those of Quindiu and Choco; but beyond Tunja (lat. $5\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$) it inclines more towards the north-east, passing somewhat abruptly from the direction N. 25° E. to that of N. 45° E. It is like a vein that changes its direction; and it rejoins the coast after being greatly enlarged by the grouping of the snowy mountains of Merida. The tripartition of the Cordilleras, and above all, the spreading of their branches, have a vast influence on the prosperity of the nations of New Grenada. The diversity of the superposed table-lands and climates varies the agricultural productions as well as the character of the inhabitants. It gives activity to the exchange of productions, and renews over a vast surface, north of the equator, the picture of the sultry vallies and cool and temperate plains of Peru. It is also worthy of remark that, by the separation of one of the branches of the Cordilleras of Cundinamarca, and by the deviation of the chain of Bogota towards the north-east, the colossal group of the mountains of Merida is enclosed in the territory of the ancient Capitania-general of Venezuela, and that the continuity of the same mountainous land from Pamplona to Barquesimeto and Nirgua may be said to have facilitated the political union of the Columbian territory. As long as

* I employ a systematic denomination, for the name of the Andes is unknown in the countries situated north of the equator.