

which runs along the coast, are linked by a ridge or knot of mountains known by the names of Altos de las Cocuyzas (845 toises) and the Higuerote (835 toises between Los Teques and La Victoria) in lon. $69^{\circ} 30'$ and $69^{\circ} 50'$. On the west of this ridge lies the enclosed basin* of the lake of Valencia or the Valles de Aragua; and on the east, the basin of Caracas and of the Rio Tuy. The bottom of the first-mentioned basins is between 220 and 250 toises high; the bottom of the latter is 460 toises above the level of the Caribbean Sea. It follows from these measures, that the most western of the two longitudinal vallies enclosed by the littoral Cordillera is the deepest; while in the plains near the Apure and the Orinoco, the declivity is from west to east; but we must not forget that the peculiar disposition of the bottom of the two basins, which are bounded by two parallel chains, is a local phenomenon altogether separate from the causes on which the general structure of the country depends. The eastern basin of the Cordillera of Venezuela is not shut up like the basin of Valencia. It is in the knot of the mountains of Las Cocuyzas, and of Higuerote, that the Serrania de los Teques and Oripoto, stretching eastward, form two valleys, those of the Rio Guayre and Rio Tuy; the former contains the town of Caracas, and both unite below the Caurimare. The Rio Tuy runs through the rest of the basin, from west to east, as far as its mouth, which is situated on the north of the mountains of Panaguire.

Cape Codera seems to terminate the northern range of the littoral mountains of Venezuela, but this termination is only apparent. The coast forms a vast nook, thirty-five sea leagues in length, at the bottom of which is the mouth of the Rio Unare, and the road of Nueva Barcelona. Stretching first from west to east, in the parallel of $10^{\circ} 37'$, this

* This basin contains a small system of inland rivers, which do not communicate with the ocean. The southern chain of the littoral Cordillera of Venezuela is so depressed on the south-west, that the Rio Paó is separated from the tributary streams of the lake of Tacarigua or Valencia. Towards the east, the Rio Tuy, which takes its rise on the western declivity of the knot of mountains of Las Cocuyzas, appears at first to empty itself into the vallies of Aragua; but hills of calcareous tufa, forming a ridge between Consejo and Victoria, force it to take its course south-east.