

The system of the mountains of Parime separates the plains of the Lower Orinoco from those of the Rio Negro and the Amazon; it occupies a territory of trapezoidal form, comprehended between the parallels of 3° and 8° , and the meridians of 61° and $70\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$. I here indicate only the elements of the loftiest group, for we shall soon see that towards south-east, the mountainous country, in lowering, draws near the equator, as well as to French and Portuguese Guiana. The Sierra Parime extends most in the direction N. 85° W., and the partial chains into which it separates on the westward generally follow the same direction. It is less a Cordillera or a continuous chain in the sense given to those denominations when applied to the Andes and Caucasus, than an irregular grouping of mountains separated the one from the other by plains and savannahs. I visited the northern, western, and southern parts of the Sierra Parime, which is remarkable by its position and its extent of more than 25,000 square leagues. From the confluence of the Apure, as far as the delta of the Orinoco, it is uniformly three or four leagues removed from the right bank of the great river; only some rocks of gneiss-granite, amphibolic slate, and greenstone advance as far as the bed of the Orinoco, and create the rapids of Torno and of La Boca del Infierno.* I shall name successively, from N.N.E. to S.S.W., the different chains seen by M. Bonpland and myself as we approached the equator and the river Amazon. 1st. The most northern chain of the whole system of the mountains of Parime, appeared to us to be that which stretches (lat. $7^{\circ} 50'$) from the Rio Arui, in the meridian of the rapids of Camiseta, at the back of the town of Angostura, towards the great cataracts of the Rio Carony and the sources of the Imataca. In the missions of the Catalonian Capuchins, this chain, which is not 300 toises high, separates the tributary streams of the Orinoco and those of the Rio Cuyuni, between the town of Upata, Cupapui, and Santa Marta. Westward of the meridian of the rapids of Camiseta (long.

* To this series of advanced rocks also belong those which pierce the soil between the Rio Aquire and the Rio Barima; the granitic and amphibolic rocks of the Vieja Guayana and of the town of Angostura; the Cerro de Mono on the south-east of Maitaco or Real Corono; the Cerro of Taramuto near the Alta Gracia, &c.