

The western shore of this basin is formed by the chain of the Andes, from the knot of the mountains of Huanuco to the sources of the Magdalena. It is enlarged by the spurs of the the Rio Beni,* rich in gem-salt, and composed of several ranges of hills (lat. $8^{\circ} 11'$ south) which advance into the plains on the eastern bank of the Paro. These hills are transformed on our maps into Upper Cordilleras and Andes of Cuchao. Towards the north, the basin of the Amazon, of which the area (244,000 square leagues) is only one-sixth less than the area of all Europe, rises in a gentle slope towards the Sierra Parime. At 68° of west longitude the elevated part of this Sierra terminates at $3\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ north latitude. The group of little mountains surrounding the source of the Rio Negro, the Inirida and the Xiè (lat. 2°) the scattered rocks between the Atabapo and the Cassiquiare, appear like groups of islands and rocks in the middle of the plain. Some of those rocks are covered with signs or symbolical sculpture. Nations, very different from those who now inhabit the banks of the Cassiquiare, penetrated into the savannahs; and the zone of painted rocks, extending more than 150 leagues in breadth, bears traces of ancient civilization. On the east of the sporadic groups of rocks (between the meridian of the bifurcation of Orinoco and that of the confluence of the Essequibo with the Rupunuri), the lofty mountains of the Parime commence only in 3° north latitude; where the plains of the Amazon terminate.

The limits of the plains of the Amazon are still less known towards the south than towards the north. The mountains that exceed 400 toises of absolute height do not appear to extend in Brazil northward of the parallels 14° or 15° of south latitude, and west of the meridian of 52° ; but it is not known how far the mountainous country extends, if we may call by that name a territory bristled with hills of one hundred or two hundred toises high. Between the Rio dos

* The real name of this great river, respecting the course of which geographers have been so long divided, is Uchaparú, probably "water (para) of Ucha"; Peni also signifies 'river' or 'water;' for the language of the Maypures has very many analogies with that of the Moxos; and *veni* (*oueni*) signifies 'water' in Maypure, as *una* in Moxo. Perhaps the river retained the name of Maypure, after the Indians who spoke that language had emigrated northward in the direction of the banks of the Orinoco.