

it is bounded by plains on the left bank, from the Cassiquiare to the mouth of the Atabapo, and flows in a basin which, geologically speaking, according to one great division of the surface of South America into three basins, we have called the basin of the Rio Negro and the Amazon. The low regions, which are bounded by the southern and northern declivities of the Parime and Brazil mountains, and which the geologist ought to mark by one name, contain, according to the no less precise language of hydrography, two basins of rivers, those of the Upper Orinoco and the Amazon, separated by a ridge that runs from Javita towards Esmeralda. From these considerations it results, that a geological basin (*sit venia verbo*) may have several recipients, and several emissaries, divided by small ridges almost imperceptible; it may at the same time contain waters that flow to the sea by different furrows independent of each other, and the systems of inland rivers flowing into lakes more or less charged with saline matter. A basin of a river, or hydrographic basin, has but one recipient, one emissary; if, by a bifurcation, it gives a part of its waters to another hydrographic basin, it is because the bed of the river, or the principal recipient, approaches so near the banks of the basin or the ridge of partition that the ridge partly crosses it.

The distribution of the inequalities of the surface of the globe does not present any strongly marked limits between the mountainous country and the low regions, or geologic basins. Even where real chains of mountains rise like rocky dykes issuing from a crevice, spurs more or less considerable, seem to indicate a lateral upheaving. While I admit the difficulty of properly defining the groups of mountains and the basins or continuous plains, I have attempted to calculate their surfaces according to the statements contained in the preceding sheets.

SOUTH AMERICA.

I. MOUNTAINOUS PART:

	Square Marine Leagues
Andes	58,900
Littoral Chain of Venezuela.....	1,900
Sierra Nevada de Merida	200
Group of the Parime	25,800
System of the Brazil mountains	27,600
	114,400