

II. PLAINS :	Square Marine Leagues.
Llanos of the Lower Orinoco, the Meta, and the Guaviare	29,000
Plains of the Amazon	260,400
Pampas of Rio de la Plata, and Patagonia.....	135,200
Plains between the eastern chain of the Andes of Cundinamarca and the chain of Choco	12,300
Plains of the shore, on the west of the Andes	20,000
	<hr/> 456,900

The whole surface of South America contains 571,300 square leagues (20 to a degree), and the proportion of the mountainous country to the region of the plains is as 1 to 3.9. The latter region, on the east of the Andes, comprises more than 424,600 square leagues, half of which consists of savannahs; that is to say, it is covered with gramina.

SECTION II.

General Partition of ground—Direction and inclination of the strata—
Relative height of the formations above the level of the Ocean.

IN the preceding section we have examined the inequalities of the surface of the soil, that is to say, the general structure of the mountains, and the form of the basins rising between those variously grouped mountains. These mountains are sometimes longitudinal, running in narrow bands or chains, similar to the veins that preserve their directions at great distances, as the Andes, the littoral chain of Venezuela, the Serra do Mar of Brazil, and the Alleghanies of the United States. Sometimes they are in masses with irregular forms, in which upheavings seem to have taken place as on a labyrinth of crevices or a heap of veins, as for example in the Sierra Parime and the Serra dos Vertentes. These modes of formation are linked with a geognostic hypothesis, which has at least the recommendation of being founded on facts observed in remote times, and which strongly characterize the chains and groups of mountains. Considerations on the aspect of a country are independent of those which indicate the nature of the soil, the heterogeneity of matter, the superposition of rocks, and the direction and inclination of strata.