

lower elevations situated more to the eastward. These ranges are the sources of numerous rivers, some of which have a northerly course, such as the Atrato, Cauca, and the great Magdalena, which debouch into the Caribbean Sea, and the river Zulia, which empties itself into the Lake of Maracaybo. Some of the very finest species yet discovered were collected near the town of Pamplona, which is situated on the banks of the last-mentioned river. The country round Antioquia, situated on the lower, and Popayan on the upper part of the Cauca, appear also to be very rich in natural productions, and particularly so in Humming-Birds. It is, however, on the paramos which surround Bogota, and on the luxuriantly-clad sides of the valleys through which flows the main stream of the Magdalena, that the greatest number of species have been discovered. Bogota, the capital of this district, has for a long time been the centre whence collections have been transmitted to Europe and the United States. The Indians have been initiated into the modes of preparing these lovely objects; and as gain and excitement have thus gone hand in hand, this part of America may be said to have been thoroughly ransacked, and I expect that but few novelties remain to be discovered therein. Now as most of the productions that have yet reached us from Antioquia and Pamplona, two districts lying in about the same parallel of latitude on either side the great valley of the Magdalena, are quite distinct and different from those of Bogota, we may safely infer that, if they were as closely searched, many new species would be found. The country of the Caraccas and Cumana have Humming-Birds which partake less of the characters of the mountain species, and assimilate more closely to those of the Guianas and Northern Brazil. It will be seen, I think, from what I have here said, that the species of Humming-Birds increase in numbers as we proceed towards the equator; that most of them are confined to countries having peculiar physical characters; and that those of New Granada differ considerably from the Humming-Birds of Veragua, Costa Rica, and Guatemala. I have observed an equally marked difference in the species which inhabit the high lands giving rise to the rivers which run eastward; I mean the many tributaries of the Napo, the Caqueta or Japura, and the Amazon.

From the eastern side of Chimborazo flow many streams which ultimately find their way into the Amazon; and however numerous the species found in the elevated districts of New Granada may be, I believe that when the dense and luxuriant forests bordering these well-watered lands are fully investigated, the species inhabiting them will be found far to exceed in number those of every other district. Even the snowy Chimborazo may be said to be inhabited by Humming-birds: certain it is that the *Oreotrochilus Chimborazo* lives upon it just below the line of perpetual congelation, some of my specimens of this bird killed by M. Bourcier bearing on the attached labels an elevation of 16,000 feet; and Mr. Fraser, I believe, killed others in an equally elevated region. Here, then, is a bird which encounters the cold blasts of these lofty situations with impunity, dwelling in a world of almost perpetual sleet, hail, and rain, and there feeding upon the insects which resort to the *Chuquiraga insignis* and other flowering plants peculiar to the situation. These truly alpine birds have always a great charm with me; and as the species just mentioned is especially beautiful, it is of course a great favourite. Besides Chimborazo, there exist many other cones of but little less elevation, such as Pichincha, Cotopaxi, and Cayambe, which, strange to say, are reported to be frequented by species peculiar to each; and if this be the case, how many summits as yet untrudged may reveal forms at present unknown to us? Now what I have said with regard to the gradual increase of Humming-Bird life from the north to the equator may be equally said of their increase towards the same line from the south. The species there found, although quite different from those of the north, perform precisely the same functions, are subject to the same migratory movements, &c.