

Esmeraldas, hence its rains. The trade winds, in passing from the south Atlantic, yield up the last drop of water in crossing the Andes. The icy crown being fed by this moisture, forms glaciers that move down the mountains and feed the streams. Many of the snowy crowns rise from 1000 to 7000 feet above the line of vegetation, and the constant accretion from snow and rain as the winds sweep over these mountains below the dew point maintains an endless supply of water in the streams. These streams become rivers. In Chili and Peru there is no western current such as blows from the Pacific across Colombia and Ecuador. The Andes cut off their clouds and rain from the east winds, and consequently in those countries there is no rain. In Ecuador one end of the country has six months' rain, while the other end has a dry season, and *vice versa*. A section of the country would show two immense ridges averaging 12,000 feet in elevation, with the inter-Andean plateau averaging about 9000 feet, and two sections sloping to the Pacific on the west and to the Amazon valley on the east. The eastern section is the largest. It is inhabited by Indians still uncivilized, who have their own language and are practically unknown to white men or their commerce. The western section is the smallest and most important. The littoral contains three States, known as the maritime provinces. These are Esmeraldas, Manabí, and Guayas. The States east of them are very mountainous, the towns in them having an elevation from 8000 to nearly 10,000 feet.

Thus we have a country containing mountains that may be measured in miles instead of feet, the largest of rivers, vegetation irrigated by never-failing rivers and fecundated by a vertical sun, producing results unequalled since the coal period—a country with diversity of contour and beauty of landscape second to none. It is not strange that Baron von Humboldt and other savants have gone there in search of scientific facts, nor that Church, the painter, went there to catch the coloring for his sunset in the tropics.

The inter-Andean plateau is the wheat belt. Its elevation is equal to the 40° that separate us from the equator. Apples, peaches, strawberries, and most of the fruits that are familiar here grow there in abundance. Viewed from the mountains, its tilled fields recall Central New York. It was the home department, the District of Columbia of the Inca Government, the civilization that preceded the Spanish conquest. It was one of the sections that was visited by priestly vandalism. Its records and buildings were destroyed. Here and there remains of Indian labor still exist, and in some things it shows that they had advanced farther than their conquerors have done to this day. They had good roads; and the only road in the country to-day is one built by the Indians, which can be followed from Quito to La Paz, a distance of more than 1500 miles. The Indian cement in which the paving stones were laid has outlasted the stone.

The mountains are massed in central Ecuador as they are nowhere else. From many of them thirty tall peaks can be seen in a single glance. Only two of them are known outside of the country—Cotopaxi and Chim-