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which is always accompanied with disgusting howlings.

Chief Towns.] PANAMA is the capital of Terra Firma Proper, and is situated upon a capacious bay to which it gives its name. It is the great receptacle of the vast quantities of gold and silver, with other rich merchandize, from all parts of Peru and Chili: Here they are lodged in store-houses, till the proper season arrives to transport them to Europe.

PORTO BELLO is situated close to the sea, on the declivity of a mountain which surrounds the whole harbour. The convenience and safety of this harbour is such, that Columbus, who first discovered it, gave it the name of Porto Bello, or the Fine Harbour.

History.] This part of South-America was discovered by Columbus, in his third voyage to this continent. It was subdued and settled by the Spaniards about the year 1514, after destroying, with great inhumanity, several millions of the natives. This country was called Terra Firma, on account of its being the first part of the continent which was discovered; all the lands discovered previous to this being islands.

P E R U.

Length 1800 ^{miles.} } between { 60° and 81° West Longitude.
Breadth 500 } { The Equator and 25° S. Latitude.

BOUNDED north by Terra Firma ; east, by the Andes; south, by Chili; west by the Pacifick ocean.

Rivers.] A prodigious number of rivers rise in the Andes, and run through this country, among which are the Grenada or Cagdalena, Orinoco and Amazon. The last has its source in Peru, and after running eastward upwards of three thousand miles, falls into the Atlantick ocean. This river, like all other tropical rivers, annually overflows its banks.

Climate, Soil and Productions.] Though Peru lies within the torrid zone, yet, having the Pacifick ocean on the west, and the Andes on the east, the air is not so sultry, as is usual in tropical countries. The sky is generally

generally cloudy, so that the inhabitants are shielded from the direct rays of the sun ; but what is extremely singular, it never rains in Peru. This defect, however, is sufficiently supplied by a soft and gentle dew, which falls every night on the ground, and so refreshes the plants and grass, as to produce in many places the greatest fertility. In the inland parts of Peru, and by the banks of the rivers, the soil is generally very fertile, but along the sea coast it is a barren sand. The productions of this country are, Indian corn, wheat, balsam, sugar, wine, cotton, cattle, deer, poultry, parrots, wild fowls, lions, bears, monkeys, &c. Their sheep are large, and work as beasts of burden. Another extraordinary animal here, is the vicunna, or Indian goat, in which is found the bezoar stone, celebrated for expelling poisons. The province of Quito abounds with cedar, cocoa, palm trees, and the kinguenna, which affords the Peruvian or Jesuit's bark ; also the storax, guaiacum, and several other gums and drugs. Gold and silver mines are found in every province, but those of Potosi are the richest. The mountain of Potosi alone, is said to have yielded to the Spaniards, the first forty years they were in possession of it, two thousand millions of pieces of eight.

Government.] Peru is governed by a Viceroy, who is absolute ; but it being impossible for him to superintend the whole extent of his government, he delegates a part of his authority to the several audiences and courts, established at different places throughout his dominions.

Chief Towns.] LIMA, the capital of Peru, and residence of the Viceroy, is large, magnificent and populous ; and for the splendor of its inhabitants, the grandeur of its publick festivals, the extent of its commerce, and the delightfulness of its climate, is superior to all cities in South-America. These eminent advantages are, however, considerably overbalanced by the dreadful earthquakes which frequently happen here. In the year 1747 a most tremendous earthquake laid three-fourths of this city level with the ground, and entirely