

higher; and hence the most extensive chains of mountains are near the equator. The mountains of Africa and Peru are the highest known; they frequently extend themselves through entire continents, and stretch to considerable distances under the ocean. The mountains of Europe and Asia, which extend from Spain to China, are not so high as those of South America and Africa. The mountains of the North, according to the accounts of travellers, are only hills in comparison with those of the Southern countries. Besides, there are very few islands in the Northern Seas, whereas in the Torrid Zone they are almost innumerable, and as islands are only the summits of mountains, it is evident that the surface of the earth has many more inequalities towards the equator than in the northerly climates.

It is therefore evident that the prodigious chain of mountains which run from the West to the East in the Old Continent, and from the North to the South in the New, must have been produced by the general motion of the tides; but the origin of all the inferior mountains must be attributed to the particular motions of currents, occasioned by the winds and other irregular agitations of the sea: they  
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