

the Arkansas river, and the Ohio. The oscillations were more feeble on the east of the Alleghanies, than to the west of these mountains, in Tennessee and Kentucky. They were accompanied by a great subterranean noise, proceeding from the south-west. In some places between New Madrid and Little Prairie, as at the Saline, north of Cincinnati, in latitude $37^{\circ} 45'$, shocks were felt every day, nay almost every hour, during several months. The whole of these phenomena continued from the 16th of December 1811, till the year 1813. The commotion, confined at first to the south, in the valley of the lower Mississippi, appeared to advance slowly northward.

Precisely at the period when this long series of earthquakes commenced in the Transalleghanian States (in the month of December 1811), the town of Caracas felt the first shock in calm and serene weather. This coincidence of phenomena was probably not accidental; for it must be borne in mind that, notwithstanding the distance which separates these countries, the low grounds of Louisiana and the coasts of Venezuela and Cumana belong to the same basin, that of the Gulf of Mexico. When we consider geologically the basin of the Caribbean Sea, and of the Gulf of Mexico, we find it bounded on the south by the coast-chain of Venezuela and the Cordilleras of Merida and Pamplona; on the east by the mountains of the West India Islands, and the Alleghanies; on the west by the Andes of Mexico, and the Rocky Mountains; and on the north by the very inconsiderable elevations which separate the Canadian lakes from the rivers which flow into the Mississippi. More than two-thirds of this basin are covered with water. It is bordered by two ranges of active volcanos; on the east, in the Carribee Islands, between latitudes 13° and 16° ; and on the west in the Cordilleras of Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Mexico, between latitudes 11° and 20° . When we reflect that the great earthquake at Lisbon, of the 1st of November, 1755, was felt almost simultaneously on the coasts of Sweden, at lake Ontario, and at the island of Martinique, it may not seem unreasonable to suppose, that all this basin of the West Indies, from Cumana and Caracas as far as the plains of Louisiana, should be simultaneously agitated by commotions proceeding from the same centre of action.