

it separates from the cultivated regions the black and inhospitable world of the lofty crests. Below, life is astir; the soil changes its aspect with the changing seasons; all kinds of organisms are developed by the solar rays; and even upon the very border of the snow-line a space of a few yards suffices to transform a snowy plain into a field of smiling verdure. But beyond this limit reigns winter, with all its horrors: the landscape is enfolded in a vast and frozen shroud; the silence of the desert is unbroken except by the fury of the liberated elements.

The reader will easily understand that the *line of perpetual snow* is always found at a greater elevation in proportion to the greater warmth prevailing at the sea-level; in other words, the hotter the climate the higher is the snow-line. In the North Polar and Antarctic regions, where reigns an unbroken cold, the snow-line ought to be found on the same level as the sea; but, on the contrary, in all hot equatorial countries it will be situated at a very high elevation. According to Rénou, this boundary is the altitude where the mean temperature of the warmer half of the year (May to October) is zero.

In the subjoined Table we give the limit of perpetual snow on the principal mountain-ranges of the world, and indicate the latitude to which the estimate applies:—

	LATITUDE.	HEIGHT OF SNOW-LINE IN ENGLISH FEET.
Spitzbergen,	79° N.	0
Mageroe (Norway),	71°	2,350
Norway, interior of,	70° to 60°	3,500 to 5,100
Iceland,	65°	3,050
Unalashka (W. America)	54°	3,510
The Altai Mountains,	50°	7,034
The Alps, northern side,	45°	8,885
„ southern side,	45°	9,150
The Caucasus,	43°	11,063
The Pyrenees,	43°	9,000
Mount Ararat,	40°	14,150
Karakorum, northern side,	36°	17,500
„ southern side,	36°	19,300
Kuen-luen, northern side,	36°	15,000
„ southern side,	35°	15,680
Himalaya, northern side,	29°	19,560
„ southern side,	28°	15,500
The Mexican Cordilleras,	17°	14,650