

which mountains form in great vallies are less acute, because the direction is less steep, and they are farther distant from each other. In plains they are not so perceptible, except by the banks of rivers, which are generally in the middle of them, and whose natural windings answer the most advanced angles or striking projections of the mountains. It is astonishing so visible a thing was so long unobserved, for when in a valley the inclination of one of the mountains which border it is less steep than that of the other, the river takes its course much nearer the steepest mountain, and does not flow through its middle.

To these observations we may join other particular ones, which confirm them; for example, the mountains of Switzerland are much more steep, and their direction much greater on the south side than on the north, and on the west side than on the east. This may be perceived in the mountains of Gemmi, Brisa, and almost every other mountain in this country. The highest are those which separate Valesia and the Grisons from Savoy, Piedmont, and Tirol. These countries are only a continuation of these mountains, the chain of which extends to the Mediterranean, and continues
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