

the old continent flow from east to west, because they are bounded by mountains whose direction is from west to east; whereas those in America preserve the same course from there being only one chain of mountains that extends from north to south.

In general, rivers run through the centre of vallies, or rather the lowest ground betwixt two opposite hills or mountains; if the two hills have nearly an equal inclination, the river will be nearly in the middle of the intermediate valley, let the valley be broad or narrow. On the contrary, if one of the hills has a more steep inclination than the other, the river will not be in the middle of the valley, but much nearer the hill whose inclination is greatest, and that too in proportion to the superiority of its declivity: in this case, the lowest ground is not in the middle of the valley, but inclines towards the highest hill, and which the river must necessarily occupy. In all places where there is any considerable difference in the height of the mountains, the rivers flow at the foot of the steepest hills, and follow them throughout all their directions, never quitting their course while they maintain the superiority of height. In the length of time, however, the steepest hills