

the most elevated, runs first from south-east to north-west, by Zacatecas towards Durango, and afterwards from south to north, by Chihuahua, towards New Mexico. It takes successively the names of Sierra de Acha, Sierra de Los Mimbres, Sierra Verde, and Sierra de las Grullas, and about the 29° and 30° of latitude, it is connected by spurs with two lateral chains, those of the Texas and La Sonora, which renders the separation of the chains more imperfect than the trifurcations of the Andes in South America.

That part of the Cordilleras of Mexico which is richest in silver beds and veins, is comprehended between the parallels of Oaxaca and Cosiquiriachi (lat. $16\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ — 29°); the alluvial soil that contains disseminated gold, extends some degrees still further northwards. It is a very striking phenomenon, that the gold-washing of Cinaloa and Sonora, like that of Barba-coas and Choco, on the south and north of the isthmus of Panama, is uniformly situated on the west of the central chain, on the descent opposite the Pacific. The traces of a still-burning volcanic fire which was no longer seen, on a length of 200 leagues, from Pasto and Popayan to the gulf of Nicoya (lat. $1\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$ — $9\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$), become very frequent on the western coast of Guatemala (lat. $9\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ — 16°); these traces of fire again cease in the gneiss-granite mountains of Oaxaca, and re-appear, perhaps for the last time, towards the north, in the central Cordillera of Anahuac, between lat. $18\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$ and $19\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, where the volcanoes of Taxtla, Orizaba, Popocatepetl, Toluca, Jorullo, and Colima, appear to be situated in a crevice* extending from E.S.E. to W.N.W., from one ocean to the other. This line of summits, several of which enter the limit of perpetual snow, and which are the loftiest of the Cordilleras from the peak of Tolima (lat. $40^{\circ} 46'$ north), is almost perpendicular to the great axis of the chain of Guatemala and Anahuac, advancing to the 27th parallel, uniformly N. 42° E. A characteristic feature of every

* On this zone of volcanoes is the parallel of the greatest heights of New Spain. If the survey of Captain Basil Hall afford results alike certain in latitude and in longitude, the volcano of Colima is north of the parallel of Puerto de Navidad, in lat. $19^{\circ} 36'$; and, like the volcano of Tuxtla, if not beyond the zone, at least beyond the average parallel of the volcanic fire of Mexico, which parallel seems to be between $18^{\circ} 59'$, and $19^{\circ} 12'$.