

the Altai range, which stretch in a serpentine line to the Pacific, south of the Gulf of Okhotsk, dividing the high lands of Tartary and China from the frozen wastes of Asiatic Siberia. Under various names, its branches skirt the north-west side of the gulf of Okhotsk, and thence extending to Behring's Straits, project into the ocean at East Cape, the easternmost extremity of the old continent—the entire length of the chain being 4500, and its breadth varying from 400 to 1000 miles.

Crossing Behring's Strait, our survey next embraces the western coast of the New World, which throughout its whole extent, with but few intervals, is lined by a barrier of lofty mountains, occasionally retiring a short distance inland, but more generally bordering on the sea, and confronting its waters with stupendous cliffs. These are the Rocky Mountains of North America, and the Andes of South America. On the eastern coast the land slopes gradually towards the Atlantic, as is shown by the course of the great rivers. A range of moderate elevation, however, occurs in Brazil, and the Alleghany Mountains in the United States.

We now cross to Europe, where a mountainous zone, lying between the 30th and 45th parallels of north latitude, strikes across the continent from W.S.W. to E.N.E., from the coast of Portugal to the Ural Mountains. The Pyrenean chain, between Spain and France, is of moderate elevation. The Alps, which in Mont Blanc attain a culminating height of 15,759 feet, lie at the head of Italy, extending from the Gulf of Genoa to the Adriatic, and thence, under various names, running east till they join the Balkan, under the 18th meridian.]

The loftiest mountains of the world surround a vast basin, whose centre is occupied by a mass of level islands. The waters of this basin frequently bathe the foot of the chain which form their margin; but, at a few points, the mountains are separated from the sea by gradual slopes. The fertile regions of India and China extend between the rocky cincture and the Great Ocean; the peninsulas of Southern Asia are like so many fragments of the isthmus which