

man, 7000 feet above the sea, bear no traces of the Garden of Eden. Mount Ararat, on which the Ark is said to have rested, stands a solitary, majestic, volcanic cone, 17,712 feet above the sea, shrouded in perpetual snow. Though high and cold, the soil of Armenia is richer than that of Anatolia, and is better cultivated. It shelves on the north, in luxuriant and beautiful declivities, to the low and undulating valley of Kara, south of the Caucasus; and, on the other hand, the broad and lofty belt of the Kurdistan mountains, rising abruptly in many parallel ranges from the plains of Mesopotamia, form its southern limit, and spread their ramifications wide over its surface. They are rent by deep ravines; and in many places are so rugged that communication between the villages is always difficult, and in winter impracticable from the depth of snow. The line of perpetual congelation is decided and even along their summit: their flanks are wooded, and the valleys populous and fertile."

The eastern division of the table-land forms a huge four-sided mass, considerably larger than the entire area of Europe, and stretching from the mountain-chain of the Hindu Kush to the Gulf of Tonquin. On the south it is bounded by the majestic range of the Himalayan—*i.e.*, the "Abode of Snow"—on whose summits and upper regions rests an eternal shroud of snow and ice. On the east lie the Chinese mountain-chains of Tun-ling and Khing-han, stretching away northward to join the range of the Shangpe-shan. The northern boundary of the table-land is formed by the metalliferous chain of the Altaï Mountains.

In Persia we meet with another mountainous region. On the north runs the great Elburz chain, culminating in the volcanic peak of Demavend, near Teheran, and throwing off numerous ridges into the volcanic table-land of Azerbijan, the ancient "fire country" of Zoroaster. Along the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean it is bounded for 1000 miles by a mountainous belt, in some places three and in others seven-fold, having an average width of 200 miles.

Several of the Asiatic mountain-chains are unconnected with the great continental masses already spoken of. Such is the case with