

became almost wholly extinct. Places occurred of an eighth of a mile in breadth, destitute of verdure of any kind. The party then ascended a ridge belonging to the main body of the Cordilleras, and at an elevation of about ten thousand feet, they reached its summit. Here they had an extensive view of all the line of the snow peaks. That of Tupongati appeared the most conspicuous, although at a distance of eighty miles. The guide asserted that he could see smoke issuing from its volcano in a faint streak, but it was beyond the vision of our gentlemen. The peak itself from this view of it was quite sharp-pointed. The scene immediately around them was one of grandeur and desolation: mountain after mountain, separated by immense chasms, to the depth of thousands of feet, and the sides broken in the most fantastic forms imaginable. In these higher parts of the Cordilleras they found a large admixture of the jaspery aluminous rock, which forms the base of the finest porphyries; also chlorite, in abundance. The rock likewise contains fine white chalcedony in irregular straggling masses. Trachytic breccia was observed in various places. The porphyry is of a dull purple colour, rather lighter than the red sandstone of the United States. No traces of cellular lava were seen, nor of other more recent volcanic productions. No limestone was seen in the regions traversed by our parties; all the lime used at Santiago is obtained from sea-shells; nor were any proper sedimentary rocks seen.

Nothing could be more striking than the complete silence that reigned every where; not a living thing appeared to their view.

After spending some time on the top, they began their descent; and after two hours' hard travelling they reached the snow line, and passed the night very comfortably in the open air, with their blankets and pillions, or saddle-cloths. Fuel for a fire they unexpectedly found in abundance: the *Alpinia umbellifera* answering admirably for that purpose, from the quantity of resinous matter it contains. Near their camp was the bank of snow before spoken of, from which the city has been supplied for many years. It covers several acres. The snow line here seemed to have remained constant, and would have afforded a fine opportunity to have verified the rule of Humboldt, but they had no instruments. The height they had ascended was supposed to have been about eleven thousand feet, and the Cordilleras opposite them about four thousand feet higher. The view of the mass of the Cordilleras, in its general outline, was not unlike those of Mont Blanc and other mountains in Switzerland.

Mr. Peale went in search of the guanacoës, and succeeded in killing one nine feet in length and four feet in height. They were found to