

not have attained to the height of that great Colossus of the Andes, the Chimborazo, whose height is twice that of Mount Ætna; and we must pile the Righi, or Mount Athos, on the summit of the Chimborazo, in order to form a just estimate of the elevation of the Dhawalagiri, the highest point of the Himalaya. But although the mountains of India greatly surpass the Cordilleras of South America by their astonishing elevation (which, after being long contested, has at last been confirmed by accurate measurements), they can not, from their geographical position, present the same inexhaustible variety of phenomena by which the latter are characterized. The impression produced by the grander aspects of nature does not depend exclusively on height. The chain of the Himalaya is placed far beyond the limits of the torrid zone, and scarcely is a solitary palm-tree to be found in the beautiful valleys of Kumaoun and Garhwal.\* On the southern slope of the ancient Paropamisus, in the latitudes of  $28^{\circ}$  and  $34^{\circ}$ , nature no longer displays the same abundance of tree-ferns and arborescent grasses, heliconias and orchideous plants, which in tropic

Thus Mont Blanc is 5646 feet below Chimborazo; Chimborazo, 3779 feet below the Sorata; the Sorata, 549 feet below the Jawahir, and probably about 2880 feet below the Dhawalagiri. According to a new measurement of the Illimani, by Pentland, in 1838, the elevation of this mountain is given at 23,868 feet, varying only 133 feet from the measurement taken in 1827. The elevations have been given in this note with minute exactness, as erroneous numbers have been introduced into many maps and tables recently published, owing to incorrect reductions of the measurements.

[In the preceding note, taken from those appended to the Introduction in the French translation, rewritten by Humboldt himself, the measurements are given in meters, but these have been converted into English feet, for the greater convenience of the general reader.]—*Tr.*

\* The absence of palms and tree-ferns on the temperate slopes of the Himalaya is shown in Don's *Flora Nepalesis*, 1825, and in the remarkable series of lithographs of Wallich's *Flora Indica*, whose catalogue contains the enormous number of 7683 Himalaya species, almost all phanerogamic plants, which have as yet been but imperfectly classified. In Nepaul (lat.  $26\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$  to  $27\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$ ) there has hitherto been observed only one species of palm, *Chamærops martiana*, Wall. (*Plantæ Asiat.*, lib. iii., p. 5, 211), which is found at the height of 5250 English feet above the level of the sea, in the shady valley of Bunipa. The magnificent tree-fern, *Alsophila brunoniana*, Wall. (of which a stem 48 feet long has been in the possession of the British Museum since 1831), does not grow in Nepaul, but is found on the mountains of Silhet, to the northwest of Calcutta, in lat.  $24^{\circ} 50'$ . The Nepaul fern, *Paranema cyathoides*, Don, formerly known as *Sphæroptera barbata*, Wall. (*Plantæ Asiat.*, lib. i., p. 42, 48), is, indeed, nearly related to *Cyathea*, a species of which I have seen in the South American Missions of Caripe, measuring 33 feet in height; this is not, however, properly speaking, a tree.