

But the countries bordering on the equator possess another advantage, to which sufficient attention has not hitherto been

very desirable that the *mean* elevation of the Thibetian plateau, which I have estimated at only about 8200 feet between the Himalaya and the Kuen-lun, and the difference in the height of the line of perpetual snow on the southern and on the northern slopes of the Himalaya, should be again investigated by travelers who are accustomed to judge of the general conformation of the land. Hitherto simple calculations have too often been confounded with actual measurements, and the elevations of isolated summits with that of the surrounding plateau. (Compare Carl Zimmerman's excellent Hypsometrical Remarks in his *Geographischen Analyse der Karte von Inner Asien*, 1841, s. 98.) Lord draws attention to the difference presented by the two faces of the Himalaya and those of the Alpine chain of Hindoo-Coosh, with respect to the limits of the snow-line. "The latter chain," he says, "has the tableland to the south, in consequence of which the snow-line is higher on the southern side, contrary to what we find to be the case with respect to the Himalaya, which is bounded on the south by sheltered plains, as Hindoo-Coosh is on the north." It must, however, be admitted that the hypsometrical data on which these statements are based require a critical revision with regard to several of their details; but still they suffice to establish the main fact, that the remarkable configuration of the land in Central Asia affords man all that is essential to the maintenance of life, as habitation, food, and fuel, at an elevation above the level of the sea which in almost all other parts of the globe is covered with perpetual ice. We must except the very dry districts of Bolivia, where snow is so rarely met with, and where Pentland (in 1838) fixed the snow-line at 15,667 feet, between 16° and 17¼° south latitude. The opinion that I had advanced regarding the difference in the snow-line on the two faces of the Himalaya has been most fully confirmed by the barometrical observations of Victor Jacquemont, who fell an early sacrifice to his noble and unwearied ardor. (See his *Correspondance pendant son Voyage dans l'Inde*, 1828 à 1832, liv. 23, p. 290, 296, 299.) "Perpetual snow," says Jacquemont, "descends lower on the southern than on the northern slopes of the Himalaya, and the limit constantly rises as we advance to the north of the chain bordering on India. On the Kioubrong, about 18,317 feet in elevation, according to Captain Gerard, I was still considerably below the limit of perpetual snow, which I believe to be 19,690 feet in this part of Hindostan." (This estimate I consider much too high.)

The same traveler says, "To whatever height we rise on the southern declivity of the Himalaya, the climate retains the same character, and the same division of the seasons as in the plains of India; the summer solstice being every year marked by the same prevalence of rain, which continues to fall without intermission until the autumnal equinox. But a new, a totally different climate begins at Kashmir, whose elevation I estimate to be 5350 feet, nearly equal to that of the cities of Mexico and Popayan" (*Correspond. de Jacquemont*, t. ii., p. 58 et 74). The warm and humid air of the sea, as Leopold von Buch well observes, is carried by the monsoons across the plains of India to the skirts of the Himalaya, which arrest its course, and hinder it from diverging to the Thibetian districts of Ladak and Lassa. Carl von Hügel estimates the elevation of the Valley of Kashmir above the level of the sea at 5818 feet, and bases his observation on the determination of the boiling