

ravin, and to the progressive fall of the table land from 2500 to 800 metres* of absolute height. Carriages may run from Mexico to Santa Fe, in an extent which exceeds the length which the chain of the Alps would have if it was prolonged without interruption from Geneva to the shores of the Black Sea. In fact, the central table land is travelled in four wheel carriages in all directions, from the capital to Guanaxuato, Durango, Chihuahua, Valladolid, Guadalajara, and Perote; but in the present bad state of the roads, waggons are not established for the conveyance of goods. They give the preference to the employment of beasts of burden; and thousands of horses and mules cover in long files (*requas*) the roads of Mexico. A considerable number of Mestizoes and Indians are employed to conduct these caravans. Preferring a wandering life to every sort of sedentary occupation, they pass the night in the open air, or in sheds, (*tambos*, or *casas de comunidad*) which are constructed in the middle of the villages for the convenience of travellers. The mules feed at liberty in the Savannahs; but when the great droughts have parched up the grass, they feed them on maize either in herb, (*zacate*) or in grain.

The roads which lead from the interior table

* From 8201 to 2624 feet. *Trans.*