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ARTICLE XLIX.—*On certain theories of the formation of mountains.*

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The causes of the elevation of mountains above the general contour of the earth whether in the shape of isolated peaks or continuous chains have always been favourite subjects for speculation among physical geologists. In Europe the Alps situated as they are in the very centre of the cradle of civilisation have naturally received the greatest amount of consideration, while in America the origin of the long ranges of the Appalachians has been, ever since the dawn of science upon this continent, the all important problem to be solved. It is principally upon the theories of the elevation of these last mentioned mountains that we shall in this paper make a few observations.

The Appalachian system occupies a belt of mountainous country extending from Cape Gaspé, at the mouth of the St. Lawrence, south-westerly, through eastern Canada to the Province line near Lake Champlain where it enters the State of Vermont and is then continued in the same general direction to the State of Alabama. The total length of the belt is more than one thousand miles and its width from thirty to one hundred and fifty. It consists not of a single line of peaks but of numerous long parallel ridges separ-