

4600 feet; and Paso del Norte, on the United States frontier, 3800 feet, the tableland rising again and extending thence into Arizona and far beyond. Of the central cross-ridges the most important is the Cordillera of Anahuac, which surrounds the capital and Puebla, culminating with Orizaba, Popocatepetl, and Ixtaccihuatl, all reaching an altitude of over 17,000 feet, and Colima, near the Pacific, in Jalisco, of about 10,000 feet. The tableland towards both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts falls more or less suddenly, leaving a comparatively narrow belt of low-lying forest-country of varying width, which extends northward on the Pacific to slightly beyond Mazatlan, opposite the southern end of Lower California, and on the Atlantic to a little north of Ciudad Victoria in Tamaulipas, where it terminates abruptly and the northern fauna commences. At the Isthmus of Tehuantepec the Sierra Madre becomes much depressed, the ridge skirting the Pacific being only 730 feet at its highest point and the rest of the district somewhat level, but rising again in Chiapas to about 6000 feet.

The peninsula of Yucatan is comparatively flat, with a range of low hills running from the neighbourhood of Merida to near the Lake of Peten in Guatemala. Though the rainfall is considerable throughout, it rapidly filters away through the limestone substratum and the country is consequently dry.

BRITISH HONDURAS.

The coast of this colony is low, swampy, and fringed with coral-reefs, thickly covered with mangroves and tropical jungle: inland, beyond a narrow belt of rich alluvial soil, are vast tracts of sandy arid country, the elevated parts of which are called "pine-ridges," from the trees with which they are covered; and succeeding these are the "cohune ridges," with a deep rich soil covered with myriads of palm-trees (*Attalea cohune*) and other tropical vegetation. Further inland still are broad savannas studded with clumps of trees, then the Manatee Hills parallel with the coast, about 800 to 1000 feet in elevation, and to the south the Cockscomb Mountains, which reach 4000 feet; west of these there is a succession of valleys and hills and open grassy ground, from 1200 to 3000 feet in height, but of this little is known.

GUATEMALA.

In Guatemala the main chain of mountains is an extension of that of Chiapas, running throughout the length of the country in an irregular line from north-west to south-east, nearly parallel to the Pacific coast and at a distance of from 40 to 50 miles