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THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE[1]

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

THIRTY-ONE years have passed since the British Association met in Sheffield, and the interval has been marked by exceptional progress. A town has become a city, the head of its municipality a lord mayor; its area has been enlarged by more than one fifth; its population has increased from about 280,000 to 479,000. Communication has been facilitated by the construction of nearly thirty-eight miles of electric tramways for home service and of new railways, including alternative routes to Manchester and London. The supplies of electricity, gas and water have more than kept pace with the wants of the city. The first was just being attempted in 1879; the second has now twenty-three times as many consumers as in those days; the story[2] of the third has been told by one who knows it well, so that it is enough for me to say your water supply can not be surpassed for quantity and quality by any in the kingdom. Nor has Sheffield fallen behind other cities in its public buildings. In 1897 your handsome town hall was opened by the late Queen Victoria; the new post office, appropriately built and adorned with material from almost local sources, was inaugurated less than two months ago. The Mappin Art Gallery commemorates the munificence of those whose name it bears, and fosters that love of the beautiful which Ruskin sought to awaken by his gen-

[1] Sheffield, 1910.

[2] "History and Description of Sheffield Water Works," W. Terrey, 1908.

erous gifts. Last, but not least, Sheffield has shown that it could not rest satisfied till its citizens could ascend from their own doors to the highest rung of the educational ladder. Firth College, named after its generous founder, was born in the year of our last visit; in 1897 it received a charter as the University College of Sheffield, and in the spring of 1905 was created a university, shortly after which its fine new buildings were opened by the late king; and last year its library, the generous gift of Dr. Edgar Allen, was inaugurated by his successor, when Prince of Wales. I must not now dwell on the great work which awaits this and other new universities. It is for them to prove that, so far from abstract thought being antagonistic to practical work, or scientific research to the labor of the factory or foundry, the one and the other can harmoniously cooperate in the advance of knowledge and the progress of civilization.

You often permit your president on these occasions to speak of a subject in which he takes a special interest, and I prefer thus trespassing on your kindness to attempting a general review of recent progress in science. I do not, however, propose, as you might naturally expect, to discuss some branch of petrology; though for this no place could be more appropriate than Sheffield, since it was the birthplace and the lifelong home of Henry Clifton Sorby, who may truly be called the father of that science. This title he won when, a little more than sixty years ago, he began to study the structure and mineral composition of rocks by examining thin sections of them under the microscope.[3] A rare combination of a singularly versatile and active intellect with accurate thought and sound judgment, shrewd in nature, as became a Yorkshireman, yet gentle, kindly and unselfish, he was one whom his friends loved and of whom this city may well be proud. Sorby's name will be kept alive among you by the professorship of geology which he has endowed in your university; but, as the funds will not be available for some time, and as that science is so intimately connected with metallurgy, coal-mining and engineering, I venture to express hope that some of your wealthier citizens will provide for the temporary deficiency, and thus worthily commemorate one so distinguished.

But to return. I have not selected petrology as my subject, partly because I think that the great attention which its more minute details have of late received has tended to limit rather than to broaden our views, while for a survey of our present position it is enough to refer to the suggestive and comprehensive volume published last year by Mr. A. Harker;[4] partly, also, because the discussion of any branch of petrology would involve so many technicalities that I fear it would be found tedious by a large majority of my audience. So I have preferred to discuss some questions relating to the effects of ice which had engaged my attention a dozen years before I attempted the study of rock slices. As much of my petrological work has been connected with mountain districts, it has been possible for me to carry on the latter without neglecting the former, and my study of ice-work gradually led me from the highlands into the lowlands.[5] I pur-

[3] His subsequent investigations into the microscopic structure of steel and other alloys of iron, in the manufacture of which your city holds a foremost place, have been extended by Mr. J. E. Stead and others, and they, besides being of great value to industrial progress, have thrown important sidelights on more than one dark place in petrology.

[4] "The Natural History of Igneous Rocks," 1909.

[5] May I add that hereafter a statement of facts without mention of an authority means that I am speaking from personal knowledge?

pose, then, to ask your attention this evening to some aspects of the glacial history of western Europe.

At no very distant geological epoch the climate in the northern part of the earth was much colder than it is at present. So it was also in the southern; but whether the two were contemporaneous is less certain. Still more doubtful are the extent and the work of the ice which was a consequence, and the origin of certain deposits on some northern lowlands, including those of our own islands: namely, whether they are the direct leavings of glaciers or were laid down beneath the sea by floating shore-ice and bergs. Much light will be thrown on this complex problem by endeavoring to ascertain what snow and ice have done in some region which, during the glacial epoch, was never submerged, and none better can be found for this purpose than the European Alps.

At the present day one school of geologists, which of late years has rapidly increased in number, claims for glaciers a very large share in the sculpture of that chain, asserting that they have not only scooped out the marginal lakes, as Sir A. Ramsay maintained fully half a century ago, but have also quarried lofty cliffs, excavated great cirques, and deepened parts of the larger Alpine valleys by something like two thousand feet. The other school, while admitting that a glacier, under special circumstances, may hollow out a tarn or small lake and modify the features of rock scenery, declares that its action is abrasive rather than erosive, and that the sculpture of ridges, crags and valleys was mainly accomplished in pre-glacial times by running water and the ordinary atmospheric agencies.

In all controversies, as time goes on, hypotheses are apt to masquerade as facts, so that I shall endeavor this evening to disentangle the two, and call attention to those which may be safely used in drawing a conclusion.

In certain mountain regions, especially those where strong limestones, granites and other massive rocks are dominant, the valleys are often trench-like with precipitous sides, having cirques or corries at their heads, and with rather wide and gently sloping floors, which occasionally descend in steps, the distance between these increasing with that from the watershed. Glaciers have unquestionably occupied many of these valleys, but of late years they have been supposed to have taken a large share in excavating them. In order to appreciate their action we must imagine the glens to be filled up and the district restored to its former condition of a more or less undulating upland. As the mean temperature[6] declined snow would begin to accumulate in inequalities on the upper slopes. This, by melting and freezing, would soften and corrode the underlying material, which would then be removed by rain and wind, gravitation and avalanche. In course of time the hollow thus formed would assume more and more the outlines of a corrie or a cirque by eating into the hillside. With an increasing diameter it would be occupied, as the temperature fell, first by a permanent snowfield, then by the névé of a glacier. Another process now becomes important, that called "sapping." While ordinary glacier-scour tends, as we are told, to produce "sweeping curves and eventually a graded slope," "sapping" produces "benches and cliffs, its action being horizontal and backwards," and often dominant over scour. The author of this hypothesis[7] convinced himself of its truth in

[6] In the remainder of this address "temperature" is to be understood as mean temperature. The Fahrenheit scale is used.

[7] W. D. Johnson, *Science*, N. S., IX., 1899, pp. 106, 112.

the Sierra Nevada by descending a bergschrund 150 feet in depth, which opened out, as is so common, beneath the walls of a cirque. Beginning in the névé, it ultimately reached the cliff, so that for the last thirty feet the bold investigator found rock on the one hand and ice on the other. The former was traversed by fracture planes, and was in all stages of displacement and dislodgement; some blocks having fallen to the bottom, others bridging the narrow chasm, and others frozen into the névé. Clear ice had formed in the fissures of the cliff; it hung down in great stalactites; it had accumulated in stalagmitic masses on the floor. Beneath the névé the temperature would be uniform, so its action would be protective, except where it set up another kind of erosion, presently to be noticed; but in the chasm, we are informed, there would be, at any rate for a considerable part of the year, a daily alternation of freezing and thawing. Thus the cliff would be rapidly undermined and be carried back into the mountain slope, so that before long the glacier would nestle in a shelter of its own making. Farther down the valley the moving ice would become more effective than subglacial streams in deepening its bed; but since the névé-flow is almost imperceptible near the head, another agency must be invoked, that of "plucking." The ice grips, like a forceps, any loose or projecting fragment in its rocky bed, wrenches that from its place, and carries it away. The extraction of one tooth weakens the hold of its neighbors, and thus the glen is deepened by "plucking," while it is carried back by "sapping." Streams from melting snows on the slopes above the amphitheater might have been expected to cooperate vigorously in making it, but of them little account seems to be taken, and we are even told that in some cases the winds probably prevented snow from resting on the rounded surface between two cirque-heads.[8] As these receded only a narrow neck would be left between them, which would be ultimately cut down into a gap or "col." Thus a region of deep valleys with precipitous sides and heads, of sharp ridges and of more or less isolated peaks is substituted for a rather monotonous, if lofty, highland.

The hypothesis is ingenious, but some students of Alpine scenery think more proof desirable before they can accept it as an axiom. For instance, continuous observations are necessary to justify the assumption of diurnal variations of temperature sufficient to produce any sensible effect on rock at the bottom of a narrow chasm nearly fifty yards deep and almost enclosed by ice. Here the conditions would more probably resemble those in a glacière, or natural ice cave. In one of these, during the summer, curtains and festoons of ice depend from the walls; from them and from the roof water drips slowly, to be frozen into stalagmitic mounds on the floor, which is itself sometimes a thick bed of ice. On this the quantity of fallen rock débris is not greater than is usual in a cave, nor are the walls notably shattered, even though a gap some four yards deep may separate them from the ice. The floors or cirques, from which the névé has vanished, can not as a rule be examined, because they are masked by débris which is brought down by the numerous cascades, little and big, which seam their walls; but glimpses of them may sometimes be obtained in the smaller corries (which would be cirques if they could), and these show no signs of either "sapping" or "plucking," but some little abrasion by moving ice. Cirques and corries also not infre-

[8] This does not appear to have occurred in the Alps.

quently occur on the sides as well as at the heads of valleys; such, for instance, as the two in the massif of the Uri Rothstock on the way to the Surenen Pass and the Fer à Cheval above Sixt. The Lago di Ritom lies between the mouth of a hanging valley and a well-defined step, and just above that is the Lago di Cadagno in a large, steep-walled corrie, which opens laterally into the Val Piora, as that of the Lago di Tremorgio does into the southern side of the Val Bedretto. Cirques may also be found where glaciers have had a comparatively brief existence, as the Creux des Vents on the Jura; or have never been formed, as on the slopes of Salina, one of the Pipari Islands, or in the limestone desert of Lower Egypt.[9] I have seen a miniature stepped valley carved by a rainstorm on a slope of Hampstead Heath; a cirque, about a yard in height and breadth, similarly excavated in the vertical wall of a gravel pit; and a corrie, measured by feet instead of furlongs, at the foot of one of the Binns near Burntisland, or, on a much reduced scale, in a bank of earth. On all these the same agent, plunging water, has left its marks —runlets of rain for the smaller, streams for the larger; convergent at first, perhaps, by accident, afterwards inevitably combined as the hollow widened and deepened. Each of the great cirques is still a "land of streams," and they are kept permanent for the greater part of the year by beds of snow on the ledges above its walls.

The "sapping and plucking" process presents another difficulty—the steps already mentioned in the floors of valleys. These are supposed to indicate stages at which the excavating glacier transferred its operations to a higher level. But, if so, the outermost one must be the oldest, or the glacier must have been first formed in the lowest part of the incipient valley. Yet, with a falling temperature, the reverse would happen, for otherwise the snow must act as a protective mantle to the mature pre-glacial surface almost down to its base. However much age might have smoothed away youthful angularities, it would be strange if no receptacles had been left higher up to initiate the process; and even if sapping had only modified the form of an older valley, it could not have cut the steps unless it had begun its work on the lowest one. Thus, in the case of the Creux de Champ, if we hesitate to assume that the sapping process began at the mouth of the valley of the Grande Eau above Aigle, we must suppose it to have started somewhere near Ormont Dessus and to have excavated that gigantic hollow, the floor of which lies full 6,000 feet below the culminating crags of the Diablerets.

But even if "sapping and plucking" were assigned a comparatively unimportant position in the cutting out of cirques and corries, it might still be maintained that the glaciers of the ice age had greatly deepened the valleys of mountain regions. That view is adopted by Professors Penck and Brückner in their work on the glaciation of the Alps,[10] the value of which even those who can not accept some of their conclusions will thankfully admit. On one point all parties agree—that a valley cut by a fairly rapid stream in a durable rock is V-like in section. With an increase of speed the walls become more vertical; with a diminution the valley widens and has a flatter bed, over which the river, as the base-line is approached, may at last meander. Lateral streams will plough into the slopes, and may be numerous enough to convert them into alternating ridges and furrows. If a valley has been evcavated in thick horizontal beds of rock varying in

[9] A. J. Jukes-Browne, *Geol. Mag.*, 1877, p. 477.

[10] "Die Alpen in Eiszeitalter," 1909.

hardness, such as limestones and shales, its sides exhibit a succession of terrace walls and shelving banks, while a marked dip and other dominant structures produce their own modifications. It is also agreed that a valley excavated or greatly enlarged by a glacier should be U-like in section. But an Alpine valley, especially as we approach its head, very commonly takes the following form. For some hundreds of feet up from the torrent it is a distinct V; above this the slopes become less rapid, changing, say, from 45° to not more than 30°, and that rather suddenly. Still higher comes a region of stone-strewn upland valleys and rugged crags, terminating in ridges and peaks of splintered rock, projecting from a mantle of ice and snow. The V-like part is often from 800 to 1,000 feet in depth, and the above-named authors maintain that this, with perhaps as much of the more open trough above, was excavated during the glacial epoch. Thus the floor of any one of these valleys prior to the ice age must often have been at least 1,800 feet above its present level.[11] As a rough estimate we may fix the deepening of one of the larger pennine valleys, tributary to the Rhone, to have been, during the ice age, at least 1,600 feet in their lower parts. Most of them are now hanging valleys; the stream issuing, on the level of the main river, from a deep gorge. Their tributaries are rather variable in form; the larger as a rule being more or less V-shaped; the shorter, and especially the smaller, corresponding more with the upper part of the larger valleys; but their lips generally are less deeply notched. Whatever may have been the cause, this rapid change in slope must indicate a corresponding change of action in the erosive agent. Here and there the apex of the V may be slightly flattened, but any approach to a real U is extremely rare. The retention of the more open form in many small, elevated recesses, from which at the present day but little water descends, suggests that where one of them soon became buried under snow,[12] but was insignificant as a feeder of a glacier, erosion has been for ages almost at a standstill.

The V-like lower portion in the section of one of the principal valleys, which is all that some other observers have claimed for the work of a glacier, can not be ascribed to subsequent modification by water, because ice-worn rock can be seen in many places, not only high up its sides, but also down to within a yard or two of the present torrent.

Thus valley after valley in the Alps seems to leave no escape from the following dilemma: Either a valley cut by a glacier does not differ in form from one made by running water, or one which has been excavated by the latter, if subsequently occupied, is but superficially modified by ice. This, as we can repeatedly see in the higher Alpine valleys, has not succeeded in obliterating the physical features due to the ordinary processes of erosion. Even where its effects are most striking, as in the Spitallamm below the Grimsel Hospice, it has not wholly effaced those features; and wherever a glacier in a recent retreat has exposed a rock surface, that demonstrates its inefficiency as a plough. The evidence of such cases has been pronounced inadmissible, on the ground that

[11] The amount varies in different valleys; for instance, it was fully 2,880 feet at Amsteg on the Reuss, just over 2,000 feet at Brieg in the Rhone Valley, about 1,000 feet at Guttanen in the Aare Valley, about 1,550 feet above Zermatt and 1,100 feet above Saas Grund.

[12] My own studies of mountain districts have led me to infer that on slopes of low grade the action of snow is preservative rather than destructive. That conclusion was confirmed by Professor Garwood in a communication to the Royal Geographical Society on June 20 of the present year.

the glaciers of the Alps have now degenerated into senile impotence; but in valley beds over which they passed when in the full tide of their strength the flanks show remnants of rocky ridges only partly smoothed away, and rough rock exists on the "lee-sides" of ice-worn mounds which no imaginary plucking can explain. The ice seems to have flowed over rather than to have plunged into the obstacles in its path, and even the huge steps of limestone exposed by the last retreat of the Unter Grindelwald Glacier have suffered little more than a rounding off of their angles, though that glacier must have passed over them when in fullest development, for it seems impossible to explain these by any process of sapping.

The comparatively level trough, which so often forms the uppermost part of one of the great passes across the watershed of the Alps, can hardly be explained without admitting that in each case the original watershed has been destroyed by the more rapid recession of the head of the southern valley, and this work bears every sign of having been accomplished in pre-glacial times. Sapping and plucking must have operated on a gigantic scale to separate the Viso from the Cottian watershed, to isolate the huge pyramid of the Matterhorn, with its western spur, or to make, by the recession of the Val Macugnaga, that great gap between the Strahlhorn and Monte Rosa. Some sceptics even go so far as to doubt whether the dominant forms of a non-glaciated region differ very materially from those of one which has been half-buried in snowfields and glaciers. To my eyes, the general outlines of the mountains about the Lake of Gennesaret and the northern part of the Dead Sea recalled those around the Lake of Annecy and on the southeastern shore of Leman. The sandstone crags, which rise here and there like ruined castles from the lower plateau of the Saxon Switzerland, resembled in outlines, though on a smaller scale, some of the dolomites in the southern Tyrol. The Lofoten Islands illustrate a half-drowned mountain range from which the glaciers have disappeared. Those were born among splintered peaks and ridges, which, though less lofty, rival in form the Aiguilles of Chamonix, and the valleys become more and more iceworn as they descend, till the coast is fringed with skerries every one of which is a roche moutonnée. The névé in each of these valleys has been comparatively ineffective; the ice has gathered strength with the growth of the glacier. As can be seen from photographs, the scenery of the heart of the Caucasus or of the Himalayas differs in scale rather than in kind from that of the Alps. Thus the amount of abrasion varies, other things being equal, with the latitude. The grinding away of ridges and spurs, the smoothing of the walls of troughs,[13] is greater in Norway than in the Alps; it is still greater in Greenland than in Norway, and it is greatest of all in the Antarctic, according to the reports of the expeditions led by Scott and Shackleton. But even in Polar regions, under the most favorable conditions, the dominant outlines of the mountains, as shown in the numerous photographs taken by both parties, and in Dr. Wilson's admirable drawings, differ in degree rather than in kind from those of mid-European ranges. It has been asserted that the parallel sides of the larger Alpine valleys—such as the Rhone above Martigny, the Lütschine near Lauterbrunnen, and the Val Bedretto below Airolo—prove that they have been made by the ice-plough rather than by running water; but in the

[13] If one may judge from photographs, the smoothing of the flanks of a valley is unusually conspicuous in Milton Sound, New Zealand.

first I am unable to discern more than the normal effects of a rather rapid river which has followed a trough of compartively soft rocks; in the second, only the cliffs marking the channel cut by a similar stream through massive limestones—cliffs like those which elsewhere rise up the mountain flanks far above the levels reached by glaciers; while in the third I have failed to discover, after repeated examination, anything abnormal.

Many lake basins have been ascribed to the erosive action of glaciers. Since the late Sir A. Ramsay advanced this hypothesis numbers of lakes in various countries have been carefully investigated and the results published, the most recent of which is the splendid work on the Scottish lochs by Sir J. Murray and Mr. L. Pullar.[14] A contribution to science of the highest value, it has also a deeply pathetic interest, for it is a father's memorial to a much-loved son, F. P. Pullar, who, after taking a most active part in beginning the investigation, lost his life while saving others from drowning. As the time at my command is limited, and many are acquainted with the literature of the subject, I may be excused from saying more than that even these latest researches have not driven me from the position which I have maintained from the first—namely, that while many tarns in corries and lakelets in other favorable situations are probably due to excavation by ice, as in the mountainous districts of Britain, in Scandinavia, or in the higher parts of the Alps, the difficulty of invoking this agency increases with the size of the basin—as, for example, in the case of Loch Maree or the Lake of Annecy —till it becomes insuperable. Even if Glas Llyn and Llyn Llydaw were the work of a glacier, the rock basins of Gennesaret and the Dead Sea, still more those of the great lakes in North America and in Central Africa, must be assigned to other causes.

I pass on, therefore, to mention another difficulty in this hypothesis—that the Alpine valleys were greatly deepened during the glacial epoch—which has not yet, I think, received sufficient attention. From three to four hundred thousand years have elapsed, according to Penck and Brückner, since the first great advance of the Alpine ice. One of the latest estimates of the thickness of the several geological formations assigns 4,000 feet[15] to the Pleistocene and Recent, 13,000 to the Pliocene, and 14,000 to the Miocene. If we assume the times of deposit to be proportional to the thicknesses, and adopt the larger figure for the first-named period, the duration of the Pliocene would be 1,300,000 years, and of the Miocene 1,400,000 years. To estimate the total vertical thickness of rock which has been removed from the Alps by denudation is far from easy, but I think 14,000 feet would be a liberal allowance, of which about one seventh is assigned to the ice age. But during that age, according to a curve given by Penck and Brückner, the temperature was below its present amount for rather less than half (.47) the time. Hence it follows that, since the sculpture of the Alps must have begun at least as far back as the Miocene period, one seventh of the work has been done by ice in not quite one fifteenth of the time, or its action must be very potent. Such data as are at our command make it probable that a Norway glacier at the present day lowers its basin by only about eighty millimeters in 1,000 years; a Greenland glacier may remove some 421 millimeters in the same time, while the Vatnajökul in Iceland attains to 647 millimeters. If Alpine glaciers had

[14] "Bathymetrical Survey of the Scottish Freshwater Lochs," Sir J. Murray and Mr. L. Pullar, 1910.

[15] I have doubts whether this is not too great.

been as effective as the last-named, they would not have removed, during their 188,000 years of occupation of the Alpine valleys, more than 121.6 meters, or just over 397 feet; and as this is not half the amount demanded by the more moderate advocates of erosion, we must either ascribe an abnormal activity to the vanished Alpine glaciers, or admit that water was much more effective as an excavator.

We must not forget that glaciers can not have been important agents in the sculpture of the Alps during more than part of Pleistocene times. That sculpture probably began in the Oligocene period; for rather early in the next one the great masses of conglomerate, called Nagelfluh, show that powerful rivers had already carved for themselves valleys corresponding generally with and nearly as deep as those still in existence. Temperature during much of the Miocene period was not less than 12° F. above its present average. This would place the snow-line at about 12,000 feet.[16] In that case, if we assume the altitudes unchanged, not a snowfield would be left between the Simplon and the Maloja, the glaciers of the Pennines would shrivel into insignificance, Monte Rosa would exchange its drapery of ice for little more than a tippet of frozen snow. As the temperature fell the white robes would steal down the mountain-sides, the glaciers grow, the torrents be swollen during all the warmer months, and the work of sculpture increase in activity. Yet with a temperature even 6° higher than it now is, as it might well be at the beginning of the Pliocene period, the snow-line would be at 10,000 feet; numbers of glaciers would have disappeared, and those around the Jungfrau and the Finster Aarhorn would be hardly more important than they now are in the western Oberland.

But denudation would begin so soon as the ground rose above the sea. Water, which can not run off the sand exposed by the retreating tide without carving a miniature system of valleys, would never leave the nascent range intact. The Miocene Alps, even before a patch of snow could remain through the summer months, would be carved into glens and valleys. Towards the end of that period the Alps were affected by a new set of movements, which produced their most marked effects in the northern zone from the Inn to the Durance. The Oberland rose to greater importance; Mont Blanc attained its primacy; the massif of Dauphiné was probably developed. That, and still more the falling temperature, would increase the snowfields, glaciers and torrents. The first would be, in the main, protective; the second, locally abrasive; the third, for the greater part of their course, erosive. No sooner had the drainage system been developed on both sides of the Alps than the valleys on the Italian side (unless we assume a very different distribution of rainfall) would work backwards more rapidly than those on the northern. Cases of trespass, such as that recorded by the long level trough on the north side of the Maloja Kulm and the precipitous descent on the southern, would become frequent. In the interglacial episodes—three in number, according to Penck and Brückner, and occupying rather more than half the epoch—the snow and ice would dwindle to something like its present amount, so that the water would resume its work. Thus I think it far more probable that the V-like por-

[16] I take the fall of temperature for a rise in altitude as 1° F. for 300 feet or, when the differences in the latter are large, 3° per 1,000 feet. These estimates will, I think, be sufficiently accurate. The figures given by Hann (see for a discussion of the question, *Report of Brit. Assoc.*, 1909, p. 93) work out to 1° F. for each 318 feet of ascent (up to about 10,000 feet).

tions of the Alpine valleys were in the main excavated during Pliocene ages, their upper and more open parts being largely the results of Miocene and yet earlier sculpture.

During the great advances of the ice, four in number, according to Penck and Brückner,[17] when the Rhone glacier covered the lowlands of Vaud and Geneva, welling on one occasion over the gaps in the Jura, and leaving its erratics in the neighborhood of Lyons, it ought to have given signs of its erosive no less than of its transporting power. But what are the facts? In these lowlands we can see where the ice has passed over the Molasse (a Miocene sandstone); but here, instead of having crushed, torn and uprooted the comparatively soft rock, it has produced hardly any effect. The huge glacier from the Linth Valley crept for not a few miles over a floor of stratified gravels, on which, some eight miles below Zurich, one of its moraines, formed during the last retreat, can be seen resting, without having produced more than a slight superficial disturbance. We are asked to credit glaciers with the erosion of deep valleys and the excavation of great lakes, and yet, whereever we pass from the hypotheses to facts, we find them to have been singularly inefficient workmen!

I have dwelt at considerable, some may think undue, length on the Alps, because we are sure that this region from before the close of the Miocene period has been above the sea-level. It accordingly demonstrates what effects ice can produce when working on land.

In America also, to which I must now make only a passing reference, great ice-sheets formerly existed: one occupying the district west of the Rocky Mountains, another spreading from that on the north-west of Hudson's Bay, and a third from the Laurentian hill-country. These two became confluent, and their united ice-flow covered the region of the Great Lakes, halting near the eastern coast a little south of New York, but in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois occasionally leaving moraines only a little north of the 39th parallel of latitude.[18] Of these relics my first-hand knowledge is very small, but the admirably illustrated reports and other writings of American geologists[19] indicate that, if we make due allowance for the differences in environment, the tills and associated deposits on their continent are similar in character to those of the Alps.[20]

In our own country and in corresponding parts of northern Europe we must take into account the possible cooperation of the sea. In these, however, geologists agree that, for at least a portion of the ice age, glaciers occupied the mountain districts. Here ice-worn rocks, moraines and perched blocks, tarns in corries, and perhaps lakelets in valleys, demonstrate the former presence of a mantle of snow and ice. Glaciers radiated outwards from more than one focus in Ireland, Scotland, the English Lake District, and Wales, and trespassed, at the time of their greatest development, upon the adjacent lowlands. They are generally believed to have advanced and retreated more than once, and

[17] On the exact number I have not had the opportunity of forming an opinion.

[18] Some of the glacial drifts on the eastern side of the continent, as we shall find, may have been deposited in the sea.

[19] See the Reports of the United States Geological Survey (from Vol. III. onwards), *Journal of Geology*, *American Journal of Science*, and local publications too numerous to mention. Among these the studies in Greenland by Professor Chamberlin are especially valuable for the light they throw on the movement of large glaciers and the transport of débris in the lower part of the ice.

[20] Here, however, we can not always be so sure of the absence of the sea.

their movements have been correlated by Professor J. Geikie with those already mentioned in the Alps. Into that very difficult question I must not enter; for my present purpose it is enough to say that in early Pleistocene times glaciers undoubtedly existed in the mountain districts of Britain and even formed piedmont ice-sheets on the lowlands. On the west side of England, smoothed and striated rocks have been observed near Liverpool, which can hardly be due to the movements of shore-ice, and at Little Crosby a considerable surface has been cleared from the overlying boulder clay by the exertions of the late Mr. T. M. Reade and his son, Mr. A. Lyell Reade. But, so far as I am aware, rocks thus affected have not yet been discovered in the Wirral peninsula. On the eastern side of England similar markings have been found down to the coast of Durham, but a more southern extension of land ice can not be taken for granted. In this direction, however, so far as the tidal valley of the Thames, and in corresponding parts of the central and western lowlands, certain deposits occur which, though to a great extent of glacial origin, are in many respects different from those left by land ice in the Alpine regions and in northern America.

They present us with problems the nature of which may be inferred from a brief statement of facts. On the Norfolk coast we find the glacial drifts resting, sometimes on the chalk, sometimes on strata of very late Pliocene or early Pleistocene age. The latter show that in their time the strand-line must have oscillated slightly on either side of its present level. The earliest of the glacial deposits, called the Cromer Till and Contorted Drift, presents its most remarkable development in the cliffs on either side of that town. Here it consists of boulder clays and alternating beds of sand and clay; the first-named, two or three in number, somewhat limited in extent, and rather lenticular in form, are slightly sandy clays, full of pieces of chalk, flint and other kinds of rock, some of the last having traveled from long distances. Yet more remarkable are the huge erratics of chalk, in the neighborhood of which the sands and clays exhibit extraordinary contortions. Like the beds of till, they have not been found very far inland, for there the group appears as a whole to be represented by a stony loam, resembling a mixture of the sandy and clayey material, and this is restricted to a zone some twenty miles wide, bordering the coast of Norfolk and Suffolk; not extending south of the latter country, but being probably represented to the north of the Humber. Above these a group of false-bedded sands and gravels, variable in thickness and character—the Mid-glacial Sands of Searles V. Wood and F. W. Harmer. They extend over a wider area, and may be traced, according to some geologists, nearly to the western side of England, rising in that direction to a greater height above sea-level. But as it is impossible to prove that all isolated patches of these materials are identical in age, we can only be certain that some of them are older than the next deposit, a boulder clay, which extends over a large part of the lowlands in the eastern counties. This has a general resemblance to the Cromer Till, but its matrix is rather more clayey and is variable in color. In the north of Yorkshire, as well as on the seaward side of the Lincolnshire wolds, it is generally brownish or purplish, but on their western side and as far as the clay goes to the south it is some shade of gray. Near to these wolds, in mid-Norfolk, and on the northern margin of Suffolk, it has a whitish tint, owing to the abundance of comminuted chalk.

To the south and west of this area it is dark, from the similar presence of Kimeridge clay. Yet further west it assumes an intermediate color by having drawn upon the Oxford clay. This boulder clay, whether the chalky or the purple, in which partings of sand sometimes occur, must once have covered, according to Mr. F. W. Harmer, an area about ten thousand square miles in extent. It spreads like a covelet over the pre-glacial irregularities of the surface. It caps the hills, attaining sometimes an elevation of fully 500 feet above sea-level;[21] it fills up valleys,[22] sometimes partly, sometimes wholly, the original floors of which occasionally lie more than 100 feet below the same level. This boulder clay, often with an underlying sand or gravel, extends to the south as far as the neighborhood of Muswell Hill and Finchley; hence its margin runs westward through Buckinghamshire, and then, bending northwards, passes to the west of Coventry. On this side of the Pennine Chain the matrix of the boulder clay is again reddish, being mainly derived from the sands and marls of the Trias; pieces of chalk and flint are rare (no doubt coming from Antrim), though other rocks are often plentiful enough. Some authorities are of the opinion that the drift in most parts of Lancashire and Cheshire is separable, as on the eastern coasts, into a lower and an upper boulder clay, with intervening gravelly sands, but others think that the association of the first and third is lenticular rather than successive. Here also the lower clay can not be traced very far inland, eastward or southward; the others have a wider extension, but they reach a greater elevation above sea-level than on the eastern side of England. The sand is inconstant in thickness, being sometimes hardly represented, sometimes as much as 200 feet. The upper clay runs on its more eastern side up to the chalky boulder clay, and extends on the south at least into Worcestershire. On the western side it merges with the upper member of the drifts radiating from the mountains of North Wales, which often exhibit a similar tripartite division, while (as we learn from the officers of the Geological Survey) boulder clays and gravelly sands, which it must suffice to mention, extend from the highlands of South Wales for a considerable distance to the southeast and south. Boulder clay has not been recognized in Devon or Cornwall, though occasional erratics are found which seem to demand some form of ice-transport. A limited deposit, however, of that clay, containing boulders now and then over a yard in diameter, occurs near Selsey Bill on the Sussex coast, which most geologists consider to have been formed by floating rather than by land ice.

Marine shells are not very infrequent in the lower clays of East Anglia and Yorkshire, but are commonly broken. The well-known Bridlington Crag is the most conspicuous instance, but this is explained by many geologists as an erratic—a piece of an ancient North Sea bed caught up and transported, like the other molluscs, by an

[21] Not far from Royston it is found at a height of 525 feet above O.D. See F. W. Harmer, "Pleistocene Period in the Eastern Counties," p. 115.

[22] At Old North Road Station, on a tributary of the Cam, the boulder clay was pierced to a depth of 180 feet, and at Impington it goes to 60 feet below sea-level. Near Hitchin, a hidden valley, traced for seven or eight miles, was proved to a depth of 68 feet below O.D., and one near Newport in Essex, to 140 feet. Depths were also found of 120 feet at West Horseheath in Suffolk, of 120 feet on low ground two miles southwest of Sandy in Bedfordshire, of from 100 to 160 feet below the sea at Fossdyke, Long Sutton and Boston, and at Glemsford in the valley of the Stour 477 feet of drift was passed through before reaching the chalk. See F. W. Harmer, *Quart. Journ. Geol. Soc.*, LXIII., 1907, p. 494.

advancing ice-sheet. They also claim a derivative origin for the organic contents of the overlying sands and gravels, but some authorities consider the majority to be contemporaneous. Near the western coast of England, shells in much the same state of preservation as those on the present shores are far from rare in the lower clay, where they are associated with numerous striated stones, often closely resembling those which have traveled beneath a glacier, both from the Lake District and the less distant Trias. Shells are also found in the overlying sands up the valleys of the Dee and Severn, at occasional localities, even as far inland as Bridgnorth, the heights of the deposits varying from about 120 feet to over 500 feet above the sea-level. If we also take account of the upper boulder clay, where it can be distinguished, the list of marine molluscs, ostracods and foraminifers from these western drifts is a rather long one.[23]

Marine shells, however, on the western side of England, are not restricted to the lowlands. Three instances, all occurring over 1,000 feet above sea-level, claim more than a passing mention. At Macclesfield, almost thirty miles in a straight line from the head of the estuary of the Mersey, boulder clays associated with stratified gravels and sands have been described by several observers.[24] The clay stops at about 1,000 feet, but the sands and gravels go on to nearly 1,300 feet, while isolated erratics are found up to about 100 feet higher. Sea shells, some of which are in good condition, have been obtained at various elevations, the highest being about 1,200 feet above sea-level. About forty-eight species of molluscs have been recognized, and the fauna, with a few exceptions, more arctic in character and now found at a greater depth, is one which at the present day lives in a temperate climate at a depth of a few fathoms.

The shell-bearing gravels at Gloppa, near Oswestry, which are about thirty miles from the head of the Dee estuary, were carefully described in 1892 by Mr. A. C. Nicholson. He has enumerated fully sixty species, of which, however, many are rare. As his collection[25] shows, the bivalves are generally broken, but a fair number of the univalves are tolerably perfect. The deposit itself consists of alternating seams of sand and gravel, the one generally about an inch in thickness, the other varying from a few inches to a foot. The difference in the amount of rounding shown by the stones is a noteworthy feature. They are not seldom striated; some have come from Scotland, others from the Lake District, but the majority from Wales, the last being the more angular. Here and there, a block, sometimes exceeding a foot in diameter and usually from the last-named country, has been dropped among the smaller material, most of which ranges in diameter from half an inch to an inch and a half. The beds in one or two places show contortions; but as a rule, though slightly wavy and with a gentle dip rather to the west of south, they are uniformly deposited. In this respect, and in the unequal wearing of the materials, the Gloppa deposit differs from most gravels that I have seen. Its situation also is peculiar. It is on the flattened top of a rocky spur from higher hills, which falls rather steeply to the Shropshire low-

[23] W. Shone, *Quart. Journ. Geol. Soc.*, XXXIV., 1878, p. 383.

[24] *Memoirs of the Geological Survey:* "Country around Macclesfield," T. I. Pocock, 1906, p. 85. For some notes on Moel Tryfaen and the altitudes of other localities at which marine organisms have been found see J. Gwyn Jeffreys, *Quart. Journ. Geol. Soc.*, XXXVI., 1880, p. 351. For the occurrence of such remains in the Vale of Clwyd see a paper by T. McK. Hughes in *Proc. Chester Soc. of Nat. Hist.*, 1884.

[25] Now deposited in the Oswestry Museum.

land on the eastern side, and on the more western is defined by a small valley which enlarges gradually as it descends towards the Severn. If the country were gradually depressed for nearly 1,200 feet, this upland would become, first a promontory, then an island, and finally a shoal.

The third instance, on Moel Tryfaen in Carnarvonshire, was carefully investigated and described by a committee of this association[26] about ten years ago. The shells occur in an irregularly stratified sand and gravel, resting on slate, and overlain by a boulder clay, no great distance from and a few dozen feet below the rocky summit of the hill, being about 1,300 feet above the level of the sea and at least five miles from its margin. About fifty-five species of molluscs and twenty-three of foraminifers have been identified. According to the late Dr. J. Gwyn Jeffreys,[27] the majority of the molluscs are littoral in habit, the rest such as live in from ten to twenty fathoms of water. Most of the erratics have been derived from the Welsh mountains, but some rocks from Anglesey have also been obtained, and a few pebbles of Lake District and Scotch rocks. If the sea were about 1,300 feet above its present level, Moel Tryfaen would become a small rocky island, open to the storms from the west and north, and nearly a mile and a half away from the nearest land.

I must pass more rapidly over Ireland. The signs of vanished glaciers—ice-worn rocks and characteristic boulder-clays—are numerous, and may be traced in places down to the sea-level, but the principal outflow of the ice, according to some competent observers, was from a comparatively low district, extending diagonally across the island from the south of Lough Neagh to north of Galway Bay. Glaciers, however, must have first begun to form in the mountains on the northern and southern side of this zone, and we should have expected that, whatever might happen on the lowlands, they would continue to assert themselves. In no other part of the British Islands are eskers, which some geologists think were formed when a glacier reached the sea, so strikingly developed. Here also an upper and a lower boulder clay, the former being the more sparsely distributed, are often divided by a widespread group of sands and gravels, which locally, as in Great Britain, contains, sometimes abundantly, shells and other marine organisms; more than twenty species of molluscs, with foraminifers, a barnacle, and perforations of annelids, having been described. These are found in counties Dublin and Wicklow, at various altitudes,[28] from a little above sea-level to a height of 1,300 feet.

Not the least perplexing of the glacial phenomena in the British Isles is the distribution of erratics, which has been already mentioned in passing. On the Norfolk coast, masses of chalk, often thousands of cubic feet in volume, occur in the lowest member of the glacial series, with occasional great blocks of sand and gravel, which must have once been frozen. But these, or at any rate the larger of them, have no doubt been derived from the immediate neighborhood. Huge erratics also occasionally occur in the upper boulder clay—sometimes of chalk, as at Roslyn Hill near Ely and at Ridlington in Rutland, of jurassic limestone, near Great Ponton, to the south of Grantham, and of Lower Kimeridge clay near Biggleswade.[29] These

[26] *Brit. Assoc. Report*, 1899 (1900), pp. 414–423.

[27] *Quart. Journ. Geol. Soc.*, XXXVI., 1880, p. 355.

[28] See T. M. Reade, *Proc. Liverpool Geol. Soc.*, 1893–94, p. 183, for some weighty arguments in favor of a marine origin for these deposits.

[29] H. Home, *Quart. Journ. Geol. Soc.*, LIX., 1903, p. 375.

also probably have not traveled more than a few miles. But others of smaller size have often made much longer journeys. The boulder clays of eastern England are full of pieces of rock, commonly ranging from about half an inch to a foot in diameter. Among these are samples of the carboniferous, jurassic and cretaceous rocks of Yorkshire and the adjacent counties; the red chalk from either Hunstanton, Speeton or some part of the Lincolnshire wolds, being found as far south as the northern heights of London. Even the chalk and flint, the former of which, especially in the upper boulder clay, commonly occurs in well-worn pebbles, are frequently not the local but the northern varieties. And with these are mingled specimens from yet more distant sources—Cheviot porphyrites, South Scotch basalts, even some of the crystalline rocks of the Highlands. Whatever was the transporting agent, its general direction was southerly, with a slight deflection towards the east in the last-named cases.

But the path of these erratics has been crossed by two streams, one coming from the west, the other from the east. On the western side of the Pennine watershed the Shap granite rises at Wasdale Crag to a height of about 1,600 feet above sea-level. Boulders from it have descended the Eden valley to beyond Penrith; they have traveled in the opposite direction almost to Lancaster,[30] and a large number of them have actually made their way near the line of the Lake District watershed, across the upper valley of the Eden, and over the high pass of Stainmoor Forest,[31] whence they descended into Upper Teesdale. Subsequently the stream seems to have bifurcated, one part passing straight out to the present sea-bed, by way of the lower course of the Tees, to be afterwards driven back on to the Yorkshire coast. The other part crossed the low watershed between the Tees and the Ouse, descended the Vale of York and spread widely over the plain.[32] Shap boulders by some means penetrated into the valleys tributary to the Ause on its west bank, and they have been observed as far to the southeast as Royston, near Barnsley. It is noteworthy that Lake District rocks have been occasionally recorded from Airedale and even the neighborhood of Colne, though the granite from Shap has not been found there. The other stream started from Scandinavia. Erratics, some of which must have come from the northwestern side of the Christiania Fjord, occur on or near the coast from Essex to Yorkshire, and occasionally even as far north as Aberdeen, while they have been traced from the East Anglian coast to near Ware, Hitchin and Bedford.[33] It may be important to notice that these Scandinavian erratics are often waterworn, like those dispersed over Denmark and parts of northern Germany.

On the western side of England the course of erratics is not less remarkable. Boulders from southwestern Scotland, especially from the Kirkcudbright district, both waterworn and angular, are scattered over the lowlands as far south as Wolverhampton, Bridgnorth and Church Stretton. They may be traced along the border of North Wales, occurring, as has been said, though generally small, up to about 1,300 feet on Moel Tryfaen, 1,100 feet at Gloppa,

[30] A pebble of it is said to have been identified at Moel Tryfaen.

[31] The lowest part of the gap is about 1,400 feet. A little to the south is another gap about 200 feet lower, but none of the boulders seem to have taken that route.

[32] A boulder was even found above Grosmont in the Eske valley, 345 feet above sea-level.

[33] R. H. Rastall and J. Romanes, *Quart. Journ. Geol. Soc.*, LXV., 1909, p. 246.

and more than that height on the hills east of Macclesfield. Boulders from the Lake District are scattered over much the same area and attain the same elevation, but extend, as might be expected, rather farther to the east in Lancashire. They also have been found on the eastern side of the Pennine watershed, perhaps the most remarkable instances being in the dales of the Derbyshire Derwent and on the adjacent hills as much as 1,400 feet above the sea-level.[34] A third remarkable stream of erratics from the neighborhood of the Arenig Mountains extends from near the estuary of the Dee right across the paths of the two streams from the north, its eastern border passing near Rugeley, Birmingham and Bromsgrove. They also range high, occurring almost 900 feet above sea-level on Romsley Hill, north of the Clents, and being common at Gloppa. Boulders also from the basalt mass of Rowley Regis have traveled in some cases between four and five miles, and in directions ranging from rather west of south to northeast; and, though that mass hardly rises above the 700-feet contour line, one lies with an Arenig boulder on Romsley Hill. From Charnwood Forest, the crags of which range up to about 850 feet above sea-level, boulders have started which have been traced over an area to the south and west to a distance of more than twenty miles.

T. G. Bonney

(To be concluded)

THE AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY

The American Fisheries Society will hold its Fortieth Anniversary Meeting in New York City, September 27 to 29, 1910.

On Tuesday, the 27th, the society will meet at the New York Aquarium, in Battery Park, at 10 A.M. The members will be welcomed by Director Townsend, with an address on "The Conservation of Our Rivers and Lakes." The regular reading and discussion of papers will follow. A luncheon will be provided at the Aquarium by the New York Zoological Society. The afternoon session will begin at 2 P.M.

On Wednesday, the 28th, the meeting will be held at the American Museum of Natural History, 77th Street and Central Park, West. The morning session will begin at 10 o'clock; the afternoon session at 2.30. A luncheon will be provided by the trustees of the museum. All papers requiring the use of the stereopticon will be presented on Wednesday, in order that advantage may be taken of the excellent facilities afforded by the Museum.

On Thursday, the 29th, meetings will again be held at the aquarium at 10 A.M. and at 2 P.M.

The Hotel Navarre, at 38th Street and 7th Avenue, has been selected as the headquarters of the society, and special rates have been secured. It is centrally located in a district containing most of the theaters and many of the larger hotels and restaurants. It is four blocks from the Subway, five blocks from the Sixth and Ninth Avenue elevated stations, eight blocks from the Grand Central Station and six blocks from the new Pennsylvania Station. Accommodations should be reserved in advance, if possible.

No special entertainments have been arranged for the meeting in New York, the committee being of the opinion that the visiting members will prefer the amusements afforded by the city.

The Fishmongers Association extends a cordial invitation to the members of the society to visit the Fulton Fish Market, Pier 17, East River, foot of Fulton Street. The market should be visited in the morning—the earlier the better.

Correspondence intended for the officers or members of the society should be sent in care of the New York Aquarium, Battery Park.

Members expecting to be present are urgently requested to so inform the chairman, in order that complete arrangements may be made.

[34] Communication from Dr. H. Arnold-Bemrose.