

SCIENCE AND NATURE.

IN his interesting work entitled "The Great Ice-Age," Mr. James Geikie comes to the conclusion that the Glacial Period took place about two hundred thousand years ago. At this time the earth was so placed with regard to the sun that a series of physical changes was induced, which eventually resulted in conferring upon the northern hemisphere a climate of more than Arctic severity. "All Northern America and Northern Europe disappeared beneath a thick crust of ice and snow, and the glaciers of such regions as Switzerland assumed gigantic proportions. This great sheet of land-ice levelled up the valleys of Britain, and stretched across our mountains and hills down to low latitudes in England. Being only one connected or confluent series of mighty glaciers, the ice crept ever downwards and outwards from the mountains, following the direction of the principal valleys, and pushing out far to sea, where it terminated at last in deep water, many miles away from what now forms the coast-line of the country. This sea of ice was of such extent that the glaciers of Scandinavia coalesced with those of Scotland, upon what is now the floor of the shallow North Sea, while a mighty stream of ice flowing outwards from the western sea-board obliterated the Hebrides, and sent its ice-bergs adrift in the deep waters of the Atlantic. In like manner, massive glaciers, born in the Welsh and Cambrian mountains, swept over the low grounds of England, and united with the Scotch and Irish ice upon the bottom of the Irish sea. At the same period the Scandinavian mountains shed vast icebergs into the northern ocean, and sent southwards a sheet of ice that not only filled up the basin of the Baltic, but overflowed Finland, and advanced upon the plains of Northern Germany; while from every mountain-region in Europe great glaciers descended, sometimes for almost inconceivable distances, into the low countries beyond. Ere long this wonderful scene of Arctic sterility passed away. Gradually the snow and ice melted and drew back to the mountains, and plants and animals appeared

as the climate ameliorated. The mammoth and the woolly-coated rhinoceros roamed in our valleys, the great bear haunted our caves, and pine-trees grew in the south of England; but the seasons were still well marked. * * * By slow degrees, however, the cold of winter abated and the heat of summer increased. As the warmth of summer waxed, the Arctic mammalia gradually disappeared from our valleys, and sought out northern and more congenial homes. Step by step the climate continued to grow milder, and the differences between the seasons less marked, till something like perpetual summer reigned in Britain. Then it was that the hippopotamus wallowed in our rivers, and the elephant crashed through our forests; then too the lion, the tiger and the hyæna, became denizens of the English caves. Such scenes as these continued for a long time; but again the climate began to change. The summers grew less genial, the winters more severe. Gradually the southern mammalia disappeared, and were succeeded by Arctic animals. Even these, however, as the temperature became too severe, migrated southwards, until all life deserted Britain, and snow and ice reigned in undisputed possession. Once more the confluent glaciers overflowed the land, and desolation and sterility were everywhere."

So far as material support goes, the people of the United States may with right boast of a generosity and magnificence in the assistance of pure science, such has as yet not been ever approached by any other civilized nation. It is proposed to found a memorial monument to Agassiz, and it has been justly decided that no more appropriate method of carrying out this object could be devised than that of completing the noble and almost unrivalled museum of which he was the founder and creator. Knowing the vast sums which have been already expended in raising this museum to its present condition, one cannot, therefore, without wonder and admiration, read that the citizens of Boston