

species had a very wide range, and must therefore have been capable of accommodating themselves to considerable variations of temperature. The same species of megatherium, for example, ranged from Patagonia and the river Plata in South America, between latitudes 31° and 50° south, to corresponding latitudes of the northern continent, and was also an inhabitant of the intermediate country of Brazil, in the caves of which its fossil remains are met with. The extinct elephant also of Georgia (*Elephas primigenius*) has been traced in a fossil state northward from the Altamaha to the Polar regions, and then southwestward through Siberia to the south of Europe.

As to the exterminating causes, I agree with Mr. Darwin, that it is the height of presumption for any geologist to be astonished that he can not render an account of them. No naturalist can pretend to be so well acquainted with all the circumstances on which the continuance upon the earth of any living species depends, as to be entitled to wonder if it should diminish rapidly in number or geographical range. But if his speculations should embrace a period in which considerable changes in physical geography are known to have occurred, as is the case in North and South America since the megatherium flourished, how much more difficult would it be to appreciate all the effects of local modifications of climate, and changes in the stations of contemporary animals and plants, on all which, and many other conditions, the permanence of a species must depend. Until we understand the physiological constitutions of organic beings so well that we can explain why an epidemic or contagious disease may rage for months or years, and cut off a large proportion of the living individuals of one species while another is spared, how can we hope to explain why, in the great struggle for existence, some species are multiplying, while others are decreasing in number? "If," says Darwin, "two species of the same genus, and of closely allied habits, people the same district, and we can not say why one of them is rare and the other common, what right have we to wonder if the rarer of the two should cease to exist altogether?"

In illustration of this principle, I may refer to two beautiful evergreens flourishing in this part of Georgia, species of *Gordonia*