TO THE READER.

UNTIL within the past few years, nearly all current knowledge of glaciers was based on the study of those of the Alps. Practically all theories of the origin, growth, motion, etc., of glaciers were inspired from the same source. An enlargement of the field of study, however, has shown not only that glaciers of the same type as those of Switzerland exist in many other lands, but in numerous instances are larger and present greater diversity; and besides, additional types or "genera" have been discovered that are not represented in Europe or in fact on any of the three continents of the Eastern Hemisphere.

. As geological and geographical explorations have been extended, it has been found that North America is not only a favorable field for the growth of these twin sciences, but in many ways furnishes the best example of continental development that has as yet been studied. Strange as it may appear in the face of the overshadowing popular interest that centers in the glaciers of the Alps, North America offers more favorable conditions for the study of existing glaciers and of the records of ancient ice sheets than any other continent. Of each of the three leading types of glaciers thus far reorganized, namely, the alpine, piedmont, and continental, North America furnishes magnificent examples. In fact there is no other continent, except the little known region about the South Pole, in which other than the alpine type of glaciers exist. Of alpine glaciers representatives occur in North America in abundance and in great variety, ranging from the "pocket editions" about the summits of the High Sierra, California, to the magnificent Seward glacier, Alaska, the largest river of ice flowing from a mountain group that has yet been discovered. Of piedmont glaciers, the type specimen, so to speak, and the only one of the class yet explored, is the great ice sheet that intervenes between