

than twice its present number! The depopulated and, to some extent, desolate northern half of the island was in those days densely populated; and where now impassable jungles afford secure retreats for apes and bears, parrots and doves, flourished extensive fields, rendered productive by a system of irrigation that is worthy all admiration. The remains of these irrigation tanks, as well as the noble ruins of the vanished cities, Anarajapoora, Sigiri, Pollanarua, etc., to this day bear witness of their former magnificence. They show what might again be accomplished on this "jewel island," this "noblest pearl in the diadem of India."

SNOW-FLAKES.

MANY of our readers will perhaps be surprised to learn that no less than 1,000 different kinds of snow-crystals have been noticed by Scoresby, Glaisher, and Lowe, and that a large proportion of them have been figured and described. The patterns are of wonderful beauty. A strange circumstance connected with these objects is the fact that for the most part they are found, on a close examination, to be formed of minute colored crystals—some red, some green, others blue or purple. In fact, all the colors of the rainbow are to be seen in the delicate tracery of these fine hexagonal stars. So that in the perfect whiteness of the driven snow we have an illustration of the well known fact that the colors of the rainbow combine to form the purest white; for the common snow-flake is formed of a large number of tiny crystals, though their beauty is destroyed in the snow-flake through the effects of collision and partial melting. It may not be very commonly known that ordinary ice also is composed of a combination of crystals presenting all the regularity of formation seen in the snow-crystals. This would scarcely be believed by anyone who examines a rough mass of ice taken from the surface of a frozen lake. Yet, if a slice be cut from the mass and placed in