

year. At this rate of diminution, a glacier, even one thousand feet in thickness, could not advance a single century without being exhausted. The water supplied by infiltration no doubt repays the loss to a great degree. Indeed the lower part of the glacier must be chiefly maintained from this source, since the annual increase from the fresh accumulations of snow is felt only above the snow line, below which the yearly snow melts away and disappears.

But where direct observations are still so scanty, and the interpretations of the facts so conflicting, it is the part of wisdom to be circumspect in forming opinions. This much, however, is believed to be already settled: that any thing which ascribes the very complicated phenomena of the glacier to one cause must be defective and one sided. It seems most probable that, while pressure has the largest share in producing the onward movement of the glacier, as well as in the transformation of the snow ice, a careful analysis of all the facts will show that this pressure is owing partly to the weight of the mass itself, partly to the pushing on of the accumulated snow from behind, partly to its sliding along the surface upon which it rests, partly to the weight of water pervading the whole, partly to the softening of the rigid ice by the infiltration of water, and partly, also, to the dilation of the mass, resulting from the freezing of this water. These causes, of course, modify the ice itself, while they contribute to the motion. Further investigations are required to ascertain in what proportion these different influences contribute to the general result, and at what time and under what circumstances they modify most directly the motion of the glacier.

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