

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE GLACIAL EPOCH.—EXISTING GLACIER REGIONS.

I HAVE now to describe a remarkable episode in Post-Tertiary times, known as the *Glacial epoch*, which is certainly later than the latest beds of the Crag, and is generally considered to be of later date than the 'Forest bed' of Cromer, on sound stratigraphical evidence. The effect of local mountain glaciers, and of far broader sheets of glacier ice that descended from the mountains and overspread great plains, have left unmistakable traces over large parts of the northern and southern hemispheres; and without going into all the minutiae of the subject I shall be able to describe the history of that period, as it affects the scenery of Britain, with something like detail. Before doing so, however, I must lead the reader into Switzerland, and show what kind of effect is being produced there by the ice of the present day, and afterwards into Greenland and Victoria Land, and show what takes place there, and then by the knowledge thus gained I shall be able to return to our own country and explain what took place here in that icy episode, which, measured by ordinary standards, is far distant in time, but which, by comparison with the more ancient periods, almost approaches our own day.

The first thing to be done is to explain what a glacier is. In any large and good map of Switzer-