

tains, and north of latitude 40°, it is as if the whole country were sown broadcast with lakes, large and small; and great part of the country not being mountainous, but consisting of undulating flats, it becomes an absurdity to suppose that, so close together, a special area of depression was provided for each lake. The physical geology of America, Scotland, and Sweden, for example, entirely goes against such a supposition; and I believe that it is equally untenable for the Alps and the lowlands between the Alps and the Jura. Having come to these conclusions, it is plain that it is not a simple thing to account for the existence of hollows, composed of hard rocks, which completely enclose lakes.

If, then, we have disposed of these erroneous hypotheses, what is left? If the sea cannot form such hollows, nor weather, nor running water, and if the hollows were not formed by synclinal curves of the strata, and if they do not lie in gaping fissures, nor, for most lakes, in areas of special depression, *the only remaining agent* that I know *is the denuding power of ice.*¹

In the region of the Alps it is a remarkable circum-

¹ I must again guard myself against misapprehension. Some lakes owe their existence merely to inequalities in 'the drift' or other glacial deposits, many to extinct volcanic craters, and others, especially in volcanic regions old and new, to special subsidences. An excellent paper on this subject 'On the Ancient Volcanoes of the District of Schemnitz Hungary,' has been published by Mr. J. W. Judd, F.R.S. in vol. xxxii. of the 'Journal of the Geological Society,' 1876; and I have no reason to doubt that the Great Salt Lake, the Yellowstone Lake, and others in the barely extinct region of the Rocky Mountains, have a similar origin. Neither would I think of attributing the origin of the great lakes of Africa to glacial influences, any more than I would the Black Sea, the Caspian, and the Sea of Aral. He would also be worse than a bold man, who would speak of the Salt Lakes of the Sahara as being of glacial origin, to say nothing of others too numerous to name.