probable that they were left exactly in the place where they still lie, the inference may be drawn that they are of older date than the peat which overlies them. Tried by such a rigid test as this, comparatively few of the Scottish peat-mosses can at present be proved to be later than the Roman invasion. There is ground for believing that some have been formed since that time, and that others, though later than the first coming of man into the country, are far older than our era. There can be little doubt that peat-bogs would begin to accumulate as soon as aquatic vegetation began to grow again over the surface of the country from which the ice and snow of the Glacial period had retired. The lower parts of many of our mosses probably date back to that ancient time, though the higher portions may belong to much more recent periods.

The history of the peat-mosses of Scotland has yet to be investigated, for at present our knowledge of them is of the most meagre and fragmentary kind. From the depths of the older mosses we may hope to learn far more than is now known regarding the plants that clothed the land during the Ice Age. It is not from Scottish localities that our information has been obtained respecting the fauna and flora of the Glacial period. The very intensity and prolongation of the glacial conditions in the northern part of Britain made the chances of the preservation of organic remains there less probable. But it may not be too much to hope that from Scottish peat-mosses relics may yet be obtained of the animals that preceded, or were contemporary with the earliest human population of the country—the mammoth, rhinoceros, reindeer, musk-ox, bear, Irish elk, the progenitors of our present races of cattle, and other denizens of forest and glade.

Peat is formed in lakes, or on wet, marshy ground. The