

colation of water through rocks into natural cisterns, from which it is discharged at a level lower than that of its collected volume. There are many perennial springs in mountainous regions, and there is, perhaps, no other theory than this that will account for them. The fall of rain, and the melting of snow upon the summits of mountains, produce a considerable body of water, part of which penetrates the permeable strata, and is thrown again to the surface at a lower elevation along some fissure, or in the line of stratification.

GLACIERS.

The snow that falls upon the summit of mountains accumulates rapidly, and by its own weight, assisted by thaws and frost, becomes a consolidated mass of great thickness. Such masses are called glaciers, and are found on the upper portions and between the caps of all lofty mountains. The appearance of a glacier must depend upon the circumstances under which it is formed. If it were possible to imagine the ocean ruffled by a gentle breeze and consolidated, or a boundless mirror of ice, the reader might have some idea of the forms in which a glacier may be presented to the eye of the traveller; but nothing less than the view can give him a conception of the terrific scene, or the amazement, if not the terror, with which the appearance is first beheld. The traveller, as he passes over the mighty frozen ocean, may well imagine that he feels the billows swelling beneath his feet; he stands in a new world, surrounded by new scenes; no living object is there, and no sound except his own feeble voice, and the detonations of the ice as it tumbles in fragments down the yawning precipice; not a flower or a tree can be seen, except the lonely pine, which seems to be left as though to mourn over the grave of nature. But even this desolate region has its use in the economy of nature; for it is the reservoir of those springs which distribute fertility through the plains, and gives that in gentle streams which would otherwise rush headlong in its fury to the valleys, and leave ruin and desolation in its path.

RIVERS.

Rivers generally take their rise in mountainous countries, from the melting of ice, or from springs. When the fall of the water is gentle, the stream is called a rivulet; when