

considerably below the tide-line at flood, a sort of recent breccia formed by calcareous springs, which, as the stalagmitical matter could not have been deposited in places exposed to the diurnal washings of the sea, indicated a higher level of the land than now, at the time of its formation ; and the submerged mosses of both Britain and Ireland,—mosses now existing in many localities far below the fall of the tide,—where not more ancient than the boulder-clay, bear evidence in the same line. But on this obscure passage in the geological history of our country I am unable, from at least actual observation, to say aught more : my few facts lie in the direction of Professor Forbes's theory, but they accompany it only a short way. There is a wide gap still unfilled. I may be permitted to remind you, that it is held by the Professor,—one of the most accomplished of our geologists,—that of the five British floras, we have two in Scotland,—the Germanic flora, and the semi-arctic or Scandinavian flora ; that these were introduced into the country at different periods ; and that while the Germanic flora dates from the times of the Post-Tertiary elevation of the land, the more ancient of the two—the semi-arctic or Scandinavian—dates from the preceding times of the boulder-clay. Nor does it appear in any degree more improbable that we should have the descendants of the plants of even the remoter period still vital on our hill-tops, than that we should have the descendants of some of its animals still living in our seas. It seems at first a curious problem, difficult of solution, that widely separated mountain summits should possess the same alpine plants,—that the summits of Ben Wyvis and Ben Lomond, for instance, or of Ben Nevis and Ben Muich Dhui, should have their species in common, while not a trace of them appears on the lower elevations between. But it simplifies the case to conceive of these alpine plants as the vegetable aborigines of the country, compelled by climatal invasion to shelter in