

ble proof that there was at least one interglacial period. There may have been more than one advance of the northern ice into temperate latitudes. The interval of milder climate, of which there is clear proof, must have been of such prolonged duration that southern types of plant and animal life were enabled to spread northward and resume their former habitats.² Eventually, however, and no doubt very gradually, after intervals of increase and diminution, the ice finally retired toward the north, and with it went the Arctic flora and fauna that had peopled the plains of Europe, Canada, and New England. The existing snow-fields and glaciers of the Pyrenees, Switzerland, and Norway are remnants of the great ice-sheets of the glacial period, while the Arctic plants that people the mountains, and survive in scattered colonies on the lower grounds, are relics of the northern vegetation that covered Europe from Norway to Spain.

The general succession of events has been the same throughout all the European region north of the Alps, likewise in Canada, Labrador, and the northeastern States, though of course with local modifications. The following summary embodies the main facts in the history of the Ice Age. Some local details are given in subsequent pages.

Pre-glacial Land-surfaces. — Here and there, fragments of the land over which the ice-sheets of the glacial period settled have escaped the general extensive ice-abrasion of that ancient terrestrial surface, and have even retained relics of the forest growth that covered them. One of the best-known deposits in which these relics have been preserved is the so-called "Forest Bed" (p. 1660). Above

² Those who wish to enter into this debated subject will find it discussed from opposite sides in some recent papers by T. C. Chamberlin and G. F. Wright in the *Amer. Journ. Sci.* (1892, 1893), with references to other authorities.