

great alluvial plains which in some of the colonies form such marked features. These deposits vary up to 300 feet in depth, and are a great storehouse of alluvial gold. They may possibly indicate that a greater rainfall was concerned in their formation than now characterizes the same regions. If the glaciers of New Zealand advanced into the sea, and the great Antarctic ice-sheet ever crept north toward the Australian shores, during some part of this cold period, the rainfall may have been so augmented that the rivers spread out far beyond the limits within which they are now confined. Evidence indeed has been adduced in favor of true glaciation in the Australian Alps. - What are described as ice-worn surfaces have been observed on Mount Cobboras at elevations of between 4000 and 6000 feet, and on Mount Kosciusko in New South Wales. Erratic blocks and moraines are likewise cited.⁶⁴

Section ii. Recent, Post-glacial or Human Period

§ 1. General Characters

The long succession of Pleistocene ages shaded without abrupt change of any kind into what is termed the Human or Recent Period.⁶⁵ The Ice Age, or Glacial Period, may indeed be said still to exist in Europe. The snow-fields and glaciers have disappeared from Britain, France, the Vosges, and the Harz, but they still linger among the Pyrenees, remain in larger mass among the Alps, and spread over wide areas in northern Scandinavia. This dovetailing or overlapping of geological periods has been the rule from the beginning of time, the apparently abrupt transitions in the geological record being due to imperfections in the chronicle.

⁶⁴ J. Stirling, *Trans. Roy. Soc. Viet.* 1884, p. 23; *Nature*, xxxv. 1886, p. 182; Dr. von Lendenfeld, *Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S. Wales*, 1885, p. 45.

⁶⁵ See for general information Lyell's "Antiquity of Man," Lubbock's "Prehistoric Times," Evans's "Ancient Stone Implements," Boyd Dawkins's "Cave Hunting" and "Early Man in Britain," J. Geikie's "Prehistoric Europe."