

CHAPTER IX

THE GLACIAL PERIOD. THE CAMBRO-SILURIAN
CONTROVERSY

GLACIAL DRIFT—JAMES MITCHELL—AGASSIZ, BUCKLAND, AND LYELL ON THE ANCIENT GLACIERS OF BRITAIN—DISCUSSIONS—WILLIAM HOPKINS—MOXON'S 'GEOLOGIST'—W. J. HAMILTON—PHOTOGRAPHY—RETIREMENT OF LONSDALE—SEDGWICK AND MURCHISON ON CAMBRIAN AND SILURIAN—H. WARBURTON—J. W. SALTER—THE RAY SOCIETY—H. E. STRICKLAND—ROBERT CHAMBERS—D. T. ANSTED

THE various superficial deposits, more especially those now grouped as Glacial Drift, were known in early days by the uncomplimentary term of 'Extraneous Rubbish.'

Several observers were engaged from about 1830 and onwards in studying the local deposits. Thus, H. E. Strickland dealt with the gravel yielding freshwater shells at Crophorne in Worcestershire; and Joshua Trimmer with that containing marine shells near Shrewsbury, and with the still more remarkable shelly 'diluvium' on Moel Tryfaen near Carnarvon. At this locality the drift was more than 1,000 feet above sea-level, and the slaty rocks beneath the sand and gravel were observed by Trimmer to be covered with scratches and furrows. James Mitchell, in a memoir read before the Society on November 7, 1838, described the Drift deposits that occur over the Eastern counties from Finchley to Cromer, and remarked that

'The current by which the drift was accumulated, the author conceives, came from a point to the east of north, and he is of opinion that the materials have been derived in part from Scandinavia and in part from the destruction of strata which once occupied the site of the German Ocean.'¹

¹ *Proc. Geol. Soc.* iii. p. 5.