

### The Supposed Glaciation of Brazil.

MR. WALLACE observes in his letter on this subject, published in *NATURE* (vol. *xlvi*. p. 589), that "no authoritative disproof has yet been given of the exceedingly strong and positive statement of Agassiz and Hartt."

I confess to my mind the matter had seemed disposed of by the interesting discussion of the subject to be found in the "Notes of a Naturalist in South America" (1887), by the late Mr. John Ball, F.R.S. This experienced and accurate observer arrived at the conclusion from a study of the phenomena on the spot, that they could be sufficiently accounted for by subaërial denudation (see, in particular, pp. 313-8).

In the following passage he rejects the agency of glacial action as definitely as his habitual caution and modesty would allow:—

"I was unfortunately not acquainted at that time with the observations made near Tijuca by Prof. Alexander Agassiz, which appear to him to give evidence of glacial action in this part of Brazil. It would be rash, especially for one who has not been able to examine the deposits referred to, to controvert conclusions resting on such high authority; but I may remark that the evidence is confessedly very imperfect, and that the characteristic striations, either on the live rock or on the transported blocks, which are commonly seen in the theatre of glacial action, have not been observed. I lean to the opinion that the deposits seen near Tijuca are of the same character as those described by M. Liais as frequent in Brazil. The crystalline rocks are of very unequal hardness, and while some portions are rapidly disintegrated, the harder part resist. The disintegrated matter is washed away, and the result is to leave a pile of blocks of unequal dimensions lying in a confused mass." (P. 342.)

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