

ing country. The inundated ground is covered permanently with a layer of black peaty earth.

From the treacherous nature of their surface, peat-mosses have frequently been the receptacles for bodies of men and animals that ventured upon them. As peat possesses great antiseptic power, these remains are usually in a state of excellent preservation. In Ireland, the remains of the extinct large Irish elk (*Megaceros hibernicus*) have been dug up from many of the bogs. Human weapons, tools, and ornaments have been exhumed from peat-mosses; likewise crannoges, or pile-dwellings (constructed in the original lakes that preceded the mosses), and canoes hollowed out of single trees.

4. Mangrove-Swamps.—On the low moist shores and river-mouths of tropical countries, the mangrove-tree plays an important geological part. It grows in such situations in a dense jungle, sometimes twenty miles broad, which fringes the coast as a green selvage, and runs up, if it does not quite occupy, creeks and inlets. The mangrove flourishes in sea-water, even down to low-water mark, forming there a dense thicket, which, as the trees drop their radicles and take root, grows outward into the sea. It is singular to find terrestrial birds nestling in the branches above, and crabs and barnacles living among the roots below. By this network of subaqueous radicles and roots, the water that flows off the land is filtered of its sediment, which, retained among the vegetation, helps to turn the spongy jungle into a firm soil.³⁵⁰ On the coast of Florida, the mangrove swamps stretch for long distances, as a belt from five to twenty miles broad, which winds round the creeks and inlets. At Bermuda, the mangroves co-operate with grasses and other plants to choke up the creeks and brackish lakes. In these waters calcareous algæ abound, and, as their remains are thrown up amid the sand and

³⁵⁰ For an account of the growth of mangrove swamps, see N. S. Shaler, 10th Ann. Rep. U. S. Geol. Surv. 1890, p. 291.