

Cambridge. The collection of scientific periodicals of the Smithsonian Institution is unquestionably the largest on this continent, and but for the wise policy of Prof. Henry, the enlightened head of that establishment, the naturalists of America could not at this time make any investigations involving historical researches. Next to the Smithsonian Institution I have to mention the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, the library of which has acquired the highest importance for naturalists, through the liberality with which Dr. Wilson has supplied its wants.

The Museum of Comparative Zoölogy in Cambridge contains specimens of all the Acalephs described in this work which could be preserved. And I would take this opportunity to say, that, with proper care, a much larger number of these animals may be preserved in a state fit for study than is generally supposed. Valuable specimens were sent to me by Professor J. Leidy, collected by him in Long Island Sound and along the shores of the Middle States, some of which he has himself described in his contributions to the Marine Faunæ of Rhode Island and New Jersey. Others, from the same localities, were presented to me by Mr. Samuel Powel of Philadelphia, among which I would especially mention the Cordylophora described by Prof. Leidy. To my friend Theodore Lyman I am indebted for fine specimens of several Hydroids of the Bay of Boston, and to Mr. William Stimpson for others from the eastern shores of the Northern States. To my friend T. G. Cary, and to my son Alexander Agassiz, who have enriched the Museum of Cambridge with immense collections from California, I owe many specimens of Acalephs from the west coast of North America. Captain W. H. A. Putnam, of Salem, to whom our Museum is indebted for the most valuable collections from the Indian and Pacific Oceans, has brought me a number of Medusæ and Hydroids from the East Indies and from the Gulf Stream, which, after years, are still in a good state of preservation. To Mr. John McCrady I am indebted for an early communication of his contributions to the history of the Acalephs of South Carolina. I would add also, that in the Aquarial Gardens of Boston I have frequently had opportunities of observing many of our Hydroids and Medusæ in a fine state of preservation.

It is but proper, that, in leaving this volume to speak for itself, I should also mention the facilities constantly afforded me by the publishers for making it as worthy as possible of the extensive patronage it has received.

LOUIS AGASSIZ.

CAMBRIDGE, October 31, 1860.