

eral subscription, by letters, by articles in the journals, and by every means which the warmest friendship and the most genuine interest in science could suggest. He was rewarded beyond his utmost hope or mine, by the generous response of the public to whom he appealed. We had fixed upon five hundred subscribers as the number necessary, to enter upon the publication with safety; and we had hoped that the list might perhaps be increased to seven or eight hundred. At this moment it stands at twenty-five hundred: a support such as was never before offered to any scientific man for purely scientific ends, without any reference to government objects or direct practical aims,—although I believe no scientific investigations, however abstruse, are without practical results. My generous friend did not live to witness the completion of the first volume of the series, which without his assistance could not have appeared, but he followed with the deepest interest every step in its progress, to the day of his death;—he did live, however, to hear the echo which answered his appeal to the nation, in whose love of culture and liberality towards all intellectual objects he had felt so much confidence. From all the principal cities, and from towns and villages in the West, which a few years since did not exist; from California, from every corner of the United States,—came not only names, but proffers of assistance in the way of collections, and information respecting the distribution and habits of animals, which have been of the utmost assistance in the progress of the work.

It has been my wish to make my part of the undertaking worthy of the interest so liberally shown by the community; and in this I have been greatly assisted by the liberal views which the publishers have taken, from the beginning, with regard to its publication. And now, in presenting this volume to the American public, I would take occasion to repeat,—what has already been stated in a circular to my subscribers,—that the plan of the work has been enlarged, in consequence of the liberality of the subscriptions, in a manner which has delayed the publication for nearly a year, but which has, I believe, made the book more valuable. I have thus been able to double, at the least, the number of figures upon most of the plates, and to include in the text, generalizations which are the results of my whole scientific life; so that this volume,—which, according to the original plan, was designed to be one of special descriptive Zoölogy,—contains, in addition to a description of the North American Turtles, a review of the classification of the whole animal kingdom. I have also endeavored to make it a text-book of reference for the student, in which he may find notices of all that has been accomplished in the various departments of Natural History alluded to, and which, I trust, young American naturalists will take not only as an indication of what has been done, but as an earnest of what remains to be done, in the fields now open to our investigation.

In consequence of these additions, the first volume is more bulky than was intended, but contains no plates; while the second, in order to avoid mixing heterogeneous subjects, had