

the theory, because it collects, under one point of view, and gives a rational explanation of, many apparently independent classes of facts.⁴

⁴ In treating the several subjects included in the present and my other works I have continually been led to ask for information from many zoologists, botanists, geologists, breeders of animals, and horticulturists, and I have invariably received from them the most generous assistance. Without such aid I could have effected little. I have repeatedly applied for information and specimens to

foreigners, and to British merchants and officers of the Government residing in distant lands, and, with the rarest exceptions, I have received prompt, open-handed, and valuable assistance. I cannot express too strongly my obligations to the many persons who have assisted me, and who, I am convinced, would be equally willing to assist others in any scientific investigation.