

of the vessel suddenly striking bottom; then, other heavier blows on the fatal bar, and a quivering and creaking among the timbers; the waters rapidly gaining, in spite of the pumps, through a long night; the morning come, our taking to the boats, empty handed, deserting the old craft that had been a home for three eventful years, for "Cape Disappointment"—a name that tells of other vessels here deceived and wrecked; and, twenty hours later, the last vestige of the old *Peacock* gone, her upper decks swept off by the waves, the hulk buried in the sands.

But these were only incidents of a few hours in a long and always delightful cruise. If this work gives pleasure to any, it will but prolong in the world the enjoyments of the "Exploring Expedition."

In explanation of some allusions in the following pages, I may here state with regard to the Exploring Expedition, that Captain (now Admiral) CHARLES WILKES, U.S.N., the Commander of the Expedition, was in charge of the Sloop-of-war *Vincennes*; Capt. WM. L. HUDSON, U.S.N., of the Sloop-of-war *Peacock*; Capt. A. K. LONG, U.S.N., of the Storeship *Relief* (the vessel which encountered the dangers in the Cape Horn sea, above related); and Lieut.-Commandant C. RINGGOLD, of the Brig *Porpoise*; and that my associates in the "Scientific Corps" were Dr. CHARLES PICKERING, J. P. COUTHOUY, and TITIAN R. PEALE, Zoölogists; WM. RICH and J. D. BRECKENRIDGE, Botanists; HORATIO HALE, Philologist: JOSEPH DRAYTON and A. T. AGATE, Artists.

Our cruise led us partly along the course followed by Mr. CHARLES DARWIN during the years 1831 to 1836, in the voyage of the *Beagle*, under Captain FITZROY; and, where it diverged from his route, it took us over scenes, similar to his, of coral and volcanic islands. Soon after reaching Sydney, Australia, in 1839, a brief statement was found in the papers of Mr. Darwin's theory with respect to the origin of the atoll and barrier forms of reefs. The paragraph threw a flood of