

CHAPTER III.

1828 - 1829 : ÆT. 21 - 22.

First Important Work in Natural History. — Spix's Brazilian Fishes. — Second Vacation Trip. — Sketch of Work during University Year. — Extracts from the Journal of Mr. Dinkel. — Home Letters. — Hope of joining Humboldt's Asiatic Expedition. — Diploma of Philosophy. — Completion of First Part of the Spix Fishes. — Letter concerning it from Cuvier.

It was not without a definite purpose that Agassiz had written to his father some weeks before, "Should I during the course of my studies succeed in making myself known by a distinguished work, would you not then consent that I should study for one year the natural sciences alone?" Unknown to his parents, for whom he hoped to prepare a delightful surprise, Agassiz had actually been engaged for months on the first work which gave him distinction in the scientific world; namely, a description of the Brazilian fishes brought home by Martius and Spix from their celebrated journey in Brazil. This was the secret to which allusion is made in the next