

and for some months he was obliged to abate his activity, and to refrain even from writing a letter. During this time, while he was shut up in a darkened room, he practiced the study of fossils by touch alone, using even the tip of the tongue to feel out the impression, when the fingers were not sufficiently sensitive. He said he was sure at the time that he could bring himself in this way to such delicacy of touch that the loss of sight would not oblige him to abandon his work. After some months his eyes improved, and though at times threatened with a return of the same malady, he was able, throughout life, to use his eyes more uninterruptedly than most persons. His lectures, always delivered extemporaneously, do not seem to have been suspended for any length of time.

The following letter from Agassiz to Humboldt is taken from a rough and incomplete draught, which was evidently put aside (perhaps on account of the trouble in his eyes), and only completed in the following May. Although imperfect, it explains Humboldt's answer, which is not only interesting in itself, but throws light on Agassiz's work at this period.