

deterred him. The "Poissons Fossiles" had shown him the peril of entering upon such an enterprise without capital. Perhaps he would never have dared to undertake it but for a friendly suggestion which opened a way out of his perplexities. Mr. Francis C. Gray, of Boston, who felt not only the interest of a personal friend in the matter, but also that of one who was himself a lover of letters and science, proposed an appeal to the public spirit of the country in behalf of a work devoted entirely to the Natural History of the United States. Mr. Gray assumed the direction of the business details, set the subscription afloat, stimulated its success by his own liberal contributions, by letters, by private and public appeals. The result far exceeded the most sanguine expectations of those interested in its success. Indeed, considering the purely scientific character of the work, the number of subscribers for it was extraordinary, and showed again the hold Agassiz had taken upon the minds and affections of the people in general. The contributors were by no means confined to Boston and Cambridge, although the Massachusetts list was naturally the largest, nor were they found exclusively among literary and scientific circles. On the contrary,