

For originality of material, clearness of presentation, and beauty of illustration, these volumes have had their full recognition as models of scientific work. Their philosophy was, perhaps, too much out of harmony with the current theories of the day to be acceptable. In the "Essay on Classification" especially, Agassiz brought out with renewed earnestness his conviction that the animal world rests upon certain abstract conceptions, persistent and indestructible. He insists that while physical influences maintain, and within certain limits modify, organisms, they have never affected typical structure, — those characters, namely, upon which the great groups of the animal kingdom are united. From his point of view, therefore, what environment can do serves to emphasize what it cannot do. For the argument on which these conclusions are based we refer to the book itself. The discussion of this question occupies, however, only the first portion of the volume, two thirds of which are devoted to a general consideration of classification, and the ideas which it embodies, with a review of the modern systems of zoölogy.

aration, the reader is referred to the Preface of the volumes themselves.