

employ my summer. I foresaw that in going to Nahant I should not find the rest I need after all the fatigue of the two last years, or, at least, not enough of change and relaxation. I felt that I must have new scenes to give me new life. But where to go and what to do?

Perhaps I wrote you last year of the many marks of kindness I have received from the Emperor of Brazil, and you remember that at the time of my *début* as an author, my attention was turned to the natural history of that country. Lately, also, in a course of lectures at the Lowell Institute, I have been led to compare the Alps, where I have passed so many happy years, with the Andes, which I have never seen. In short, the idea came to me gradually, that I might spend the summer at Rio de Janeiro, and that, with the present facilities for travel, the journey would not be too fatiguing for my wife. . . . Upon this, then, I had decided, when most unexpectedly, and as the consummation of all my wishes, my pleasure trip was transformed into an important scientific expedition for the benefit of the Museum, by the intervention of one of my friends, Mr. Nathaniel Thayer. By chance I met him a week ago in Boston. He laughed at me a little about my roving disposition,