

can hardly look forward to the time when we shall be in possession of it without shrinking from the grandeur of our undertaking. The past history of our science rises before me with its lessons. Thinking men in every part of the world have been stimulated to grapple with the infinite variety of problems, connected with the countless animals scattered without apparent order throughout sea and land. They have been led to discover the affinities of various living beings. The past has yielded up its secrets, and has shown them that the animals now peopling the earth are but the successors of countless populations which have preceded them, and whose remains are buried in the crust of our globe. Further study has revealed relations between the animals of past time and those now living, and between the law of succession in the former and the laws of growth and distribution in the latter, so intimate and comprehensive that this labyrinth of organic life assumes the character of a connected history, which opens before us with greater clearness in proportion as our knowledge increases. But when the museums of the Old World were founded, these relations were not even suspected. The collections of natural history, gathered at im-