

of its *floats* sinks at once to the bottom of the water, and these floats are not likely to be the first parts developed from the spores. Moreover, after examining large quantities of the weed, I have not seen a single branch, however small, which did not show marks of having been torn from a solid attachment.

You may hardly feel an interest in my zoological observations, but I am sure you will be glad to learn that we had the best opportunity of carefully examining most of the animals known to inhabit the Gulf weed, and some also which I did not know to occur among them. The most interesting discovery of our voyage thus far, however, is that of a nest built by a fish, and floating on the broad ocean with its living freight. On the 13th, Mr. Mansfield, one of our officers, brought me a ball of Gulf weed which he had just picked up, and which excited my curiosity to the utmost. It was a round mass of Sargassum about the size of two fists. The bulk of the ball was made up of closely packed branches and leaves, held together by fine threads, running through them in every direction, while other branches hung more loosely from the margin. Placed in a large bowl of water it became apparent that the loose branches