

P R E F A C E.

Soon after Porto Rico came into the possession of the United States the Commission of Fish and Fisheries made arrangements for an investigation of the waters in and about the island with reference to their fauna and their fishery resources; and in December, 1898, the steamer *Fish Hawk*, with a corps of specialists, was sent to the island for this purpose, remaining there until the latter part of February, 1899. Large collections of water animals were made, the knowledge of the fauna of the island and the West Indies in general was greatly extended, and the economic fisheries were carefully considered.

On the return of the expedition the collections were distributed among specialists for study and report, with a view to the publication of a comprehensive work on the animals of the fresh and salt waters of the region. The meagerness of information on this subject and the demand for authentic data which would follow the influx of new people and the development of the fishing industry appeared to warrant the issuance of a bulletin which would contain descriptions of the animals and illustrations of many of the most important ones.

The specimens representing the following groups were assigned to the persons named, whose reports are contained in the two volumes composing the present bulletin:

- Fishes*: Prof. B. W. Evermann and Mr. M. C. Marsh, U. S. Fish Commission.
- Mollusks*: Dr. W. H. Dall and Mr. Charles T. Simpson, U. S. National Museum.
- Brachyurans and Macrurans*: Miss M. J. Rathbun, U. S. National Museum.
- Anomurans*: Dr. James E. Benedict, U. S. National Museum.
- Stomatopods*: Dr. Robert P. Bigelow, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Isopods*: Dr. H. F. Moore, U. S. Fish Commission.
- Cirripeds*: Mr. Maurice A. Bigelow, Teachers' College, Columbia University.
- Polychaetous Annelids*: Prof. A. L. Treadwell, Vassar College.
- Leeches*: Dr. J. P. Moore, University of Pennsylvania.
- Nemerteans*: Dr. Wesley R. Coe, Yale University.
- Echinoderms*: Prof. Hubert L. Clark, Olivet College.
- Alcyonarians*: Prof. Charles W. Hargitt, Syracuse University.
- Stony Corals*: Mr. T. W. Vaughan, U. S. Geological Survey.
- Actinians*: Dr. J. E. Duerden, Institute of Jamaica.
- Sponges*: Prof. H. V. Wilson, University of North Carolina.
- Foraminifera*: Dr. James M. Flint, U. S. Navy.

In addition to the foregoing articles, a general report on the investigations is given by Prof. B. W. Evermann, who was in charge of the expedition, and a chapter on "The fisheries and fish trade of Porto Rico" is contributed by Mr. W. A. Wilcox.

By joint resolution, approved May 14, 1900, Congress ordered the printing of a special edition of 7,500 copies of the general report of the expedition and of the parts relating to the fishes and fisheries. In compliance therewith the matter covered by pages 1 to 350 and plates 1 to 52 of the first part of this bulletin was issued as a Congressional document.

A summary of the scientific results of the Porto Rican expedition has been prepared by Professor Evermann, and appears immediately after this preface.

GEORGE M. BOWERS,
Commissioner.