

cially when one considers how much can be found with a simple outfit, and a few ounces of energy. No doubt the same is true of the whole country. A person once said to the writer "your hobby is the most fascinating I know. Every one admires shells." Perfectly true, but far too many are afraid of mud. I don't know of any success without a bit of the disagreeable work.

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### THE LAND MOLLUSCA OF ALDABRA.

BY MAXWELL SMITH.

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Mr. E. Dupont, who is now residing at Hell Bourg, Reunion, has been fortunate in obtaining specimens and information of this group. The Aldabra Islands are situated in the Indian Ocean to the north of Madagascar and between the Conoro and Mascarene groups. Not many years ago the land mollusca of Aldabra were unknown, in fact not a single species had been recorded from the islands. Mr. Dupont writes me as follows. Aldabra was visited by an American, Dr. W. L. Abbott, in 1892, who published an account of the birds in the Proceedings of the U. S. National Museum for 1895.

The island was visited by a German, Dr. Vodtykon in 1895, accounts of which were published. I do not think that these mention land shells. In September, 1906 my cousin, Mr. R. Dupont, Curator of the Botanical Station at Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles, investigated these islands on behalf of the Seychelles government. He collected the shells which I now send to you.

At last, quite recently an English naturalist, Mr. Fryers, has been staying there during several months; to complete the geological observations made by Prof. Sardina, on the separation of the islands in the Indian Ocean.

So now the natural productions of this island, which was for long a terra incognita, will now be fairly known. Judging from the shells, it has more affinities with the Comoro Islands than with the Mascarene.

The shells known are as follows:

*Ennea* sp. Grande Terre. The Picard. Iles Vertes. Closely allied to the common *E. dentiens*. May prove to be new.

*Kaliella aldabraensis*, n. sp. To be described by Col. Godwin Austin.



*Rachis aldabræ* Mart. A beautiful shell of the Comoro type. The most common of all the species from Aldabra. Mostly found on Picard Island. 200 metres from the sea.

*Succinea mascarensis*? Nevill. Larger and more strongly striated than the Mascarene specimens.

*Assimineæ* sp. Perhaps *A. hidalgoi* Gass.= *granum* Morelet. Grande Terre. The Picard. Iles Vertes.

*Cyclostoma* sp. Plaine Cubi. A *Ligatella* or *Otopoma*. It seems to be a new species, but too much worn for description. Better specimens came in Sardina's collection.

*Truncatella valida* Pfr. Grande Terre. The Picard. Iles Vertes.

*Isidora* sp. Perhaps *I. forskali* Chr. = *Physa cernica* Morelet. from Mauritius. The presence of this fresh-water shell at Aldabra is very curious, the only spot provided with fresh water being a spring at Tata maca.

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DR. R. E. C. STEARNS.

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DR. ROBERT EDWARDS CARTER STEARNS died at Los Angeles, Cal., July 27, in his eighty-third year. He was a native of Boston, Mass., a son of Charles Stearns, and was born February 1, 1827. He was educated in the schools of his native city, followed by a course of mercantile training, and from his earliest years evinced a deep love of nature, fostered by his father, with whom similar tastes led to a degree of comradeship in rambles and hunting expeditions which he always remembered with appreciation. The boy had an unusual artistic ability, and though his early avocations were services in a bank and on a farm, when only twenty-two years of age he painted a panorama of the Hudson River from the mouth of the Mohawk to Fort William, which he exhibited with much success. He turned his attention to mining, explored the coal fields of southern Indiana, and in 1854 was appointed resident agent of several copper mines in northern Michigan on Lake Superior. In 1858 he went to California, where he became a partner in the large printing establishment of a brother-in-law of his wife, in San Francisco. This firm published the *Pacific Methodist*, a weekly religious paper, and in the troubled times preceding the Civil War the reverend editor of this journal was obliged to visit the East. Stearns was requested to fill this place during his absence. The fate of California hung in the balance; many of the immigrants from the Southern States urged



Smith, Maxwell. 1909. "The land Mollusca on Aldabra." *The Nautilus* 23, 69–70.

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