

It was originally intended that the general account should have been a joint production, each of us contributing his part. There were difficulties, however, in the way of this arrangement. We were all fully occupied with other matters, and the amount of communication and correspondence between us, required to carry out the plan of joint authorship, seemed likely to prove a cumbrous complication.

It was therefore decided that *quoad* the popular exposition I should take upon myself the office of 'reporter,' and thus it comes about that I am individually and solely responsible for the opinions and statements contained in this book, save where they are included within quotation marks, or their sources otherwise acknowledged.

Since we began these deep-sea investigations, inquiries have come in from all quarters, both at home and abroad, as to the implements and methods which we employ. To supply the desired information, I have described, in detail, the processes both of sounding and dredging; and I hope that the special chapters on these matters—the result of considerable experience—may be found useful to beginners.

I pretend to no special knowledge of physics, and I should have greatly preferred confining myself to the domain of Biology, my own proper province; but certain physical questions raised during our late explorations have so great importance in relation to