We spent a few very pleasant days at St. Thomas, some of the civilians of our party enjoying greatly their first experience of life and scenery within the tropics. M. Gardé, the Danish governor, received us with the most friendly hospitality. He is a naval man, and was greatly interested in our investigations; and his aid-de-camp, Baron Eggers, had collected and worked out the plants of the island with care, and was otherwise well acquainted with its natural history. St. Thomas, like most of the West Indian islands, has suffered greatly, since the emancipation, from the difficulty of procuring free labor; and most of the sugar estates, formerly in high cultivation and a source of large revenue, are now waste and covered with a second jungle. The comparative prosperity of this island seems to be entirely due to the excellence of the harbor, which marks it out as the principal packet and coaling station for that part of the West Indies.

The natural history of the island of St. Thomas is tolerably well known, and large collections of its fauna and flora have been sent home from time to time by many competent naturalists to the museum at Copenhagen. On the present occasion our time was much too limited to attempt to make collections, so the naturalists contented themselves with a little shallow-water dredging, and such a general survey of the island and its shores as might familiarize them with the more characteristic forms of animal and vegetable life; for while the Atlantic islands, Madeira and the Canaries, although gradually assuming a more tropical character, maintain the most intimate relations in natural products with the South of Europe, in tropical America every thing is changed, and it takes a little time to become familiar with new acquaintances, whom one has hitherto known, if he have known them at all, only from figures or descriptions, or, at best, mummied or pickled, or otherwise in inadequate effigy. Ophiurideans are particularly plentiful at St. Thomas, and we made large collections of these, particularly of the many