

The geographical features are rather remarkable : the group forms an irregular triangle, the sides of which are about 720, 600 and 200 miles long. They lie within the influence of the trade winds, and inside the zone of hurricanes, which often do much damage, as the islands are mostly small and low, usually under 100 feet above tide level, the loftiest not over 400, while often they lie almost even with the water. In composition they are chiefly white sandstone or coral rock more or less disintegrated, often with sand beaches of dazzling whiteness. Situated on the edges of coral banks, often of a most dangerous character, and with so little of commercial attractiveness, we find most of the trade between the Bahamas and United States to consist of "fruiting," which is carried on in small schooners of from 150 to 200 tons burthen, plying chiefly between the island ports and Baltimore.

With this rather extended preliminary account, attention may now be directed towards the insect fauna. The first researches we made in this direction were on Egg Island, May 12th. This is a small wooded islet about a mile in length and 67 feet high ; on the topmost point is situated a lighthouse, while the beach along the harbour is adorned with an extensive cocoanut grove. Arriving about six o'clock in the evening, a short trip was made ashore, one of the objects in view being the capture of fire-flies, which could be seen flitting around in the thickets. Only one could be captured, however, and this proved to be a *Pyrophorus*, a genus of Elaterid beetle in which the light is emitted from two whitish spots, one on each side near the hind angles of the prothorax. This light is under the control of the insect to some extent, since two or three of the beetles that were knocked down became at once invisible, when they could certainly have been seen had the light continued. It was found later that in such cases the *Pyrophorus* could often be taken by carefully feeling in the dark for it—placing the palm of the hand flat on the ground over the spot where it was thought the specimen had fallen, and its presence would then be betrayed by its "snapping" in the manner of most elaters when pressure is applied.

Next morning another opportunity was afforded for going ashore, and by beating bushes over an umbrella a good number of additions were made to the collections of Coleoptera, though search along the beach and lagoons yielded no Cicindelidæ nor Carabidæ whatever. It is probable that they are rare on the island, as they seem, in fact, to be in most spots in the