

When 46, he met for the first time a young and enthusiastic collector of beetles, William Spence. The two became fast friends, and three years later was born the idea of a popular introduction to their favourite pursuit. This was in the year 1808, and it shows how great examples serve to

"inspire posterity,
Fathering their kind, from son to son;"

for it was in 1808 that news had come to them of the death of the great Fabricius.

The "Introduction" consists of a series of letters written in delightful style, the more remarkable that both authors were learned in every branch of the science and profoundly read. They brought to their task the ripe experience of years of active observation and collection, and during nearly 20 years of planning and publishing, they ransacked whole libraries of British and foreign literature.

The letters were originally in four volumes: Vol. I dealing largely with Injuries and Benefits due to Insects, but treating also such interesting topics as Metamorphoses, Care of Young, Food, and Homes; Vol. II chiefly taken up with Insect Societies, but including letters on Weapons, Movements, Emission of Sound and Light, Hibernation, and Instinct; Vols. III and IV were systematic and supplementary; these ceased to be reprinted after the sixth edition, and Vols. I and II came to constitute the now world-famed Introduction.

And what a transformation it effected! Just look before and after. A little over a century before, and the sanity of Lady Glanville had been hotly impugned by British lawyers and the great naturalist Ray dragged to court to testify that the lady, though indeed a collector of Lepidoptera, was not insane.

In the first decades of the 19th century ignorance was widespread and prejudice strong against entomology; but the "Introduction" changed all that, and in a preface to the sixth edition (1843) the authors (Kirby, now an octogenarian) could congratulate themselves on the removal of this public reproach. Moreover, a