

In addition to the valuable Canadian collections made by Dr. Boys, with contributions from Dr. Bird, of Oshawa, and the land and fresh-water shells of Germany and of Southern Europe, presented by Dr. Croft: Professor Hincks brought over with him a set of illustrations of genera obtained from the late Mr. Sowerby; and many valuable tropical shells were presented by Mrs. Dall, a lady then resident in Toronto. To these have been added an extensive series, including some fine specimens purchased from an eminent dealer in Boston, U.S.; and one or two friends, particularly Professors Wilson and Chapman, have contributed useful additions. Mr. Bland, of New York, has also kindly furnished a series of North American species, with some land shells from other localities.

It will thus appear that the Conchological department was by no means in a low condition, when the attention of the Professor of Natural History was called to the fact that a valued friend, the Rev. P. P. Carpenter, of Warrington, England, had purchased the principal part of a fine collection, the result of several years' labour made at Mazatlan, in Mexico, or, *site* the southern point of California, by M. Frederic Reigen, a Belgian gentleman, who died just as he had completed them, and by whose executors they were sold in Liverpool—first to a wholesale dealer, and by him to Mr. Carpenter. The latter gentleman generously resolved to present to the British Museum a full series, including many specimens of each of all the species obtained, and proposed then to issue, by subscription, sets of the remainder to those who might desire to obtain them. The matter coming to the knowledge of Professor Hincks, he was of opinion that shells illustrating the western coast of this continent, would have a special interest for us in Canada, and the subscription appearing moderate in comparison to the usual charges, he recommended them for purchase. Mr. Carpenter was good enough—besides expending for the University collection a small additional sum in selected specimens of known locality—to present to the Museum above four hundred specimens from his own collection, all with their localities carefully marked; so that the whole addition made to the University cabinet is very extensive.

The circumstances which may be regarded as giving special interest to the Mazatlan shells are:

1. That they furnish trustworthy data for inquiries respecting the geographical distribution of mollusca. All who have studied the subject know the difficulty of obtaining authentic information on this subject. Even scientific collectors are often very careless in separating the productions of different localities; and when it is considered how numerous are the places at which ships may touch in long voyages, at all of which something may be obtained, and the practice of purchasing collections often brought together from remote points, we cannot wonder that specimens, introduced in the way of trade, are difficult to trace to the place in which the animals lived. Nor is this all. When shells fall into the hands of dealers they are strangely mixed, and the accounts given of them are not always strictly truthful. A person seeking shells from a particular region may frequently obtain more than ever really belonged to it. M. Reigen appears to have laboured diligently in collecting the shells of the interesting spot which he visited, but not to have at all sought to extend his collection by miscellaneous purchases; and the history of what he had brought together, subsequent to his death, is well known, so that there is little room for error.

2. The specimens of each species are in most instances numerous, showing the