



The Butterflies of the Eastern United States and Canada, Vol. 1: With Special Reference to New England (Classic Reprint)

Samuel Hubbard Scudder

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Excerpt from *The Butterflies of the Eastern United States and Canada, Vol. 1: With Special Reference to New England*

The present work originated in a plan, devised thirty years ago by the students of Professor Louis Agassiz, to describe within the compass of a series of volumes all the animals of New England, with special reference to their life histories. To me was assigned, among other subjects, the volume on Lepidoptera, and though the original scheme never passed beyond the stage of discussion (and the design of a titlepage by one of our number, which I still preserve), it has borne fruit in not a few additions to our knowledge of "The Zoology of New England," by my associates, - Messrs. Allen, Hyatt, Morse, Packard, Putnam, Shaler, and Verrill, to mention the living only. Twenty years ago the present work was definitely planned, announced, and begun, and the greater part of it has been written for fifteen years; but with the increase of our knowledge, nearly all the histories of the species have been completely rewritten within the past few years, in the intervals of work in other directions.

This delay has not been to follow the sage advice of Horace, -

"Si quid tamen olim
Scripseris, in Maeci descendat indicis auris,
Et patris et nostras, nonumque premature in annum,
Membranis intus positis:"

but has been caused rather by the "res angusta domi," preventing earlier accomplishment of my desire.


Although very much more extended than I at first contemplated, especially in the matter of illustration, the work as completed is still far short of what I could wish; insufficient attention, for instance, has been paid to the differences in the form and clothing of the head in the various stages of the caterpillar, though the illustrations of the same will partly atone for this omission. I had also intended to include a description of the minute texture of the integument of the caterpillar, and made many preparations for the purpose, but not enough to warrant the introduction of this material.

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Robert Prather:

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Aaron Ryan:

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