

I saw the remarks about
Widder, because you may think it
best to write a notice of the hydrographical
Department in connection with
Hale's work (and mine, if it may be) — and I wish
you to appreciate exactly this
character. He failed in never receiving his officers
but always finding fault with them — and

often very unjustly. Especially
when he had prejudices, the screws
came down rather severely.

Dear I pray.
The scientific has
are they desired, after the
first year. — How in this first year
do you get back Country so
completes. — Had Wilkes been

aware of his own ignorance in
Scientific Subjects, he might
have avoided many errors in
his narrative, and some
disputable discussions. — But
nobody has its returns. — It
was the common opinion among
the Naval officers when we started
that if 6 months notice had
been given to some of the
officers in the Navy, they might
have prepared themselves on
any of the departments of Science,
and they would have needed no other
Scientific. — They would acknowledge
edge however that it took at least
6 years to make a navigator!
I am at the end of my chain of thought.
I saw you when J. B. & Dana

Read. of Am. & Sci. shall be presented to the
Connecticut Acad. of Sc., — a society that has good
names in it, & which meets once a month to
talk Science. — Do you intend that other societies
should report to you on the subject, or direct,
the Library Committee, and ~~another~~ had your
(or the same in form) report better be signed by a committee here, or
another, ^{form} alluding to your report? — Prof. S. is away
now, but we will have his name on it. —
Your Document is a very excellent one. — I
would only suggest that when you say 50 or 75
copies have been published, you drop the 50, ^{or say 75 or 100} — 75
copies of my book on Corals, Sea & Blanchard consented
to publish, and speaking of what has been done that
number should be used; though it is doubtful if they
would publish as many of the volume on a less
popular subject — They intimated as much with regard to the
Crustacea

I am much provoked that I must add
a word of doubt as to whether the Coral volume
can be properly ^{be} reviewed in the next number of the
N. American. — Because, the bills with regard to
it cannot be signed till Tappan comes from Ohio
(which ~~they~~ ^{he} say will be in 10 days). Wilkes thinks
he sees in these a large amount of non-Expedition
matter, and writes that his power does not
extend so far as to allow of his signing them bills.
When this news first reached me, I was vexed
I had feelings as hard as a brick bat. — But I
suppose Wilkes is right. — Tappan saw the
manuscript, read it for three days in his hands,
and finally gave it his approval, remarking
at the same time on the descriptions of
species not collected in the Expedition, so that I
am safe, if there was any disposition to make
trouble. — After the correspondence on the subject
I should not wish to give the book for a review
before it has been presented to Congress. — Perhaps
you had better prepare it, and if I hear about
it in 10 days or so I will let you know. — Hal's
book is not under this incumbrance — though
actually as much liable to the objection as mine,
and the review of that can be published whether

mine joins it or not. — My material, the
result of Exped. observations was sufficient for a
reconstruction of the Science, and I have
consequently made a complete ~~and~~ ^{and} shanting
of the whole. — In no other way could I
have brought out the results. — The Table
Title page has not yet come; but I am
still expecting it. —

The plates are yet in the works, and not
even half a dozen are finished — and none of
these are here. It will probably be 8 or 10
months before they are all engraved. — They will
be hurried, as soon as we have one next appropriate.
They ought, ^{all} to have been finished before this.

I will write you again the first news I get
from Washington. The next number of the Journal
contains two citations from the Coral book — one
on the analysis of Corals, and another on the Cyathophylloidea.
They were printed before ~~there was~~ I had heard of
the delay at Washington: and if they object, it
cannot be helped. — There is no review of it. —

The bundle of extra copies of the Introduction
shall be sent on as soon as I receive the
remaining sheets from Philad. — The communication

to the Library Committee shall be returned
to you by tomorrow's mail. —

as ever

Sincerely yours

James D. Dana

Prof. Wm. Gray

Prof. Wm. Gray
Harvard — Cambridge

Mass

although overbearing with his officers, and corrected, exhibited through the entire
a wonderful degree of energy and was but even to the end in many of his
explorations. I know no one else what naval officers were generally
one, that I much doubt if with any commander that could have
been selected, we should have better, or lived together more harmoniously
and I am confident that the navy does not contain a
more daring explorer, or bolder officer. —

P.S. If you examine Wilkes's Charts, you will find
them well done. They are the surveys of his officers (as well
as himself) and among them were some excellent surveys — The
Reifel chart is very far superior to the French one by D'Urville, made
after their late voyage, a rival of our expedition. Indeed, we had a better chart
from our traders there, to start with, than that by D'Urville. This was the
work of a few days, & ours of 3 1/2 months. — I mention these particulars, because, what
ever may be said of him & the Narrative, this hydrographical department has been well carried out — Wilkes



Dana, James Dwight. 1836. "Dana, James Dwight undated." *James Dwight Dana letters*

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/288143>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/337691>

Holding Institution

Harvard University Botany Libraries

Sponsored by

Arcadia (Open Collections)

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: Public domain. The BHL considers that this work is no longer under copyright protection.

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.