

SCIENCE :

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INDEX FOR SCIENCE.

In accordance with the promise made in our first number, we have prepared an elaborate Index for Volume One.

Genera and species are printed in italics; also the names of recently discovered stars. There is a separate Subject and Authors' Index, the whole having 4576 distinct references. "SCIENCE" thus becomes a valuable standard work of reference, which should be found in every library. The Index has been sent to regular subscribers; others can obtain it on payment of twenty cents.

THE NEW YORK AQUARIUM.

With the closing of the New York Aquarium the city will lose an institution that might have been made a source of instruction to the people, combined with an agreeable place of recreation, and the causes of its failure to be remunerative may be studied with advantage by those who desire to have a permanent public aquarium in this city, thriving on a paying basis.

We observe that the present proprietor, Mr. Charles Reiche, makes the assertion "that such a place is not appreciated by the people." We consider that such a statement has been amply refuted by the very fair amount of patronage received, even at a price for admission which was practically prohibitory to the majority of those who would have visited the place in thousands.

Neither do we believe that the faults of the management can be charged with the failure, and we have as little faith in the other reasons which have been suggested. In our opinion the whole enterprise was killed by being loaded down with heavy expenses, and too profuse expenditure by those who controlled the finances.

Unfortunately, there was too much money at command from the start, and by the time experience of the proper course to pursue had been gained, the capita had been squandered, and the demoralization which finally led to the ruin, had set in.

To saddle the enterprise with a rental of \$10,000 a year for the bare ground on which the building stood was to court ruin, but all the outlays were made on the same extravagant basis. Then came the fatal mistake of appealing for support to the few affluent, and making each admission fifty cents, instead of trusting to the multitude who could and would have paid twenty-five cents.

Even under these circumstances we are now told by Mr. Reiche that *for a time it did pay*. We think this very convincing proof that under more economical management and with a less pretentious establishment, success would have been secured.

On behalf of many scientific men, we extend our thanks to Mr. Reiche for the liberal facilities he has throughout extended to those who desired to visit and make use of the aquarium for scientific purposes; to such the place has always been open and a cordial welcome given. Under instructions, the officers in charge have been courteous in offering the fullest facilities for study and freely gave such specimens as could be spared. How little such opportunities have been appreciated and used by naturalists within reach of the institution reflects little credit on those who should have seized the occasion with avidity.

Unfortunately the facilities were too great, and too conveniently at hand to be appreciated, and because they were offered as a gift they were neglected. The New York Aquarium had the benefit of the services of the best professional collectors in this country, and the coast from Maine to Florida was constantly searched for living species of rare and interesting forms of animal life, and yet many naturalists preferred to waste their time and money, travelling hundreds of miles, to obtain objects which could be had at their very doors.

The same results have happened in Europe under similar circumstances. When Mr. Lloyd, of London, was asked if he thought the aquarium at the Channel Islands would answer, he replied, that he feared it was too near home, too convenient of access; for said he, "I have known persons prefer to travel from to the Bay of Naples to collect specimens, which I had in my aquarium at the Crystal Palace."

We trust that steps may be taken to preserve the fittings of the New York Aquarium, and that they may be replaced in some part of the city where a site will be inexpensive, and that a plan may be arranged for maintaining it on a remunerative basis, which in our opinion should not be a difficult matter; but to secure success we should advise the institution to be placed in the charge of some well-known professional naturalist, who could be well named by Professor Spencer F. Baird.