

PREFACE.

I HAVE little to say in this Preface, beyond the expression of my sincere regret for the delay which has occurred in the publication of the work. That delay has arisen from causes which it would not interest the public to be informed of, and which I have no wish to put forward for the sake of deprecating the displeasure or disappointment which it may have excited.

A much more agreeable task is that of acknowledging, which I do with feelings of sincere gratification and deep thankfulness, the extensive and valuable assistance which I have received from so many of my fellow-labourers in the field of Natural History. Their names are mentioned in connection with their contributions, in various parts of the work; and it would be invidious to particularise them here, lest, through inadvertence, any should be omitted. To one and all I beg to offer the tribute of my grateful thanks.

SELBORNE, HANTS.

July, 1853.