

P R E F A C E.

IN the Preface to the 'Birds of Australia,' which has now been fifteen years before the public, I stated that, "Having in the summer of 1837 brought my work on the 'Birds of Europe' to a successful termination, I was naturally desirous of turning my attention to the Ornithology of some other region; and a variety of opportune and concurring circumstances induced me to select that of Australia, the birds of which country, although invested with the highest degree of interest, had been almost entirely neglected." But if the Birds of Australia had not received that degree of attention from the scientific ornithologist which their interest demanded, I can assert, without fear of contradiction, that its highly curious and interesting Mammals had been still less investigated. It was not, however, until I arrived in the country, and found myself surrounded by objects as strange as if I had been transported to another planet, that I conceived the idea of devoting a portion of my attention to the mammalian class of its extraordinary fauna.

The native black, while conducting me through the forest or among the park-like trees of the open plains, would often point out the pricking of an Opossum's nails on the bark of a *Eucalyptus* or other tree, and indicate by his actions that in yonder hole, high up, was sleeping an Opossum, a *Phalangista*, or a Flying *Petaurus*. Even the objects brought to our bush-fires were enough to incite a desire for a more extended knowledge of Australia's Mammals; for numerous were the species of Kangaroos and Opossums that were nightly roasted and eaten by these children of nature. Perchance a half-charred log, or the heated hollow branch of a *Eucalyptus*, would send forth into the lap of one or other of the surrounding guests the *Acrobates pygmaeus*, the white-footed *Hapalotis*, or

other small quadruped. Tired by a long and laborious day's walk under a burning sun, I frequently encamped for the night by the side of a river, a natural pond, or a water-hole, and before retiring to rest not unfrequently stretched my weary body on the river's bank; while thus reposing, the surface of the water was often disturbed by the little concentric circles formed by the *Ornithorhynchus*, or perhaps an *Echidna* came trotting up towards me. With such scenes as these continually around me, is it surprising that I should have entertained the idea of collecting examples of the indigenous Mammals of a country whose ornithological productions I had gone out expressly to investigate? To have attempted to acquire a knowledge of more than the Birds and Mammals would have been unwise; still I was not insensible to the interest which attaches to its insects and to its wonderful botanical productions. The *Eucalypti*, the *Banksia*, the *Casuarina*, the native Cedar- and the Fig-trees will ever stand forth prominently in my memory. While in the interior of the country, I formed the intention of publishing a monograph of the great family of Kangaroos; but soon after my return to England I determined to attempt a more extended work, under the title of the 'Mammals of Australia.'

It will always be a source of pleasure to me to remember that I was the first to describe and figure the Great Black and Red Wallaroos (*Osphranter robustus* and *O. antilopinus*), the three species of *Onychogalea*, several of the equally singular *Lagorchestes*, and many other new species of Kangaroos. Mounted examples of all these animals, whether discovered by myself or by others, are now contained in the national collection of this country; but I regret to say that their colours are very different from what they were while the animals were living, the continuous exposure to light, consequent upon their being placed in a museum, causing their evanescent colouring rapidly to fade, both here and in the collections of every other country. Those who have seen the living *Osphranter rufus* at the Zoological Gardens could scarcely for a moment suppose that the Museum specimen of the same animal had ever been dressed in such glowing tints. To see the Kangaroos in all their glory, their native country must be visited; their beauty would then be at once apparent, and their various specific distinctions easily recognizable.

The exploration of every new district has afforded ample proof of the existence of species in every department of zoology with which we were previously unacquainted. Under these circumstances, I do not consider my work to be in any way complete, or that it comprises nearly the whole of the Mammals of a country of which so much has yet to be traversed; but I bring it to a close after an interval of eighteen years since its commencement, during which constant attention has been given to the subject, as treating upon the genera and species known up to the present time. If my life be prolonged, and the blessing of health be continued to me, I propose, as in the case of the 'Birds

of Australia,' to keep the subject complete, by issuing a supplementary part, from time to time, should sufficient new materials be acquired to enable me so to do.

As with regard to my other publications, so also with this, I have to offer my best thanks to many persons for the kind and friendly assistance they have rendered me in prosecuting my labours on the 'Mammals of Australia.' I cannot, therefore, close these remarks without recording my obligations to Professor Owen, Dr. Gray, and G. R. Waterhouse, Esq., of the British Museum; to Ronald C. Gunn, Esq., of Launceston; the Rev. T. J. Ewing and Dr. Milligan of Hobart Town; to Dr. Bennett, W. S. MacLeay, Esq., Gerard Krefft, Esq., the late Dr. Ludwig Becker, W. S. Wall, Esq., the authorities of the Australian Museum, and the late Frederick Strange, of New South Wales; to Charles Coxen, Esq., of Queensland; John Macgillivray, Esq.; the late Commander J. M. R. Ince, R.N.; to His Excellency Sir George Grey, formerly Governor of South Australia, and now of New Zealand; the late John Gilbert; Professor M'Coy, of Melbourne; George French Angas, Esq., of Angaston, South Australia; W. Ogilby, Esq., formerly Secretary of the Zoological Society of London; Dr. Sclater, its present Secretary; R. F. Toms, Esq.; M. Jules Verreaux, of Paris; Dr. W. Peters, of the Royal Museum of Berlin; and lastly, my son, Mr. Charles Gould, the Geological Surveyor of Tasmania. I believe I have here enumerated the names of all who have favoured me with specimens or with the benefit of their opinions, in reference to the subjects of the present work. To have omitted the name of one friend would be a source of much vexation to me; but if such should unfortunately have been done, I trust it will be considered the result of inadvertence, and not of intentional neglect.

To my artist, Mr. Richter, I consider (and I have no doubt my readers will concur in my opinion) that much credit is due for the manner in which he has executed the drawings, both from the dead as well as from the living examples from which they were taken. My Secretary, Mr. Prince, has also discharged the same praiseworthy services as heretofore.

It will be observed that, in mentioning the localities frequented by the various species, I have mostly employed the term Van Diemen's Land to designate the large island lying off the south coast of Australia; there is now, however, a very general desire that it should be called Tasmania—in honour of Tasman, its original discoverer; this term has, therefore, also been used, and hence has arisen the discrepancy of employing two names for one island. Even since the commencement of the work, new colonies have sprung up, or the older ones have been divided; thus the country now known as Queensland was formerly part of New South Wales, and Victoria, until lately, was known as Port Phillip.