

## P R E F A C E.

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THE Birds of Paradise have always attracted great attention among lovers of nature, on account of their extraordinary form and beautiful decoration; they have, therefore, been frequently monographed and figured. Since Dr. A. R. Wallace first published his notes on the habits of these beautiful birds in his 'Malay Archipelago,' many new forms have been discovered in the great island of New Guinea, some of them being still more remarkable for their fantastic plumage and curious habits than those which were known to him; and even during the progress of the present work some really startling species have been brought to light, which have obliged the publishers to extend the scope of the work beyond the original limits proposed.

A few of the Plates have been reproduced from Gould's 'Birds of New Guinea,' but a great number of species are here figured for the first time, and in the 'Introduction' I have given a complete list of the genera and species at present known.

I am extremely grateful to the Hon. Walter Rothschild for the loan of many specimens from his Museum at Tring; and I have also to thank Mr. C. W. De Vis, the Director of the Queensland Museum, for the opportunity of figuring some of the new species discovered in British New Guinea by Sir William MacGregor. I must also express my obligations to Count Salvadori, Dr. A. B. Meyer, Mr. E. Hartert, and other friends for much kindly advice and assistance; and it is with sincere grief for the loss of my Mentor in ornithology, that I have to acknowledge the help which I received from my old friend Mr. Osbert Salvin, one of whose last actions was to look over the proofs of the 'Introduction' and 'Appendix' to the present work.

With the exception of a few species drawn by Mr. Keulemans from specimens in foreign Museums, the whole of the Plates have been prepared by Mr. W. Hart, so well known for his long and honourable association as artist for Mr. Gould's ornithological works.

R. BOWDLER SHARPE.

Chiswick, June 20, 1898.