

finest possessions of the British Crown, and from its natural productions being as remarkable for the anomalous nature of their forms, as for their beauty, and the singularity of their habits. In the attempt to supply this desideratum I commenced publishing from the materials then accessible, but soon found, from the paucity of information extant upon the subject, that it could not be executed in a manner that would be satisfactory to my own mind or commensurate with the exigencies of science; I therefore determined to proceed to Australia and personally investigate (so far as a stay of two years would allow) the habits and manners of its birds in a state of nature. Accordingly in May 1838 I left England, provided, by the liberality of Government, with letters from Lord Glenelg, at that time Secretary of State for the Colonies, Sir George Grey, Bart., and Gordon Gairdner, Esq., of the Colonial Office, recommending me to the countenance and protection of the various Governors, and requesting them to afford me such aid and assistance in furtherance of my objects as they might have it in their power to render; similar favours were also granted me by the authorities of the Admiralty, who, through their Secretary, Sir John Barrow, directed the captains and commanders of Her Majesty's ships and vessels employed on the coasts of Australia to further my views, by giving myself and my assistant a passage to such part of the coasts as either of us might be desirous of visiting, only stipulating that the ships under their command should not be detained on any parts of the coasts they were not ordered to visit. His late Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, in his capacity of President of the Royal Society, was pleased to favour me with a letter addressed to the authorities, civil and military, of Her Majesty's Colonies, recommending me to their kind offices and protection, as he felt assured that my exertions would materially promote the interests of Natural History. I was also under considerable obligations to the kindness of Captain Washington, R.N., at that time Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, who furnished me with introductions to Captains Sir John Franklin and Sir Gordon Bremer, R.N., and other influential persons. Having thus acknowledged the facilities afforded me by the home authorities, it becomes my pleasing duty to state that their recommendations and wishes were responded to in the warmest manner by Captain Sir John Franklin, R.N., Governor of Van Diemen's Land; Sir George Gipps, Governor-General of New South Wales; Lieut.-Colonel Gawler, Governor of South Australia; John Hutt, Esq., Governor of Western Australia; and Captain M'Arthur, Commandant of Port Essington; all of whom rendered me every assistance compatible with the instructions under which they were acting. I should be wanting, however, both in courtesy and gratitude, did I not especially acknowledge the warm friendship, and the many acts of genuine kindness which I received at the hands of my valued