

P R E F A C E.

WERE it necessary to assign a reason for the publication of the present Monograph, I might state that it is due to the interest excited in my mind by the sight of several living examples of the beautiful *Callipepla Californica*, brought home and presented to the Zoological Society of London by Captain Beechey in 1830. The graceful actions and elegant deportment of these birds inspired me with a desire to become thoroughly acquainted with the entire group, of which they form a part; this desire was even strengthened by the details furnished to me by the late celebrated traveller and botanist, Mr. David Douglas, respecting species seen by him in California, of the existence of which we had until then no idea.

So little had at that time been recorded respecting this group of birds, that Mr. Bennett remarked, in his "Gardens and Menagerie of the Zoological Society Delineated":—"From some observations lately offered by Mr. Vigors, before the Committee of Science and Correspondence of the Zoological Society, it appears that the number of species of this genus, which until within three years of the present time did not exceed four, or at the utmost five (some of them very imperfectly known), has partly by the researches of Mr. David Douglas, and partly by the additions made in various ways to the Society's collection, been