

P R E F A C E.

I am truly and sincerely thankful for the blessing of health which has attended me during the course of my twelve years' labour on the present work; and it was only while the Introductory matter was going through the press that a severe blight fell upon me (the untimely death of my youngest son, Dr. Franklin Gould*), and cast a gloom over my future happiness. I should not have alluded to this painful subject here did I not feel it was only doing justice to his memory, as he rendered me great assistance in the composition of the following Introduction, which, from his varied acquirements, he was well qualified to give. His loss has called forth the sympathy of many kind friends, which has in some measure assuaged the sad affliction which has befallen me. If I am spared it is my intention not to be idle; for although I do not entertain the idea of entering upon any new enterprise, I shall still pursue the subject with the same energy I have hitherto done,—at one period of the year attending to the Birds of Asia, at another to the recent discoveries in the ornithology of Australia, pursuing the subject to New Guinea and the adjacent islands, the avifaunas of these latter countries being inseparable.

It gives me great pleasure to state that my Secretary, Mr. Prince, after twelve months of very severe illness, is again able to render me his assistance, that Mr. Wolf affords me the benefit of his talented pencil, and that Mr. Richter and Mr. Hart continue their services as heretofore.

JOHN GOULD.

November 1, 1873.

* Dr. F. Gould died of fever on board the Steamship 'Behar' on the 19th of March last, during his passage from India to Suez, and was buried the same day in the Red Sea.