P R E F A C E.

IN the Preface to the First Edition of this Work I remarked that I was induced to publish it in order to make known several new species of a most remarkable group of birds, and to revise and set forth in as clear a light as possible the numerous members of which the family is composed; if these reasons were sufficient to induce me then to attempt their elucidation, the same reasons become still more urgent now, when after an interval of twenty years a great amount of information respecting the entire group, and a further addition of new species has been obtained, rendering a SECOND EDITION a matter of necessity. It appeared to me, as I formerly remarked, that the members of the group were naturally divided into several more genera than the two—*Ramphastos* and *Pteroglossus*—then recognised; nor did I omit to notice a suggestion, that some distinguishing title should be given to these divisions, but I did not then feel warranted in following out this idea; the materials since acquired have, however, thrown much additional light on the subject, and I now feel myself justified in proposing the requisite generic appellations, which with their appropriate characters will be found in their proper place in the Introduction.

In order to render the Work as perfect as possible, I have obtained access to all the collections of this country, and have also visited and examined the principal Museums of the continent; in several of which I found some species not contained in the others. Thus in Vienna I first saw the *Pteroglossus pluricinctus*; in Munich *Selenidera Reinwardti*, *S. Langsdorffi* and *Aulacoramphus Wagleri*; in Paris *Pteroglossus flavirostris*; while Berlin and Leyden both contained other species not previously known to me. In many instances single specimens only existed, appertaining moreover to *Ramphastidae*, in which much dissimilarity occurs in the colouring of the sexes, whereby I was prevented from illustrating those species so fully as I could have wished. Just as my Monograph was brought to a close, that celebrated traveller and naturalist, the late Mr. John Natterer of Vienna, returned to Europe, bringing with him females of the species of which I found males only at Munich, together with several other new ones acquired during a sojourn of eighteen years in the Brazils; unfortunately, however, he did not arrive in London until the last sheets had gone to press, consequently I was unable to

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include therein figures of these new species, as well as the many valuable notes which he, in the kindest manner, placed at my disposal. I felt very much disposed to publish the work anew, or at least to issue a supplement containing these novelties, but from one cause or other I have delayed so doing until the present moment. In the interim I have constantly kept the subject in view, and have obtained much interesting information respecting the older species, besides the acceptable addition from time to time of others new to science.

I now publish a Second Edition with new drawings of the old species, and figures and descriptions of no less than eighteen others—all, in fact, that are known up to the present time. Great attention has been paid to the colouring of the soft parts—the orbits, eyes, bill, legs, &c.—the hues of which are so evanescent, that unless they be either drawn or noted down from the living bird or immediately after death, it is impossible to present faithful portraiture; and here I have derived much valuable information from the rich menagerie of the Zoological Society of London, in which living examples of no less than five species were exhibited during the year 1853.

Of late years, the lowlands of the great country of South America, and particularly those bordering the mighty Amazon and its tributaries, have been explored by many intelligent travellers, who have diligently searched for novelties with success. It is, however, from the high mountain ranges of the Andes and the Cordilleras, rather than from the low forest-covered lands, that the greater number of the recent accessions to the *Ramphastidæ* has emanated, and it is there that all the species (with a single exception) of the genus *Andigena* have been discovered.

For the elaborate "Observations on the Anatomy of the Toucan," given at the close, I am indebted to my friend Professor Owen, F.R.S.: they were the result of investigations instituted by himself expressly for my Monograph.

In conclusion, I beg to state, that neither pains nor expense have been spared to render the present edition as perfect as possible up to the present period. It will be found to comprise illustrations and descriptions of 51 species. The greater portion of the originals from which my figures have been taken are now in the British Museum, and these, in addition to the species previously contained therein, contribute to render the series of the *Ramphastidæ* in the National Collection by far the finest and most complete in Europe.

JOHN GOULD.

May 1st, 1854.

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