

TO

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LINNEAN SOCIETY, AND DIRECTOR OF THE ROYAL GARDENS, KEW,
ETC. ETC ,

WHOM SCIENCE NUMBERS

AMONGST ITS MOST ARDENT PROMOTERS,

AND TO WHOM

THE AUTHOR IS SO DEEPLY INDEBTED FOR HIS GENEROUS

ENCOURAGEMENT AND READY ASSISTANCE,

THIS

Narrative of the Voyage of H.M.S. Herald

IS DEDICATED,

WITH FEELINGS OF ESTEEM AND GRATITUDE,

BY

BERTHOLD SEEMANN.

P R E F A C E.

IN July, 1846, after the death of Mr. Thomas Edmonston, I had the honour of being appointed Naturalist of H.M.S. Herald,—having been recommended to that office by Sir W. J. Hooker,—and directed to join the vessel at Panama. Proceeding by one of the West India Mail Steamers to Chagres, I crossed over the Isthmus, and arrived at the city of Panama on the 22nd of September. The Herald not having returned from the Straits of Juan de Fuca, I employed my time in exploring various districts of Panama and Veraguas, a task which was rendered comparatively easy by the assistance I received from Her Majesty's Consul, William Perry, Esq., to whom I had a letter of introduction from Lord Palmerston. In January, 1847, the Herald returned to Panama, and from that time, until she was paid off, I accompanied her.

On the return of the expedition to England, a repre

sentation was made to Her Majesty's Government by several men of eminence, that science would be greatly benefited if the various collections of Natural History formed during the voyage could be brought before the public in a manner worthy of the times and the country. The Government responded to these wishes by granting a sum of money to defray part of the expenses of such a publication, and Professor Edward Forbes, with a disinterested zeal truly praiseworthy, volunteered to edit the zoological section, while I engaged to undertake the phytological. These works are partly before the public, and may, together with the series of charts laid down in our survey, and issued by the Hydrographical Office, and the present Narrative, be looked upon as the principal result of the voyage. It is but fair however to state, both in justice to the Captain who conducted the expedition and to the officers engaged in it, that a great mass of the materials still remain unpublished. The nautical, meteorological, magnetical, astronomical, and other observations are so numerous that they would fill several thick quarto volumes, and could not possibly be comprised within the limits of an appendix to this Narrative; but it is to be hoped that they will not be lost to science.

The present Narrative was to have been written by the

Commander of the expedition; but as Captain Kellett was called upon to renew the search for Sir John Franklin's Expedition, and all those officers of the Herald who were either willing or able to perform the part of historian of the voyage had left these shores, I was compelled to engage in an undertaking for which I fear I was but ill qualified. I have commenced it the more reluctantly because I am fully aware of the difficulties. Formerly, when everything was new and striking, both to the author and the reader, an amusing and instructive work was easily written. But now, nearly every school-boy is able to give a tolerably accurate account of the most remote corners of the globe, and if a traveller wants to bring forward something new, he must dive into details which, valuable as they may be to science, are not always appreciated by the general reader

The materials from which this work has been compiled are not so rich as could be wished. That portion of Captain Kellett's journal relating to the first volume is entirely wanting, and cannot, in the absence of its author, be procured. Commander J. Wood's diary has not been sent to me, and this must be considered as the reason why the movements of the Pandora are not more frequently alluded to. Lieutenant (now Commander) Henry Trollope made ample notes during the

first year of the voyage, which have supplied the substance of the account of the cruize of the *Herald* during that period. Mr. Bedford Pim kept a journal when in the Arctic regions, and also during his journey with me in Peru and Ecuador, of which I have been allowed to avail myself. Mr. Whiffin, Mr. Jago, and Mr. Hull have supplied me with extracts from their diaries, and Mr. Chimmo with the illustrations for this work. I have thought it the more necessary to make this statement, in order to escape the charge of having given precedence to my own journal, which, in many instances, was the only source of information.

As I did not join the *Herald* before January, 1847, and had to write an account of the voyage from the beginning, I submitted the proof-sheets relating to the Brazils, the Falkland Isles, Chile, and Peru, to Dr. J. D. Hooker and John Miers, Esq., who, having themselves explored those countries, were kind enough to point out any inaccuracies they detected, and add here and there a passage calculated to improve my account. I have also had the advantage of the valuable assistance of Commander H. Trollope, who looked over every proof-sheet, and have derived great benefit from the liberality of Sir William Hooker, who permitted me to consult his extensive library and Herbarium.

Fact is the object I have aimed at throughout the following pages, on the strict adherence to which will rest their sole recommendation. If however, while abstaining from all fictitious colouring, and with a paucity of adventure, I have succeeded in producing an arrangement not inharmonious or displeasing, I shall have attained a position far beyond that to which I have been carried by my most flattering hopes or sanguine expectations.

Kew Green, December 31, 1852.

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