

P R E F A C E.

IN the autumn of 1846, I left home for, as I supposed, a few weeks, to visit some of my family and friends. At Liverpool, I was invited by my friends, Mr. and Mrs. Richard V. Yates, to accompany them in their proposed travels in the East. By the zeal and kindness of those who saw what a privilege this journey would be, all obstacles in the shape of business and engagements were cleared away; and in a month, I was ready to set out with my kind friends.—At Malta, we fell in with Mr. Joseph C. Ewart, who presently joined our party, and remained with us till we reached Malta on our return. There is nothing that I do not owe to my companions for their unceasing care and indulgence: but one act of kindness I felt particularly. They permitted me to read to them my Egyptian journal, (there was no time for the others,) that I might have the satisfaction of knowing whether they agreed in my impressions of the facts which came under our observation. About these facts there is an entire agreement between them and me.—For the opinions expressed in this book, no one is answerable but myself.

It is by permission of my companions that I have thus named them here, and spoken of them in my book as occasion required. I am truly obliged to them for granting me this freedom, by which I am spared much trouble of concealment and circumlocution which, in their opinion and mine, the personal affairs of travel are not important enough to require and justify.—Not having asked a similar permission from our comrades in our Arabian journey, I have said as little as possible about them, and suppressed their names. I shall be glad if they find anything in my

narrative to remind them pleasantly of that remarkable season of our lives,—our five weeks abode in the Desert.

Sir G. Wilkinson must be almost tired of the testimonies and thanks of grateful travelers: but I must just say that he was, by his books, a daily benefactor to us in Egypt. It is really cheering to find that any one *can* be so accurate, and on so large a scale, as his works prove him to be. Such almost faultless correctness requires a union of intellectual and moral powers and training, which it is encouraging for those who are interested in the results of travel to contemplate. After making the fullest use of his “Modern Egypt and Thebes,” we find only about half-a-dozen points in which we differ from him.

In regard to that difficult matter,—difficult to those who do not understand Arabic,—the spelling of the names of places and persons in Egypt and Arabia,—I have done what every one will allow to be the safest thing;—I have followed the authority of Mr. Lane wherever I could. If any English reader complains of me for altering the look of familiar Egyptian names, it is enough to reply that Mr. Lane knows better than any one, and that I copy from him. If I have departed from his method anywhere, it is merely because I had not his authority before me in those particular instances.

H. M.

AMBLESIDE, 25th March, 1848.