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Preface to "A Visit to India, China, and Japan in the Year 1853"

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P R E F A C E.

WITH this volume ends the record of two and a half years of travel, which was commenced in the "Journey to Central Africa," and continued in the "Lands of the Saracen." In bringing his work to a close, the author cannot avoid expressing his acknowledgment of the public interest in those portions of his narrative already published—an interest which has justified him in the preparation of this volume, and encouraged him to hope that he will again be received at the same firesides as a gossip and companion, not as a bore.

Although the entire travels herewith presented embrace India, China, Japan, the Loo-Choo and Bonin Islands, and the long homeward voyage around the Cape of Good Hope, they were all accomplished in the space

of a year. Hence, some of my descriptions may bear the marks of haste, and I may, occasionally, have founded a judgment on the first rapid impressions, which a greater familiarity with the subject might not have confirmed. I can only say, in answer to objections of this kind, that I have conscientiously endeavored to be correct and impartial, and that, in preparing this work for the press, I have carefully tested the original impressions recorded on the spot, by the truer images which slowly ripen in the memory, and by the light of subsequent experience.

The portions of the book devoted to India and China are as complete as the length of my stay in those countries allowed me to make them. The account of my visit to Loo-Choo and Japan, however, is less full and detailed than I could have wished. In accordance with special regulations issued by the Secretary of the Navy, I was obliged to give up my journals to the Department, at the close of my connection with the Expedition. It was understood that they would be retained and employed in the compilation of the Narrative of the Expedition, now being prepared by order of Congress. As my accounts of the most interesting events which I wit-

nessed had already been published, and were therefore common property, I made application to Government for the favor of being allowed to copy portions of my journal—especially that part relating to Loo-Choo—which would have enabled me to supply the links between the published accounts: but my request was peremptorily denied. My papers will no doubt be restored to me, after the completion of the Government work: otherwise, like John Ledyard, in a precisely similar case, I shall have the alternative of an unusually tenacious memory.

During my journeys and voyages in those remote parts of the world, I was treated with great kindness and hospitality by the English and American merchants and officials established there, and received assistance in the prosecution of my plans, which I take sincere pleasure in acknowledging. I desire, especially, to return my thanks to Commodore Perry, to whose kindness I was indebted for the most interesting portion of my experiences; to the Hon. Humphrey Marshall, late U. S. Commissioner to China; to Capt. Buchanan, U. S. N.; to Edward Cunningham, Esq., U. S. Vice-Consul at Shanghai; to Henry G. Keene, Esq., of the E. I. Com-

pany's Civil Service, and Capt. R. Baird Smith, of the Bengal Engineers ; and to the American Missionaries in India and China, from all of whom I received every assistance in their power.

B. T.

NEW YORK, *August*, 1855.