

PREFACE.

A PORTION of the following pages was read at the late meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, in Norwich. I also read a paper in connexion with the proposed route at the Royal Geographical Society, shortly after my arrival in England; and in both cases the subject excited considerable attention, and was reproduced in most of the leading papers. I have been led to embody the whole in the present *brochure* since my return from Norwich, at the request of several well-known gentlemen, who feel and understand the importance of the question at issue; for it is by publicity alone that our Government and the nation can be aroused to its importance. The subject is a most serious one, and I recommend it to the earnest consideration of our bankers and merchants, to that of the different chambers of commerce, and of the mercantile community generally.

ALFRED WADDINGTON.

*Tavistock Hotel, Covent Garden,
September 17th, 1868.*