

## PREFACE.

I promised my children to write a book for them. It was a hasty promise, for I never considered whether I was capable of so doing. On my requesting to know what kind of a book they would prefer, they said that they wished me to continue a work called the „Swiss Family Robinson,“ which had never been completed, and which appeared peculiarly to interest them. I sent for the work and read it: it was originally written in German, translated into French, and from French into English, — a very fair evidence of its merits as amusing to children; but I found difficulties which were to me insurmountable, and which decided me not to continue that work, but to write another in the same style; and I mention this more with a view to prevent any accusation of plagiarism, than with any intent to depreciate the work referred to. I have said that it is very amusing; but the fault which I find in it is, that it does not adhere to the probable, or even the possible, which should ever be the case in a book, even if fictitious, when written for children. I pass over the seamanship, or rather the