

this subject in ancient authors. Only they agree in placing this discovery in ages greatly posterior to those we are now examining. They ascribe this invention to several different persons. I imagine, the anchor, like several other machines, might be found out in many different countries, much about the same time. It is certain, that the first anchors were not made of iron, but of stone, or even of wood. These last were loaded with lead. We are told this by several writers, and amongst others by Diodorus. This author relates, that the Phœnicians, in their first voyages into Spain, having amassed more silver than their ships could contain, took the lead from their anchors, and put silver in its place. We may observe further, that the first anchors had only one flook. It was not till many ages after, that Anacharsis invented one with two.

All these different kinds of anchors are still in use in some countries. The inhabitants of Iceland, and of Bander-Congo, use a large stone with a hole in the middle, and a stick thrust through it. In China, Japan, Siam, and the Manilles, they have only wooden anchors to which they tie great stones. In the kingdom of Calicut they are of stone. The ignorance of the first ages, and of many nations to this day, of the art of working iron, has been the occasion of all these rude and clumsy contrivances.

Though the first navigators coasted along the shores, and took all possible pains not to lose sight of land, yet, in the very first ages, they must frequently have been driven off to sea by storms. The confusion and uncertainty they found themselves in when these accidents happened, would put them upon studying some method of finding where they were in these circumstances. They would soon be sensible, that the inspection of the heavenly bodies was the only thing that could afford them any direction. It was in this manner, probably, that astronomy came to be applied to navigation.

From the first moment men began to observe the motion of the heavenly bodies, they would take notice, that in that part of the heavens where the sun never passes, there are certain stars which appears constantly every night. It was easy to discover the position of these stars in respect of our earth. They appear always on the left hand of the observator whose face is turned to the east. Navigators were soon sensible that this discovery might be of great advantage to them, as these