

INTRODUCTION.

THE discovery of a north-west passage to the Pacific had for some years occupied the attention of the British government and of the public at large, and several brilliant attempts had been made both by sea and by land to ascertain the practicability of its navigation, which, though conducted with a zeal and perseverance that will transmit them to the latest posterity, had, from insurmountable difficulties, failed of success.

In 1824, His late Majesty having commanded that another attempt should be made by way of Prince Regent's Inlet, an expedition was equipped — the last that sailed upon this interesting service — and the command again conferred upon Captain Parry, whose exploits have so deservedly earned him the approbation of his country. At the same time Captain Franklin, undaunted by his former perilous expedition, and by the magnitude of the contemplated undertaking, having, with the promptness and perseverance peculiar to his character, proposed to connect his brilliant discoveries at the mouth of the Coppermine River with the furthest known point on the western side of America, by descending the Mackenzie River, and, with the assistance of his