

## PREFATORY NOTICE.

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Captain Sir John Ross, the commander of two expeditions in search of a North-West passage, the existence of which he has left as much in doubt as ever, has, in the Narrative of his last voyage, been pleased to lay the chief blame of its failure on the manufacturers of the steam-engines with which his vessel, the Victory, was equipped. He has done this, too, in language well calculated, by its boldness and bitterness, to impress his readers with a belief that he has been a prodigious sufferer from the conduct of these parties. Nor is this impression at all likely to be weakened by the reflection that must naturally suggest itself to every one, that Captain Ross's long residence amidst the Polar snows, must have given his fit of indignation (supposing it to be real) more time for cooling down to the sobriety of truth, than usually falls to the lot of offended mortals. Perhaps, too, it may occur to many, who calling to mind how commonly generosity is combined with quickness to resentment in the naval character—gentlemanly courtesy, with sturdy rectitude—that during the eighteen months which elapsed between the return of Captain Ross to England, and the publication of his Narrative, he must, as a matter of course, have made the individuals whose characters were to be seriously affected by his complaints fully acquainted with their nature, and even offered (it would have been