

terest to oppose and hinder a discovery of this passage, use every art to destroy all credibility of it.

I persuade myself I am quite dispassionate : I have fairly proposed two exceeding strong objections to it : 1. from the prodigious length of the passage; such as one cannot without the greatest difficulty persuade themselves exists at all in nature; and 2. from its never being known to be navigated by those Indians, who come to Hudson's Bay from the Australian ocean, and who to be sure would use it, if they knew of such. Nor can one admit any answer whatever to this; not scarcely, tho' ever so well authenticated, relations in favour of the passage; but only the supposing it to lye in some other tract than that, which these Indians use, who visit our settlements in Hudson's Bay.

On the other hand, notwithstanding the strength of these objections; I confess De Fonte's relation, even with its inaccuracies and some mistakes, does yet carry with it such an air of simplicity and truth, and the circumstance of meeting Gibbons and Shapely, is so strong in its favour, that I cannot think myself at liberty quite to reject it.

But then as after all, it will not prove that there is any such N. E. passage as can be navigated, uninterruptedly by ships; so must it therefore appear of much less importance to have it fully discovered; and yet it must be owned, if navigable only for boats, that it highly deserves very serious considerations from the government.

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