

P R E F A C E.

I SHALL not encumber the reader with a tedious detail of my motives in publishing this work ; or of its scheme and plan. This is a kind of egotism, and currying favour with the reader, already carried to great excess. But I shall state a few facts—due to myself to give, and to the reader to know.

Having been articed to the Hudson's Bay Company, I left my father's home in London, in their ship, the *Ganymede*, for their settlements on the Pacific. It is needless for me to give any account of our outward voyage (though I met with some strange adventures) to the Sandwich Islands—at which we stopped for a short time ; and thence to the Columbia river. Having arrived at the western head-quarters of the Company—Fort Vancouver ; on the northern shore of the river, ninety miles from its mouth—I was placed in the fort, in the situation of assistant storekeeper. After remaining in the fort nearly a year, I was commissioned to proceed northward, in the Company's ships, on trading and exploring expeditions ; threading, in our various courses, the whole of the vast labyrinth of gulfs, sounds, straits, bays, and inlets, that interlace the whole of the Pacific shore, for many hundred miles inland, and along many degrees of latitude. Here I was in the character of trader and interpreter ; and assisted at the erection of several forts in various parts of the country, never before occupied. I then returned to the Columbia ; and was placed, for some time, in charge of Fort George, near the mouth of the river—now an outpost attached to Vancouver—the famous