

PREFACE.

THE discovery of America has produced important changes in the knowledge of the globe, navigation, and natural history in its several branches. The ancient systems of geography have gradually vanished, and mankind have founded their knowledge of the form and surface of the terraqueous globe on facts and experience. The whole art of voyaging by sea, the construction and equipment of ships, and the methods proper to preserve the lives and health of seamen in all climates, are likewise much better known. The sphere of natural history has been considerably enlarged by the wider field which this discovery has opened of the works of the Great Creator, some of which appear there constructed on a