

ever, to enter the field of discovery, and to the enterprising voyages of the daring and probably piratical Northmen, as related in the invaluable Icelandic records, the other kingdoms of Europe owed the first knowledge that had been obtained of Iceland and East or Old Greenland. Great Britain could not then lag behind, although as yet the dawn of her future indomitable and enterprising career in exploring the then unknown regions of the earth had not arisen; for we find that ships leaving her ports upon discovery were arrested in their progress northward by "great heaps of ice swimming in the sea," in latitudes, where, during the month of July, there was almost constant daylight.

Passing over all the early voyages, in which stand proudly pre-eminent the names of the renowned navigators, Cabot, Sir Hugh Willoughby, Chancellor, Davis, Hudson, Baffin, Bylot, Phipps, Cook, Vancouver, and many others, who boldly heralded us into the icy seas, we arrive at a period of comparative repose to those regions of nearly half a century, owing probably to the wars in which we and all the kingdoms of Europe were so seriously involved. From the discoveries made previous to this time, and from the inducements held out by the government in the shape of premiums, large

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