

CONCLUDING REMARKS by the EDITOR.

IN order to convince our subscribers and the public of the just preference due to this new and complete Collection of Captain Cook's Voyages, &c. round the World, and how undeservedly they may depend on the punctual execution of the Publisher's other periodical publications, on various useful and interesting subjects, it will be necessary to make a few remarks on the imperfections most glaringly conspicuous in most works of the kind; and also to point out the peculiar useful information, and important improvements, with which this genuine Edition of Cook's celebrated voyages abound; whereby we flatter ourselves, the unprejudiced, and disinterested, whose delight may be to employ their hours of leisure in the attainment of substantial knowledge, will not withhold from our several undertakings, and laborious endeavours to please, that encouragement they may be thought justly to deserve.

It has been too common a practice of late, to usher periodical publications into the world with a good appearance at first; and, in the course of their execution, to fall off from their original perfection; so that when concluded, they cannot, properly speaking, for want of uniformity, and due order, be deemed complete and perfect. We think, upon the whole, not one of our readers can, with justice, charge us with such defects, and unfair artifices. The latter numbers of our weekly publications, are, in general, equal in goodness to the former; and the whole are finished in so regular, uniform, and complete a manner, as, of which we have been repeatedly assured, answer the wishes both of the publisher and readers, by doing credit to the one, and giving full and pleasing satisfaction to the other. Let any impartial examiner compare the concluding numbers of Millar's Universal System of Geography, Barnard's New History of England, and this Complete Collection of Voyages Round the World, with any other works of the like kind, and, we are persuaded, they will distinguish on which side superior excellence lies; such a comparative view we earnestly request; not doubting, but that, agreeable to their usual candour, the Public will readily give merit the preference. Indeed, the just preference which is now generally given by the public to our various periodical publications, is a very flattering testimony in their favour. We have gone out of the common beaten track, and carried on business with a degree of credit and reputation, hitherto unattempted by our predecessors, and present competitors in the same line, which has effectually established a reputation with the public at large, who can depend safely upon the honourable and punctual execution of any work, which we announce for publication.

Our friends, and readers, will also please to observe, that most of the publications of our competitors, are spun out to an unreasonable length, by loose printing, or small pages, merely to answer pecuniary purposes; or, on the other hand, they have been mere abridgments, being contracted in too confined a compass, and so mutilated, and frivolous, as scarcely to deserve notice. Now it has been our invariable aim, to render every work that has been the object of our study, the very best, and most perfect of the kind. We dare not affront a discerning and generous public in a single instance, whereby they may have reason to say, our promises have not been honourably performed. We have always given full scope to the necessary copiousness and importance of the subject; while, at the same time, it has been our constant endeavour to preserve a happy medium between the two extremes, by not extending our performances further than absolute necessity may require: thus disdaining to renounce our respect for the public, by promoting, unnecessarily, the private interest of any of the artists concerned in their external execution.

One would think it must be obvious to the most cursory reader, how artfully many recent publications have been passed off in a very pompous manner by certain adventurers, in order to take the advantage of credulity;

notwithstanding they are too contemptible to come under the eye of criticism, being void of excellencies, and replete with errors, though offered to the public on very extravagant terms. With respect to these particulars, we apprehend the advantages over all similar publications are much in our favour. Our plans we have always endeavoured to render improved and extensive. Our materials have not been an indigested heap, put together without judgment; not a jumble of plagiarisms and piracies, of vain conjectures, paltry interpolations, ridiculous suppositions, and palpable falsities, but they are a select, judicious collection, extracted from the most approved authors, founded on the most respectable authorities, and arranged with the greatest accuracy and care. This authentic, and complete Collection of Cook's Voyages, &c. Round the World, is a real new undertaking, the result of the most laborious assiduity, and containing all the new improvements, and all the late discoveries, made in every part of the globe; for, which we request our friends and readers particularly to notice, we have not only corrected the journals put into our hands, by genuine records, but, with a view of rendering this work the best and most complete of the kind, we have enriched it by interweaving therein the substance of all the most remarkable and important Voyages and Travels, which have been undertaken, at various times, to the different quarters of the world; particularly those of Cavendish, Vaquez de Gama, Dampier, Raleigh, Columbus, Magellan, Hanway, Hamilton, Herbert, Drummond, Pocock, Shaw, Stuart, Kalm, Carver, Dalrymple, &c. &c.

In all the performances of those compilers that have hitherto come under our observation, and we have examined carefully not a few of them, it has greatly surprised us, when we found they slavishly followed each other, not having corrected even the most palpable errors. And, in order to give their imperfect and incorrect works a temporary credit, the most mean and paltry artifices have been employed by certain persons, to mislead the unwary; which persons have ignorantly and piratically copied our proposals and advertisements, and applied them to old and imperfect publications, in order to give them a new appearance.

It has also happened frequently, that, either from want of genius, or in order to conceal a servile imitation, they have enlarged on the least interesting parts of their subject, and have passed over slightly others, to elucidate or decorate which required a particular attention. Here, with a degree of self-satisfaction, we can appeal to the decision of public judgment, and leave the question to be determined by the unprejudiced peers, whether, in any of our works offered to their consideration, and calculated for general use, we have cut them short, or mangled them by the pen of ignorance, or spun them out with a tedious prolixity, to answer private purposes. In this work, every particular circumstance worthy of notice has been included; yet, though the narratives are circumstantial, it has been our study to render them entertaining, comprehensive, and interesting. This work contains the whole of Captain Cook's Voyages complete, with all the splendid folio copper-plates: so that our readers have not been imposed upon by being presented with a mutilated, imperfect, spurious edition, a trifling abridgment, or a mere compendium. We are now naturally led to point out the important improvements, with which this edition of these celebrated voyages abounds, whereby its superiority over all other works of the like kind will evidently appear.

Captain Cook's first, second and third voyages, were undertaken by order of his present Majesty, for making discoveries in the northern and southern hemispheres, and were successively performed in a period, from the year 1768, to 1780, inclusive. The first voyage was undertaken in His Majesty's ship the Endeavour, for making discoveries in the southern hemisphere, and round the world. The second in the Resolution