

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

HIS Majesty's Government having, towards the close of the year 1823, determined upon another attempt to effect a northern passage by sea between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and Captain Parry, the highly distinguished Commander of the two preceding Expeditions, having been again entrusted with its execution, success, as far as ability, enterprise, and experience could ensure it, appeared likely to be the result. Yet, as the object was one for which Great Britain had thought proper to contend for upwards of three centuries, it seemed to me that it might be desirable to pursue it by more ways than one; I therefore ventured to lay before His Majesty's Government a plan for an Expedition overland to the mouth of the Mackenzie River, and thence, by sea, to the north-western extremity of America, with the combined object, also, of surveying the coast between the Mackenzie and Coppermine Rivers.

I was well aware of the sympathy excited in the British public by the sufferings of those engaged in the former overland Expedition to the mouth of the Coppermine River, and