

taining thirty or forty vessels. These dangers, whether exaggerated or imaginary, do not, it may be objected, enough affright those who fit out ships for the Whale Fishery, to lessen the number sent, which annually increases, as it did this very last year. But the obvious answer to this will be, that they are not destined to work through the ice to the Pole; and that they know how to get back with the profitable return that allures them to venture in.

The Northern Sea bears various aspects in different quarters: to the West of *Spitzbergen*, and South of *Nova Zembla*, it seems full of ice; between *Spitzbergen* and *Nova Zembla*, it bears a better appearance, having only some floating shoals; and in the open space to the North and East of both, it looks far more pleasing, none being found there. Not the least mention is made of ice met with in that sea, by the two Dutch ships that proceeded so far North in the year 1570. They found the Polar Ocean calm, deep, and free. Their pursuit for a discovery was earnest, but defeated by the jealousy and powerful influence of the East-India Company in Holland. An account of the matter is published among the Transactions of the Royal Society: and a more ample state of the case is found in the writings of the famous *Vossius*, with the memorials on both sides. The narrative of those Navigators is confirmed by the testimony of the renowned Admiral *Heemskerke*, and corroborated by the report of Captain *Barents*, one of the ablest sailors of that time; he made several voyages to the North, bent upon making discoveries, and died at *Nova Zembla* in 1597, having explored its Southern coast through the ice, gone about its Eastern part, and convinced himself, as he declared in his last moments, that a passage would certainly be found when attempted from the most Northern part