

Spice Islands would be shorter, by more than two thousand leagues, than either from Spain by the straits of Magellan, or Portugal by the Cape of Good Hope; and to shew the likelihood of success in the enterprize he says, it is as probable that the cosmographers should be mistaken in the opinion they entertain of the polar regions being impassable from extreme cold, as, it has been found, they were, in supposing the countries under the line to be uninhabitable from excessive heat. With all the spirit of a man convinced of the glory to be gained, and the probability of success in the undertaking, he adds,—“God knoweth, that though by it I should have no great interest, yet I have had, and still have, no little mind of this business; so that if I had faculty to my will, it should be the first thing that I would understand, even to attempt, if our seas northward be navigable to the Pole or no.” Notwithstanding the many good arguments, with which he supported his proposition, and the offer of his own services, it does not appear that he prevailed so far as to procure an attempt to be made.

No voyage appears, indeed, to have been undertaken to explore the polar seas, till the year 1607, when “Henry Hudson was set forth, at the charge of certain worshipful merchants of London, to discover a passage by the North Pole to Japan and China.” He sailed from Gravesend on the first of May, in a ship called the *Hopewell*, having with him ten men and a boy. Great pains have been taken to find his original journal, as well as those of some others of the adventurers who followed him; but without success: the only account is an imperfect abridgement in Purchas, by which it is not possible to lay down his track; from which, however, are drawn the following particulars:—He fell in with the land to the westward in latitude 73°, on the twenty-first of June, which he named *Hold-with-Hope*. The twenty-seventh, he fell in with *Spitsbergen*, and met with much ice; he got to 80° 23', which was the northernmost latitude he observed in. Giving an account of the