

A JOURNEY TO THE SHORES

OF

THE POLAR SEA.

CHAPTER I.

Departure from England—Transactions at Stromness—Enter Davis' Straits—Perilous Situation on the shore of Resolution Island—Land on the Coast of Labrador—Eskimaux of Savage Islands—York Factory—Preparations for the Journey into the Interior.

1819.

May.

ON Sunday, the 23d of May, the whole of our party embarked at Gravesend on board the ship *Prince of Wales*, belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, just as she was in the act of getting under weigh, with her consorts the *Eddystone* and *Wear*. The wind being unfavourable, and on the ebb tide being finished, the vessels were again anchored ; but they weighed in the night, and beat down as far as the *Warp*, where they were detained two days by a strong easterly wind.

Having learned from some of the passengers, who were the trading Officers of the Company, that the arrival of the ships at either of the establishments in Hudson's Bay, gives full occupation to all the boatmen in their service, who are required to convey the necessary stores to the different posts in the interior ; that it was very probable a sufficient number of men might not be procured from this indispensable duty ; and, considering that any delay at York Factory would materially retard our future operations, I wrote to the Under Secretary of State, requesting his permission to provide a few well qualified steersmen and bowmen at Stromness, to assist our proceedings in the former part of our journey into the interior.

May 30.—The easterly wind which had retarded the ship's