

"A PLAIN MATTER-OF-FACT MAN WISHES FOR DATA
RATHER THAN WILD HYPOTHESES."

Quart. Rev. xxviii. 398.

AFTER a lapse of about twenty-six years, the question of the Existence, as well as the *Practicability*, of a Passage for ships, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, was revived; and the attention of the public excited in the year 1817, by the writer of an article headed "Lord Selkirk, and the North-West Passage," in No. 31. of "a popular critical Journal." Having introduced the latter subject by an examination into the authenticity of "Voyage de la Mer Glaciale; par le Capitaine Laurent Ferrer Maldonado, l'an 1588," the Reviewer says, "Destitute as we consider the relation of Maldonado to be, both of veracity and authenticity, we are by no means inclined to suppose that such a voyage, as it describes, is *impracticable*. We firmly believe, on the contrary, that a *navigable passage does exist*, and may be of *no difficult* execution. Why then, it may be asked, have all the attempts made at different times, from both sides the continent of America, failed?—Because, not one of them was ever made near that part of the coast of America round which, it is most likely, the passage would lead, into the Frozen or Northern Ocean. The distance between *Baffin's Sea* and Behring's Strait, is not

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