

PREFACE.

IN bringing forward a new edition of Crantz's History of Greenland to the notice of the Public, the Editors have laboured under peculiar difficulties. While it seemed derogatory from the reputation of Crantz, as a writer of much genuine merit, and some celebrity among his countrymen, to metamorphose his work by alterations and curtailments, it was evident that the many minute details of trivial circumstances, the fatiguing mass of heavy narrative, and the numerous repetitions of the original publication, would tend to exhaust the attention of the reader, and obscure the real excellencies of the work. The style also of the original German, required considerable alteration, to adapt it to the more perspicuous and refined model of modern composition. We are hereby far from insinuating, that the language of our Author is destitute of merit. It is in general simple, manly, correct, and energetic; and above all, possesses that fascinating charm, which sound judgment, united with veracity and integrity of purpose, can give to the production of a writer, though he be comparatively unskilled in the technicalities of composition. We may add, that Crantz's style will appear still more meritorious, when it is recollected, that as he wrote his book before the literature of Germany was ennobled, and its language refined, by the labours of a Schiller, a Wieland, or a Göthe, the works of his cotemporaries were chiefly remarkable for a certain clumsy strength, and could boast of very little beauty, or even propriety of diction. Contrasted with these, the language of the History of