

the means of obtaining their protection, and of recommending himself to the favor of savages. In the humble situation of a corporal of marines, to which he submitted rather than relinquish his pursuit, he made, with Captain Cook, the voyage of the world; and feeling, on his return, an anxious desire of penetrating from the north western coast, which Cook had partly explored, to the eastern coast, with which he himself was perfectly familiar, he determined to traverse the vast continent, from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean.

His first plan for the purpose, was that of embarking in a vessel which was preparing to sail, on a voyage of commercial adventure, to *Nootka Sound*, on the western coast of America; and with this view, he expended in sea-stores the greatest part of the money which his chief benefactor, Sir Joseph Banks (whose generous conduct the writer of this narrative has often heard him acknowledge) had liberally supplied. But the scheme being frustrated by the rapacity of a custom-house officer, who had seized and detained the vessel for reasons which, on legal enquiry, proved to be frivolous, he determined to travel over land to Kamtschatka, from whence to the western coast of America the passage is extremely short. With no other than ten guineas in his purse, which was all that he had left, he crossed the British Channel to Ostend, and by the way of Denmark and the Sound, proceeded to the capital of Sweden; from whence, as it was winter, he attempted to traverse to the gulph of Bothnia on the ice, in order to reach Kamtschatka by the shortest way; but finding, when he came to the middle of the sea, that the water was not frozen, he returned to Stockholm, and, taking his course northward, walked into the arctic circle, and, passing round the head of the gulph, descended, on its eastern side to Petersburg.

There he was soon noticed as an extraordinary man.—Without stockings or shoes, and in too much poverty to provide himself with either, he received and accepted an invitation to dine with the Portuguese ambassador. To this invitation it was probably owing that he was able to obtain the sum of twenty guineas for a bill on Sir Joseph Banks, which he confessed he had no authority to draw, but which, in consideration of the business that he had undertaken, and of the progress that he had made, Sir Joseph, he believed, would not be unwilling to pay. To the ambassador's interest it might also be owing that he obtained permission to accompany a detachment of soldiers which the

Empress had ordered to be sent to Yakutz, for the use of Mr. Billings, an Englishman, at that time in her service.

Thus accommodated, he travelled eastward through Siberia, six thousand miles to Yakutz, where he was kindly received by Mr. Billings, whom he remembered on board Capt. Cook's ship in the situation of the astronomer's servant, but to whom the Empress had now entrusted the schemes of northern discovery.

From Yakutz, he proceeded to Ocza-kow, on the coast of the Kamtscharka sea; from whence he meant to have passed over to that peninsula, and to have embarked on the eastern side in one of the Russian vessels that trade to the western shores of America; but, finding, that the navigation was completely obstructed by the ice, he returned again to Yakutz in order to wait for the conclusion of the winter.

Such was his situation when, in consequence of suspicions not hitherto explained or resentments for which no reason is assigned, he was seized, in the Empress's name, by two Russian soldiers, who placed him in a sledge, and conveying him, in the depth of winter, through the deserts of the northern tartary, left him at last on the frontiers of the Polish dominions. As they parted they told him, that if he returned to Russia he would certainly be hanged; but that if he chose to go back to England, they wished him a pleasant journey.

In the midst of poverty, covered with rags, infested with the usual accompaniment of such clothing, worn with continued hardship, exhausted by disease, without friends, without credit, unknown and full of misery, he found his way to Koenigsberg.—There, in the hour of his utmost distress, he resolves once more to have recourse to his old benefactor, and he luckily found a person who was willing to take his draft for five guineas on the President of the Royal Society.

With this assistance he arrived in England, and immediately waited on Sir Joseph Banks, who told him knowing his temper, that he believed he could recommend him to an adventure almost as perilous as the one from which he had returned; and then communicated to him the wishes of the Association for discovering the inland countries of Africa.

Mr. Ledyard replied, that he had always determined to traverse the continent of Africa as soon as he had explored the interior of North America; and, as Sir Joseph had offered him a letter of introduction, he came directly to the writer of these memoirs. Before I had learnt from