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INTRODUCTION.

IT is fortunate for commerce, and the intercourse of nations, that there is implanted in man's nature a desire of novelty, which no present gratification can satisfy; that when he has visited one region of the earth, he is still, like Alexander, sighing for another to explore; and that, after having escaped one danger in his progress, he is no less eager to encounter others, that may chance to obstruct him in the course of his pursuits.

If the history of former hardships could have deterred men from engaging in new adventures, the Voyage, the particulars of which we are now about to relate, would probably never have been undertaken. The dreary regions that surround the poles are so little accustomed to feel the kindly influences of the enlivening sun, and are so destitute of the ordinary productions of the earth in happier climates, that little less than one whole quarter of the globe is, by its sterility, rendered uninhabitable by human beings, and but thinly occupied by a very inconsiderable number of the race of quadrupedes. The many and almost insuperable difficulties that must therefore be expected in traversing these forlorn deserts, where no relief is to be
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