

than once, in remote Ages, was found to be impracticable, and the Projectors were obliged to desist, after having consumed Multitudes of Men in the Attempt, either deterred by the Difficulty of cutting through vast Mountains and Beds of Rocks, which lay in the Way, or by a Fear of what Consequences might ensue from a Junction of those Seas; the *Red Sea* being found, by a Level taken, to be much higher than the *Mediterranean*: The Event, therefore, of a Junction of such vast Bodies of Water, they dreaded might cause great Devastation by the over-filling of the *Mediterranean*, which in all Probability would have laid *Egypt* entirely under Water. Besides, as the *Turks* govern the Country on both Sides the *Red Sea*, they would also be Masters of the Passage, and levy what exorbitant Tax they should think proper to demand, in Opposition to all the Powers in *Europe*, though they united in fighting for this Door to the *East Indies*.

Another Project was, that of cutting a Way for sailing from *Europe* to *Asia*, through the narrowest Part of the Isthmus of *Panama*, a Neck of Land, which connects the two Continents of Northern and Southern *America* together; but the Execution of this Design must meet with insurmountable Obstacles, from a Want of Numbers sufficient to accomplish so vast an Enterprize, as well as Provisions to subsist them during their Labours, was it possible to bring thither an adequate Number of Hands; not to mention that the Unhealthiness of the Climate, and the Fatigue joined with it, would be so destructive to the People employed, that perhaps the whole Maritime Power of *Europe* would be scarcely able to furnish out Men requisite for this Purpose, and supply the continual Waste of human Lives.

These Schemes being therefore justly deemed visionary, and impracticable, Men cast about to find whether Nature had offered to them any other Method of rendering the Voyage to the *East-Indies* less tedious and irksome. Two Ways only now presented themselves to be tried, the one to the North West round *America*, the other to the North East, about the Coasts of *Europe* and *Asia*. Both have been attempted without Success hitherto, though the following Treatise makes it plain to Demonstration, that there is, in the last-mentioned Voyage, a Continuation of Sea extending to *China* and *Japan*. Indeed, if we consider the extreme Difficulties that would occur in the North-West Voyage by the Coast of *America*, that round *Europe* and the Northern Boundary of *Asia*, into the *Indian Sea*, is

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