

A preface to the Reader as touching the principall Voyages and discourfes in this first part.



Having for the benefit and honour of my Country zealously bestowed so many yeeres, so much traueile and cost, to bring Antiquities smothered and buried in darke silence, to light, and to reserve certaine memorable exploits of late yeeres by our English nation atchieued, from the greedy and deuouring iawes of obliuion: to gather likewise, and as it were to incorporate into one body the torne and scattered limmes of our ancient and late Navigations by Sea, our voyages by land, and traffiques

of merchandise by both: and having (so much as in me lieth) restored each particular member, being before displaced, to their true ioynts and ligaments; I meane, by the helpe of Geographie and Chronologie (which I may call the Sunne and the Moone, the right eye and the left of history) referred each particular relation to the due time and place: I do this second time (friendly Reader, if not to satisfie, yet at least for the present to allay and hold in suspense thine expectation) presume to offer vnto thy view this first part of my threefold discourse. For the bringing of which into this homely and rough-hewen shape, which bere thou seest, what restlesse nights, what painefull dayes, what heat, what cold I haue indured; how many long & chargeable iournies I haue traueiled; how many famous libraries I haue searched into; what varietie of ancient and moderne writers I haue perused; what a number of old records, patents, priuileges, letters, &c. I haue redeemed from obscuritie and perishing; into how manifold acquaintance I haue entred; what expenses I haue not spared; and yet selfe canst hardly imagine, yet I by daily experience do finde & feele, and some of my entier friends can sufficiently testifie. Howbeit (as I told thee at the first) the honour and benefit of this Common weale wherein I liue and breathe, hath made all difficulties seeme easie, all paines and industrie pleasant, and all expenses of light value and moment vnto me.

For (to containe my selfe onely within the bounds of this present discourse, and in the midst thereof to begin) wil it not in all posteritie be as great a renoume vnto our English nation, to haue bene the first discoverers of a Sea beyond the North cape (neuer certainly knowne before) and of a conuenient passage into the huge Empire of Russia by the bay of S. Nicolas and the riuer of Duina; as for the Portugales to haue found a Sea beyond the Cape of Buona Esperanza, and so consequently a passage by Sea into the East Indies; or for the Italians and Spaniards to haue discovered vnknewen landes so many hundred leagues Westward and Southwestward of the streits of Gibraltar, & of the pillars of Hercules? Be it granted that the renowned Portugale Vaquez de Gama trauesed the maine Ocean Southward of Africke: Did not Richard Chanceler and his mates performe the like Northward of Europe? Suppose that Columbus that noble and high-spirited Genuois espyed vnknewen landes to the Westward of Europe and Africke: Did not the valiant English knight sir Hugh Willoughby; did not the famous Pilots Stephen Burrough, Arthur Pet, and Charles Iackman accost Noua Zembla, Colgoieue, and Vaigatz to the North of Europe and Asia? Howbeit you will (perhaps, not with the like golden succeffe, nor with such deductions of Colonies, nor attaining of conquests. True it is, that our succeffe hath not bene correspondent vnto theirs: yet in this our attempt the vncertainie of finding was farre greater, and the difficultie and danger of searching was no whit lesse. For hath not Herodotus (a man for his time, most skilfull and iudicial in Cosmographie, who writ about 2000. yeeres ago) in his 4. booke called Mel-

pomene,