

Year 1781 = 15.

[11]

INTRODUCTION.

THE successes of His Majesty's ships in having penetrated into the inmost recesses of the South Pacific Ocean, will appear from a recital of their various extensive operations, which have settled the geography of so considerable a part of the globe.

The several lands mentioned to have been discovered by preceding navigators, whether Spanish or Dutch, have been diligently sought after; and most of those which appeared to be of any consequence, found out and visited; and every method put in practice to correct former mistakes, and supply the deficiencies.

Besides perfecting the discoveries of their predecessors, our late navigators have added a long catalogue of their own, to enrich geographical knowledge. By repeatedly traversing the Pacific Ocean, such ample accounts have been received of the different islands and their inhabitants, that, to make use of Captain Cook's own words, we *have left little more to be done in those parts.*

Byron, Wallis, and Carteret, all contributed towards increasing our knowledge of the isles in the Pacific Ocean, within the limits of the southern tropic; but how far that ocean ex-