

Back was mostly prevented from turning his attention to objects of science by the many severe duties which were required of him, and which obliged him to travel almost constantly every winter that we passed in America; to his personal exertions indeed, is mainly to be attributed our final safety. And here I must be permitted to pay the tribute, which is due to the fidelity, exertion, and uniform good conduct in the most trying situations, of John Hepburn, an English seamen, and our only attendant, to whom in the latter part of our journey we owe, under Divine Providence, the preservation of the lives of some of the party.

I ought, perhaps, to crave the reader's indulgence towards the defective style of this work, which I trust will not be refused when it is considered that mine has been a life of constant employment in my profession from a very early age. I have been prompted to venture upon the task solely by an imperious sense of duty, when called upon to undertake it.