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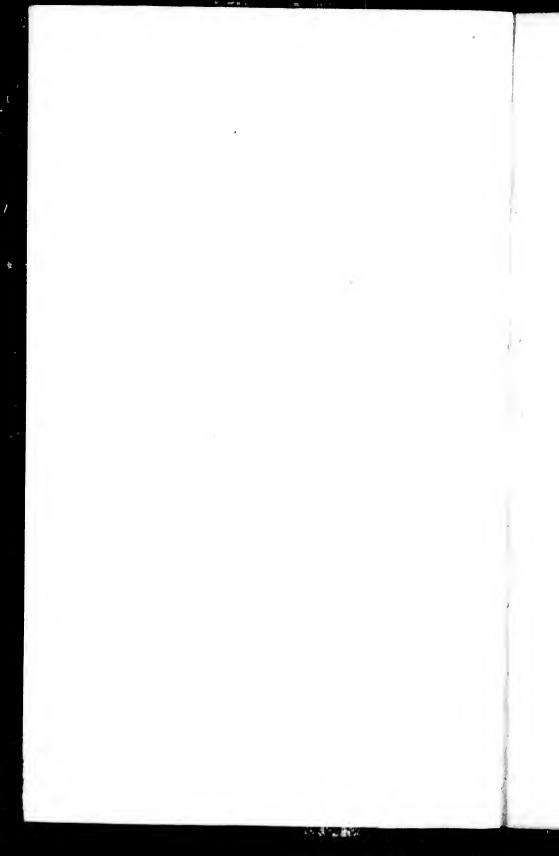
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AUTHENTIC STATEMENT

OF

ALL THE FACTS

RELATIVE TO

NOOTKA SOUND:

ITS DISCOVERY, HISTORY, SETTLEMENT, TRADE,

AND

THE PROBABLE ADVANTAGES TO BE DERIVED FROM 1T;

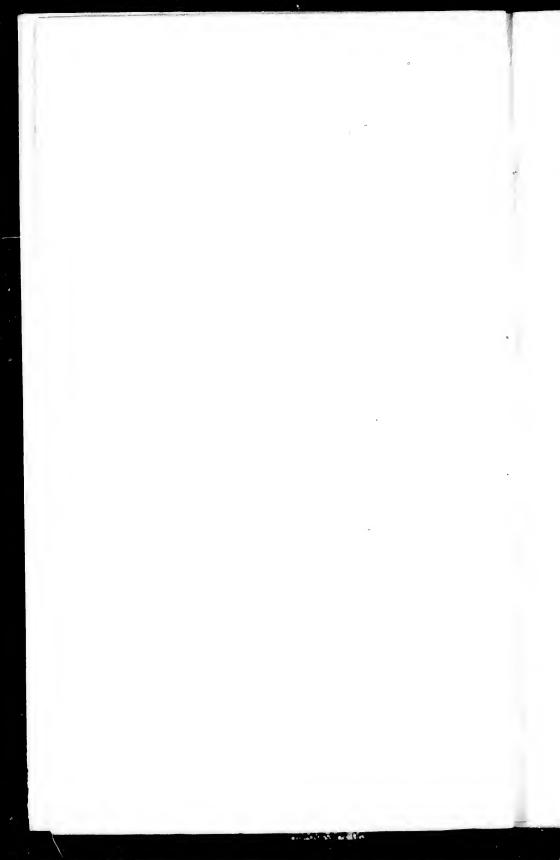
IN AN

ADDRESS TO THE KING.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. DEBRETT, OPPOSITE BURLINGTON-HOUSE, PICCADILLY,

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AUTHENTIC STATEMENT, &c.

TO THE KING.

SIRE,

THE late seisure and confiscation (by a Spanish armament) of the British ships and sactories in King George's, or Nootka Sound, on the North-West coast of America, being now a subject not only of public conversation and attention, but having roused the spirit and indignation of the British nation in support of your majesty's insulted crown and dignity, and of her violated commerce, I beg

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leave.

leave to submit a few leading facts respecting that settlement, and this stagrant depredation by order of the Spanish court. Your Majesty, and the public may give me full credit both for the accuracy and authenticity of the following statement:

In 1785 a plan was submitted to your Majesty's ministry by Mr. Richard Cadman Etches, a merchant of the city of London, for profecuting and converting to national utility the discoveries of the late Captain Cook, and for the establishing a regular and reciprocal fystem of commerce between Great Britain, the North-west coast of America, the Japanese, Kureil, and Jesso islands, and the coast of Asia, Corea, and China; the plan was warmly applauded and patronifed by the ministry, by Sir Joseph Banks, Sir John Dick, and many other personages of rank and acknowledged abilities, who rendered Mr. Etches every affistance in digefting and maturing the principal outlines of the undertaking. Accordingly two vessels, the King George, Captain Nathaniel Portlock, and the the Queen Charlotte, Captain George Dixon, were then fitted out, and equipped in the most complete and ample manner for discovery and commerce; they were furnished, at the same time, with a number of extra feamen and artificers. with stores, ammunition, provisions, &c. for the establishment of two factories, the one in King George's Sound, and another to the northward, and for opening new commercial channels to the manufactories of Great Britain. So fatisfied were the ministry with the great and public advantages of the enterprife, with the liberal equipment and extensive arrangement of the owners, that Mr. Rofe, Mr. Steele, Sir Joseph Banks, Lord Mulgrave, and a number of other diffinguished and public-spirited gentlemen, visited the ships at Deptford, fpent the day convivially on board, and honoured the expedition by christening the two ships, the officers of which were dressed in full uniform; and, as an emblem of fo novel and enterprifing an undertaking, Hope, leaning on an anchor, was painted on their colours.

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A license was obtained from the South-Sea Company, with full liberty to make discoveries, to erect factories, and to prosecute other commercial objects; and another license was granted by the Hon. East-India Company, for the disposal of their cargoes in China. The instructions, both public and private, delivered to the captains, were previously submitted to your majetty's ministers for perusal, and returned with the utmost approbation.

The two ships sailed from Deptsord in September 1785, and in May 1787 learned from the Indians, in Prince William Sound, that there was a ship somewhere in the vicinity; and from what could be judged from their pointing and descriptions, must be near Snug-Corner Cove, and which afterwards proved to be a brig called the Nootka, Captain John Mears, from Bengal.

Captain Mears had been blocked up all the winter by the ice, and had fuffered incredible haroship by the scurvy, &c. This ship was affished

fisted with necessaries and medicines, and a few feamen to assist in navigating her to China.

The King George and Queen Charlotte arrived in China in 1787, and were chartered by the Hon. East-India Company's supercargoes to carry a freight of tea to Europe. In the year 1786, Mr. Etches sitted out two more ships—the Prince of Wales, Captain James Colnett; and the Princess Royal, Captain Charles Duncan; and Mr. John Etches, his brother, accompanied them, to superintend the commerce and establishments of both expeditions.

These vessels were equipped with every necessary article, and with people to form an establishment on Staten Island, for the purpose of carrying on a fishery, and for assisting any of the stature expeditions bound round Cape Horn.

The following spring Mr. Etches equipped a large ship, the Duke of York, to reinforce the settlement on Staten Island, which ship was unfectionedly

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The experiment fufficiently afcertained the importance of this island, for the wooding, watering, and refreshing of ships bound round Cape Horn, but the disaster put an end to the establishment, and the people quitted the island in their boats.

This island, which was regularly surveyed by Mr. Lamb, one of the officers in Mr. Etches' fervice, was found to have many considerable and convenient harbours; it was covered with large woods of the cortex winteranus; it was supplied with remarkably sine water, and was likely to be of infinite more importance to all ships bound round Cape Horn, than the Falkland islands.

Had this circumstance been so well known some years back, or had the present ministry been then in power, the nation would not have been subjected to that considerable expense and disgrace which it experienced in the fracas with the Spaniards respecting the Falkland islands.

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The Prince of Wales and the Princess Royal arrived in King George's Sound in July 1787, and so certain were they of finding an establishment formed there, agreeable to the equipment and orders given to Captains Portlock and Dixon, commanders of the first expedition, that, on discovering a boat coming off, Mr. John Etches was persuaded that he recognised the officer sent out to command at the factories; but, to their utter astonishment, they found it to be a boat belonging to the Louden, Captain Berkley, under Imperial colours.

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One of the first great geographical discoveries by Mr. Etches' ships was, that what was laid down by the immortal Cook as a continuation of the North-West Continent of America, and lying between the Northern latitudes of 48, and 57, was, on the contrary, an extensive cluster of unexplored islands, inhabited by numerous tribes of Friendly Indians, with whom a regular connexion was formed, and a multitude of these valuable islands were taken possession of with the usual

usual forms and ceremonies of original discoveries; particularly Queen Charlotte's and Princess Royal's Islands, amounting from fifty to one hundred in number; and many of the chiefs of them were presented with light-horsemens' caps and medals, on which were your Majesty's arms.

These islands they discovered, contrary to the affertion of captain Cook, to conceal the opening of a vait inland Sea, or Archipelago, in all probability equal to the Mediterranean, or Baltic Seas, and dividing the great Northern Continent of America. The Princess Royal penetrated some hundred leagues among them, in a North-East course, to within two hundred leagues of Hudfon's-house, but had not then an opportunity to explore the extreme termination of that Archipelago, their commercial concerns obliging them to return back to the China market; but the commanders had the strongest reasons to believe, had time favoured their furvey, that they should have been able to discover the long wished for passage between the Atlantic and South Sea, and and immediately before the present hostilities of Spain, the proprietors were building small vessels on the coast, with the determination of reattempting this great geographical and commercial discovery. They are convinced that should neither the inland arm of the sea through which the Princess Royal penetrated, nor a large strait, named Sir Charles Middleton's, about three degrees to the Southward, be found to reach across the North-American Continent, yet that the land barrier must be very inconsiderable, and that at the extremity of this bay a practicable passage, either by rivers or lakes, will, by perseverance, be found terminating towards Hudson's Bay.

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ea, nd Captain Cook never had brought the probability of a North-West passage, nearer than King George's Sound; and from thence to the bay of Islands in North latitude 57, he conjectured to be the North-West Continent of America; and positively deemed the idea of Desont's, and Desucca's Straits as fabulous. It is well known that this country, for more than a century past,

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has expended large fums in planning a fuccession of expeditions, both to Hudson's Bay, and to the opposite coasts of the Pacific Ocean, for the discovery of the North-West passage, which Mr. Dobbs so ably predicted, and which captain Cook, in the most peremptory and decided manner, deemed ideal and impracticable: indeed he fought for it in a latitude too far Northward, in the vicinity of Cook's river, where even had the two great oceans been found united, yet such navigation must have been extremely incommoded by ice.

I am now to speak of the commercial discoveries, and the lucrative prospects presented to the mercantile adventurers: and here it is but justice to observe, that the grandeur and originality of the attempt may challenge the most celebrated exploits of the Phænicians, or Argonauts, and must be considered as a stupendous under-Every one taking of a few British merchants. knows that the unconquerable infatuation of the English and Irish to that Chinese leaf, called Tea, is a wasting drain of more than one million annually of of folid specie from this country; to recover back a part of that specie, was one of the collateral objects of the present commerce. The staple manufactories of England, the woollens, hardware, and earthen ware, were bartered with the Indians for their surs, and other native productions; these were again exchanged in China for currency, which was paid into the East India Company's treasury at Canton.

It was not merely the trade in otter skins and other furs, that was aimed at and meant to be pursued; there was the greatest probability of establishing an important sishery, of supplying the China and India markets with masts, yards, timber, and most kinds of naval stores; the want of which was so fatally selt the last war by our sleet in India; the whole proceeds of which, being paid into the Company's treasuries, were to be in lieu of an equal proportion of specie hitherto transmitted by them from Europe; and the proprietors were to be reimbursed by taking the hopographs.

nourable East-India Company's bills at twelvemonth's fight on London.

Nootka Sound was found to be a remarkable healthy fituation for the fettlers and failors; the run from which to the Sandwich Islands is generally made in about three weeks, and from thence to China, in fix or feven weeks more; and during their stay at the Sandwich Islands, any quantity of provisions are to be procured to the greatest certainty.

Mr. John Etches and captain Mears fortunately meeting at Canton in 1788, and being fully fenfible of the neceffity of entirging their capital, to fecure the commerce to the British nation, and to render abortive the feeble attempts of some foreign rivals, agreed to form a joint concern and copartnership, and to equip two more thips that season from Canton, with additional mechanics, artificers, and others, to reinforce the establishment at Nootka, to complete their arrangement,

rangement, and to give every degree of vigour to the enterprise.

Mr. John Etches returned to Europe for the purpose of making another equipment from England the present season, and to store the settlement with an additional affortment of European articles and merchandize. Captain Mears was to remain at China, for conducting the commerce and preparing the equipment in that quarter for the American coast, and also for expediting a promissing attempt of opening a commercial intercourse with the Japanese islands, and for completing a treaty entered into with Tyana, a prince of the Sandwich islands, who had accompanied captain Mears to China, for the purpose of disposing of the island of Oneehow, and for granting admission to all British ships to those islands. This prince was taken back again to his own country by Captain Douglass, in the Iphigenia. On the arrival of Captain Colnet at Nootka, the Company's force confisted of the Argonaut, Captain Colnet, the Iphigenia, Captain Douglas, the Princess Royal, Captain

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Captain Hudson, (with a very large cargo of fur on board,) together with the N. W. America, a vessel built at Nootka, besides small crast for the purpose of discovery, and trassic with the Indians. Captain Colnet also took out with him materials for laying the keel of a ship of two hundred tons in Nootka, and was to remain there to manage and conduct the whole concern in that quarter, and to build small crast for exploring the large bays and rivers.

Every thing that commercial genius, with human prudence, could devife, was established on the most regular and permanent footing, at an immense expense. The infant colony was in the most flourishing and prosperous state, and presented to the proprietors a certainty of being rewarded with ample fortunes, when the arrival of the Spanish sleet put an end, for the present, to all their hopes.

Captain Colnet, a lieutenant in the Royal Navy, who ferved under the late Captain Cook, and was distinguished distinguished by that great circumnavigator as a very valuable seaman and enterprising officer, was so exasperated at the illiberal treatment of the Spaniards, after his captivity, and so severely stung at the prospect of an undertaking so grand and national being, at one blow, and without any just cause, overturned, that he became distracted.

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Captain Hudson, who commanded the Princess Royal, a very enterprising seaman, and who has eminently distinguished himself by exploring the country in open boats, the Spaniards frequently threatened to hang, for acting as became a British officer.

All the fore-mentioned veffels, the craft, artificers, stores, ammunition, a number of British and Chinese subjects, with the materials of the settlement, were seized and carried off to Mexico; and, was it not for that spirited and glorious manner with which their cause is espoused by government, it is much to be feared they would have been condemned to linger out a miserable existence, in the

the most dreadful of all dungeons, the mines of Mexico. An American brig, lying in the Sound, was not molested; and, to aggravate the insult to the British nation, several days after the captivity of Capt. Colnet, the anniversary of the American Independence was commemorated with every demonstration of joy; the English slag, which till then had been slying on board the Argonaut, was hauled down, and the Spanish slag hoisted to complete the celebration and triumph of the day.

It is yet a profound mystery to every rational being, with what shadow of excuse the Spanish Court can attempt to colour this enormous outrage, this premeditated robbery, and unprovoked hostility. They cannot have the effrontery to arrogate to themselves the fruits of the discoveries made by the late Capt. Cook, and other British adventurers, in a region so remote from their own settlements.

Nootka Sound is many hundred leagues North from every Spanish settlement; and even the intermediate first discovered and taken possession of, in the usual forms, by Admiral Drake, so long ago as the reign of Queen Elizabeth. I shall, however, postpone, to the end of this letter, the remaining animadversions on this most extraordinary conduct on the part of Spain, in order to resume and conclude the history of the infant settlement.

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In the early attempts and dawning of fo extensive an undertaking, the projectors must expect to be material sufferers, from the want of local knowledge, and experience, and of the articles necessary to surnish their cargos, particularly for so distant a market: necessity demanding a change and variety. There must also, in every business, be a gradation of some preparatory processes, previous to reaping the golden harvest.

It is an incontrovertible fact, that in new discovered countries the natives are remarkably capricious; articles in demand one day will be rejected the following; and both their fickleness and industry

The King George and Queen Charlotte were furnished with large and complete cargoes of the commodities and manufactures of England, above one half, and the most valuable part of which, were again brought home at an enormous loss: but, on the other hand, they gained much information and experience, of which they reaped the benefit in the last expedition.

The projector's instructions to the commanders not being punctually obeyed in the first expedition, was a circumstance very injurious to their interests. And again, at the China markets, they laboured under a disadvantage, from an unauthorised and interested claim of the Honourable the East-India Company's supercargoes, of a controul over the disposal of their furs.

The equipment of the Prince of Wales and the Princess Royal, under the management of Mr. John Etches, was not attended with half the expence of the former; their voyage was not so dilatorily

latorily conducted; and Mr. Etches disposed of his cargo considerably more advantageous than the former, and for a very handsome profit; Capt. Mears also arrived at Canton the same season with a valuable and lucrative cargo from the coast of America.

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Each fuccessive season must have been confiderably more productive; the competition of the contending parties, who had hitherto trafficked in opposition to each other, both at the American and China markets, was done away, and the interest of the whole concern became one common cause.

The local experience of each party had almost overcome every obstacle; they had obtained a thorough knowledge of the various stations and extensive range of traffic, of the wants of the natives, and of the articles necessary to be exported from this country.

They had formed alliances with the Indians,
D 2 who,

who, from the established trading houses, knew at all times where to dispose of their produce; a certainty which would tend to stimulate them not only to industry, by hunting, but likewise to barter in exchange, the European articles which they received for their produce, with the more distant tribes of Indians. Thus, in a very short period of time, would a regular barter have been settled with, perhaps, all the numerous tribes of Indians dispersed over that immense tract of country.

Hitherto the natives had no other fpur to industry than merely supplying the common wants of nature, and to protect themselves from the inclemency of the seasons.

The Indians, of all nations, are fond of perfonal ornaments; in this part of the globe they manifest an uncommon demand for them. No some are they supplied with one apparent want, than another and another is successively created; and, as civilization is introduced amongst them, their

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em, neir their wants and importance must progressively increase. Their dress being furs, forms one great staple of reciprocal commerce; but their habitual intercourse with Europeans prompts them to prefer woollens, particularly, as by bartering their furs, they can supply all their multiplied wants and cravings.

Another valuable and important object had been accomplished. The Sandwich islanders, with whom a treaty had been formed, were found to be a brave, hardy, and industrious race of people; anxious to embark in the ships, uncommonly tractable and attached, and soon taught the use of the axe, saw, and of every other tool, as well as every implement of husbandry. Mr. John Etches took several of them to the coast of America the second season; they were soon trained not only in navigating the ship, but in trafficking with the natives, and were employed in common with the people both on board and on shore.

The owners had determined, the present sea-

fon, to make up two-thirds of their complements with these islanders, both for navigating the vessels, and at the sactories: this would have been a saving of an enormous expence, as all the requisite supplies for them would be provisions and cloathing; the chief of which would be procured by barter at their own islands.

Mr. Etches and Capt. Duncan each brought a youth, natives of the Sandwich islands, with them to England, to whom they are greatly attached, and who feem capable of being taught any art or fcience equally with the youth of any European nation.—Lastly, to the peroration—

The property of those persevering British adventurers, who, at the risk of their fortunes, have pushed the national commerce to the extreme quarters of the globe, should be protected and guarded by the public sanction, and vindictive sword. To them is due, not as an obligation of favour, but of right, redress—not only for their actual losses and expences, but likewise an ample

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compensation for the lucrative rewards of which they were then in fight, and nearly in reach.

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To the nation is due retribution for the extra expence of its prefent armaments, and likewise for the sudden shock and damp to mercantile enterprise, and commercial ardour.

In this island the vigorous and the tender shoots of diverging commerce should be fostered and protected, with the same serupulous vigilance, as its bank paper, or its national stock.

The supporters of the insulted Flag of Britain demand no other favour, than the unbridled exertion of their own nervous and powerful arm.

But it is faid that the Spanish usurpations are not merely confined to the dispossession of the British from their own discoveries in those parts; they are not satisfied with the uninterrupted and undisturbed possession of that vast range of American continent, extending nearly from the rising to the setting setting of the sun; they have the arrogance to assume an exclusive right to the gates, locks, and keys of the whole Pacific, to the exclusive monopoly of an ocean, and its numerous islands, which embrace in their extent almost one half of the globe. On what patent, charter, or right, they can found claims fo monstrous and absurd, I know not, nor can guess at; certainly not on discovery or occupancy? Is it on the Pope's Bull and omnipotent anathemas, with which about two centuries ago they failed, with their invincible Armada, to subdue England? In the present case they have equal pretentions and justice on their fide, and, I trust, will meet with equal savour and fuccefs. Indeed their avarice and conscious criminality may well be alarmed-the ghosts of murdered millions of the natives of that continent are yet screaming for vengeance on their remorseless butchers-ten millions more of their wretched descendants are, with broken hearts, incessantly supplicating Heaven to relieve them from their rigorous bondage-to fend to their deliverance fome generous and compassionate nation, to

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tion, to break their chains asunder, and to place them in the rank of human beings. It is well known they have the means amply to testify their gratitude, and to repay their deliverers from the most flagitious of all human tyranny and oppression; from the shackles and scourges of unbridled despotism; from the siery siends of gloomy bigotry and priestly inquisition.

The vengeance of Heaven, when flow, is more fevere. May the reddening bolt foon take wing, and the guilty tremble!

Has Spain any ancient or modern claims on the gratitude or the forbearance of Britain?

Is it their late infidious and mercenary confpiracy in the affiftance of our revolted American colonies, and in the diffmemberment of our empire?

Is it their private robbery, at the same time, of the Floridas, of the Musquito shore, of Mi-E norca,

norca, of our East and West-Indian sleets, were these the victorious blows of a generous and manly soe, or the stabs and rapine of a dastardly assassin!

To the King of Great Britain, the Father of his People, the Patron and Protector of their Commerce, the Defender of their Liberties and Dignity, this Address is dedicated, with all humility, by

Your Majesty's faithful, dutiful, and devoted subject, ARGONAUT.

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