JOURNAL OF A VOYAGE TO GREENLAND, IN THE YEAR 1821. WITH GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS

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Journal of a voyage to Greenland, in the year 1821. With graphic illustrations by George William Manby

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GEORGE WILLIAM MANBY

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JOURNAL

OF A

VOYAGE TO GREENLAND,

IN THE YEAR 1821.

WITH GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY GEORGE WILLIAM MANBY, Esq.

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TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

SIR BENJAMIN BLOOMFIELD,

Se. Se. Se.

MY DEAR SIE,

In availing myself of the permission, so kindly given, to dedicate to you this Volume, it were an equal want of good feeling as of good taste, to repeat those praises which the general voice of the nation has long pronounced upon your public character; but I may be allowed to state, with conscious pride, that in early life, when Cadets at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, you were my guide, my leader, and my friend; and it is a great pleasure to me to know that you also can look back with pleasure to our intimacy in those times,

" memor

- " Acte non alio rege puertize,
- " Mutatæque simul togæ."

I have the honour to be,

With the profoundest respect,

Your devoted and humble Servant,

GEORGE W. MANBY.

Barracks at Yarmouth, July 19, 1822.

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INTRODUCTION.

MY views were originally directed to the undertaking which forms the subject of the present Volume, by a suggestion of the late Right Honourable George Rose, when President of the Board of Trade. On witnessing some experiments made by me to illustrate my method of saving persons from shipwreck, he was pleased to declare his conviction that the principle there employed, in the projection of a rope from a gun, might be extended with much advantage to the whale-fishery, for the purpose of throwing a harpoon in a similar manner. He expressed his own confidence that the general introduction of such a change, would, in a great degree, avert the failure, which he regretted to learn, had latterly attended the investment of capital in this branch of commercial speculation; and he at the same

time inquired my opinion, how far that failure was generally susceptible of remedy, either by improvement in the present method of taking whales, or by such alterations in the construction of the implements used in the business, as should tend to give greater security to those engaged in the enterprise. After remarking that the Greenland whale-fishery afforded the best nursery for a hardy race of sailors, that, if successful, it would give employment to much shipping and numerous artificers, and was calculated to produce valuable cargoes for the comfort and convenience of life, without sending money out of the country, he concluded by a flattering wish that I should apply my attention to this subject of paramount national importance.

It was a sufficient motive for exertion, that my efforts were encouraged by the favourable expectations of this distinguished individual who had so eloquently and successfully advocated my plan for rescue from shipwreck. If, however, a further incentive to indefatigable perseverance had been requisite, I should have found it in the zealous desire to shew gratitude to my country for that generous patronage, which had enabled me to carry into execution my invention for protecting her seamen from the horrors of a watery grave. I shall be pardoned if I here remark, with some degree of pride and satisfaction, that this invention, has already been crowned with success in the prescription of ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SIX PERSONS, as well foreigners as natives, saved within my own immediate knowledge, who, under Heaven, are indebted for their lives to the philanthropy of the British Government.

It was under the influence of these feelings, that I became a painful observer of the consequences entailed upon the port of Yarmouth by the general stagnation of trade and commercial difficulty, which unhappily visited this empire for years after the return of peace. The effects of this total suspension of mercantile activity were distressingly visible in the forest