

CHAPTER IX.

ANTARCTIC CRUISE.

1840.

THE subjects of which I am about to treat in the following chapters are exclusively nautical. I shall therefore adopt in treating them more of the form of a log-book, and follow the daily order of their occurrence with more strictness than I have hitherto considered necessary. This will be done in order to illustrate more fully the nature of the remote regions we traversed, and for the purpose of giving a more exact relation of the incidents of this part of our cruise,—incidents that I cannot but hope have made this part of our labours particularly interesting to all of our countrymen who possess a feeling of national pride.

The credit of these discoveries has been claimed on the part of one foreign nation, and their extent, nay, actual existence, called into question by another; both having rival expeditions abroad, one at the same time, the other the year succeeding.

Each of these nations, with what intent I shall not stop to inquire, has seemed disposed to rob us of the honour by underrating the importance of their own researches, and would restrict the Antarctic land to the small parts they respectively saw. However willing I might be in a private capacity to avoid contesting their statements, and let truth make its own way, I feel it due to the honour of our flag to make a proper assertion of the priority of the claim of the American Expedition, and of the greater extent of its discoveries and researches.

That land does exist within the Antarctic Circle is now confirmed by the united testimony of both French and English navigators. D'Urville, the celebrated French navigator, within a few days after land was seen by the three vessels of our squadron, reports that his