This series includes accounts, by eye-witnesses and contemporaries, of early expeditions to the Arctic and the Antarctic. Huge resources were invested in such endeavours, particularly the search for the North-West Passage, which, if successful, promised enormous strategic and commercial rewards. Cartographers and scientists travelled with many of the expeditions, and their work made important contributions to earth sciences, climatology, botany and zoology. They also brought back anthropological information about the indigenous peoples of the Arctic region and the southern fringes of the American continent. The series further includes dramatic and poignant accounts of the harsh realities of working in extreme conditions and utter isolation in bygone centuries.

A Voyage to Hudson's Bay during the Summer of 1812

Thomas M'Keevor served as the physician for the second group of Selkirk settlers that set out in 1812 for the Red River Colony in Canada. This short account of what he witnessed, particularly the crossing of Hudson Bay, appeared in 1819. Greatly interested in icebergs, M'Keevor discusses these 'sea mountains' in detail. He also describes the Inuit peoples encountered, giving a short glossary of Inuit words. Presenting a vivid account of the scene, he was clearly moved by seeing a polar bear protecting her cubs from a hunting party sent out from the ship. Also published in this volume is a brief account in English of the 1806 voyage of the Sirène by the French naval officer Fréminville. Initially tasked with attacking British whalers off Spitsbergen, the frigate came close to the coast of Greenland, yet most of the time on land was spent in Iceland, where observations were made of the Icelandic people, fauna and geology.
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A Voyage to Hudson’s Bay during the Summer of 1812

Containing a Particular Account of the Icebergs and Other Phenomena which Present Themselves in those Regions; Also, a Description of the Esquimeaux and North American Indians

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Thomas M’Keevor

Frontmatter

More information
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ALSO, A DESCRIPTION OF THE ESQUIMEAUX AND NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS; THEIR MANNERS, CUSTOMS, DRESS, LANGUAGE, &c. &c. &c.

BY THOMAS M’KEEVOIR, M.D. OF THE DUBLIN LYING-IN HOSPITAL.

Where, undissolving from the first of time,
Snows swell on snows amazing to the sky,
And icy mountains, high on mountains pi’d,
Seem, to the shivering sailor, from afar,
Shapeless and white, an atmosphere of clouds
Projecting, huge and horrid, o’er the surge.

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W. Lewis, Printer, 21, Thane-Jainn, Cornhill.
PREFACE.

A few months relaxation from professional studies during the summer of the year 1812, and a very liberal offer of the Earl of Selkirk, induced me to become the medical attendant on his Lordship's colony, then about to depart for Hudson's Bay.

The notes which I took during that very interesting voyage, have lain by me ever since; nor is it probable they would ever have emerged from obscurity, but for the unprecedented interest which the affairs of that part of the northern world have of late excited, and for the present convenient and popular form of publication.

The literary defects which pervade this narrative require, I am aware, some apology; but this, I should hope, will be afforded by the unremitting anxieties to which I am exposed in my present situation of Assistant to the extensive Lying-in Hospital of this city.

Dublin Lying-in Hospital,
Aug. 26, 1819.