

VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY.

THE following particulars of the last attempt of this kind, which has made but little noise, cannot fail to procure attention. A magnificent work is at this present moment in the Madrid press, containing a full and ample detail of all the transactions that occurred during this voyage of discovery; and, on its publication, we shall be gratified with an account of the manners and customs of the Babaco Isles, a non-descript cluster, then visited for the first time by Europeans.

The two sloops, called the Discovery and the Subtile, the former commanded by Don Alexander Malespina, and the latter by Don Joseph de Bastamente, sailed in company, from the port of Cadiz, on the 30th July, 1789, in order to co-operate with the other maritime powers in the extension of human knowledge, and more particularly of navigation. The commanders of these vessels made correct charts of the coasts of America and the adjacent islands, from the river La Plata to Cape Horn, and from that Cape to the farthest northern extremities of that part of the world. Their intention in this was merely to repeat the attempts of the same kind, formerly undertaken either by foreigners or their own countrymen, and thus ac-

quire a more minute knowledge of the subject.

On their arrival at the north-west coast of America, in latitude 59, 60, and 61, degrees, they searched, in vain, for a passage by which they might penetrate into the Atlantic Ocean; they accordingly concluded that the predictions of Cook were founded in sound reasoning, and that the Gut mentioned by Maldonado, an old Spanish navigator, had not any existence, except in his own brain.

In the beginning of the year 1792, the Subtile, and a galliot called the Mexicana, under the command of Don Galeano and Don Cais de Taldes, joined the English squadron commanded by Captain Vancouver, with an intention to examine the immense Archipelago, known by the name of the Admirals Fonte and Juan de Fuca.

They continued the greater part of the year 1791 in visiting the Marianes and Philippines, as also the Macas on the coast of China. They afterwards passed between the Isles Mindanao and the Isles called Mountay, shaping their course along the coasts of New Guinea, and crossing the Equator. On this occasion they discovered a gulph of about five hundred maritime leagues in extent, which no former navigator had traversed. They then stopped at New Zealand

Zealand and New Holland, and discovered, in the Archipelago called the Friendly Isles, the Babacos, a range of islands which had never before been seen by any European mariner.

After a variety of other researches in the southern ocean, they arrived in June, 1793, at Callao. From this port, they made other occasional expeditions; and each of the vessels separately examined the Port of Conception, and the rest of the coast of America, which extends to the south-west, as well as the western coast of Moluccas. They then entered the river La Plata, after having surmounted all the dangers incident to those southern latitudes. Having been equipped and supplied anew with provisions at Montecedia, they joined a fleet of frigates and register-ships, and sailed for Cadiz, where they arrived after a passage of ninety days, with cargoes to the amount of eight millions of dollars in money and merchandize.

These voyages have not a little contributed to the extension of botany, mineralogy, and navigation. In both hemispheres, and in a variety of different latitudes, many experiments were made relative to the weight of bodies, which will tend to very important discoveries connected with the irregular form of our globe; these will also be highly useful, so far as respects a fixed and general measure. While examining the inhabitants, our travellers collected all

the monuments that could throw any light either on the migration of nations, or on their progress in civilization. Luckily for the interests of humanity, these discoveries have not caused a single tear to be shed. On the contrary; all the tribes with whom they had any connection, will bless the memory of these navigators, who have furnished them with useful seeds, presented them with a variety of instruments, and made them acquainted with several arts, of which they were before entirely ignorant.

The vessels brought back nearly the whole of their crews; neither of them, in short, lost more than three or four men; which is wonderful, if we but consider the unhealthy climates of the torrid zone, to which they were so long exposed.

Don Antonio de Valdes, the minister of the marine, who encouraged and supported this expedition, is busied at this moment in drawing up a detailed account of this voyage, so as to render the enterprise of general utility. It will soon be published; and the curious will be gratified with charts, maps, and engravings, now preparing, to accompany it. In the mean time he has presented to the king Captains Don Alexander Malaspina, Don Joseph de Balmante, and Don Galeano, and Lieut. Don Carlos de Cevallos. These officers are entitled to, and will soon experience, the royal munificence.