

CHAPTER XIX

NORTH-POLAR VOYAGES

CONTRARY to the general impression, arctic voyages for the attainment of the North Pole have been the exception rather than the rule. Robert Thorne successfully urged on Henry the Eighth a renewal of the search for a short route to China by sailing across the Arctic Ocean; of the resulting voyage of two ships in 1527, only their failure is definitely known.

The first recorded voyage of Henry Hudson, May 1, 1607, was to discover a passage by the North Pole to China and Japan. Although the main intent failed, far-reaching results followed in the development of the whale fisheries of Spitsbergen. The voyage of Jonas Poole, 1610-1611, turned to a fishing venture in the Greenland Sea.

In June, 1773, the attempt was renewed under Captain J. C. Phipps, afterwards Lord Mulgrave, in the *Racehorse*, supported by Captain S. Lutwidge in the *Carcass*. They followed the edge of the ice barrier off the west coast of Spitsbergen to the northwest beyond the 80th parallel, when further progress was impossible. Eventually Phipps abandoned the attempt, after reaching 80° 48' N.,