

They knew not that the torrid zone was inhabited, although they had navigated round Africa; for it is 2200 years since Neco, king of Egypt, gave vessels to the Phenicians, who sailed along the Red Sea, coasted round Africa, doubled the Cape of Good Hope, and having employed two years in this voyage, the third year they entered the straits of Gibraltar*. Yet the ancients were unacquainted with the property of the load stone, of turning towards the poles, although they knew that it attracted iron; they were ignorant of the general cause of the flux and reflux of the sea, nor were they certain that the ocean surrounded the globe; some, indeed, suspected it might be so, but with so little foundation, that no one dared to say, or even to conjecture, that it was possible to make a voyage round the world. Magellan was the first who attempted it in the year 1519, and accomplished the great voyage in 1124 days. Sir Francis Drake was the second in 1577, and he performed it in 1056 days; afterwards Thomas Cavendish made this great voyage in 777 days, in the year 1586. These celebrated navigators were the first who demonstrated physically the sphericity and the extent of the earth's circumference: for the

* Vide Herodotus, lib. iv.