



Homeward Bound; Or, the Chase: A Tale of the Sea

James Fenimore Cooper

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In one respect, this book is a parallel to Franklin's well-known apologue of the hatter and his sign. It was commenced with a sole view to exhibit the present state of society in the United States, through the agency, in part, of a set of characters with different peculiarities, who had freshly arrived from Europe, and to whom the distinctive features of the country would be apt to present themselves with greater force, than to those who had never lived beyond the influence of the things portrayed. By the original plan, the work was to open at the threshold of the country, or with the arrival of the travellers at Sandy Hook, from which point the tale was to have been carried regularly forward to its conclusion. But a consultation with others has left little more of this plan than the hatter's friends left of his sign. As a vessel was introduced in the first chapter, the cry was for "more ship," until the work has become "all ship;" it actually closing at, or near, the spot where it was originally intended it should commence. Owing to this diversion from the author's design--a design that lay at the bottom of all his projects--a necessity has been created of running the tale through two separate works, or of making a hurried and insufficient conclusion. The former scheme has, consequently, been adopted.



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