

to one hundred and thirty-eight gallant and enterprising fellows, they left our shores in May, 1845, and the last intelligence we had of them was dated in Baffin's Bay, two months after they had left the Thames.

As the third winter was passing by without any further intelligence of Sir John Franklin, anxiety began to be evinced at the Admiralty for his safety, and very soon thereafter the "Erebus" and "Terror" were first spoken of as "the missing ships," and "the missing expedition." In the following year (1848) three expeditions were set on foot, and despatched in three different directions,—Behring's Straits, the shores of Arctic America and Barrow Straits, the localities in which it appeared to be most probable they would be able to communicate with and assist, if necessary, the missing ships. These expeditions were commanded by persons of the most extensive experience, who had acquired almost the highest distinction as Arctic travellers, and, although in the course of their explorations much had been added to our knowledge of the regions they visited, the chief objects of their search were still absent from their anxious and, in some cases, mourning, relations, and no additional intelligence had been obtained. The return of the expe-

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