

## Selections.

*The Discovery of the North-West Passage by Her Majesty's Ship Investigator. Captain R. McClure, 1850, 1851, 1852, 1853, 1854. Edited by Commander SHERARD OSBORN, Author of "Stray Leaves from an Arctic Journal," from the Logs and Journals of Captain Robert Le McClure. Illustrated by Commander S. GURNEY CRESSWELL, R. N. Longmans.*

Captain Osborn apologizes for his style, but in truth his book is very well written. It is terse and lucid, giving proof at times of considerable powers of composition and narrative, and as emphatic in condemnation as it is in eulogy. The strange and unsatisfactory proceedings of Sir Edward Belcher meet with no mercy at his hands, while the heroic gallantry and endurance and the simple manliness of Sir Robert McClure and his associates receive ample justice and cordial praise. The crew of the *Investigator* are fortunate in an author who knows so well and describes so vividly the tremendous scenes and daring actions in which they were so long engaged. Perhaps the most interesting portions of the volume, better even than Captain Osborn's own narrative, are the extracts from the diary of Sir Robert McClure; and if we were disposed to find fault with Captain Osborn at all, it would be for not having used frequently and copiously enough such admirable and striking materials.

As far as Sir John Franklin is concerned, this voyage, most interesting in itself, was entirely barren of result. It is now known that he passed through Lancaster Sound, and that he perished in his attempt to escape southwards from Barrow Straits, probably down Peel Sound. The remains or relics of his expedition are, in all likelihood, to be found somewhere between King William's Land and Boothia.

The voyage of which Captain Osborn gives the narrative, resulted in the discovery of the North-West Passage, and in the proof of its total practical inutility. It is a noble record of dangers cheerfully met and hardships manfully sustained. Captain McClure, as our readers know, approached from the eastward, and after twice ineffectually attempting to pass between the northern coast of Bank's Land, which was discovered to be an island, and the southern coast of Melville Island, he was finally arrested in the ice near to Bank's Land, and was only rescued when his food and health were failing by a portion of Captain Kellett's crew. He demonstrated the extreme danger of the sea off Melville Island, and the impossibility of passing through the narrow lane of water which runs between Bank's Land and the continent of North America. The voyage along the northern shore of North America was full, also, of imminent peril, as the following powerful description will show:—

"They had fortunately laid hold of a large piece of ice which grounded upon the shoals westward of Princess Royal Island; and there the ship held on under its lee for security, as the rest of the ice swept by her. Some idea of the strain upon the ship, as well as the desperate position she was in, may be gleaned by the fact that at one time she was in five fathoms water, and trusting for safety to every available hawser in the vessel, amounting in the aggregate to a thirty-one inch cable and a stream chain in addition, yet she was every minute expecting to part, as the pressure took her broad bow, or surged against her trembling sides.

"Anticipating the worst that could occur, Captain McClure ordered a large quantity of provisions and fuel to be placed upon deck, the officers and men to be carefully told off to their boats, and every one to have his appointed place and duty in the event of a final catastrophe; tents and warm clothing were also prepared, and every precaution taken to save life, even if it were beyond human power to save the ship. On the 27th September, the temperature being then at zero, and the ice, as they fancied, stationary, after the *Investigator* had drifted ten miles south of the Princess Royal Island, preparations were commenced for housing the vessel over, and otherwise securing her crew from the intense cold and inclemency of a winter which was well nigh upon them. The officers had just time to congratulate themselves from the escape from past dangers, and to express thankfulness at having only lost thirty miles of latitude by the drifting of the pack, when a change of wind set it all again in motion.—The 28th was spent in breathless anxiety, as, helpless in their icy trammels, they swept northward again towards the cliffs of Princess Royal Island. These cliffs arose perpendicularly from the sea at the part against which the ship appeared to be setting, and as the crew eyed them for a hope of safety, if the gora craft should

be crushed against their face, they could see no ledge upon which even a goat could have established a footing; and an elevation of 400 feet precluded a chance of scaling them; to launch the boat over the moving pack was their sole chance, and that a poor one, rolling and upheaving as it was under the influence of wind, tide, and pressure.

"It is in such an emergency that discipline, and a certainty that each would perform unflinchingly his duty, as well as the innate good qualities of our noble seamen, are best exhibited. Dastards would in such circumstances have deserted their ship; but the Investigators were made of different stuff; they knew, too, that One who is 'strong to save' was watching over them, and they eyed the bleak cliffs, which in a few minutes might be frowning over their graves, with the calm courage of resolute men. A finer picture than such a scene presented can hardly be imagined, and it was once repeatedly exhibited during this wonderful voyage; but it would be an almost hopeless attempt to convey to the reader, by mere description, an adequate idea either of the scenery so replete with the grim terrors of the Polar regions or of the moral grandeur of self-devotion in the officers and men. "It looks like a bad job this time!" inquiringly remarked one of the sailors as he assisted another old sea-dog in coiling down neatly a frozen hawser. "Yes!" was the rejoinder, as the other shaded his eyes from the driving snow, and cast a glance at the dark cliff looming through the storm, "the old craft will double up like an old basket when she gets alongside of them rocks."

"The *Investigator's* hour was not yet come, however; and when within 500 yards of the rocks, the ice coach wheeled her along them, and finally swept her past the islands upon the eastern side."

They failed to obtain till after their rescue by Capt. Kellett any considerable supply of fresh meat, and the want of it told heavily upon the constitutions of the crew. Great and unexplained differences as to the quantity of animal life exist within short distances in these cold regions. At Melville Island, for instance, game was abundant; but Captain McClure was seldom lucky enough all through his voyage, to obtain any quantity. He did discover, however, that the prevailing notion of the southern migration of the Arctic animals during the winter is a mistake.

"Early one dark and icy morning in January, a man named John Eames was walking out upon the floe, and saw pass close to him a small herd of reindeer trotting quietly towards Princess Royal lands. Had the ghost of his grandfather suddenly appeared to him upon the floe, John Eames could not have been more astonished; for he, like every one else, confidently believed in every living creature having gone to more favoured climes to the southward, until the summer should return. The news quickly spread; appetites sharpened; and sportsmen issued forth to slay venison. But there was no venison to be slain; the deer were nowhere to be found, although the discovery of a ptarmigan gave rise to much astonishment as to how birds could exist in such a temperature, with the land covered deeply in snow, and, where it happened to be exposed, the soil so hard as to destroy iron tools in attempting to loosen it.

"These discoveries, however, raised a doubt of the correctness of the theory of animal-emigration in the Arctic regions, as laid down by that eminent naturalist and traveller Sir John Richardson, as well as of the opinion in its favour expressed by the late Admiral Sir Edward Parry; and Captain McClure in his Journal says, "it is pretty evident that during the whole winter animals may be found in these straits, and that the want of sufficient light alone prevents our larder being stored with fresh food." Subsequent observation has completely overthrown the idea that the reindeer, musk-ox, or other animals inhabiting the archipelago of islands north of America, migrate southward to avoid an Arctic winter. Throughout Bank's Land, Melville Island, Bathurst and Cornwallis Land—in short, wherever British seamen have wintered of late years, there have been found indubitable proofs of the reindeer, bear, musk-ox, marmot, wolf, hare, and ptarmigan—in short, all the Fauna of those climes—wintering in the latitudes in which they are found during the summer.

**REAL LADIES.**—There is a class of masters and mistresses whose means do not afford them more than one servant, while the work of the house would require two or three, yet most unfortunately the females of the family, especially the younger ones, consider it a degradation to take any part in the work of the house; they spend their time in cultivating accom-

plishments, in ornamental but useless work, in anything or nothing rather than contribute to the comfort of their parents by learning to do useful things well. The unfortunate 'maid of all work' is driven from one thing to another without time to do anything properly, even if she had the ability; rooms are only half swept, knives and forks and spoons only half cleaned, dinner is ill cooked and uninviting; but the piano has been sounding without intermission all the morning, or wonders have been accomplished in the cross-stitch or crochet. Now, we do not mean at all to condemn the acquirements or accomplishments where there is a taste for them, still less the cultivation of the mind, provided neither take the place of necessary duties. Under all circumstances, the superintendence of her house must be among a woman's chief duties, but especially in the circumstances that I have supposed; and a mother so situated should train her daughters to see that every part of the house is clean and in perfect order, not at all grudging to assist in making it so; they should learn how to cook, and should be ashamed of an ill cooked dinner coming upon the table; they should learn to make purchases, to know good things from bad; and only when they have done all that is necessary for the comfort of the house, should they feel free to indulge in what they may think more agreeable pursuits. We know that in other countries young ladies, even of the best families, consider instruction in these household duties, and attention to them, quite a necessary part of our education; they are neither ashamed to understand them, nor to take an active part in them, nor does that in the least prevent them from taking the enjoyments or acquiring the accomplishments suited to their age and station in society. It is strange that in this country, where we boast so much of our practical good sense, this foolish vanity and attempt to appear what we are not, prevails more than anywhere else. A really lady-like person will much rather clean her room herself, if circumstances make it necessary, than submit to sit in a dirty one; will much rather put her house in order with her own hands, than see it in disorder; will much rather learn to cook a dinner, than see badly prepared food daily put down before her husband or father. There is not, in fact, any hardship in doing these things; only among us, unfortunately, there is thought to be a degradation in doing them. I am quite persuaded that to any young person who has not much musical taste, practising sonatas for an hour is quite as great a drudgery, or greater, than making a pudding, or even cooking a dinner; but then it is dignified drudgery, but gratifies a pride that the other would perhaps mortify. It may be thought that taking a share in what they have been accustomed to consider servants' work will degrade them before their own servant. I believe it will do quite the contrary. When a servant is watched over and well trained by those who she sees understand how her work is to be done; when more is not given her to do than any human being can accomplish well; when she is treated with kindness, and some consideration shown for her, and her work so arranged that she shall at the close of the day have a little leisure, longer or shorter, according to her own diligence, there is much more chance of her turning out respectful, attached, and useful, than according to the ordinary system.—*Hints to Mistresses.*

**STORY OF A RUSSIAN MARRIAGE.**—About eighteen months ago a Miss Ward, from one of the Southern States, was married at Florence, after a short courtship, to a Polish Count, whose unpronounceable name escapes me at this moment. They were married before the American Consul, I believe. After living with Miss Ward maritally for three weeks, the Count took French leave one fine morning, carrying off his wife's jewelry as booty. A letter left behind informed Miss Ward of a fact of which she had been full that moment entirely ignorant—to wit, that the marriage of a Russian subject not according to the service of the Greek Church and a Russian subject was invalid and not binding, and that the service which had united them resembling in no wise the one required; they were as free as if no service had been performed. The consternation of Miss Ward and her family at this detestable piece of villainy may be well imagined for on inquiry they found that the Count's statement was but too true. Miss Ward and her mother remained a short time in Italy, endeavouring to obtain some kind of redress for the base imposition which had been practised on them but their efforts were fruitless. Then they came to Paris and spent the winter here, where they were generally known to the American residents in the place. At the period of