

were well devised; but peculiar drawbacks seemed to attend their efforts, and before the beginning of 1850 they had all abandoned the search, almost without attaining the first threshold of inquiry.

Their failure aroused every where the generous sympathies of men. Science felt for its votaries, humanity mourned its fellows, and an impulse, holier and more energetic than either, invoked a crusade of rescue. That admirable woman, the wife of Sir John Franklin, not content with stimulating the renewed efforts of her own countrymen, claimed the co-operation of the world. In letters to the President of the United States, full of the eloquence of feeling, she called on us, as a "kindred people, to join heart and hand in the enterprise of snatching the lost navigators from a dreary grave."

The delays incident to much of our national legislation menaced the defeat of her appeal. The bill making appropriations for the outfit of an expedition lingered on its passage, and the season for commencing operations had nearly gone by. At this juncture, a noble-spirited merchant of New York, of whom as an American and a man I can hardly trust myself to speak, fitted out two of his own vessels, and proffered them gratuitously to the government. Thus prompted by the munificent liberality of Mr. Grinnell, Congress hastened to take the expedition under its charge, and authorized the president to detail from the navy such necessary officers and seamen as might be willing to engage in it.

Though I accompanied this expedition as its senior medical officer, I had no claim to be considered as its historian. Such a province belonged strictly to our commander; but he having declined making any