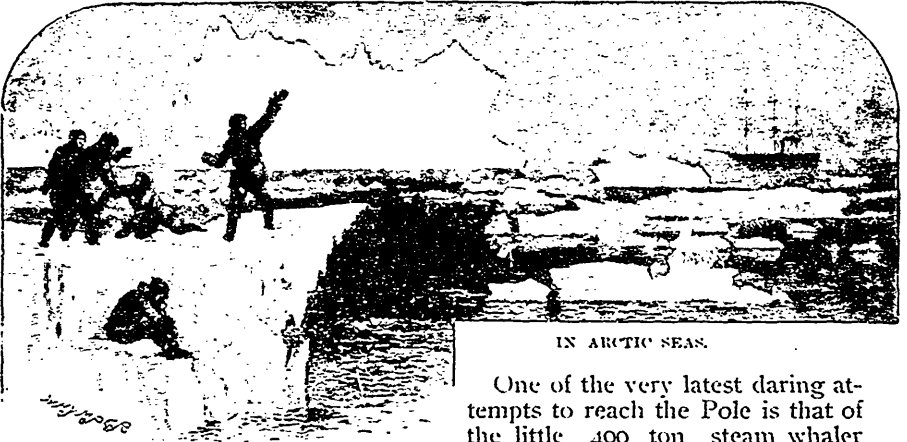


RECENT ARCTIC EXPLORATION.*



IN ARCTIC SEAS.

There is a strange fascination about Arctic exploration. Age after age dauntless mariners have gone forth

“ To brave the perils of the wintry sea,
To beard the Ice-King in his frozen lair,
To pluck their ghastly secret from the
wilds,
Where broods Eternal Solitude around
The boreal pole—to solve the mystery
which
So long had kept the world in awe.”

Baffled again and again they yet return to the quest with unabated zeal. For three centuries and more, Arctic discovery has been a national passion of the maritime countries of the world. The exploration of the polar regions furnishes material for one of the most interesting chapters in the history of the human race. The brave but ineffectual efforts which, from time to time, have been made to reach the Pole have furnished examples of patience, self-sacrifice, and heroic endurance which have scarcely been surpassed in any other field of human endeavour.

One of the very latest daring attempts to reach the Pole is that of the little 400 ton steam whaler *Windward*, which recently arrived in the Thames from Franz Josef Land. Her cruise is one of the most interesting of all the long series of Arctic voyages which have been undertaken in the comparatively unknown sea beyond Spitzbergen. Leith, Smith, and Payer attacked the North Pole by that route, and the *Eira*, Mr. Smith's ship, met her fate near the place where Mr. Jackson and his companions, in the *Windward*, established themselves in winter quarters last year.

The *Windward* is a staunch little craft. She was built at Peterhead in 1860 for the whale fishery. Not a timber or spar of her but is the result of the experience gained by the famous north-country whalers in their perilous trade. Handy in size, sturdy in build, barque-rigged, and with slow but sure engine-power, the *Windward* is (with her newly fortified bows) an admirable Arctic ship. She proved herself so in her recent memorable struggle with the ice barrier which barred her homeward course. For

* Compiled by the Editor from Reports of the Geographical Society and other recent authorities.