

ENCLOSURE No. 10.

REPORT OF THE ARCTIC COMMITTEE* OF THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE.

THE knowledge already acquired of the Arctic Regions, leads to the conclusion that the discovery of the unknown portion of the Greenland coasts will yield very important results in the science of Anthropology. Although barely one-half of the Arctic Regions has been explored, yet abundant traces of former inhabitants are found throughout their most desert wastes, where now there is absolute solitude. These wilds have not been inhabited for centuries, yet they are covered with traces of wanderers, or of sojourners, of a bygone age. Here and there, in Greenland, in Boothia, on the shores of America, where existence is possible, the descendants of former wanderers are still to be found. The migrations of these people, the scanty notices of their origin and movements that are scattered through history, and the requirements of their existence, are all so many clues which, when carefully gathered together, throw light upon a most interesting subject. The migrations of man within the Arctic zone give rise to questions which are closely connected with the geography of the undiscovered portions of the Arctic Regions.

The extreme points which exploration has yet reached on the shore of Greenland are in about 80° on the west, and in 76° on the eastern side; and these two points are about 600 miles apart. As there are inhabitants at both these points, and they are separated by an uninhabitable interval from the settlements further south, it may be inferred that the unknown interval further north is or has been inhabited. On the western side of Greenland it was discovered, in 1818, that a small tribe inhabited the rugged coast, between 76° and 79° N.; their range being bounded on the south by the glaciers of Melville Bay, which bar all progress in that direction, and on the north by the Humboldt Glacier, while the *Seralik-sook*, or great glacier of the interior, confines them to the sea-coast. These "Arctic Highlanders" number about 140 souls, and their existence depends on open pools and lanes of water throughout the winter, which attract animal life. Hence, it is certain that where such conditions exist man may be found. The question whether the unexplored coast of Greenland is inhabited, therefore, depends upon the existence of currents and other conditions such as prevail in the northern part of Baffin's Bay. But this question is not even now left entirely to conjecture. It is true that the "Arctic Highlanders" told Dr. Kane that they knew of no inhabitants beyond the Humboldt glacier, and this is the furthest point which was indicated by Kalahierua (the native lad who was on board the *Assistance*) on his wonderfully accurate chart. But neither did the Esquimaux of Upernavik know anything of natives north of Melville Bay until the first voyage of Sir John Ross. Yet now we know that there either are or have been inhabitants north of the Humboldt glacier, on the extreme verge of the

* This committee consisted of Sir John Lubbock (President), Professor Busk, Captain Sherard Osborn, Captain Bedford Pim, Col. Lane Fox, Mr. Clements Markham, Mr. Flower and Mr. Brabrook.