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## THE GREAT ARCTIC EXPEDITIONS IN SEARCH OF A NORTH-WEST PASSAGE TO ASIA.

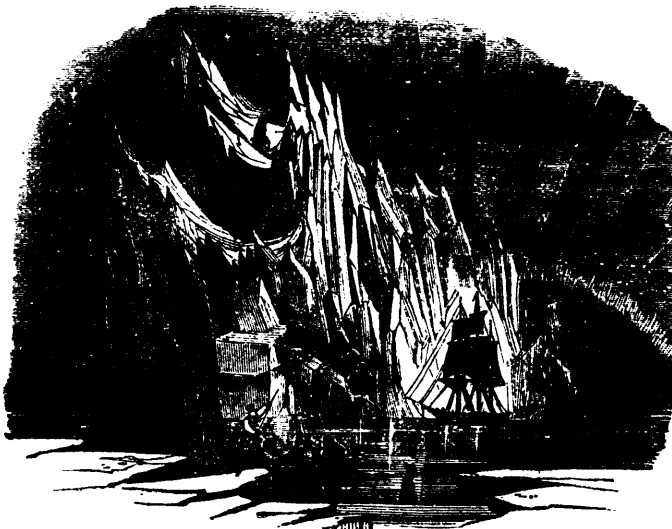
The recent visit of the noble-minded Lady Franklin to this continent—(with the physical geography of whose northern regions her heroic husband's name is so memorably associated)—has given such additional interest to the history of the search in the Arctic Seas, and the unparalleled sufferings of its navigators, that we are induced to devote a few pages of this number of the *Journal* to a brief sketch of them. Taken together, the forty years' search after the North-West passage, and its now ascertained discovery, forms a grand and solemn episode in the naval history and enterprise of the British nation, aided, as they generously were in this instance, by the American people.

To Sir John Franklin's exploration of the Arctic Seas of North America, is attached a deep, as well as melancholy, interest. In 1818-21, when a young man, he had explored these regions, enduring incredible hardships, and afterwards published a simple but most thrilling narrative of his adventures and discoveries. Twenty-six years afterwards, he succeeded in solving the long-essayed

problem of a water communication between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, *vid* the Northern Coasts of America, as the skeleton of one of his party was found within the line of coast which had been explored from the Pacific by Simpson. He died within sight of the goal he had been so long seeking; but he left no record of his achievement, and none of his brave companions survived to announce the triumphant results of his enterprise and sufferings. It remained for the scarcely less bold and honoured McClure to re-solve and announce, in 1851, the problem which Franklin had solved in 1847,—that there is a North-West passage for ships from Europe to the Pacific, though practically useless. For seven years the fate of Franklin and his companions was enveloped in profound mystery; and the successive voyages of inquiry, undertaken on both sides of the Atlantic, left it in as deep darkness as ever, until Dr. Rae, in 1854, discovered, among the Esquimaux, relics sufficient to extinguish the last hope that any of the party was yet in the land of the living. The British Government abandoned all further search, and struck the name of Franklin from the Admiralty roll of living officers.

But it was not so with Lady Franklin. A true woman's heart has impulses and resources beyond those of a Government. She resolved to exhaust all human resources to learn the when, the where, and the how of the fate of one with whose name her own has become inseparably linked, and of whose fame she has created a memorial only excelling in self-devotion and enterprise that which appertains to Lady Franklin herself. In 1859, her untiring labours of twelve years' search for the fate of her heroic husband were crowned with complete, though melancholy, success. Captain McClintock, after a two years' voyage in Lady Franklin's little steam yacht *Fox* (of 177 tons), ascertained all that is likely to be known in this world of the ships and crews of Sir John Franklin's expedition.

Lady Franklin has recently visited Canada; and her quiet



ICEBERG AND AURORA BOREALIS, IN THE ARCTIC REGIONS.