

discovered a headland fifteen miles distant west by north, over-canopied by a dark sky, which indicated an expanse of open water on the further side. This point was found to be in latitude  $76^{\circ} 2'$  and west longitude  $95^{\circ} 55'$ ; and the strait received the name of Victoria Channel.

Captain Penny hastened back to the ships for a boat, and drove every means to have one promptly mounted on sledges and away, but did not get it up to the strait without vast effort, and some tantalizing delays. But at length he launched it, laded it, and pushed off to the unknown. He proceeded only ten miles, till he was obliged to seek refuge in a bay from a westerly gale and a strong head sea; and he afterwards contended much and almost constantly with unfavourable winds and rapid tides; yet he succeeded in examining 310 miles of coast, and did not desist till his stock of provisions sank admonishingly low. He put about on the 20th of July, and he made his way to the ships amid constant rain and tempest, insomuch that, in the route over the ice, he had to ford rapid streams.

Captain Penny thus ranks high as a discoverer. Victoria Channel, with its far-north position and its iceless water, is quite as remarkable an object as anything discovered by Sir John Ross, and not much less so than the things discovered by Sir Edward Parry. As to the immediate design of his adventures, however, Captain Penny had all his labour for nothing. He found not a trace of the Erebus and the Terror. Yet he acquired strong conviction that they had gone up Wellington Channel and along Victoria Channel; and if he could have got one of Captain Austin's steamers, he would have instantly gone in search of them through the latter; or if he could have promptly procured one on his arrival in Britain in September, he would have gone back, late though the season was, in the hope of penetrating, by the route of his new discovery, into the Polar main, and there obtaining a solution of Sir John Franklin's fate.

Exploration  
of Victoria  
Channel.

Importance  
of Victoria  
Channel.