

From Mr. Penny,

1. To proceed westerly, and communicate with Melville Island.
2. To search northerly, and around his winter position.

No. 12.
Letter from Mr.
W. P. Snow to
Captain Hamilton,
R. N.

The Americans, if unable to move in their ships, making a determined push, by two parties, for the Coppermine and Mackenzie.

In June, then, I may venture to surmise there will be four parties during spring examining, in a southerly and south-westerly direction, from the parallel of 74 degrees, and the neighbourhood of Banks Land, or thence to Cape Walker.

Thus much, then, for the westerly portion of the Arctic regions at present discovered.

For the eastern, four prominent places may be said to hold information: Port Leopold (possibly), Cape Riley (for "Resolute's" proceedings), Cape Hotham, and Griffith's Island; the last two more important than the others, and the latter of the two more important than all.

With regard to the route by the Mackenzie, it is probable that the parties thrown out from the ships in spring would either be still searching in June, or have left marks of their progress. Any new party then arriving from England by that month, would no doubt effect a communication or gather tidings. The question, however, is, could a party reach the Arctic sea by June? To this I can give no answer from any personal experience; but upon referring to Lieutenant Osborn's plan, it seems probable that it might be done.

*Vide Arctic Re-
turns, No. 107,
Sess. 1850, p. 131.*

Sir John Richardson left England March 25th, and by the 13th of September had reached Fort Confidence, after having gone down the Mackenzie and examined the coast round Cape Bathurst to the Coppermine. If a party left England two months earlier, according to Lieutenant Osborn's plan, would it be possible to reach the Arctic sea in June? This question involves another: can a party travel in Northern America during any of the winter months?

I find in reference to this, that Sir John Franklin, in his first land journey, left Cumberland House on the 18th of January, and arrived at Fort Chippewyan on the 26th of March; also, in the year 1836, Mr. Thomas Simpson left Fort Garry in December, and in 46 days arrived at Fort Chippewyan.

This proves that a party could travel during the early part of the year; and supposing they left England on the 1st of February, the following route and dates might probably be accomplished: New York, February 15th; Buffalo, February 23d; Goderich, February 24th; Sault Ste. Marie, March 1st; Fort William, March 10th; Fort Garry, March 24th; Fort Chippewyan, April 24th; Slave River (last portage), May 17th; Arctic sea, June 10th.

The party would then have July, August, and September to work in.

As respects a communication *via* Lancaster Sound, I cannot help thinking it might be effected.

It strikes me, therefore, with all submission to the opinion of those whose experience and long attention to the subject better enable them to judge, that if a small vessel of from 40 to 50 tons, schooner rigged, and equipped for a boat expedition, were to go out very early in the year from home, to take advantage of every opening that occurs in the ice, she would be able to reach Lancaster Sound at the commencement of the summer. And supposing the worst to be taken into consideration, and allowing the sound to be at that time impassable for ships, at once dispatch her boats to Griffith's Island, following up herself as the ice permitted, in a similar manner to Commander Pullen's party.

A few facts, permit me here, to glance at.

The size of the vessel is no smaller than some of those employed by the old voyagers of the 16th and 17th centuries, if the tonnage then and now is the same. Baffin's little ship, it is well known, was only 55 tons, and he reached open water in lat. 75 deg. 40 min. on the 1st of July.