

ties, near or remote, obtained the slightest trace of the missing adventurers ; and Captain Austin, after receiving and considering well the reports of all, "arrived at the conclusion that the expedition under Sir John Franklin did not prosecute the object of its mission to the southward and westward of Wellington Strait."

Exploration  
of Wellington  
Channel.

The sledge-parties for the exploration of Wellington Channel amounted to six, and comprised forty-one men, and were officered by Captain Stewart, Messrs. Marshall, Reid, and J. Stuart, and Surgeons Sutherland and Goodsir. They started on the 17th of April, under the general superintendence of Captain Penny ; but they soon encountered severe weather, and were buffeted and baffled by it for a series of days, and compelled to return ; and on the 6th of May, after special prayer to God for support, they again started. Some coursed so far and so curvingly as to make a near approach to the most northerly of Captain Austin's parties ; and all figured largely and respectably in the squadron's aggregate of exploits. But their chief feat—the feat at least or those on the Channel and west of it—was a discovery which put a stop to their progress toward the north, and gave an entirely new complexion to the search in which

Discovery of  
Victoria  
Channel.

they were engaged,—the discovery of a wide westward strait of open water, lying along the further side of the lands which flank Barrow's Strait and Parry's Strait.

Captain Penny personally shared in this discovery, and personally made enormous exertions to follow it up. The explorers, proceeding up Wellington Channel, arrived in latitude 75° 22' at Cape Duhorn, and thence ten miles north-westward to Point Decision. Captain Penny, on the 15th of May, went from this point, over the ice, north-west by north, to an island which he called Bailie Hamilton Island. The ice was in a very decayed state ; and on the 17th, after travelling round the island, first in a north-north-easterly, and next in a north-north-westerly direction, he arrived at the open strait, saw in it twenty-five miles of clear water, and