

PART X.

DISCOVERY OF A NORTH-WEST PASSAGE.

CHAPTER I.

SEARCH BY BEHRING STRAIT RESUMED—EXPEDITION UNDER CAPTAINS COLLINSON
AND M'CLURE—VOYAGE OF THE "INVESTIGATOR."

ON the return of the unsuccessful expedition, consisting of the "Enterprise" and "Investigator," under the command of Sir James C. Ross, in 1849, Government, having already provided for the prosecution of the Franklin search in Lancaster Sound, Wellington Channel, etc., by fitting out the squadrons to be conducted to these waters by Penny and A. B. C. B. resolved to re-equip the newly-returned vessels and despatch them to continue the search by *Behring Strait*. The "Enterprise" and "Investigator" were accordingly re-docked, thoroughly repaired, and provisioned for the long voyage round Cape Horn, across the Pacific, and into the Polar Sea by its western entrance. The command of the "Enterprise"—and of the expedition—was entrusted to Captain Richard Collinson, C.B., while Commander Robert J. Le Mesurier M'Clure was appointed to the "Investigator." Collinson entered the navy in 1823, and had served with distinction on the West Coast of Africa and during the first China War; while M'Clure, who sailed as mate in the "Terror" with Sir George Back in 1836-37, had just returned with Sir J. C. Ross, under whom, in the "Enterprise," he had held the rank of first lieutenant. Of the officers, the latter, Commander M'Clure, was destined, in the expedition now under consideration, to achieve the object for which British navigators had been striving ever since the close of the fifteenth century—the discovery of a North-West Passage; and it will therefore be necessary, in our narrative of the incidents and results of this expedition, to follow closely the fortunes of his vessel, the "Investigator."

The vessels sailed from the Thames on the 10th January 1850; but did not finally leave the British shores till the 20th. On the 20th February the