

## SIR JOHN FRANKLIN'S ILL-FATED EXPEDITION.

### LAMENT OF THE LAST MAN ON HIS WAY TO GREAT FISH RIVER. \*

#### I.

They have fallen, one by one ;  
 The last, but one, to-day—  
 God ! am I left, alone,  
 To track this weary way ;  
 My weary way to the River,  
 The haven where I would be ?  
 But, alas ! heart-struck I shiver—  
 I can never attain the sea !  
 I am touching his lifeless head,  
 A waif on this desolate shore ;  
 I am kissing the last of the dead—  
 Shall I see man's face no more ?

Cold, cold, cold :  
 But mine hour is not yet told !

#### II.

In mine ear the terrible rush,  
 The thund'ring rush of the floe ;  
 And the shriek of herribs in the grinding crush,  
 And the good ship in her throe.  
 In mine heart, their mute despair,  
 And the groans of our wailing knell,  
 As the death-call swoop'd thro' the pitiless air,  
 And the pale men droop'd and fell.  
 Where they fell, they lay ;  
 Not a knee rose more to the light ;  
 The reeling and shrunken clay  
 Sank at once into icy night !

Cold, cold, cold :  
 And mine hour as yet untold !

#### III.

Mine eyelids burn ; congeals  
 My brain within its cell ;  
 And the scalding tear-drop steals  
 From an overflowing well ;  
 For I dream of fond hearts at home,  
 I think of the brave that are gone ;  
 As I gaze at this star-lit dome,  
 And stagger from stone to stone.  
 We were two but yesternight ;  
 And, faint, to this welcome sod  
 I've crawl'd, till he's out of sight—  
 And there's no one near but God !

Cold, cold, cold :  
 And mine hour is nearly told

#### IV.

When they come, for come they will,  
 Nor search this coast in vain,  
 They will find us sleeping still,  
 On its lone unfriendly plain ;  
 But none shall ever know,  
 Till the Great Day comes at last,  
 Our griefs in these realms of snow,  
 And the horrors of the Past !  
 For I sink on this fatal beach ;  
 I have pray'd with my latest breath  
 And my struggles will only reach  
 The River of Life, in Death !

Cold, cold, icy cold :  
 And mine own last hour is told

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B.

\* The writer assumed the last man had died, this is questioned  
 by

CAPTAIN SIR EDWARD BELCHER, R.N.  
 CAPTAIN COLLINSON, R.N.  
 DR. KING, M.D.

CAPTAIN PARKER SNOW.  
 CAPTAIN KENNEDY.  
 CAPTAIN BEDFORD PIM, R.N.