

The Month
Apr. 66

Sealskins and Copperskins.

PART I.

So much English treasure, and, more than that, so many valuable English lives, have been squandered on the search for the North-west Passage, that the dreary and frostbitten regions which form the extreme north of the continent of America have become objects of great and lasting interest to many of us. Of late years also the immense territories of the British Crown in that part of the world have assumed a new importance by the erection of the colony of British Columbia, which, if it could emerge from the difficulties imposed on it by its want of communication, and consequent unattractiveness to emigrants, might soon become the home of a teeming and prosperous population. Under these circumstances, we need hardly apologise to our readers for carrying them once more among the natives of the extreme north of the American continent; and in order to do so we shall make use of the narratives recently published of two expeditions to these regions. We have grouped them together on account of the geographical affinity and the similarity in the social state of the races which they severally describe; though in the mode of treating their subject, and the point of view from which they approach it, the writers of them exhibit quite as much difference as we might expect to find between the productions of an American explorer and a French missionary.*

Captain Hall, unconvinced by the evidence published by Captain McClintock in 1859, undertook his expedition in search of the surviving members of Sir John Franklin's crew (if such there were); or in the hope of clearing up all doubt about the history of their end, in the event of their having perished. He was baffled in his attempt to reach the region in which he hoped to find traces of the objects of his search, by the wreck of the boat which he had constructed for the enterprise; and his ship being beset with ice in a winter which

* *Life with the Esquimaux.* A Narrative of Arctic experience in search of the Survivors of Sir John Franklin's Expedition. By Captain Charles Francis Hall, of the whaling-barque George Henry. London: Sampson Low and Son. 1865.

Dix-Huit Ans Chez Les Sauvages. Voyages et Missions de Mgr. Henry Fraud dans l'extrême Nord de l'Amérique Britannique. Paris: Régis Ruffet et Cie. 1866.

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