

The present voyage of Sir James Clark Ross was not undertaken for making new discoveries, nor for scientific purposes alone, but to seek for and render assistance to the Expedition, consisting of H. M. ships the "Erebus" and "Terror," under the command of Sir John Franklin, which sailed from England on the 19th of May, 1845, for the safety of which considerable fears were felt.

The Expedition, consisting of H. M. ships "Enterprise," Capt. Sir J. C. Ross, and the "Investigator," Capt. Bird, sailed from the Thames on the 12th of May, 1848, and after a boisterous voyage, stopping a few days at Whale Island, arrived at Upernavik, a small Danish settlement on the east side of Baffin's Bay, on the 6th of July, where the ice was found to be so closely packed as to obstruct for several days any further advance. On the 13th they were again able to proceed, and on the 20th, standing in shore to the eastward, among numerous islets, forty-five miles within the boundary line of the west coast of Greenland, as laid down in the present charts, an immense glacier was observed extending completely along the imaginary coast line, apparently formed between high and unconnected land, as seen in the first portion of the Panorama. The ships, from the immense pack of loose unconnected ice, here became almost unmanageable, and were violently whirled about, being in great danger of being nipped; the "Enterprise" having two of her boats injured, one, a cutter, being completely squeezed together. There is, perhaps, no danger more great, no difficulty more perplexing, than that of commanding a vessel through the intricate mazes of the ice, whose vast fields, meeting in headlong fury, driving, whirling, and dashing each other to pieces, form a scene appallingly frightful, perilously grand.

On the 26th, the ships were off the three islands of Baffin, whence, continuing their course, as Sir James observes, "under varying circumstances of perplexity, anxiety, and success," they passed, with considerable difficulty, across Melville barrier; but the movement of the pack was so much impeded by calms, or light and uncertain winds which prevail during the summer months amongst drift ice, that it was not until the 20th of August, that during a heavy breeze from the north-east, they, with all the sail they could carry, bored through a pack of ice of moderate thickness, which it was necessary at all hazards they should pass, and gained clear, or, what is called by Polar navigators the "west water," in latitude  $75\frac{1}{2}$  N., fortunately without sustaining any very severe damage.

The ships then steered for Pond's Bay, and there the real business of the Expedition commenced. Land was made on the 22nd, ten miles to the southward of that place, and the line of the main pack of ice was traced close in against it, at the distance of three or four miles, so closely pressed home, as to leave no room for ships or boats to pass between it and the shore. Every point of this coast, which was known to be the summer resort of the Esquimaux, was carefully examined, as was also the coast to the northward, but without a single human being having been seen. On the 26th, when off Possession Bay, a party was sent on shore to search for any traces of Sir J. Franklin having touched at this