

THE GREAT ARCTIC PROBLEM SOLVED.

THE most western point reached by Sir John Franklin, in his survey of the shores of the Arctic Sea, as our readers have seen, was denominated "Return Reef," situated at some distance west of the mouth of Mackenzie's River. From this point westward remained a region yet unexplored by the footsteps of civilized man. So late as the summer of 1836, it was unknown to the civilized world, whether or not the Arctic Ocean extended westward until its icy waters mingled with the great Pacific Sea, but in the Spring of this year an expedition was fitted out, which solving this great problem, acquired to themselves the honour of crowning the unexampled enterprises of Parry, Ross, Franklin, and other intrepid adventurers in the polar seas and regions, with the successful results of complete discovery. The following is a brief account of the expedition.

The lively interest which the British public, for such a length of time, manifested in the further discovery of the Arctic regions, induced the Hudson's Bay Company to determine on equipping an expedition, solely at their own expense, and composed of their own officers and servants, with the view of endeavouring to complete the survey of the northern shores of the American continent.

The formation and equipment of the expedition were entrusted to Mr. George Simpson, the resident governor of the Company.

That gentleman, on his arrival from England at Norway House, Lake Winnipeg, in June 1836, beat up for volunteers for this arduous service. Two enterprising and active leaders, Messrs. P. W. Dease, and Thomas Simpson, and twelve men, were immediately selected, and forwarded with the necessary supplies to Fort Chipewyan, Athabasca Lake, where they passed the winter of 1836-7.

On the 1st of June, 1837, immediately after the opening of navigation, the party started from Fort Chipewyan in two small boats, descended the Slave River, passed the western end of the Great Slave Lake, and descended Mackenzie's River to Fort Norman, where they arrived on the 1st of July. From Fort Norman two of the party, in connection with two men from the fort, were despatched to the eastern end of Great Bears Lake for the purpose of erecting a small establishment in which the party might pass the winter of 1837, and whence they might extend their survey in the summer of 1838.

Messrs. Dease and Simpson, with the remainder of the party continuing their route down Mackenzie's River, on the 9th of July reached the great Arctic Ocean by the most westerly mouth of that river.

From this point, they prosecuted their voyage westward along the coast, through many obstacles and perils, now enclosed by ice, obstructed by fogs and strong head winds, and now obliged to carry their canoes over unbroken masses of ice, until the 23d of July, when they reached Point Anxiety, and had the satisfaction of discovering a range of the Rocky Mountains not seen by Sir John Franklin, but being within the limits of his survey, they called it the Franklin Range, as a just tribute to his character and merits. The evening of the same day they reached the westernmost point of Sir John Franklin's survey, called Return Reef. Beyond this point no adventurer had ever advanced, and from this point their exploration commenced. Continuing their way amid the usual