

in all the circumstances of the case, and that you should be left to the exercise of your own judgment and discretion, in combining the most active and energetic search after Her Majesty's ships "Erebus" and "Terror," with a strict and careful regard to the safety of the ships and their crews under your charge; and with a fixed attention to that part of your orders which relate to your returning with those ships to this country.

3. For this purpose you will be furnished with copies of the original instructions given to Sir John Franklin, and which instructions will indicate the course he was directed to pursue, together with our orders and directions to Sir James Ross, when he was dispatched on a search after Sir John Franklin, in the spring of 1848.

4. You will be aware that the case virtually stands now as it did then. Sir James Ross, from adverse circumstances, failed in discovering traces of the missing expedition.

5. Our orders of the 9th May 1848, to Sir James Ross, will still serve as the indication of our views of the general course you will have to pursue; but it being our desire that a certain strait, known as Alderman Jones's Sound, and which would not appear to have been as yet examined, should be searched; you are hereby required and directed to proceed in the first instance to that sound, closely examining the shores for any traces of Sir John Franklin's course, and proceeding, should it offer the means of your doing so, in the direction of Wellington Strait, and on to the Parry Islands and Melville Island.

6. On your proceeding in the above direction, too much vigilance cannot be observed in your search along the various shores, for traces of the missing expedition; at the same time, you will bear in mind that Sir John Franklin's orders were "to push on through Lancaster Sound, without stopping to examine any openings north or south of that sound, till he had reached Cape Walker." And although it may be possible that the obstructions incident to navigation in those seas, may have forced Sir John Franklin north or south of his prescribed course, yet that his principal object would be, the gaining the latitude and longitude of Cape Walker.

7. To that point, therefore, failing your discovering traces of the Expedition in your course by Jones's Sound and the Parry Islands, your efforts will be directed, and beyond this, your own judgment must be your principal guide.

8. The circumstance of Sir James Ross having partially searched the shores of Lancaster Sound and Barrow's Strait, as far west as Cape Rennell, without discovering traces of Sir John Franklin's ships, has led, in some quarters, to the supposition of an extreme case, viz., that failing to get into Lancaster Sound, Sir John Franklin had proceeded in the direction of Smith's Sound, at the head of Baffin's Bay.

9. We do not deem it expedient to direct your attention specially to this sound (or supposed sound); but should your passage by Jones's Sound, to which you are specially directed, be early and absolutely impeded, and there should appear to you to be the time (without hazarding the only remaining chance of proceeding to Wellington Strait, the Parry Islands, and Cape Walker by Lancaster Sound) for examining Smith's Sound, you are at liberty to do so; but this is a contingency scarcely to be contemplated; as, in the event of your being frustrated in the attempt to get to the westward, and towards Wellington Strait by Jones's Sound, the late period of the year when Smith's Sound is said to be open would render it difficult, if not impossible, to combine a search in that quarter with the securing a passage into Lancaster Sound before the season closed.

10. Much of the painful anxiety that now exists respecting the missing ships might possibly have been avoided, if greater care had been taken to leave traces of their progress. You will consider it rigidly your duty, and a matter of the utmost importance, that every means should be adopted for marking your own track.

For this purpose you will provide yourself with an ample supply of red and white lead for making point; and in addition to the usual pole or staff, or cairn of stones, usually looked for on a cape or headland, you will, wherever the colouring of the cliff or shore admits of a mark being made in strong relief, paint a red