

227
230

EXPLORATION, DISCOVERY, AND ADVENTURE IN THE POLAR SEAS.

241

INTRODUCTION.

247
259
264
270
276

"THE SEA IS ENGLAND'S GLORY!" sings a minstrel of our own day, and the truth of his song comes home to the heart of the whole British nation. The sea and all its associations have ever been dear to Englishmen. The sight of a Jack Tar on shore—whether steering a donkey through a country fair, walking through fashionable streets on a summer day smoking a long pipe and protecting his complexion under an open umbrella, or otherwise poking harmless fun at Madame Decorum—is always pleasant and mirth-provoking. When we have a holiday, it is to the sea we fly to enjoy it. The songs that are sung in England with equal approbation in hamlet and in hall, are the songs of the ocean. No reported calamity stirs the national sympathy more deeply than a story of gallant rescue, of self-sacrifice, or of "hair-breadth 'scape," at sea. In our schooldays, it was in making ships that we tested the metal of the first pocket knife we ever possessed; and, down to his latest year, it is the music of the sea that is the spell and inspiration under which the "roving Englishman" passes restless from land to land—from the dark north to "far Cathay" and the broad shining waters of Indian seas. Through every valley of our isle, as through the hollows of an ocean shell, the irresistible voice of the waves passes inland, murmurs in the ears of lads in remote parsonages and in country schoolrooms—draws them as with the song of the syren, and woos them to the shore. And not in the ears of youth alone is the tone of the ever-sounding sea alluring. To many a noble and ambitious spirit, fretting at the sameness and tameness, the conventionalities and restrictions of modern life, the sea brings welcome emancipation, and comforts with the stormy but unflattering solace of its winds and waves.