

imperfect nautical observation rendered entirely unreliable their assertions of latitudes, we have the names of but two who may be said to have attained the parallel of 82° ; Heindrich Hudson in 1607, and Edward Parry in our own times.

This latter navigator felt that the sea, ice-clogged with its floating masses, was not the element for successful travel, and with a daring unequaled, I think, in the history of personal enterprise, determined to cross the ice upon sledges. The spot he selected was north of Spitzbergen, a group of rocks called the Seven Islands, the most northern known land upon our globe. With indomitable resolution he gained within four hundred and thirty-five miles of his mysterious goal, and then, unable to stem the rapid drift to the southward, was forced to return.

But the question of access to the Arctic pole—the penetration to this open sea—is now brought again before us, not as in the days of Hudson, and Scoresby, and Parry, a curious problem for scientific inquiry, but as an object claiming philanthropic effort, and appealing thus to the sympathies of the whole civilized world—the rescue of Sir John Franklin and his followers.

The recent discoveries by the united squadrons of De Haven and Penny, of Franklin's first winter quarters at the mouth of Wellington Channel, aided by the complete proofs since obtained that he did not proceed to the east or west, render it beyond conjecture certain that he passed up Wellington Channel to the north.

Here we have lost him; and, save the lonely records upon the tomb-stones of his dead, for seven years he has been lost to the world. To assign his exact position is impossible: we only know that he has traveled up this land-locked channel, seeking the objects of his enterprise to the north and west. That some of his party are yet in existence, this is not the place to argue. Let the question rest upon the opinions of those who, having visited this region, are at least better qualified to judge of its resources than those who have formed their opinions by the fireside.

The journeys of Penny, Goodsir, Manson, and Sutherland have shown this tract to be a tortuous estuary, a highway for the polar ice-drift, and interspersed with islands as high as latitude 77° ; beyond which they could not see. It is up this channel that the searching squadron of Sir Edward Belcher has now disappeared, followed by the anxious wishes of those who look to it as the final hope of rescue. I regret to say, that after considering carefully the prospects of this squadron, I have to confess that I am far from sanguine as to its success. It must be remembered that Wellington Channel is all that has just been stated, tortuous, studded with islands, and a thoroughfare for the northern ice; and the open water sighted by Captain Penny is not to be relied on, either as extending very far, or as more than temporarily unobstructed. If we look up from the highlands of Beechy Head, fifty miles of apparently open navigation is all that we can assert certainly to have been attained by the searching vessels, and to reach the present known limits of the sound would require a progress in a direct line on their part of at least one hundred and thirty miles.

They left, moreover, on the fifth of August; and early as this is there considered, and open as was the season, they have but forty days before winter cements the sea, or renders navigation impossible by clogging the running gear. By a fortunate concurrence of circumstances, the squadron of Sir Edward