

men who have at different periods so nobly braved the perils and privations of a voyage in the Polar Regions. In dealing with a matter so difficult of adjustment, Your Committee have felt that their prudent course was to confine such a recommendation to a case in which they have precedent and authority to guide them, and in which the performance of a specific service makes in itself a distinction, which upon any ground of the general claim of enterprise and bravery it would be difficult, if not impossible, to draw.

Your Committee having been instructed by The House to investigate the claims of Captains Collinson and Kellett, two very distinguished officers, have, in compliance therewith, taken evidence, from which it appears that Captain Collinson was the senior officer of the expedition fitted out to search for and succour Sir J. Franklin, and afterwards to proceed to Melville Island; that in July 1850 Captain Collinson parted company with Captain M'Clure in a gale of wind after passing the Straits of Magellan, and did not meet him again; that Captain Collinson entered Prince of Wales's Strait without being aware of its previous discovery by Captain M'Clure, until he reached Princess Royal Islands, where he found a record left by that officer; that he forced his way along Prince of Wales's Strait to the entrance of Parry's Sound: that he was compelled by the ice to return, and that, in the subsequent spring, exploring parties were sent out from his ship, one of which reached Melville Island about 20 days after it had been first visited by Captain M'Clure.

Capt. Collinson's
Ev., 320 and
following.

Your Committee cannot refrain from expressing their high sense of the skill, judgment, and perseverance evinced by Captain Collinson in pushing his ship through Dolphin and Union Straits to a point many degrees further eastward than has ever been attained by any other vessel passing from the west along the northern shores of America, and in successfully extricating her from the embarrassments of so perilous a position.

They also feel it incumbent upon them to notice the determination of this gallant officer to return to the eastward in search of his missing consort previously to having communicated with Her Majesty's ship "Plover," and from her obtained intelligence of Captain M'Clure's safety; nor can they omit to mention the bold attempt made by him in the year 1850 to penetrate to the northward into the heart of the Polar Sea, where he was stopped in latitude $73\frac{1}{2}$ by an impenetrable barrier of ice.

In reference to the evidence regarding Captain Kellett, which was given with much modesty by that distinguished officer, who had already served with great credit in the Arctic Seas for many years, it appears that immediately on his return to England, after having seen both Captain Collinson and Captain M'Clure enter the ice at Behring's Straits, Captain Kellett volunteered to accompany the expedition of Sir E. Belcher. He proceeded to Melville Island, and whilst wintering there, at Dealy Island, having discovered a record left by Captain M'Clure in the preceding year, he was enabled to relieve that officer from his perilous position in Mercy Bay, by sending to his aid an expedition under the command of Lieutenant Bedford Clapperton Pim. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this succour. In the words of Captain M'Clure, the officers and men of the "Investigator" were "at once raised from despondency to the height of exultation and delight." Without this timely assistance it may be doubted whether Captain M'Clure could have reached Beechey Island; if this could have been performed by Captain M'Clure and a few hardy men of his crew, the remainder would have had little chance of their lives, and might have shared the fate of Sir John Franklin, in place of being now in their native land. In concluding these remarks on a North-west Passage, Your Committee cannot but express their satisfaction that the long-sought-for problem has at length been solved by this country, and that another ray has been added to the maritime glory of the British Empire.

Capt. Kellett's Ev.,
No. 140 and fol-
lowing.

While Your Committee have not felt justified in recommending that the principle of a pecuniary compensation should be carried beyond the case of the commander, officers, and crew who actually achieved the objects sanctioned by an Act of Parliament, they cannot but consider it their duty to suggest that the country at large would hail with satisfaction any distinctions which might be conferred, not only upon the officers whose names have been