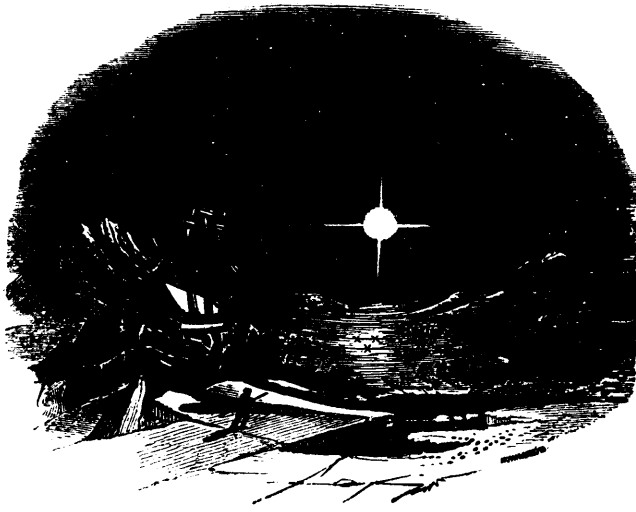


eminent name of Barrow to the straits which he found to be its continuation, and saw the loom of Bank's Land in the south-western distance, before he wintered on the coast of Melville Island (long. 110°,) thirty degrees to the west of Cape Warrender, the starting-



DISCOVERY SHIP IN WINTER QUARTERS.—SINGULAR APPEARANCE OF THE MOON.

point of his new track from Baffin's Bay. His record of the first winter ever passed by a ship's crew in those sullen regions, engraved on the great block of sandstone by the shore of Winter Harbour, still remains fresh and clear in the icy climate; as interesting a token, though not as wonderfully preserved a relic, as those yet legible inscriptions scrawled with charcoal in the quarries of Egypt in the time of the Ptolemies. The conspicuous place and nature of this memorial induced McClure to select the same rock in 1852 as the best spot upon which to place a notice of the *Investigator's* position in the Bay of Mercy, Banks' Land. This notice was found by a sledging party from the *Resolute*; and McClure's choice of so marked a place of deposit may be said to have saved the lives of the *Investigator's* crew, or at least to have preserved them from the toils and risks of a sledging march for life, of a very similar character to that which in 1848 Franklin's less fortunate crews were driven to attempt in vain. Such are the links by which the details of one Arctic voyage of discovery are bound up with those of another.

The second expedition of Parry, in 1821-2, was intended for a movement in combination with the overland journey of Richardson and Franklin from the farthest posts of the Hudson's Bay Company to the coast which had been seen by Hearne and Mackenzie.

Incommensurate as Parry's progress on this occasion was with the professed expectations of the Admiralty, he followed out the tracing of the line of the American continent to the north of Hudson's Strait and Fox Channel, along Melville Peninsula to the Fury and Hecla Strait, which opens into the water afterwards named by Ross the Gulf of Boothia. In his third expedition (1822-25) Parry tried a fresh cast upon his former track through Lancaster Sound, turning southward into the wide mouth of Prince Regent's Inlet, which he had christened in passing on his first voyage. The limits to which he penetrated this channel southward in two years, are marked on the chart by the names of Fury Beach, where the ship of that name was pressed on shore by the ice, and Cape Garry, the farthest headland in sight on his southern horizon. Captain John Ross, following the same path in 1829, in the *Victory*, navigated down the coasts of North Somerset and Boothia as far as Victory Harbour (lat. 70°,) the starting place from which his nephew James Ross traversed with a sledging party the Boothian Isthmus, and explored westward the strait which bears his name, and the shore line of King William's Land, as far as Point Victory, or Cape Jane Franklin, as has been mentioned before. It is a remarkable and important fact, that although in this coasting voyage Sir John Ross landed on Brown's Island, in Brentford Bay, and professedly made the most minute and accurate survey of the whole coast, he overlooked altogether the existence of Bellot Strait, which lies at the bottom of that bay. Had he penetrated behind the outwork of islands which covers the narrow passage through the natural curtain formed by the granite cliffs of Brentford Bay, he would have gained, twenty years earlier than its actual discoverer, Kennedy, the nearest entrance into the channel where the *Erebus* and *Terror* were ultimately beset on their last voyage.

The land and boat journeys taken during these years by Franklin, Back, and Richardson, are even more memorable and fuller of personal interest than the voyages of Ross and Parry. There are few

volumes of travels accessible to ordinary English readers more deservedly popular than those containing Franklin's graphic and touching account of his expedition in 1821, to the shores of the Polar Sea. The difficulties of the march northward, and the descent of the Coppermine river, the stupid and negligent blunderings of the *voyageurs*, the suspicious and greedy, but punctilious and charitable character of the Indians, the hazardous boat voyage from the mouth of the Coppermine to Point Turnagain, and the fearful sufferings of the desperate straggling return across the Barren Grounds to Fort Enterprise, are painted with a noble simplicity and an unsurpassable fidelity. English officers and seamen never battled more bravely with hardships, dangers, famine, and climate, than did Franklin and his English companions on that occasion; and it is mainly in the drawing out of the calm and trustful strength of character individually shown by them under the greatest trials, that the personal interest of this record is greater than that inspired by the adventures of Parry, or Ross, and their crews. There is a wonderful and stern pathos in the plain narrative of the murder of Lieutenant Hood by the Iroquois Michel, and the quick and steady execution of justice upon the murderer by those who would undeniably have fallen victims in their turn to his treachery had they spared him a day longer. And a stranger and more solemn picture of mingled familiarity with and sensitiveness to the outward signs of suffering was never given, than in the few words which tell how, when the relics of Franklin's and Richardson's parties met again at Fort Enterprise, after a separation of some twenty days, they were mutually horror-struck at the gaunt forms, worn faces, and hollow tones of each other, and utterly unconscious that an equally tell-tale change had been stamped by an equally long endurance of hunger and hardship on themselves.

"We were all shocked" (says Franklin) "at beholding the emaciated countenance of the Doctor and Hepburn, as they strongly evidenced their extremely debilitated state. The alteration in our appearance was equally distressing to them, for since the swellings had subsided we were little more than skin and bone. The Doctor particularly remarked the sepulchral tone of our voices, which he requested us to make as cheerful as possible, unconscious that his own partook of the same key." "Our own misery," says Dr. Richardson of himself and the sailor Hepburn, "had stolen upon us by degrees, and we were accustomed to the contemplation of each other's emaciated figures; but the ghastly countenances, dilated eyeballs, and sepulchral voices of Mr. Franklin and those with him, were more than we could at first bear." Human fortitude could hardly have wavered in a more noble manner. Franklin's party had tasted nothing more nutritious than scraps of leather and fragments of bone for thirty-one days, and Richardson's fare had been but little better. Whoever will turn to the narrative may gauge for himself the depth of their gallant endurance, and take a lesson from those brave and cheerful natures, that under such circumstances mingled no self-pity with their tenderness for others, exerted themselves to the last, and never dreamed of breaking down.

The result of this and the later coast expeditions of Franklin, Richardson, and Back, before the date of Ross's voyage in the *Victory*, was to trace the line of the continent uninterruptedly from Point Turnagain to within a very short distance of the coast visited from the western side through Behring's Strait. This line was extended eastward by Sir George Simpson in 1839. In that year he explored Simpson Strait, to the south of King William's Land, and connected Franklin's first limits of discovery with the mouth of the Great Fish river, visited by Back in 1834. He crossed the strait to Cape Herschel, King William's Land, and built there the cairn now standing, which was searched in vain by McClintock for any record of Franklin's crews.

Such was the state of the chart when the *Erebus* and *Terror* sailed on their last voyage in 1845 in search of a north-west passage. It is known that Franklin's favourite idea, before he left England, coincided with his orders; to pierce, if possible, to the southward of the course discovered by Parry, and so find the most direct way from Lancaster Sound, to the point of the American shore, from which, as he could testify of his own experience, it was "all plain sailing to the westward." From what we now know of his first year's cruise round Cornwallis Island, and back to Cape Riley, his first winter quarters, it seems probable that a closed sea towards Peel Sound and an open one towards the north, tempted him to an apparent temporary divergence from the plan which he had laid down for himself from the first, and which, in the next spring, he took the earliest opportunity of pursuing. What the condition of Prince Regent's Inlet in regard to ice may have been in the summer of 1845 we have no means of divining; inasmuch as, with the chart of the Boothian coast made by Ross for his only guide, Franklin would of course have passed it by. From the date when Captain Fitzjames sealed up the last packet of journals he sent home from Baffin's Bay, the history of Franklin's expedition is comprised in the three graves at Beachy Island, the record now brought from Cape