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R E P O R T

FROM

THE SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

ARCTIC EXPEDITION;

TOGETHER WITH THE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE,

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE,

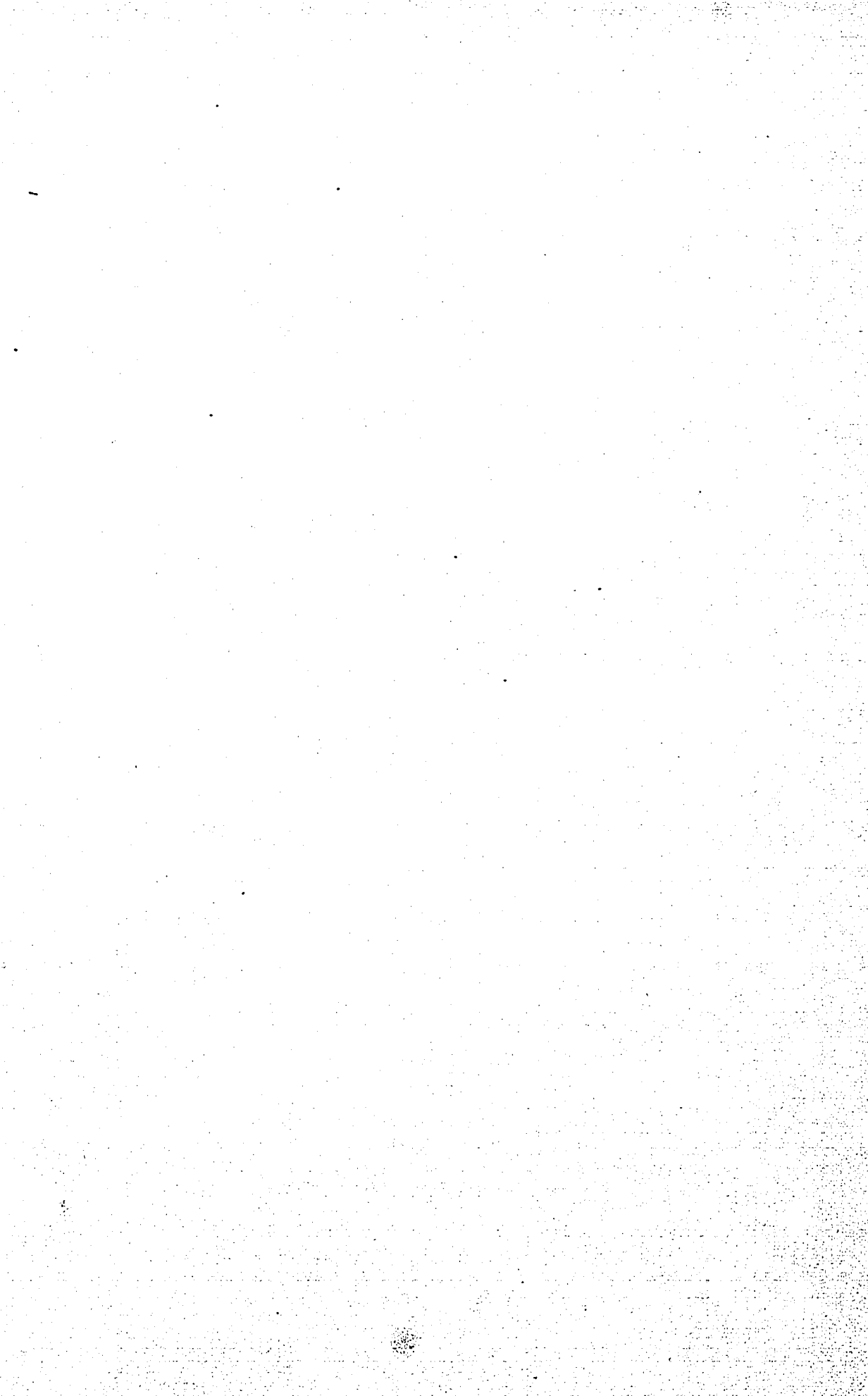
AND APPENDIX.

*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
20 July 1855.*

[*Price 1 s. 6 d.*]

409.

Under 12 oz.



Kidney Brooks Esq

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R E P O R T

FROM THE

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

ARCTIC EXPEDITION;

TOGETHER WITH THE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE,

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE,

AND APPENDIX.

*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
20 July 1855.*

Martis, 19^o die Junii, 1855.

Ordered, THAT a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the circumstances of the Expedition to the Arctic Seas, commanded by Captain M'Clure, of the Royal Navy, with a view to ascertain whether any and what Reward may be due for the Services rendered on that occasion.

Veneris, 29^o die Junii, 1855.

Committee nominated of,—

Mr. Mackinnon.	Mr. Gordon.
Mr. Wilson.	Sir Thomas Acland.
Lord Stanley.	Captain Scobell.
Admiral Walcott.	Mr. Isaac Butt.
Mr. Edward Ellice.	Mr. Stephenson.
Sir Thomas Herbert.	Mr. Talbot.
Mr Ker Seymer.	Sir Robert Peel.
Mr. Jackson.	

Ordered, THAT the Committee have power to send for Persons, Papers, and Records.

Ordered, THAT Five be the Quorum of the Committee.

Jovis, 5^o die Julii, 1855.

Ordered, THAT it be an instruction to the Committee to examine into the Claims of Captains Collinson and Kellett, with a view to ascertain whether any and what Reward may be due to them for the Services rendered on the occasion of that Expedition.

Veneris, 20^o die Julii, 1855.

Ordered, THAT the Committee have power to report their Observations, and the Minutes of Evidence taken before them, to The House.

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R E P O R T.

THE SELECT COMMITTEE appointed to inquire into the Circumstances of the EXPEDITION to the ARCTIC SEAS, commanded by Captain *M'Clure*, of the Royal Navy, with a view to ascertain whether any and what Reward may be due for the Services rendered on that Occasion; and who were further instructed to examine into the Claims of Captains *Collinson* and *Kellett*, with a view to ascertain whether any and what Reward may be due to them for the Services rendered on the Occasion of that Expedition; and who were empowered to report their Observations, and the Minutes of Evidence taken before them, to The House:—

HAVING examined some of the most distinguished explorers of the Arctic Regions, including those who were ordered to relieve or ascertain the fate of the lamented Sir John Franklin, having also had before them the evidence of others well acquainted with the Polar Seas, and also the report and evidence of Captain *M'Clure*, have considered the other matters to them referred, and agreed to the following REPORT:

The attempt to discover a water communication through the Arctic Regions between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, is one which has engaged the attention of maritime nations, and especially that of Great Britain, for a period now extending over nearly three centuries. It has fallen to the lot of Captain *M'Clure*, his officers and crew, to set at rest this question. They are undoubtedly the first who have passed by water from sea to sea, and have returned to this country a living evidence of the existence of a North-west Passage.

Rewards for the discovery of a North-west Passage have more than once been offered by Parliament. Successive Sovereigns have encouraged the enterprise, and men of science have, through succeeding generations, urged the attempt. In the earliest Arctic voyages no doubt a hope was entertained that the North-west Passage would open a safe and speedy route to India; but this idea was speedily abandoned, and for a long series of years the advancement of natural science and the extension of our knowledge of the globe appear to have been the sole incentives of these expeditions, which, sullied by no lust of conquest or selfish views, must ever be considered among the most disinterested of national undertakings; they have served to bring forward some of the best officers and bravest seamen in the British Navy, and have added greatly to the lustre of that service of which our maritime nation is so justly proud. With reference to the services of Captain *M'Clure* in the expedition, the circumstances of which Your Committee have been desired to investigate, the evidence adduced enables Your Committee to present the following concise account of the movements of Captain *M'Clure*, after the arrival in the Arctic Seas of Her Majesty's ship "Investigator" under his command.

ABSTRACT OF THE EVIDENCE PRODUCED.

On the 30th July 1850, the "Investigator" parted company with Her Majesty's ship "Herald," Captain *Kellett*, off Cape Lisburne, and stood to the northward until the morning of the 2d August, when the ice was first fallen in

M'Clure's Ev.,
No. 188 and
following.

See Capt. Pullen's
Evidence before
Arctic Committee,
7 Nov. 1851; also
Capt. Beechey's
opinion, Question
1380.

M'Clure's Ev., 197
and following.

M'Clure's Ev., 228
and following.

with, in lat. $72^{\circ} 1'$, long. $166^{\circ} 12' w$. Captain M'Clure worked along its edge until midnight of the 5th, when Point Barrow was rounded in open water; from this point his progress was beset with difficulties and anxieties of no ordinary character, having to traverse an ice-encumbered sea hitherto considered impracticable for navigation. In this sea the "Investigator" continued her course along the north coast of America, and on the 30th August reached Cape Bathurst, having in the interval threaded her course amidst sand banks, and heavy masses of ice, a great portion of that time enveloped in thick fog, where the lead was the only guide.

Here finding that the ice pressed upon the shore, barring any further advance, Captain M'Clure anchored until the 1st of September, when the ice slightly moving enabled him to round the Cape, crossing Franklin Bay, and on the morning of the 6th high land was observable to the N. E., and on the 7th Captain M'Clure landed on its southern extremity, taking possession in the name of Her Most Gracious Majesty, with the usual ceremonies, naming it Baring's Land, after the First Lord of the Admiralty. Proceeding to the N. E., through continuous fogs, until the morning of the 9th, when, it clearing a little, high land was remarked, to which he gave the name of Prince Albert; and on the 10th two small islands were passed, which were called after Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal; the further advance of the "Investigator" was then impeded by ice setting in from the N. E., which beset her, and in which she drifted about the Straits in great peril, attached to a small piece of ice, drawing eight fathom water, until the 30th September, when she was firmly frozen in. Captain M'Clure, entertaining a strong impression that the waters in which the "Investigator" then lay communicated with those of Barrow's Strait, and that the important question of a North-west Passage might now be solved, set out with a sledge and a few men on the 21st of October for the purpose of testing this conviction, having previously left instructions for the guidance of the commanding officer, in the event of any disruption of the ice, or other casualties, preventing his return to the ship.

On the 26th October, Captain M'Clure and his party reached Point Russell, and, having ascended an elevation of about 600 feet, commanding a very extensive view, had the gratification of finding that their arduous and most fatiguing journey had not been in vain, for beneath them lay the frozen waters of Parry or Melville Sound, proving, beyond doubt, that "a north-west passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean existed."

In honour of this event, Captain M'Clure named the strait, in which he had left the "Investigator," after His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

The party reached the ship again on the 31st October, and remained frozen in until the 14th July 1851, when the ice broke up. Every effort was then made to get to Parry Sound; but in consequence of the quantity of ice coming in from the northward, these efforts were not attended with success.

The ship's furthest advance being latitude 73.14 north, and longitude 115.32 west, Captain M'Clure therefore determined on bearing up, and attempted a passage into Parry Sound, to the westward, and along the shore of Baring's Land, which he was induced, from apparent circumstances, to consider an island.

On the 14th August he accordingly returned southward, and, rounding Nelson's Head, made his way along the west shore of that island, accomplishing what Captain M'Clure, in his published despatches, has styled, "The terrific passage of that terrible Polar Sea;" and on the 24th September, after several providential escapes, succeeded in bringing the "Investigator" into a bay on the northern coast, which, in thankfulness for his preservation, he has appropriately named "The Bay of Mercy," and in the same night was firmly frozen in.

It being now evident that the "Investigator" had taken up her winter quarters, and her release upon the following season being doubtful, Captain M'Clure thought it advisable to place himself, his officers and crew, upon two-third allowance of all species of provision, and this was rigidly adhered to during the period of 20 months, in a climate where a greater supply of food is required

required to sustain men in a healthy condition than in others more temperate. These privations were borne by the crew with uncomplaining fortitude, notwithstanding its effects became painfully visible as their third winter drew towards its close, in all, by their altered personal appearance, and in some by their weakened mental faculties.

On the 11th of April 1852 Captain M'Clure proceeded with a party by sledge to Winter Harbour, in Melville Island, depositing a cylinder containing a summary of his proceedings, and returned to the ship on the 9th May, where he remained for 11 months.

On the 6th April 1853 Captain M'Clure received a communication, brought by Lieutenant Pim, who had been dispatched from Melville Island by Captain Kellett, who had found the record left there by Captain M'Clure in April 1852, and on the 7th crossed that portion of the Arctic Sea now called Banks' Strait, to that officer's ship, at Dealy Island, a small island off Melville Island, which he reached on the 19th, and having arranged with Captain Kellett that if 20 volunteers could be found to remain with him in the hope of extricating the "Investigator" during the navigable season of 1853, he had his permission to do so, if not, Captain M'Clure and his crew were to abandon their ship and join the "Resolute," Captain Kellett. Capt. Kellett's Ev.,
191 and following.

About this period Lieutenant Creswell, of the "Investigator," was dispatched by Captain M'Clure to England to report the position of that ship.

Captain M'Clure rejoined the "Investigator" on the 19th May, and finding that a sufficient number of men would not volunteer to remain, he was compelled to leave the "Investigator" in the Bay of Mercy, which he did on June 3d, and reached the "Resolute" on the 21st.

On the 18th August Captain M'Clure, his officers and crew, quitted Dealy Island in the "Resolute," and were again frozen south-west of Cape Cockburn, and remained there until the 10th April 1854, when Captain M'Clure and his crew proceeded by sledge 180 miles to join the "North Star," at Beechey Island, which they reached on the 27th.

On the 26th of August they proceeded in her down Barrow's Straits, across Baffin's Bay, to Disco, on the west-coast of Greenland, where Captain M'Clure was transferred, early in September, to the "Phoenix," under the command of Captain Inglefield, a very distinguished Arctic navigator, who in another direction had penetrated, by Smith's Sound, to the 78° 36' N. degree of latitude: they arrived safe at Cork on the 30th of the same month, having been four years and eight months in effecting a passage between the Great Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, performing what has been so graphically described by an American writer of some celebrity, Lieutenant Maury, of the United States Navy, "That Captain M'Clure and his followers were the first to put a girdle round the great continent of America."

The evidence places beyond doubt that to Captain M'Clure incontestably belongs the distinguished honour of having been the first to perform the actual passage over water along the Northern Coast of America, between the two great oceans that encircle the globe. By this achievement he has demonstrated the existence, and traced the course of that connexion between these oceans, which, under the name of the North-west Passage, has so long been the object of perilous search and deep interest to the nations of the civilised world.

In addition to the completion of a North-west Passage, Captain M'Clure and his officers have explored about 2,000 miles of coast line, where a blank has hitherto existed in our charts.

In the accomplishment of this exploit, Captain M'Clure exhibited those high qualities of enterprise, heroism, and endurance, which have indeed been the common characteristics of the brave navigators who have carried the researches of British adventure far beyond the confines of the frozen seas, which at one time seemed inaccessible, even to the skill and courage of British seamen. In the discovery of the double passage from the western waters of the Polar Ocean, to the strait which Parry had many years ago reached from the east,

Captain M'Clure has had the good fortune to complete the last link in the chain of discovery to which many intrepid and persevering enterprises have contributed. Few passages in the history of naval enterprise can command a deeper interest than belongs to the position of Captain M'Clure in the autumn of 1851. In the previous autumn he had penetrated to the northern extremity of Prince of Wales' Strait, a channel discovered by himself, and had reached at its entrance the frozen waters of Parry's Sound. Baffled by the ice in his attempt to force his ship into those waters by that channel, he attempted another course. With almost instinctive sagacity he came to the conclusion that the unknown and unexplored land to the westward of the strait through which he had passed, was an island, and that along its northern coast there must be another passage from the open ocean into Melville Sound. He took the bold resolution to retrace his steps to the southward, and attempt to reach the same point by sailing round an unexplored tract of land; and braving the perils of a coast navigation, exposed to the pressure of the Polar Ocean. Your Committee have already recorded the verification of his bold conjecture, and the successful issue of this daring enterprise. Ample and honourable testimony has also been borne to the intrepidity with which he braved, and the judgment with which he met, the perils which attended his attempt; and Your Committee cordially unite in the tribute of admiration which this testimony has offered to the combination of prudence and daring which marked his conduct in the adventurous achievement in which he has succeeded.

Your Committee feel great satisfaction in being able to recommend that these special services should be recompensed by an appropriate pecuniary reward. For many years a reward of 20,000 *l.* was offered for the first person who should complete the North-west Passage, by actually sailing with his ship from one ocean to another. In the year 1818 that reward was modified by proposing that a sum of

£. 5,000	should be paid for passing -	-	-	110°	West Longitude.
£. 5,000	„	„	-	-	120° „
£. 5,000	„	„	-	-	130° „

The arrangements under which these rewards were offered were sanctioned by Acts of Parliament. It appears that the sum of 5,000 *l.* has been already paid to Sir Edward Parry for having passed one of the degrees of longitude for which the partial reward was offered.

In 1828 these Acts were repealed. Your Committee do not refer to them as determining the question which has been submitted to their consideration, but as supplying, in some respects, a guide to them in estimating the sums which ought to be appropriated as the recompense for services of the same nature with those for which the Acts of Parliament offered the reward.

Your Committee, under all the circumstances, recommend that a sum of 10,000 *l.* should be appropriated to Captain M'Clure and the officers and crew of the "Investigator."

Of this sum they recommend that, as a personal tribute to his energy, bravery, and skill, a sum of 5,000 *l.* should be appropriated to Captain M'Clure, and the 5,000 *l.* be distributed, under the directions of the Admiralty, between the officers and the crew.

Upon the most careful consideration, Your Committee have come to the conclusion, that there would be great difficulty in their making any recommendation that would extend the principle of pecuniary reward further than it has been sanctioned by the spirit of the Acts of Parliament to which they have referred. They therefore forbear from making any recommendation of this nature, except in the case of those whose good fortune it was first to complete and make known the enterprise which, from an early period, had been made the object of a distinct and specific reward.

In this decision they have not been influenced by any want of appreciation of the merits of the two brave and distinguished officers whose services they were specially desired to investigate at a period subsequent to the original appointment of Your Committee, or of the many other intrepid and distinguished men

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 following.

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

referred to Your Committee, but upon others who are no less honourably connected with the perils and the exertions that have attended the exploration of the Arctic Seas. For the last 30 years, and also since the loss of the gallant and lamented Sir John Franklin, some of the most distinguished officers of the British Navy have been commissioned to explore the Arctic regions, and in so doing have encountered great dangers, hardships, and privations of every description, much more severe and less endurable than those usually met with in ordinary maritime warfare. It is customary to award clasps to military prowess in the field. Service in the Arctic regions may well be deemed worthy of similar distinction. Her Majesty's gracious recommendation has invited Your Committee to consider the proper mode of rewarding the officers whose names have been specially referred to them. Your Committee therefore venture to suggest that there are marks of honour and distinction which, by brave and high-spirited men, would be valued even more highly than that reward which Your Committee have felt compelled to confine to those within the spirit, if not the letter, of the legislative enactment which originally offered it.

In connexion with this subject, Your Committee beg to direct attention to the evidence, which establishes that the grant of a medal to all those of every rank and class engaged in the several Arctic Expeditions, would be received with great satisfaction. Your Committee feel persuaded that such a medal would honour deeds of heroism, which, though not accompanied by the excitement and the glory of the battle-field, yet rival in bravery and devotion to duty the highest and most successful achievements of war.

The names of no other officers having been referred to Your Committee, Your Committee is of opinion that it might be invidious to particularise individuals where all have not only performed their duty but earned distinction; nevertheless Your Committee desire, in connexion with this branch of their Report, to call attention to the fact, that in addition to officers and men of the Royal Navy, many high-spirited individuals connected with the Hudson's Bay Company and the merchant service have nobly exerted themselves in the search after Sir J. Franklin, and have gained distinguished positions in the annals of Arctic Discovery. Their labours have also been shared by natives of France and of the United States, with similar energy and zeal.

Your Committee would particularly allude to the United States Expedition, equipped through the philanthropic exertions of Henry Grenel, Esq., and commanded by Captain de Haven.

Great praise is due to the commanders and crews of the small vessels sent out by Lady Franklin. Your Committee cannot but express a hope that these brave and enterprising men may be admitted to share in any honorary distinction awarded to those who have taken part in these services.

An accidental and early death cut short the already distinguished career of the gallant and unfortunate Bellot, and Your Committee have learnt with deep regret that the last few days have removed, beyond the reach of any honours which it may please the Sovereign to bestow, a veteran explorer of these frozen regions, whose name must ever be inseparably connected with the history of Arctic Discovery. The islands and channels of this perilous sea, which are now accurately laid down, and whose names are familiar words to us, were unknown and undiscovered when Sir Edward Parry first entered the ice, to encounter the hardships and dangers of a then almost untried navigation.

Before concluding their Report, Your Committee beg to allude to an incident in their inquiries, a reference to which will at all events enable them to do justice to feelings which have commanded their deepest sympathy and respect.

While the inquiry before Your Committee was proceeding, the Chairman of Your Committee received a letter from Lady Franklin, which is printed in the Appendix to the Report.

It is scarcely necessary to say, that neither in their investigations nor in this Report have Your Committee in the slightest degree interfered with anything which it is the object of this noble and touching appeal to preserve. Your Committee cannot determine the extent to which it may yet be found that Sir John
Franklin

Franklin and his companions had carried those discoveries to which they sacrificed their lives.

Whatever may have been their extent, this is certain, that a North-west Passage having been performed, it was in the search for Sir John Franklin that it was incidentally achieved. It may almost literally be said that it was his spirit which pointed out the way. Future investigations may perhaps determine the precise point of the path of discovery at which it pleased Providence that his labours should cease; but however this may be, it never can be forgotten that it was in the attempt to trace his steps, that this path was successfully pursued, and only because men worthy to be his followers went where they hoped and believed that he had already gone before.

20 *July* 1855.

 PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE.

Lunæ, 2^o die Julii, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Mackinnon.
 Captain Scobell.
 Lord Stanley.

Sir Thomas Herbert.
 Mr. Gordon.
 Admiral Walcott.

Motion made (Captain *Scobell*), and question, "That Mr. Mackinnon do take the Chair," put, and agreed to.

Committee deliberated on its course of proceedings.

Captain Sir *George Back*, R. N., and Captain *Kellett*, R. N., Examined.

[Adjourned to To-morrow, at Twelve o'clock.

Martis, 3^o die Julii, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. MACKINNON, in the Chair.

Admiral Walcott.
 Sir Thomas Herbert.
 Mr. Edward Ellice.
 Lord Stanley.
 Mr. Talbot.

Mr. Gordon.
 Captain Scobell.
 Mr. Stevenson.
 Sir Robert Peel.
 Mr. Isaac Butt.

The following witnesses were examined: Captain Sir *James Ross*, R. N., Captain *Kellett*, R. N., Captain *Washington*, R. N., Captain *M^cClure*, R. N.

Committee deliberated.

[Adjourned to Friday, at One o'clock.

Veneris, 7^o die Julii, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. MACKINNON, in the Chair.

Mr. Edward Ellice.
 Admiral Walcott.
 Sir Thomas Herbert.
 Sir Robert Peel.
 Mr. Gordon.
 Captain Scobell.

Sir Thomas Acland.
 Mr. Wilson.
 Mr. Jackson.
 Mr. Ker Seymour.
 Mr. Isaac Butt.
 Mr. Stevenson.

Order of The House read, that it be an instruction to the Committee to examine into the claims of Captains *Collinson* and *Kellett*, with a view to ascertain whether any and what reward may be due to them for the services rendered on the occasion of that Expedition.

Committee deliberated.

Sir *Roderick Murchison* and Dr. *Domville* examined.

Committee deliberated.

Admiral *Hamilton* and Captain *Collinson* examined.

[Adjourned to Tuesday, at One o'clock.

Martis, 10^o die Julii, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT :

Mr. MACKINNON, in the Chair.

Sir Robert Peel.
Admiral Walcott.
Captain Scobell.
Sir Thomas Acland.
Mr. Gordon.
Lord Stanley.

Sir Thomas Herbert.
Mr. Butt.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Stevenson.
Mr. Talbot.

The Committee deliberated.

[Adjourned to Friday next, at Twelve o'clock.

Veneris, 14^o die Julii, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT :

Mr. MACKINNON, in the Chair.

Sir Thomas Acland.
Lord Stanley.
Captain Scobell.
Mr. Gordon.
Sir Thomas Herbert.
Mr. Stevenson.

Admiral Walcott.
Sir Robert Peel.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Ker Seymer.
Mr. Butt.

Draft Report proposed by the Chairman, read 1^o, as follows:—

“YOUR Committee having examined some of the most distinguished explorers of the Arctic Regions, including those who were ordered to relieve or ascertain the fate of the lamented Sir John Franklin, having also had before them the evidence of others well acquainted with the Polar Seas, and also the report and evidence of Captain M'Clure, cannot but consider that a North-west Passage has been discovered, the concise account of which is as follows :

ABSTRACT OF THE EVIDENCE PRODUCED.

“On the 30th July 1850, the ‘Investigator’ parted company with Her Majesty’s ship ‘Herald,’ Captain Kellett, off Cape Lisburne, and stood to the N. N. W. until the morning of the 2d August, when the ice was first fallen in with in lat. 72° 1', long. 166° 12' w. Captain M'Clure worked along its edge until midnight of the 5th, when Point Barrow was rounded in open water; from this point his progress was beset with difficulties and anxieties of no ordinary character, having to traverse an ice-encumbered sea hitherto considered impracticable for navigation. In this sea the ‘Investigator’ continued her course along the north coast of America, and on the 30th August reached Cape Bathurst, having in the interval threaded her course amidst sand banks, and heavy masses of ice, a great portion of that time enveloped in thick fog, where the lead was the only guide.

Capt. Kellett's Ev.

M'Clure's Ev., No. 188 and following.

See Captain Pullen's Evidence before Arctic Committee, 7 Nov. 1851; also Captain Beechey's opinion, Question 1380.

“Here finding that the ice pressed upon the shore, barring any further advance, Captain M'Clure anchored until the 1st of September, when the ice slightly moving enabled him to round the Cape, crossing Franklin Bay, and on the morning of the 6th high land was observable to the N. E., and on the 7th Captain M'Clure landed on its southern extremity, taking possession in the name of Her Most Gracious Majesty, with the usual ceremonies, naming it Baring's Land, after the First Lord of the Admiralty. Proceeding to the N. E., through continuous fogs, until the morning of the 9th, when, it clearing a little, high land was remarked, to which he gave the name of Prince Albert; and on the 10th two islands were passed, which were called after Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal; the further advance of the ‘Investigator’ was then impeded by ice setting in from the N. E., which beset her, and in which she drifted about the Straits in great peril, attached to a small piece of ice, drawing eight fathom water, until the 30th September, when she was firmly frozen in. Captain M'Clure, entertaining a strong impression that the waters in which the

M'Clure's Ev., 197 and following.

M'Clure's Ev., 228
and following.

'Investigator' then lay communicated with those of Barrow Strait, and that the important question of a north-west passage might now be solved, set out with a sledge and a few men on the 21st of October, for the purpose of testing this conviction, having previously left instructions for the guidance of the commanding officer, in the event of any disruption of the ice, or other casualties, preventing his return to the ship.

"On the 26th October, Captain M'Clure and his small party reached Point Russell, and, having ascended an elevation of about 600 feet, commanding a very extensive view, had the gratification of finding that their arduous and most fatiguing journey had not been in vain, for beneath them lay the frozen waters of Barrow's Strait, proving beyond doubt, that 'a north-west passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean existed.'

"In honour of this event, Captain M'Clure named the strait, in which he had left the 'Investigator,' after His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

"The party reached the ship on the 31st, which remained frozen in until the 14th July 1851, when the ice broke up. Every effort was then made to get to Barrow Straits; but in consequence of the quantity of ice coming in from the northward, these efforts were not attended with success.

"The ship's furthest advance being latitude 73.14 north, and longitude 115.32 west, Captain M'Clure therefore determined on bearing up, and attempted a passage into Barrow Straits to the westward of Baring's Land, which he was induced, from apparent circumstances, to consider an island.

"On the 14th August he accordingly returned southward, and, rounding Nelson's Head, made his way along the west shore of that island, accomplishing what Captain M'Clure, in his published despatches, has styled, 'The terrific passage of that terrible Polar Sea;' and on the 24th September, after several providential escapes, succeeded in bringing the 'Investigator' into a bay on the north-west coast, which, in thankfulness for his preservation, he has appropriately named 'The Bay of Mercy,' and in the same night was firmly frozen in.

"It being now evident that the 'Investigator' had taken up her winter quarters, and her release upon the following season being doubtful, Captain M'Clure thought it advisable to place himself, his officers and crew, upon two-third allowance of all species of provision, and this was rigidly adhered to during the period of 20 months, in a climate where a greater supply of food is required to sustain men in a healthy condition than in others more temperate. These privations were borne by the crew with uncomplaining fortitude, notwithstanding its effects became painfully visible as their third winter drew towards its close, in all, by their altered personal appearance, and in some by their weakened mental faculties.

"On the 11th of April 1852, Captain M'Clure proceeded by sledge to Winter Harbour, in Melville Island, depositing a cylinder containing a summary of his proceedings, and returned to the ship on the 9th May.

Capt. Kellett's Ev.,
191 and following.

"On the 6th April 1853, Captain M'Clure received a communication, brought by Lieutenant Pim from Captain Kellett, and on the 7th crossed Barrow's Straits to that officer's ship, at Dealy Island, which he reached on the 19th, and having arranged with Captain Kellett that if 20 volunteers could be found to remain with him in the hope of extricating the 'Investigator' during the navigable season of 1853, he had his permission to do so; if not, Captain M'Clure and his crew were to abandon their ship and join the 'Resolute.'

"Captain M'Clure rejoined the 'Investigator' on the 19th May, and finding that a sufficient number of men could not be found to remain, he was compelled to leave the 'Investigator' in the Bay of Mercy, which he did on June 3d, and reached the 'Resolute' on the 21st.

"On the 18th August quitted Dealy Island in the 'Resolute,' and was again frozen south-west of Cape Cockburn, and remained there until the 10th April 1854, when Captain M'Clure and his crew proceeded by sledge 180 miles to join the 'North Star,' at Beechey Island, which they reached on the 27th.

"On the 26th of August proceeded in her down Barrow's Straits, across Baffin's Bay, to Disco, on the west coast of Greenland, where Captain M'Clure was transferred to the 'Phœnix' early in September, and arrived safe at Cork on the 30th of the same month, having been four years and eight months in effecting a passage between the Great Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, performing what has been so quaintly described by an American writer of some celebrity, Lieutenant Maury, of the United States Navy, 'That Captain M'Clure and his followers were the first to put a girdle round the great continent of America.'

"Independently of the discovery of a North-west Passage, which has been for some centuries an object of perilous search by many, and of deep interest to the world at large, Captain M'Clure has contributed upwards of 2,000 miles of coast line, where a blank previously existed on our charts.

"It

“ It appears that formerly a reward of 20,000 L. was assigned to any person who performed the whole of the North-west Passage. After the year 1818 this reward was modified and divided into four equal parts, as follows:—

5,000 L. for passing	-	-	-	-	110°
5,000 L. for passing	-	-	-	-	120°
5,000 L. for passing	-	-	-	-	130°

and the additional 5,000 L. for going through.

“ It further appears that Captain M'Clure passed—

130° about 1st September 1850;

120° about 7th September 1850;

110° about April 1851; and on 26th October 1851 completed the passage.

“ From these sums 5,000 L. was awarded to Sir Edward Parry. There remains, therefore, the sum of 15,000 L. unappropriated, from which Your Committee think that a sum of L. might be appropriated for Captain M'Clure, a sum to his officers of a sum to his crew of

“ An Order from the House of Commons having reached this Committee to investigate the claims of Captains Collinson and Kellett, two most brave and distinguished officers, Your Committee, in compliance with the directions of The House, have examined several witnesses, from whose evidence it appears that Captain Collinson was the senior officer and commander of the expedition fitted out to search for and succour Sir J. Franklin, if alive, and afterwards to proceed to Melville Island; that Captain Collinson parted company in a gale of wind after passing the Straits of Magellan, and did not meet again; and that Captain Collinson had also the merit of exploring a North-west Passage about 12 months after it was discovered by Captain M'Clure.

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

“ In reference to the investigation regarding Captain Kellett, which was given by that distinguished officer with singular modesty, it appears that he performed a very great service in discovering Captain M'Clure, by sending Lieutenant Pim, by which means Captain M'Clure was, with his crew, rescued from a most perilous situation. Without this timely assistance there is a great doubt 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 Captain Franklin, in place of being now in their native land. In concluding those 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 following.

“ Another question has arisen for the consideration of Your Committee, to which they deem it their duty to call particular attention. For the last 30 years, and also since the loss of the gallant and lamented Sir John Franklin, some of the most distinguished officers of the British Navy have been commissioned to explore the Arctic Regions, and in so doing have encountered great dangers, hardships and privations of every description, much more severe and less endurable than those usually met with in ordinary maritime warfare. Your Committee need scarcely enumerate them, such as Back, Beechey, Belcher, Collinson, Inglefield, Kellett, M'Clure, Parry, Ross, &c.; these brave and gallant men would be gratified were they to receive some mark of their services from their Sovereign. A clasp is awarded for every battle in which the military are engaged; a year of service in the Polar Seas is far more dangerous, irksome, and trying than even a gallant battle. Commanders, officers, and crews would indeed feel it a noble reward for their conduct, were they so rewarded. Herewith is appended the evidence on the subject before Your Committee:

“ ‘276. *Chairman.*] I wish to ask you a question upon another subject, which I consider of very great importance for our consideration; I think that, some time ago, you stated to the Royal Geographical Society that, in your opinion, those individuals who had explored the Arctic Seas had shown so much courage, so much devotion, and so much perseverance amongst the hardships to which they were exposed, that if they did not meet with a substantial reward, they ought, at least, to receive from the country the reward of some honorary distinction, such as a medal. Do you continue of that opinion now?—I not only continue of that opinion, but I feel most strongly that the country owes this distinction to every one of those brave men who were ready to sacrifice their lives, and underwent such perils as the Arctic explorers did. I am quite of opinion that not only geographers, but that all naval and military men, and every man who has ever thought upon the subject, will consider that the men who have so perilled their lives, and have shown so much nautical skill, combined with such perseverance and courage, ought to be distinguished exactly in the same manner as those who peril their lives, whether it be at Sebastopol, or formerly in the Peninsula. I am sure that I only express the general feeling of the country, that all those brave men ought to be so honoured; and, if you will allow me to say it, I think that there are some of them, at least three, who well merit still higher honours. I am quite sure that in saying this I express the opinion of many geographers also.

“ ‘277. Will you name the three?—In the order of rank in which they stand, Kellett, Collinson, and M'Clure.

“ ‘278. Captain *Scobell*.] In suggesting the very proper reward of a medal for the navigators in the Arctic Ocean, do not you think that if given at all, it ought to be extended to the officers, and to every seaman?—I meant it so.

“ ‘279. Sir *T. Acland*.] You alluded also to higher honours as being due to some among them?—Yes; if I may be allowed to extend my wish, I should include another naval captain, who though he did not make the passage, did it in part. I mean Captain *Inglefield*, whose voyage I have always thought very remarkable in exploring to a more northern point than any one else in search of Sir John Franklin. Looking at the whole case, we geographers have but one feeling, which is that of admiration of all the gentlemen who have been employed in this search.

“ ‘280. Mr. *Ellice*.] You think it very desirable that in every case a medal should be given to all those officers and men?—Unquestionably. I am of opinion that all the seamen, as well as the officers, should receive an Arctic medal. I further think that all the explorers in search of Franklin, whether by land or by water, and whether they be in Her Majesty's service or not, should be honoured with an Arctic medal. Such men as *Rae*, *Penny*, *Kennedy*, *Stewart*, *Sutherland*, and others, should not be omitted; and I would suggest that the American officers, *De Haven*, *Kane*, &c., who have aided so zealously in the search, should also have the same honours.’ ”

Proposed Report read 2° paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraph 1 read, amended, and agreed to.

Motion made (Mr. *Gordon*) to insert following paragraphs:—

“ That the attempt to discover a water communication through the Arctic Regions between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, is one which has engaged the attention of maritime nations, and especially that of Great Britain, for a period now extending over nearly three centuries. It has fallen to the lot of Captain *M'Clure*, his officers and crew, to set at rest this question. They are undoubtedly the first who have passed by water from sea to sea, and have returned to this country a living evidence of the existence of a North-west Passage.

“ Rewards for the discovery of a North-west Passage have more than once been offered by Parliament. Successive Sovereigns have encouraged the enterprise, and men of science have, through succeeding generations, urged the attempt. In the earliest Arctic voyages no doubt a hope was entertained that the North-west Passage would open a safe and speedy route to India; but this idea was speedily abandoned, and for a long series of years the advancement of natural science and the extension of our knowledge of the globe appear to have been the sole incentives of these expeditions, which, sullied by no lust of conquest or selfish views, must ever be considered among the most disinterested of national undertakings; they have served to bring forward some of the best officers and bravest seamen in the British Navy, and have added greatly to the lustre of that service of which our maritime nation is so justly proud. With reference to the services of Captain *M'Clure* in the expedition, the circumstances of which Your Committee have been desired to investigate, the evidence adduced enables Your Committee to present the following concise account of the movements of Captain *M'Clure*, after the arrival in the Arctic Seas of Her Majesty's ship ‘*Investigator*’ under his command.”

Question, “ That these paragraphs be inserted in the proposed Report,” put, and agreed to.

Several paragraphs read, amended, and agreed to.

The following paragraph read:—“ Independently of the discovery of a North-west Passage, which has been for some centuries an object of perilous search by many, and of deep interest to the world at large, Captain *M'Clure* has contributed upwards of 2,000 miles of coast line, where a blank previously existed on our charts.”

Amendment proposed (Mr. *Butt*), To strike out the paragraph, and insert the following instead thereof:—

“ The evidence places beyond doubt that to Captain *M'Clure* incontestably belongs the distinguished honour of having been the first to perform the actual passage over water along the Northern Coast of America, between the two great oceans that encircle the globe. By this achievement he has demonstrated the existence, and traced the course of that connexion between these oceans, which, under the name of the North-west Passage, has so long been the object of perilous search and deep interest to the nations of the civilised world.

“ In addition to the completion of a North-west Passage, Captain *M'Clure* has explored about 2,000 miles of coast line, where a blank has hitherto existed in our charts.

“ In the accomplishment of this exploit, Captain *M'Clure* exhibited those high qualities of enterprise, heroism, and endurance, which have indeed been the common characteristics of the brave navigators who have carried the researches of British adventure far beyond the confines of the frozen seas, which at one time seemed inaccessible, even to the skill and courage of British seamen. Ample and honourable testimony has been borne before Your Committee

Committee

Committee to the intrepidity with which he braved, and the judgment with which he met, the perils which attended his attempt; and Your Committee cordially unite in the tribute of admiration which this testimony has offered to the combination of prudence and daring which marked his conduct in the adventurous achievement in which he has succeeded."

Question, "That the paragraph proposed to be left out, stand part of the proposed Report," put, and negatived.

Question, "That the paragraphs proposed by Mr. Butt be there inserted in the proposed Report," put, and agreed to.

Motion made and question put (Mr. Butt):—"That the consideration of the remaining paragraphs be postponed until the Committee determine, by preliminary resolutions, what course they will adopt with reference to recommending a pecuniary reward in the case of each of the officers whose names have been referred to them," put, and agreed to.

Further consideration of the proposed Report postponed accordingly.

Motion made and question (Mr. Butt): "That in the opinion of the Committee, Captain M'Clure, and his officers and crew, ought to be recommended to receive a pecuniary reward," put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and question proposed (Mr. Jackson), "That the sum of 5,000*l.* be awarded to Captain M'Clure, and 5,000*l.* to his officers and crew, as the Admiralty may direct."—Amendment proposed (Captain Scobell), To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the question, for the purpose of inserting the words:—"The consideration of the question be postponed until the Committee have come to some determination concerning what, if any, pecuniary compensation should be recommended to be awarded to Captains Collinson and Kellett," instead thereof:—Question, "That the words 'the sum of' stand part of the Question," put and agreed to.

Another amendment proposed (Sir T. Herbert), To leave out the words "5,000*l.* be awarded to Captain M'Clure, and 5,000*l.* to his officers and crew," for the purpose of inserting the words "20,000*l.* be awarded to Captain M'Clure, his officers and crew," instead thereof.—Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question," put, and agreed to.—Main question put and agreed to.

Motion made, and question proposed (Sir R. Peel), "That it is the opinion of Your Committee that, limiting the reward to Captain M'Clure, his officers and crew, no further pecuniary grant be recommended to the favourable consideration of Parliament, with reference to the evidence which has been submitted to Your Committee in the course of its present investigation."—Amendment proposed (Mr. Gordon), To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the question, for the purpose of inserting the words, "This Committee, considering that Captain Collinson did actually discover, by independent means, a north-west passage subsequently to its discovery by Captain M'Clure, and that his other services in the Arctic Seas are of exceeding brilliancy and merit, recommend that a sum of 5,000*l.* should be awarded to Captain Collinson, his officers and crew," instead thereof.—Question, put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question." The Committee divided:

Ayes, 6.
 Captain Scobell.
 Sir T. Herbert.
 Mr. Butt.
 Lord Stanley.
 Sir R. Peel.
 Mr. Mackinnon.

Noes, 5.
 Sir T. Acland.
 Mr. Jackson.
 Mr. Stevenson.
 Mr. Seymour.
 Mr. Gordon.

Main question put and agreed to.

Consideration of the proposed Report then proceeded with.

Motion made (Mr. Butt), "That the following paragraphs be added to the Report":—

"Your Committee feel great satisfaction in being able to recommend that these special services should be recompensed by an adequate pecuniary reward. For many years a reward of 20,000*l.* was offered for the first person who should complete the North-west Passage, by actually sailing with his ship from one ocean to another. In the year 1818 that reward was modified by proposing that a sum of

5,000 <i>l.</i> should be paid for passing	-	-	-	-	110°
5,000 <i>l.</i> " "	-	-	-	-	120°
5,000 <i>l.</i> " "	-	-	-	-	130°

"The arrangements under which these rewards were offered were sanctioned by Acts of Parliament. It appears that the sum of 5,000*l.* has been already paid to Sir Edward Parry for

for having penetrated one of the degrees of longitude for which the partial reward was offered.

“In 1828 these Acts were repealed. Your Committee do not refer to them as determining the question which has been submitted to their consideration, but as supplying, in some respects, a guide to them in estimating the sums which ought to be appropriated as the recompense for services of the same nature with those for which the Acts of Parliament offered the reward.

“Your Committee, under all the circumstances, recommend that a sum of 10,000*l.* should be appropriated to Captain M'Clure and the officers and crew of the ‘Investigator.’

“Of this sum they recommend that, as a personal tribute to his energy, bravery, and skill, a sum of 5,000*l.* should be appropriated to Captain M'Clure, and the residue be distributed, under the directions of the Admiralty, between the officers and the crew.

“Upon the most careful consideration, Your Committee have come to the conclusion, that there would be great difficulty in their making any recommendation that would extend the principle of pecuniary reward further than it has been sanctioned by the spirit of the Acts of Parliament to which they have referred. They therefore forbear from making any recommendation of this nature, except in the case of those whose good fortune it was first to complete and make known the enterprise which, from an early period, had been made the object of a distinct and specific reward.

“In this decision they have not been influenced by any want of appreciation of the services of the two brave and distinguished officers whose services they were specially desired to investigate at a period subsequent to the original appointment of the Committee, or of the many other intrepid and distinguished 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, 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.”

Question “That these paragraphs be added to the proposed report,” put, and agreed to.

[Adjourned to Monday next, at One o'clock.]

Lunæ, 16^o die Julii, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. MACKINNON, in the Chair.

Mr. Gordon.
Captain Scobell.
Sir Thomas Acland.
Sir Thomas Herbert.

Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Stevenson.
Mr. Butt.

The proposed Report (Mr. Mackinnon) further proceeded with.

The following paragraph read, amended, and agreed to: “An order from the House of Commons having reached this Committee to investigate the claims of Captains Collinson and Kellett, two very distinguished officers, Your Committee, in compliance with the directions of The House, have 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 Strait without being aware of its previous discovery by Captain M'Clure, until he reached Princess Royal Islands, where he found a record left for that officer; that he forced his way along Prince of Wales Straits 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.”

Motion made (Mr. Gordon), “That the following paragraphs be added to the proposed Report.”

“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

with Her Majesty's ship 'Plover,' and from her obtaining 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 73½° by an impenetrable barrier of ice,"

Question "That these paragraphs be added to the proposed report," put, and agreed to.

The following paragraph read, amended and agreed to: "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 so 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 Pim. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this succour. In the words of Captain M'Clure, the officers and men of the 'Resolute' 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 Captain Franklin, in place of being now in their native land. In concluding those 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."

Motion made (Mr. Butt), "That the following paragraphs be added to the Report,"

"While Your Committee do not feel justified in recommending that the principle of a pecuniary compensation should be carried beyond the case of the commander, officers, and crew who actually accomplished the result, for which a former Act of Parliament had sanctioned that principle, at the same time they feel that they do not transgress their proper duty in suggesting that the country at large would hail with satisfaction any distinctions which might be conferred, not only upon the officers whose names have been immediately referred to Your Committee, but upon others whose names are no less honourably connected with the perils and the exertions that have attended the exploration of the Arctic Seas. For the last 30 years, and also since the loss of the gallant and lamented Sir John Franklin, some of the most distinguished officers of the British Navy have been commissioned to explore the Arctic regions, and in so doing have encountered great dangers, hardships, and privations of every description, much more severe and less endurable than those usually met with in ordinary maritime warfare. A clasp is awarded for every battle in which the military are engaged; a year of service in the Polar Seas is far more dangerous, irksome, and trying than even a gallant battle. Her Majesty's gracious recommendation has invited Your Committee to consider the proper mode of rewarding the officers whose names have been specially referred to them. Your Committee therefore venture to suggest that there are marks of honour and distinction which, by brave and high-spirited men, would be valued even more highly than that reward which Your Committee have felt compelled to confine to those within the spirit, if not the letter, of the legislative enactment which originally offered it.

"In connexion with this subject, Your Committee beg to direct attention to the evidence, which establishes that the grant of a medal to all those of every rank engaged in the several Arctic Expeditions would be received with great satisfaction. Your Committee feel persuaded that such a medal would honour deeds of heroism, which, though not accompanied by the excitement and the glory of the battle-field, yet rival in bravery and devotion to duty the highest and most successful achievements of war."

Question, "That these paragraphs be added to the proposed report," put, and agreed to.

Motion made (Mr. Gordon), "That the following paragraphs be added to the proposed Report."

"The names of no other officers having been referred to Your Committee, Your Committee is of opinion that it might be invidious to particularise individuals where all have not only performed their duty, but earned distinction; nevertheless Your Committee desire, in connexion with this branch of their Report, to call attention to the fact, that in addition to officers and men of the Royal Navy, many individuals connected with the Hudson's Bay Company and the merchant service have nobly exerted themselves in the search after Sir J. Franklin, and have gained distinguished positions in the annals of Arctic Discovery. Their labours have also been shared by natives of France and of the United States with similar zeal and energy.

"Your Committee would particularly allude to the United States Expedition, equipped through the philanthropic exertions of Henry Grenel, Esq., and commanded by Captain De Haven.

“ Great praise is due to the commanders of the small vessels sent out by Lady Franklin. Your Committee cannot but express a hope that these brave and enterprising men may be admitted to share in any honorary distinction awarded to those who have taken part in these services.

“ An accidental and early death cut short the already distinguished career of the gallant and unfortunate Bellot, and Your Committee have learnt with deep regret that the last few days have removed, beyond the reach of any honours which it may please the Sovereign to bestow, a veteran explorer of these frozen regions whose name must ever be inseparably connected with the history of Arctic Discovery. The islands and channels of this perilous sea, which are now accurately laid down, and whose names are familiar words to us, were unknown and undiscovered when Sir Edward Parry first entered the ice, to encounter the hardships and dangers of a then almost untried navigation.”

Question, “ That these paragraphs be there added,” put and agreed to.

[Adjourned till Wednesday, at Twelve o'clock.

Mercurii, 18^o die Julii, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. MACKINNON, in the Chair.

Sir Robert Peel.
Sir Thomas Acland.
Captain Scobell.
Admiral Walcott.

Mr. Gordon.
Sir Thomas Herbert.
Mr. Butt.

The consideration of the draft Report proceeded with.

A letter from Lady *Franklin* to the Chairman read as follows:—

“ Sir,

60, Pall Mall, 6 July 1855.

“ I VENTURE to trespass a few minutes on your time and that of the Committee over which you preside, in behalf of the claims of my late husband, Sir John Franklin, and his companions, as connected with the subject you have under discussion.

“ When it is remembered that these brave and unfortunate men, after years of intense privations and suffering, were found dead of starvation upon a spot which they could not have reached without having first solved that geographical problem which was the object and aim of all these painful efforts, and when it is also remembered that they are beyond the reach of their country's rewards, you will not, I think, refuse them the just acknowledgment that is due to their memories.

“ It would ill become me, and is far indeed from my wish, to attempt to question the claims of Captain M'Clure to every honour his country may think proper to award him. That enterprising officer is not the less the discoverer of a North-west Passage, or, in other words, of one of the links which was wanted to connect the main channels of navigation already ascertained by previous explorers, because the ‘Erebus’ and ‘Terror’ under my husband had previously, though unknown to Captain M'Clure, discovered another and a more navigable passage; that passage, in fact, which if ever ships attempt to push their way from one ocean to the other, will assuredly be the one adopted. And it can never be denied to Captain M'Clure that he is the first who has by his own skill, and by means of the timely assistance of the brave men who were in search of him, made his individual way from one ocean to the other. Such a transit, though not the object which has engaged the attention of the civilised world for centuries, is a distinction of which any man may well be proud.

“ What I presume to claim for those who can urge nothing for themselves is the first discovery of a navigable passage for ships in that unknown space which lay between the discoveries of former navigators, for to such connecting channel has the solution of the geographical problem for many years past been reduced. My husband was specially warned by his instructions not to seek it in the quarter where the ‘Investigator’ lies, lest impenetrable ice should, as was anticipated, arrest his progress, and he found the passage by acting (in conformity with his instructions) on those theoretical convictions which, as Sir John Richardson has shown, he deliberately formed.

“ Convinced, Sir, that it must be your desire, and that of the other honourable Members of the Committee, to do justice to the dead, while you duly and generously honour the living, and believing that these two objects do not clash, but may be harmoniously combined, I have presumed thus to address you.

“ I trust you will pardon the Widow and the Friend this last effort in behalf of those who have nobly perished.

“ W. A. Mackinnon, Esq., M.P.”

“ I have, &c.,
(signed) “ Jane Franklin.”

Motion made (Sir *R. Peel*), and question, “ That the letter be printed in the Appendix,” put and agreed to.

The

The following paragraphs (Mr. *Butt*) read, amended and added to the Report :

“ Before concluding their Report, Your Committee beg to allude to an incident in their inquiries, a reference to which will at all events enable them to do justice to feelings which have commanded their deepest sympathy and respect.

“ While the inquiry before Your Committee was proceeding, the Chairman of Your Committee received a letter from Lady Franklin, which is printed in the Appendix of the Report.”

A further paragraph proposed by Mr. *Butt*, read; several amendments made—Paragraph read, as amended, as follows, and agreed to :—

“ In the discovery of the double passage from the western waters of the Polar Ocean to the strait which Parry had many years ago reached from the east, Captain M'Clure has had the good fortune to complete the last link in the chain of discovery to which many intrepid and persevering enterprises have contributed. Few passages in the history of naval enterprise can command a deeper interest than belongs to the position of Captain M'Clure in the autumn of 1851. In the previous autumn he had penetrated to the northern extremity of Prince of Wales Strait, a channel discovered by himself, and had reached at its entrance the frozen waters of Parry's Sound. Baffled by the ice in his attempt to force his ship into those waters by that channel, he attempted another course. With almost instinctive sagacity, he came to the conclusion that the unknown and unexplored land to the westward of the strait through which he had passed was an island, and that along its northern coast there must be another passage from the open ocean into Melville Sound. He took the bold resolution to retrace his steps to the southward, and attempt to reach the same point by sailing round an unexplored tract of land, and braving the perils of a coast navigation, exposed to the pressure of the Polar Ocean. Your Committee have already recorded the verification of his bold conjecture, and the successful issue of this daring enterprise.”

Several verbal amendments were made.

Question, “ That the Report as amended be the Report of the Committee,” put and agreed to.

Question, “ That the Minutes of Evidence be reported to The House,” put and agreed to.

Ordered to report.

EXPENSES OF WITNESSES.

NAME of WITNESS.	PROFESSION or CONDITION.	FROM whence SUMMONED.	Number of Days absent from Home, under Orders of Committee.	Expenses	Allowance	TOTAL
				of Journey to London and Back.	during absence from Home.	Expenses allowed to Witness.
				£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Captain M'Clintock -	Royal Navy - -	Macroom - -	6	10 - -	6 6 -	16 6 -
Dr. Rae - - -	- - - -	Merthyr - - -	5	3 16 -	5 5 -	9 1 -
						25 7 -

LIST OF WITNESSES.

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Captain Sir James Clark Ross, R.N.	-	-	-	-	-	-	p. 7
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Sir Roderick Impey Murchison	-	-	-	-	-	-	p. 18
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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

Lunæ, 2^o die Julii, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Mackinnon.
Lord Stanley.
Admiral Walcott.

Sir Thomas Herbert.
Mr. Gordon.
Captain Scobell.

WILLIAM ALEXANDER MACKINNON, ESQ., IN THE CHAIR.

Captain Sir *George Back*, R. N., called in ; and Examined.

1. *Chairman.*] YOU are well conversant with the Arctic Regions :—Tolerably well.
2. How many years have you passed in exploring those regions :—Thirteen years.

3. You are aware of the object for which we are assembled here ; will you have the goodness to state to the Committee what is your general impression of Captain M'Clure's passage, the North-west Passage, and also your general opinion upon the subject :—As regards Captain M'Clure's discovery, I think there can be but one opinion of the great merit which attaches to that officer for his perseverance in pushing his vessel through a sea encumbered with ice, amidst immense difficulties, and where a ship had never been before. I think also, that his proceeding in getting up Prince of Wales's Strait with his ship was one that showed immense firmness and great judgment. Perhaps still more meritorious, in my opinion, was his attempt, and a successful attempt, in forcing his way along the west side of Baring Island, where his ship was necessarily exposed to all the pressure of the northern ice, drifting down, as it sometimes is known to do, with great velocity and immense force against the shore of that and other lands. Judging from my experience amongst the ice, in Her Majesty's ship "Terror," where Captain M'Clure commenced his Polar career—the account of which has been published, and, I take it for granted, is well known to the Committee ; I say, judging from what we underwent there, the constant pressure and up-heaving of the ice, in a manner, I believe, almost unknown, the constant danger which attended us, and the extreme jeopardy in which the ship was frequently placed, raises my admiration of the conduct of Captain M'Clure in exposing himself and his ship to similar dangers—dangers, however, which must be encountered, as he well knew, before success could be achieved. With this vivid impression on my mind, I cannot sufficiently admire the conduct of Captain M'Clure and his officers, who, with every faith in Providence, could quietly thrust their ship into such danger. Doubtless, it is owing to that firmness, skill, and intrepidity that the success of the expedition to the Bay of Mercy was accomplished. There can be no doubt that Captain M'Clure's ship was the first that ever traversed the Polar Sea from Behring's Strait to Baring Island ; and, in having accomplished that, it is equally certain that the credit of the discovery of a North-west passage by a great channel is due solely and

0.61. entirely

Captain
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Captain
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entirely to Captain M'Clure. I really do not know that I can add anything to what I have related, beyond a re-assertion of the circumstances, and my great admiration of the conduct of all employed.

4. I think you stated just now that no vessel had ever gone to the north or north-westernmost part of Baring Island before Captain M'Clure's?—I did.

5. The difficulty of so doing was the immense pressure of the ice coming down from the north-west?—Precisely so.

6. Of course, if he succeeded in weathering the north-west point of Baring Island and went round, in doing that he did what no other explorer of the Arctic Regions had ever done before?—What no person had ever done before.

7. Is there any possibility of passing by the south-east corner of Baring Island in the Prince of Wales's Channel?—It appears that Captain M'Clure was stopped there by one continuous mass of ice; thereby he was prevented from accomplishing a passage, which but for that impediment would have been completed during the same year.

8. As far as I can understand, he attempted that passage first?—He did.

9. Then, finding that he could not succeed, he dropped down to the southern extremity, went to the westward, and steered to the northward, and then turned to the east?—That is precisely what I think I have said.

10. Would there have been any possibility for him, if the weather had cleared, to have gone on with his vessel?—That would have depended entirely upon the state of the ice. Had Captain M'Clure commanded a steam-vessel or an auxiliary steam-vessel, perhaps it is not hazarding too much in saying that he would have got entirely through in the same season, by which means he would have brought his ship to England.

11. Admiral *Walcott*.] Do you think that the ice would not have prevented his forcing his way through with a steam-vessel?—I do. Such is the uncertainty of the drift or motion of the ice in the Polar Regions, that it frequently happens, and I believe it did with Captain M'Clure, that a channel or a wide space of water is visible, but, from not having any steam-power, the ship cannot possibly get to it. The impediment between the open water and the ship may probably only be 600 yards, perhaps less.

12. Sir *T. Herbert*.] And the wind may be directly against you?—Exactly so.

13. Admiral *Walcott*.] Did Captain M'Clure see any such broken water?—I believe I am correct in saying, that at one time he did see open water to windward of him, towards Melville Island.

14. At what distance from Melville Island?—I cannot answer that question exactly; but he told me, to the best of my recollection, it was complete sailing water; that is to say, the pieces of ice were so small as not to form any impediment to the ship's progress.

15. Captain *Scobell*.] I suppose you have read the full details of the "Investigator's" passage from Behring's Straits to where the "Investigator" was left?—I have.

16. Do you remember about what distance that is in a straight line?—No, I cannot say exactly the distance. Perhaps between 600 and 700 miles; but I have not measured it.

17. Remembering the great object which was in view, namely, the North-west Passage, how far do you think, in the fair acceptation of the term, Captain M'Clure has made that passage, taking into consideration how he got home, that he travelled over the ice a certain distance, and then proceeded by other vessels to England?—I should think, if I understand the question rightly, that the distance between Captain M'Clure's furthest (if I may so call it), the Bay of Mercy, and where Captain Sir Edward Parry was in 1819, would be probably from 70 to 90 miles in a straight line, east and west; that is to say, in the direction of the Strait; I mean leading to open water.

18. Has he not, in point of fact, cleared up whether there is or is not a North-west Passage?—Undoubtedly, he has cleared up that there is one.

19. Has he not, in person and with his crew, made that passage?—Unquestionably.

20. Though they did not do it in the "Investigator" all the way from impediments?—As far as the Bay of Mercy.

21. Did you ever winter in that region of which we are speaking, near Baring Island and Melville Island?—I have not wintered there; my wintering was to the southward of that, in Frozen Strait, in the "Terror."

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22. In what latitude and longitude did you winter?—I have not got the latitude and longitude down here; but it is near to Frozen Strait, to the southward; about $65^{\circ} 18'$ and $83^{\circ} 30'$.

23. Still the region which you were in, and in which you persevered with your endeavours, was full of the same and similar impediments which a more northern latitude would offer?—I should say almost greater, because I was coming from east to west, consequently against the current, and to the south of that entirely; not in connexion with that, because there is only a passage through Hecla and Fury Straits to my position, which was considerably to the eastward.

24. So that your experience, you think, enables you to give a just judgment on the case?—I should say so.

25. Sir *Thomas Herbert*.] You were never at Melville Island?—No.

26. You do not know how much of the distance from Melville Island across to Cape Mercy has been traversed by a ship, and the distance of the part that was left unconnected by sailing vessel between those points?—I believe the distance is from near Winter Harbour, where Captain Kellett wintered, or close to it.

27. In that channel, what distance do vessels from Melville Island reach to what they call Banks's Island; how near the Cape?—Not far; but the distance is about 150 or 160 miles.

28. Captain M'Clure did not perform that?—Not in the ship.

29. Captain *Scobell*.] None of the other navigators from Sir Edward Parry on to the present time, except Captain M'Clure, effected anything amounting to ascertaining the North-west Passage?—Not that I am aware of; not from the westward, certainly.

30. Are you familiar enough with all the events of those various voyages to know who, on the whole, penetrated furthest to ascertain that problem next to Captain M'Clure?—If the Committee wishes me to answer the question, I can have no hesitation in doing so. In a ship, Captain Collinson was unquestionably the second after Captain M'Clure.

31. Do you remember how much he came short in distance of performing what Captain M'Clure did?—I am not well versed in that; I believe that his ship, in Prince of Wales's Strait, was a little to the north of Captain M'Clure's position there.

32. Further on?—Yes, a little higher up. He tried to get round to the westward, and failed; consequently, that would be his northern point in Prince of Wales's Strait.

33. Admiral *Walcott*.] He reached more to the northward than Captain M'Clure did?—Only in Prince of Wales's Strait; not in the Bay of Mercy. The Bay of Mercy is considerably to the northward of the other. (*The Witness pointed out upon the map the relative positions of the places named.*)

34. Captain *Scobell*.] Where was Captain Kellett's furthest?—(*The Witness pointed out the same.*) It is a point near Winter Harbour.

35. *Chairman*.] You have not been there, have you?—No.

36. Captain Collinson, finding that he could not get through the Straits, what did he do?—Captain Collinson returned to the southward, and wintered in a bay which you see to the south there (*pointing out the same*), in latitude $71^{\circ} 35'$ and longitude $117^{\circ} 39' W$. Then in the following season he went round here, and wintered in Cambridge Bay; his party afterwards travelled on the ice, up to here (*showing the same*), in latitude $70^{\circ} 26'$ and longitude $100^{\circ} 45' W$.

37. And came back?—They then returned to the ship.

38. Where was Captain Collinson at the time that Captain M'Clure made the passage?—I am not quite clear where he was.

39. Sir *T. Herbert*.] He must have been at Hong Kong?—Yes, because he wintered at Hong Kong.

40. Captain *Scobell*.] Where was Captain Collinson's furthest?—(*The Witness pointed out the same.*)

41. What are the latitude and longitude of his furthest?—About $105^{\circ} 20'$ longitude, and something like $69^{\circ} 8'$ latitude; viz., Cambridge Bay.

42. Sir *T. Herbert*.] Captain Collinson got as far as 105° West; that is to say, coming from the westward and going to the eastward. How far west did Captain M'Clure get; that is, coming from the westward and going to the eastward?— 118° or $117. 50^{\circ}$.

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43. *Chairman.*] Then, as far as your view of the subject goes, there is no question that Captain M'Clure was the only person who got so far to the west?—Not the least in the world.

Captain Henry Kellett, R. N., C. B., called in; and Examined.

Captain
H. Kellett, R.N., C.B.

44. *Chairman.*] WILL you have the kindness to state how many years you have been intimate with the Arctic Seas?—I wintered twice in the Arctic Seas, and I have made three summer voyages to Behring's Straits in connexion with this expedition.

45. When did your first acquaintance with the Arctic Seas commence?—In 1848 I went there.

46. As you are well aware of the objects of this Committee, will you have the kindness to state your opinion on the subject, as far as it goes, with reference to Captain M'Clure's discovery of the passage to the north-west?—With respect to the discovery of the North-west Passage, I will say that there is no doubt that Captain M'Clure has the priority of claim to that discovery.

47. In your impression, if he had not gone to the westward of Baring Island, he could by no means have done it?—He could; he would have done it equally.

48. In what manner?—By going from Prince of Wales's Strait to Sir Edward Parry's position.

49. But he could not get through?—No, he could never get through with his ship; it has never been made by ships at all.

50. Nor, as stated by the former Witness, has the passage to the westward of Baring Island ever before been achieved?—Never before; in fact, the actual North-west Passage, as far as men going from the westward, as it was in this case, across and actually going over the footsteps of Sir Edward Parry, was achieved first by Captain M'Clure, and in about 20 days afterwards by Captain Collinson's party. Captain M'Clure wintered in Mercy Bay, and Captain Collinson the same year wintered just a little to the southward, in the entrance of Prince of Wales's Strait. (*The Witness pointed out the different positions on the Map.*) Captain M'Clure wintered here, and Captain Collinson in the same year there. Captain M'Clure's party went from here to there, and Captain Collinson's party went from here to there (*pointing out the same*), both in the same year, only Captain Collinson's party were 20 days after the other.

51. *Admiral Walcott.*] That, of course, was in communication with each other?—No further communication than that Captain Collinson found Captain M'Clure's records.

52. *Chairman.*] But Captain M'Clure was the first?—Captain M'Clure was the first by 20 days.

53. Then they both went back to their ships; Captain Collinson's party returned?—Yes, and so did Captain M'Clure's; they went back to his ship also.

54. That was the first year, as I understand?—That was Captain M'Clure's second year in the Arctic Regions.

55. That was in the year 1852?—Yes, the year that I went out there; and I found Captain M'Clure's record, with the date of his having done so in Winter Harbour, where Sir Edward Parry wintered before.

56. *Sir T. Herbert.*] The first intimation which you had of Captain M'Clure being in Mercy Bay was, from a party of his coming over to Melville Island?—He himself came; it was from his having gone over and deposited a record of what he had done, which I found in October 1852.

57. What was the next intimation which you had of him?—The next intimation which I had of him was from having sent an officer of my own to him, Lieutenant Pim, who reached him on the 6th of April 1853; I could not send in October. I should have been only adding more men to his difficulties by sending over a party at that time, besides not supposing that he was there.

58. *Captain Scobell.*] Of what date was Captain M'Clure's record which you found at Melville Island?—It was dated some time in April 1852.

59. The previous April before you found it in October?—Yes.

60. You found it in April?—I did in October.

61. What distance did you afterwards ascertain that Captain M'Clure was from you; what was the distance between where the "Investigator" wintered and

and you, in a straight line?—He was about 165 miles, as the crow flies: I think, about 168 or 170 miles by sledge route.

62. If there had been no ice, would it have been entirely seen between you and him?—I think so, as far as one could judge.

63. No reports came to you that there were indications of land?—No.

64. Then, geographically speaking, has he or has he not, in person with his crew, performed the North-west Passage, not in the "Investigator," but himself?—I consider that he has.

65. And he has solved the problem, in fact?—He has solved that problem.

66. Mr. *Gordon*.] Sir George Back has stated that, in his opinion, if Captain M'Clure had been furnished with any steam-power, he would have been able to make the passage not only in person, but with his vessel; do you concur in that opinion?—No; I do not think it practicable for any vessel ever to go by the west through that channel with any power. I do not think it possible.

67. Admiral *Walcott*.] Then your opinion is, that if Captain Collinson, as well as Captain M'Clure, had had a screw-vessel with them, it would have been impracticable for them to have forced through the ice, which is generally, and indeed, if I understand you rightly, at all times so thick, that they could not have made a passage in that direction?—I do not think they ever could. They may have passed one another a mile or two in Prince of Wales's Strait; but I do not think it ever practicable for a vessel to get from the southward up through that Strait into Barrow Strait, from what I have seen.

68. Then it is your impression that, from the position in which Captain Collinson was, he could never have achieved the North-west Passage?—Never, with his ship.

69. Captain *Scobell*.] You pointed out, a little while ago, where Captain Collinson wintered, his furthest, and where the "Investigator" was left; what is the distance, in a straight line, from the one to the other?—They could not go straight; every one of those distances is given in the Blue Book. I think there is a small chart in the Blue Book; I could get it out with a pair of compasses.

70. Will you give the latitude and longitude where the "Investigator" was left, and the furthest which Captain Collinson reached?—It is about 230 miles, I think.

71. Admiral *Walcott*.] In your opinion, at the time Captain Collinson reached the longitude which he did, and in the position in which he was, would it have been practicable, as far as it is possible to judge, from the state of the ice which you might have seen from Melville Island, to have gone by the ice from where Captain Collinson had his ship to Melville Island, or for Captain M'Clure to have done it?—Perfectly easy. Captain Collinson went from that position.

72. To Melville Island?—Yes; he was only 20 days after Captain M'Clure. Captain M'Clure was one year longer on the ice than Captain Collinson; he went one year before. The same year that Captain M'Clure went round here (*showing the same*), Captain Collinson got into the ice and he wintered here.

73. I understand that the impression which you give to the Committee is precisely this, that Captain M'Clure has the merit of having achieved the North-west Passage in the first instance?—That is exactly it.

74. And Captain Collinson in the second instance?—Yes.

75. Captain *Scobell*.] Did Captain Collinson go from where his vessel wintered to Melville Island?—Yes; that is to say his party did; some of his officers and crew.

76. Supposing Captain M'Clure had not made the passage, then Captain Collinson may be supposed to have done it in the same sense?—Yes; 20 days later.

77. Having performed a large portion of it over the ice?—Yes.

78. *Chairman*.] Was that the year after?—The same year.

79. Captain *Scobell*.] How long after?—About 20 days, I think it was, as near as possible; their sledges crossed one another.

80. Sir *T. Herbert*.] Captain Collinson had the advantage of the information which Captain M'Clure left at the different stations as he went along?—Yes, he found his records. Captain M'Clure's was a perfectly unknown land to him.

81. Admiral *Walcott*.] If I understand you rightly, Captain Collinson had the advantage of the records which Captain M'Clure left during his progress, or

Captain
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a part of his progress?—Yes; the records which he left are in this book. I do not think there was anything left by Captain M'Clure as to what his intentions were—I do not suppose he knew very well what they were, depending entirely on his finding water; but Captain Collinson certainly found his records of what he had done.

82. And he knew that Captain M'Clure was before him?—Yes, he knew that Captain M'Clure had been before him wherever he went.

83. Captain *Scobell*.] Do you consider it an act of great perseverance that when Captain M'Clure found that he could not get through Prince of Wales's Straits, he went right round the island on the outside with the pressure of the whole Arctic Sea ice upon him?—I do certainly think it a most unparalleled piece of perseverance, and I have seen a good deal of it.

84. That part of what he did, taken as a part of the whole, must have been the most dangerous of the whole?—Yes; for one period he was six weeks on the face of a perpendicular coast, where, if the ice had come upon him, there could not have been a man saved. I do not think it is quite fair to suppose that Captain M'Clure, if he had found a passage there, would have persevered and gone through, because that was not the object of his voyage; the North-west Passage was not the object of his voyage. It was stated that he would have gone through the same year; I do not think that he would have done so, or could have done so, even if it had been open; it might have been in his power.

85. Sir *T. Herbert*.] Did you see Captain M'Clure's orders?—I did; a copy of them was sent; they were Captain Collinson's orders.

86. He had a copy of them; when he communicated with you, did he show you a copy of his orders?—I had a copy of his orders; I knew them very well.

87. Will you state to the Committee what his orders were; was he ordered to go to Melville Island?—He was, I think; I am almost sure he was, but I cannot exactly say whether the words "Melville Island" were included. The orders are there.

88. Captain *Scobell*.] Your officers and crew were healthy throughout the winters which you passed there, were not they?—Perfectly healthy. Captain M'Clure's ship was abandoned in consequence of the state of his crew, and the length of time, and the impracticability of getting her out.

89. Admiral *Walcott*.] At the time when you were ordered to desert your ship, had you the impression that, had you not deserted her, you had sufficient provisions, and that your crew were sufficiently healthy to have run the chance of another winter of getting clear?—They were perfectly healthy, and there were quite sufficient provisions for the number of men that would have been necessary for me to have brought the vessels out.

Captain Sir *George Back*, R.N., again called in; and further Examined.

Captain
Sir G. Back, R.N.

90. Sir *T. Herbert*.] YOU had a conversation at the Admiralty with the First Lord of the Admiralty, I believe, or with the parties there at the time, when the expedition was going out to look for Captain M'Clure and Captain Collinson, on account of the anxiety about them; what was the nature of that conversation?—I may mention that the Duke of Northumberland sent for me to the Admiralty, and in the presence of the late Admiral Hyde Parker asked my opinion respecting any succour that might be rendered to Captain M'Clure, or, in fact, any plan that I might entertain of sending out another expedition. I strongly recommended that succour of some kind or other, by ship, should be sent towards Melville Island, in the hope of meeting with Captain M'Clure. I believe that was all. From that originated other things, which terminated as you know.

91. Was this after Sir Edward Belcher had sailed?—No; Sir Edward Belcher had just been appointed, but he had not sailed.

92. *Chairman*.] Is there anything else which you have to state to the Committee upon the subject of Captain M'Clure's expedition?—I have nothing to state individually, further than I have stated.

93. Captain *Scobell*.] About what year was that conversation?—It must have been previous to the going out of Sir Edward Belcher's expedition; it would be about June 1852, I should think; May or June.

94. Admiral

94. Admiral *Walcott*.] In the summer of 1852?—Yes; all that I wish to state is, that the Duke of Northumberland felt a very warm interest in the fate of Captain M'Clure.

95. Captain *Scobell*.] And of Captain Collinson, of course?—Naturally; they being the Expedition, in fact.

Martis, 3^o die Julii, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Mackinnon.	Captain Scobell.
Admiral Walcott.	Mr. Stephenson.
Sir Thomas Herbert.	Mr. Isaac Butt.
Lord Stanley.	Mr. Talbot.
Mr. Edward Ellice.	Sir Robert Peel.
Mr. Gordon.	

WILLIAM ALEXANDER MACKINNON, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Captain Sir *James Clark Ross*, R. N., called in; and Examined.

96. *Chairman*.] YOU have been long conversant with the Arctic Seas?—Yes; I have been many voyages to that region.

Captain
Sir *J. C. Ross*, R. N.

97. You are well aware what we are assembled here for; will you state generally your opinion as to what was accomplished by Captain M'Clure, with reference to the discovery of the North-west Passage?—There can be but one opinion of Captain M'Clure having accomplished the remaining portion of the passage, that portion which was left undone by Sir Edward Parry. The discovery of the North-west Passage may properly be said to have been made by Sir Edward Parry, Sir John Franklin, and Sir John Richardson; but Captain M'Clure has completed in a ship that which Sir Edward Parry had left unaccomplished.

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98. Admiral *Walcott*.] The question which the Committee desire to ask you is not as to the comparative merits of Captain M'Clure and Sir Edward Parry, and others (whose indomitable perseverance and meritorious exertions all must acknowledge); but the question is, whether to Captain M'Clure does not belong the merit of having solved the problem of the North-west Passage in so far as this: that he went in at one end, and came out at the other?—There cannot be the least doubt about it; but as it is upon record that Sir Edward Parry had found a portion of the North-west Passage, and received a reward for it, I meant to say that it was the remaining part of the North-west Passage that Captain M'Clure has accomplished in the "Investigator."

99. Captain *Scobell*.] If Captain Parry received a reward for performing part of the North-west Passage, does not that circumstance lessen the claim of any person who performed the whole of the North-west Passage?—I should think so. In the first place, the reward was offered to any person who should sail through the North-west Passage; that was modified after the first voyage in 1818, and it was apportioned out in four parts: 5,000 *l.* for passing 110°, 10,000 *l.* for passing 130°, 15,000 *l.* for passing 150° west longitude, and 20,000 *l.* for going through; the first portion of which was received by Sir Edward Parry; and if the Board of Longitude had not been dissolved, Captain M'Clure and his crew would have been entitled to the other 15,000 *l.*

100. Mr. *Ellice*.] Captain M'Clure is the only one who has gone through?—He is the only one who has gone entirely through, except his officers and crew.

101. *Chairman*.] He is the only one who has taken a belt round America?—Yes.

102. Mr. *Ellice*.] He may be said to be the first and hitherto the only real discoverer of the through passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific?—Certainly, he has been the first to go entirely through. Captain Collinson may be said also to have discovered a passage, but that was a year later, and he did not go

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through it; but he discovered a communication by water, which was not known before. If Captain M'Clure and all his officers had perished, Captain Collinson would have proved that there was a North-west Passage by what he did; but Captain M'Clure was a twelvemonth before him.

103. Captain *Scobell*.] Captain M'Clure got to the Bay of Mercy by persevering, after he was defeated in Prince of Wales Strait, in going round Baring Island, notwithstanding the pressure and the dangers of the Arctic ice?—Yes.

104. Captain Collinson did not attempt to go round?—Yes, but did not get so far; he went up Princess Royal Channel, and thus would have equally proved the North-west Passage, if Captain M'Clure had not anticipated him.

105. Which advanced furthest up Prince of Wales Strait?—Captain Collinson, in the “Enterprize.”

106. *Chairman*.] Did Captain Collinson, or did he not, go further than Captain M'Clure?—In his ship he did not go so far as Captain M'Clure round Baring Island; and he equally went across to Melville Island over the ice.

107. Was not the direction which the Admiralty gave to Captain M'Clure to go through the Pacific and to reach Melville Island, in fact, a direction to him to attempt the North-west Passage?—No doubt of it. I do not know that the Admiralty intended by those orders that he should seek for the North-west Passage. I suppose he was directed to go there in search of Sir John Franklin, in the expectation that Sir John Franklin might have gone there from the eastward, and that Captain M'Clure might reach him from the westward. I do not suppose that the Admiralty sent out Captain Collinson or Captain M'Clure for the purpose of discovering the North-west Passage.

108. Mr. *Gordon*.] But though not for the purpose, the orders of the Admiralty, if carried out, would have had the effect of ordering him to accomplish that?—No doubt.

109. Mr. *Ellice*.] The Act of Parliament promises the reward to any person “first finding out and sailing through the North-west Passage”?—Yes; that was afterwards modified by the Act of 1819, apportioning the reward.

110. *Chairman*.] In your impression, “sailing through,” or “going through,” mean the same thing?—I suppose so.

111. Admiral *Walcott*.] Captain Collinson, by a party, communicated with Melville Island?—I think by a sledge party.

112. Was that before or after Captain M'Clure communicated with Melville Island?—I think it must have been after.

113. *Chairman*.] Your impression is, that Captain M'Clure was the first man who made a sort of belt round the island?—There is no doubt of it.

114. Mr. *Ellice*.] There is no doubt of the facts, which are matter of public notoriety, and beyond controversy, that Captain M'Clure is the first and only person who has passed from sea to sea?—There is no doubt that Captain M'Clure is the first commander of a ship that has passed from sea to sea, but Lieutenant Cresswell and his party were the first individuals, and Captain M'Clure was therefore not the first person nor the only person, as he was accompanied by the ex-officers and crew of the ship he commanded.

Captain *Henry Kellett*, R. N., C. B., called in; and further Examined.

Captain
H. Kellett, R. N., C. B.

115. Admiral *Walcott*.] WILL you be so good as to acquaint the Committee whether Captain M'Clure communicated directly with you at Melville Island, after having left his ship off Banks's Island?—Yes: Captain M'Clure came himself direct to me.

116. Sir *T. Herbert*.] When you abandoned your vessel, what remuneration did you get on account of your stores and your clothing?—I received remuneration for my losses, but not exactly agreeably with my demands. In most cases the demands of the officers were not up to the service allowance.

117. Captain *Scobell*.] After Captain M'Clure reached you at Melville Island, by what means did he reach England?—He walked to Beechey Island, and then he went in the “North Star” as far as Lievely in Greenland, and from thence he came home in the “Phoenix” to Cork.

118. Did the officers and crew accompany him?—No; they came home in other vessels at the same time.

119. Admiral *Walcott*.] By "walking," do you mean walking over the ice?—Yes; he walked upon frozen water, in fact.

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120. Mr. *Stephenson*.] The first communication that took place between your vessel and Captain M'Clure's was through the medium of Lieutenant Pim?—It was. They started at a very early season, a most unprecedented season, with the temperature at 50° below zero, and they went across, and met him on the 6th of April.

121. Did you then consider that the communication that took place between your vessel and Captain M'Clure was mainly dependent upon the energy of Lieutenant Pim?—Lieutenant Pim had his orders to go. I knew that Captain M'Clure had been a year before in that position, and I sent Mr. Pim to communicate with Captain M'Clure.

122. He conducted that expedition to your satisfaction?—He conducted that expedition.

123. Mr. *Gordon*.] If the communication which took place between you and Captain M'Clure had not taken place at the time it did, is it your opinion that Captain M'Clure would have been enabled to perform the passage at all?—Captain M'Clure had actually performed the passage at that time.

124. But would he have been able to have actually done what no one before had done, namely, to have made the whole circuit?—Not without assistance, certainly; he might have walked to Beechey Island, but it would have been a very great trial under those circumstances. I think some of his healthy men might have walked to Beechey Island, but I think the greater proportion of his men would not have been able.

125. You have no doubt that he received very important assistance?—I conceive certainly that he received most important assistance. Had not the Admiralty sent ships to the westward, I do not think Captain M'Clure would have been here now to receive the honours which I hope he may obtain.

126. In short, the success of his expedition is, in some degree, to be attributed to the succour which he received from you?—Yes; his successful arrival in this country.

127. *Chairman*.] What was the distance that he had to walk, which you say might have been achieved by strong men?—About 500 miles to Beechey Island; When Lieutenant Meecham, (one of my officers), found Captain Collinson's record, he went in 63 days 1,200 miles; but few men can do that. It had never been done before by any traveller in that time.

128. In your opinion the assistance was very important to Captain M'Clure; but it was possible that he might have done without it?—Exactly; it is possible that he might have reached Beechey Island.

129. Captain *Scobell*.] Were the depôts of provisions known to Captain M'Clure?—There was a depôt, which he supposed to be a large one, at Beechey Island, and for which he was about to start 20 of his men, but it was a miserable depôt; there was not sufficient there to maintain them for a week, to say nothing of a winter. But those men were actually going to that place; therefore, I say, the assistance they received was very necessary to their salvation.

130. Mr. *Stephenson*.] Were not Captain M'Clure and his crew in a very reduced state when Lieutenant Pim arrived there?—They were.

131. Considering the state they were then in, are you able to form an opinion as to their capability of walking to Beechey Island?—I should think there were some of them that would have walked, in fact some did; because Lieutenant Cresswell went down there, and so did Mr. Wynniat. But they were all in a very bad state, without any exception.

132. Although you think it possible that they might have walked to Beechey Island, do you think it probable under the circumstances?—Yes; I think that some might have got there, but no doubt with great losses. I think that they were in that state that they would not have waited for one another in their escape.

133. You think that the expedition which you sent to Mercy Bay was of the utmost importance to their ultimate success?—I think it was.

134. Admiral *Walcott*.] Your deliberate opinion is, that to Captain M'Clure attaches the merit of having solved the problem of the North-west Passage?—Yes, I am of that opinion.

135. *Chairman*.] Being the first man who made that circuit?—Yes; he proved

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it perfectly; he proved it through the Prince of Wales's Strait, and he proved it by going along the west coast of Baring Island.

136. Sir R. Peel.] But he never would have made the entire circuit except it had been for the assistance he received from you at Mercy Bay?—I have stated that he could have walked from that place to Beechey Island.

137. Mr. Gordon.] But that would have been only with great difficulty?—Yes.

138. Admiral Walcott.] In your opinion he was capable, so far as you could judge, of reaching Beechey Island?—Yes.

139. Mr. Gordon.] The assistance which you gave to Captain M'Clure was of the most essential importance in enabling him to perform the whole circuit?—Certainly; no doubt of it.

140. And without that it is doubtful whether he could have done it?—Without it, it would have been doubtful, I think.

141. Captain Scobell.] Were there any depôts of provisions on Melville Island, independently of your being there?—No.

142. Then if you had not been there he would have found nothing to eat there?—No; nothing.

Captain John Washington, R.N., called in; and Examined.

Captain
J. Washington,
R. N.

143. Sir T. Herbert.] YOU are Hydrographer to the Admiralty?—I am.

144. Do you consider that Captain M'Clure succeeded in ascertaining the North-west Passage?—Undoubtedly he succeeded in discovering the North-west Passage. I am not aware whether the Committee has attached any particular meaning to the actual making the passage, but in the common acceptance of the word, I consider that he was one of the discoverers that there was a passage.

145. Sir R. Peel.] Who were the others?—I think probably some of Sir John Franklin's crew.

146. Sir T. Herbert.] But the question being with respect to those who sailed, or went or made the passage, has any one else done it, except Captain M'Clure?—Not at that particular point from Banks Land to Behring Strait.

147. And he did it by sailing?—Captain M'Clure did not do it by sailing.

148. But more than any one else?—We want information upon that point; we do not know what Sir John Franklin's crews may have done.

149. Chairman.] You are supposing that some of Sir John Franklin's crew discovered the North-west Passage; but there is no evidence of that?—I am judging upon general grounds. The men being left at one point, and being ascertained to be at another point, it is a fair ground of supposition that they passed over the distance between the two points.

150. Where were they?—Supposing this to be Beechey Island (*pointing out the spot on the chart*), the graves of some of Franklin's crew were found there. They were known to be there about April or May, or probably later, in 1846; they had orders to go to the westward, and they were found here, at the mouth the Great Fish river, in May 1850, by the Eskimó. How they reached from that point to this we do not know, but we do know this, that there is a water communication to the southern part of Peel Sound. We know that there is water communication along the north coast of America, as far as Cape Nikolai, in Boothia Felix, leaving a tract of from 90 to 100 miles of which we know nothing; but it is fair to presume that it is ice and water.

151. Mr. Ellice.] But still that is not actually discovered?—No.

152. Chairman.] The facts you have stated do not show that the North-west Passage was made by any one of those individuals?—Supposing that it was water in Victoria Strait, and supposing Franklin's crews to have gone by way of that track, then they would have discovered the North-west Passage as completely as it was done by Captain M'Clure. The main continent of America was circumnavigated if they made that passage.

153. Sir R. Peel.] Your opinion is that, if any party is entitled to the reward for having made the North-west Passage, Sir John Franklin's expedition is justly entitled to it?—I would not say "justly entitled to it," but entitled to be heard upon it, as having a standing upon the question.

154. Admiral Walcott.] I wish to ask whether, in your deliberate opinion, you have not arrived at the conviction that the problem of the North-west Passage was solved by Captain M'Clure, and by Captain M'Clure alone, simply upon
this

this ground, that he entered at one end and came out at the other, and that he thus proved that it was possible to go by water from one end to the other, provided the water had not been frozen?—Undoubtedly.

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155. That is your opinion?—Unquestionably; that he did so in September 1850.

156. Captain *Scobell*.] You described a kind of theory, according to which you considered that it might be shown that Captain Franklin had performed the North-west Passage?—I said that if Captain Franklin did as I suppose, he was the first person who effected the North-west Passage; and I may add, that such is the opinion of Sir John Richardson, the highest possible authority on all arctic affairs.

157. How do you make out that there is a North-west Passage, going from where he entered to the spot where the remains were found?—The 100 miles of Victoria Strait was the only link wanting; the whole of the north-west coast of America had been discovered by prior explorers.

158. You mean that he would have made up the deficiency?—He would have made up the wanting link.

159. But he would not himself have performed the whole passage?—Except that Captain Franklin did himself discover a great deal of that coast in different voyages, and some of his crew may have completed the whole.

160. When you say that Captain M'Clure is one of those who have performed the North-west Passage, and when you now admit that Captain Franklin did not perform it, but only performed a portion which was not previously made out, will you state what other person besides Captain M'Clure has performed the North-west Passage?—No one individual has actually discovered the whole distance; what Captain M'Clure did was, that he crossed over the unexplored part, so as to connect the links; but he did not do so in his ship.

161. He entered Behring Strait, he came to the Bay of Mercy, he passed over a great distance on the ice, and he came to England by water?—Undoubtedly he was the first to go over the whole distance; all that I wished to do was, to guard myself from saying that he was the first discoverer of the North-west Passage, and to state that I think it is quite possible that others may have discovered it before.

162. When you contend that some one else may have made the North-west Passage, do you mean from end to end, or a portion of it?—A portion of it; the only portion required to solve the problem.

163. Should you put a person who merely made out the remnant of the passage previously undiscovered on an equality with a person who had performed the whole passage from end to end?—I do not wish to put it in that manner; I only state the possible fact.

164. But you do not know as a fact that Captain Franklin did discover that portion of the passage?—No.

165. Mr. *Ellice*.] I gather from your evidence that Captain M'Clure is the first and only person who has gone from sea to sea as the discoverer of the North-west Passage?—Yes.

166. There may be others who may have discovered it, but we have no evidence of it?—Just so.

167. Sir *T. Herbert*.] Do you know of any other way in which any person has gone from sea to sea, except that which has been accomplished by Captain M'Clure?—As far as we know, he is the only person who has done it. I am far from wishing in any degree to diminish Captain M'Clure's merit; he and his crew did their work gallantly and nobly, but I wish to guard the Committee from pronouncing a decision upon the priority of a discovery which may be proved to have been made by another; which possibly a few months may show to have been made by another.

168. Upon what grounds do you rest that supposition; you allude to Sir John Franklin as having possibly made the prior discovery?—I do.

169. Then the proof depends upon there being certain of his party still alive?—Or some of his journals or logs being brought home, that may prove how the party reached the spot at which their remains were found.

170. Admiral *Walcott*.] But that would not prove that they reached Behring Strait?—No; but it would prove that the problem of the North-west Passage was solved.

171. So it is solved, because Captain M'Clure has gone from sea to sea?—

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But the discovery of this passage cannot be attributed to any one individual; it is a series of exertions which has been continued for about 30 years. Had Captain M'Clure arrived at that spot without any one having preceded him there, he could never have attempted to cross either to Port Leopold or to Beechey Island; others have assisted him, and chiefly Captain Kellett, who has described the aid he rendered with great modesty. Kellett was the person that held out the right hand of assistance to M'Clure in his precarious situation. Without that aid it is possible that some one of the party might have survived to reach Beechey Island; but it is only a bare possibility.

172. Mr. *Ellice*.] Is not it the fact that Captain M'Clure actually performed the whole circuit himself?—He has actually done that, but he profited greatly by the voyages of others.

173. But what other people had discovered, he has actually gone over himself, and he has completed the whole by performing the link that was wanting before?—Yes.

174. Admiral *Walcott*.] You must understand that there can be no desire on the part of the Committee to detract from the great merit due to the indomitable perseverance and exertions which have distinguished all the Arctic discoverers, and the great privations which they have gone through; but we are met here simply to ascertain the point whether Captain M'Clure has or has not solved the problem of the North-west Passage by having entered at one end and come out at the other by water?—If I understand that the Committee is not to decide the priority of discovery, I have not a word to say. That is the only point I wish to guard.

175. Captain *Scobell*.] If we did give a decision upon the priority, have you any strong ground for stating, in fact, anything amounting to proof that any one else did it before Captain M'Clure?—No; but I would beg the Committee to suspend their opinion till the result of the researches of the Hudson's Bay travellers who have gone to the spot shall be known. It will be known in a few months, or in a year at the outside.

176. You are aware that Captain M'Clure's orders were to go to Melville Island from Behring Strait?—Yes.

177. Of course he was not deprived of the previous discoveries of other voyagers to aid him?—Certainly.

178. Availing himself of the previous discoveries, he made the whole passage?—He did.

179. Mr. *Gordon*.] Are not the solving of the problem and the performance of the passage two very distinct things; even supposing Sir John Franklin and his crew to have done all that you suppose them to have done, then they would, it is true, have solved the problem by ascertaining that there was water the whole way; but they would not have performed the whole passage along the north coast of America?—No, possibly not.

180. That is what Captain M'Clure has done, and which no one has done before?—Yes.

181. Sir *T. Herbert*.] Do you suppose that any one of the party of Captain Franklin could have gone out by Behring Strait?—It is not impossible; we have no proof to the contrary.

182. Supposing we adopted your supposition, that some of them arrived at the spot that you pointed out, do you think it probable that they could have gone on from thence, and gone out by Behring Strait?—It is not probable; it is possible.

183. Mr. *Ellice*.] I gather from your evidence, that from the information which the Admiralty have received, you doubt very much whether Captain M'Clure would have got safely through the passage had it not been for the aid which he derived from Captain Kellett?—I think it is very doubtful; it is possible; but I think Captain Kellett contributed most materially to their assistance.

184. Mr. *Stephenson*.] Do you not consider that the arrival of Lieutenant Pim from Captain Kellett's vessel was in fact the first demonstration of a North-west Passage actually existing?—No; Captain M'Clure had crossed over the ice to Melville Island before, and left a notice.

Captain *Robert John Lemesurier M'Clure*, R. N., called in; and Examined.

185. *Chairman*]. YOU are aware what this Committee is assembled for. The Committee are desirous of having from you a short and correct, but succinct statement of your passage from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean. Will you state first the substance of your orders?—I have a copy of my orders, which I will hand in.

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[*The same was read, as follows:*]

Her Majesty's Ship "Enterprise," Oahee,
29 June 1850.

Memo.—So soon as Her Majesty's ship under your command is fully complete with provisions, fuel, and water, you will make the best of your way to Cape Lisburne, keeping a good look-out for "Herald" or casks, and firing guns in foggy weather after passing St. Lawrence. The whalers also may afford you information of our progress.

Should you obtain no intelligence, you will understand that I intend to make the pack close to the American shore, and pursue the first favourable opening west of the coast stream, pressing forwards towards Melville Island. In the event of meeting land, it is most probable that I would pursue the southern shore, but conspicuous marks will be erected if practicable, and information buried at a 10-foot radius.

As it is necessary to be prepared for the contingency of your not being able to follow, by the ice closing in, or the severity of the weather, you will in that case keep the "Investigator" as close to the edge of the pack as is consistent with her safety, and remain there until the season compels you to depart, when you will look into Kotzebue Sound for the "Plover," or information regarding her position, and having deposited under her charge a twelvemonth's provision, you will proceed to Valparaiso, replenish, and return to the Straits, bearing in mind that the months of June and July are the most favourable. A letter from the hydrographer relative to the variation of the compass is annexed, and you will bear in mind that the value of these observations will be greatly enhanced by obtaining the variation with the ship's head at every second or fourth point round the compass, occasionally, and she should be swung for deviation in harbour as often as opportunity may offer.

Should you not find the "Plover," or that any casualty has happened to render her inefficient as a depot, you will take her place; and if (as Captain Kellett supposes) Kotzebue Sound has proved too exposed for a winter harbour, you will proceed to Grantley Harbour, leaving a notice to that effect on Chamisso Island. The attention of your officers is to be called, and you will read to your ship's company the remarks of Sir J. Richardson concerning the communication with the Esquimaux contained in the Arctic Report received at Plymouth.

Your operations in the season of 1851 cannot be guided by me, nor is there any occasion to urge you to proceed to the N. E.; yet it will be highly desirable previous to entering the pack that you completed provisions from the whalers, and obtained as much reindeer's meat as possible; Captain Kellett's narrative will point out where the latter is to be had in most abundance, and where coal can be picked up on the beach; but husband the latter article during the winter, by using all the drift-wood in your power.

In the event of leaving the Straits this season, you will take any weak or sickly men out of the "Plover," and replace them from your crew, affording Commander Moore all the assistance in your power, and leaving with her Mr. Miertching, the interpreter; instructions with regard to whose accommodation you have received, and will convey to the Captain of the "Plover."

(signed) *Rd. Collinson*,
Captain.

To Commander M'Clure,
H. M. S. "Investigator."

Should it be the opinion of Commander Moore that the services of the "Investigator's" ship's company in exploring parties during the spring would be attended with material benefit to the object of the expedition, he will, notwithstanding these orders, detain you for the purpose; but care must be taken that your efficiency as a sailing vessel is not crippled by the parties not returning in time for the opening of the ice.

"R. C."

186. Will you now have the goodness to point out on the chart exactly what you did; will you state when you left England, and the course you took?—We left England on 20th January 1850. A few days after that I received orders from Captain Collinson, in case of parting company, to rendezvous at the Straits of Magellan. A few days subsequently we parted company by accident, and did not meet again until the 17th of April, in the Straits of Magellan. On the 20th, we left the Straits, towed out by the "Gorgon" steamer, and parted company the same night in a heavy gale of wind, and did not meet again till we came to England. On arriving at Oahu, in the Sandwich Islands,

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I received orders from Captain Collinson to make the best of my way to Behring's Straits.

187. What was the place whence you received those orders?—It was in the Sandwich Islands. And in the event of not being able to get into the ice that year, to return to Valparaiso; and, in that event, to return again in the following year to penetrate the ice, and to follow him along the coast of America, and make the best of my way towards the north-east, towards Melville Island. All other orders were left to my own discretion. In the latter end of July I fell in with the "Herald," Captain Kellett, off Cape Lisburne. I communicated with him, and gave him a copy of my orders. I had imagined that Captain Collinson had preceded me into the ice, and was anxious to follow him. Captain Kellett gave me permission, but in the course of the afternoon made a signal to me that I had better wait 48 hours to see whether Captain Collinson arrived.

188. Captain *Scobell*.] That was the same Captain Kellett that you met at Melville Island afterwards?—The same officer. I signaled back to say that the service was of such importance that I could not remain upon my own responsibility. Captain Kellett gave me no further orders, and I proceeded. Then, on the 6th of August, I went round Point Barrow, meeting with different obstructions, and went along the coast of North America, along this track (*pointing out the same on the chart*), with various stoppages. And it appears that I passed Captain Pullen at the mouth of Mackenzie River. In September we made Baring Island. I landed and took possession of it in the name of Her Majesty, and called a height Nelson's Head. I then went up a strait, to which I gave the name of Prince of Wales Strait, as far as 73° north latitude, and 117° longitude. The ice then came before the north-easterly wind from Barrow Straits, and prevented any further progress in that direction.

189. How near were you then to the extreme end of Prince of Wales's Strait?—We were about 20 miles; I was then beset, and drifted down the Straits again round two small islands here (*pointing out the same*), and was finally frozen in off Princess Royal Islands. We drifted in the ice with different degrees of danger and difficulty amongst shoals and grounded ice; and got finally frozen in on the 9th of October 1850. When we were frozen in I crossed over and took possession of the land on the east side of the Strait, called Prince Albert Land, after his Royal Highness. And when the ice was firm, on the 21st of October I started with a sledge to ascertain if the water in Prince of Wales Strait communicated with that of Barrow Strait, which would prove the existence of a North-west Passage. On the 26th I arrived at a point, which I called Point Russell, and at an elevation of several hundred feet, had an opportunity of seeing, with a very clear horizon, that this was one mass of heavy ice; which established, in my mind, the existence of a passage. The ship remained in her position for nine months, till July 1851. On the 14th July, when the ice broke up, we drifted about, and on the 14th of August I was as far as this again (*pointing out the spot*), and again met with obstruction: the ice came in from Barrow Straits and prevented our getting any further. I then determined upon trying to the westward of Baring Island.

190. Upon the second time, did you get any further in Prince of Wales Strait than you had done before?—No, I was near the same spot. Then on the 14th of August, finding that I could not proceed in that direction, I determined to endeavour and make a passage to the westward of Baring Island.

191. Had you previously travelled across the island, so as to know the width of it?—No, I had not.

192. Admiral *Walcott*.] Why did you make no attempt to communicate with Melville Island, when you reached the furthest extremity of Prince of Wales Inlet?—It was then October, and it was too late to travel; and the following year I had parties in other directions, which I thought more important to explore for the object of the expedition, which was to find traces of Sir John Franklin; I had parties in three directions. On the 14th of August I bore up, and ran to the westward of this island.

193. I wish to know the distance from the extreme point which you reached with your ship, till you arrived round the point at the furthest end of Baring Island, whence you ultimately communicated with Melville Island?—The distance from this point round there (*pointing out the same on the chart*), was about

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about 600 miles; we had great obstacles, and were very near being wrecked several times along the north-west coast of Baring Island, where it was so exposed to the ice. The water was so very scanty that I had barely room to get the vessel between the rocks and the ice without listing her over, to prevent the boats being carried away against the ice, and falling upon the rocks. After several escapes we managed upon the 24th of September to get into what I have termed the Bay of Mercy.

194. What was the prevailing wind at that time?—The winds were variable. Occasionally we had strong gales from the southward, which lasted two or three days, but they had no effect upon the mass of ice. The first open water only extended about half a mile from the shore; we went off in the pack, but by the use of gunpowder we managed to extricate ourselves from the ice, and we succeeded in getting along this coast, where, on the 24th of September, we ran ashore upon a reef, and on the following morning we got into a small bay.

195. That was in the year 1851?—On the 24th of September 1851.

196. Sir T. Herbert.] What reef is that?—A small reef consisting of *debris* coming out of a large ravine; when the ice breaks out in the summer, a large rush of water carries the *debris* out, and upon that we ran ashore.

197. Will you mention the point?—Providence Point. There I remained until I left the ship, by the order of Captain Kellett, in June 1853; the ice never broke out of the bay during the time I was here, and in the summer of 1852 there was no water whatever seen in this part of the Straits, but there was a channel of water about six miles in length along the cliff of Banks Island; that was the only water we saw; the consequence was, that the vessel could not move, and there she remained.

198. What did you do during the time that you were frozen in there?—We got in there, as I have stated, on the 24th of September 1851; where the vessel was frozen in; and in the following year, in April 1852, I crossed over with a sledge to Winter Harbour, in Melville Island.

199. Chairman.] How many were with you?—Six men and an officer. I there found a notice from the present Captain M'Clintock, who had been despatched from the "Resolute" under Captain Austin, and had arrived there the previous year; he stated that the vessels were in different directions, looking for Sir John Franklin, and that a depôt was left at Beechey Island, and also at Port Leopold, which I was aware of before. After having examined this, and left my notice, I returned to my ship in May 1852. The ice during that summer never opened at all except along Banks Land; and the consequence was, that the ship never moved. Then, in April 1853, Captain Kellett sent Lieutenant Pim across to me, stating that the "Resolute" was at Dealy Island; upon the following day I crossed over to Captain Kellett with a sledge's crew, and then I received instructions which led to the abandonment of the ship.

200. Admiral Walcott.] What was the distance of your ship from Winter Harbour?—One hundred and fifty miles.

201. What distance from the nearest point of Melville Island?—About 60. I had a survey held upon the crew, according to the orders which I received from Captain Kellett, and allowed the men to volunteer to remain out for that season, in the hope of getting the vessel through; 20 men were the least that I could undertake to attempt to navigate her home with; and Captain Kellett very kindly acceded to my wishes to attempt to get her through, if I could get the men. However, only four were found to volunteer. Consequently, on the 3d of June 1853, I left the ship, and joined Captain Kellett in the "Resolute."

202. Chairman.] Will you now trace your course after that?—In August 1853, we broke out in a gale of wind, expecting to run down Barrow Straits; but we were stopped by ice in Byam Martin Channel. There we remained till September, when a gale of wind broke out again; and, in a heavy snow-storm, we got stopped here (*pointing out the spot on the chart*), 30 miles south-west of Cape Cockburn, where the vessel was eventually frozen in, in October of the same year; and in the following year, in April 1854, orders were received from Sir Edward Belcher for myself and crew to proceed to Beechey Island and join the "North Star."

203. How did you get there?—By a sledge, over the ice. I arrived at the "North Star" 27th April 1854.

204. Admiral Walcott.] That ice was upon frozen water, not ice upon land?—Certainly not; it was frozen water. In August 1854, we left Beechey Island
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in the "North Star," and came home through Lancaster Sound, and across Baffin's Bay to Lievely, where I removed into the "Phoenix," by the order of Sir Edward Belcher, and finally reached England, across the Atlantic, on the 30th of September 1854. That is an epitome of my four years and nine months' service.

205. Captain *Scobell*.] When you parted from Captain Collinson, did any communication take place, either in writing or by signal, as to your intentions?—No; the only orders I received from Captain Collinson were verbal orders to keep company with him.

206. Did you telegraph anything to him?—No, nothing.

207. Did you telegraph your intention of running into the ice and taking your chance?—I think that refers to a telegraph which I made to Captain Kellett. It was after parting company with Captain Kellett. He made a signal to say that I had better wait 48 hours, to give Captain Collinson a chance of coming up. I was of opinion that he had already gone on before me, and I made a signal then that I could not wait upon my own responsibility, knowing the importance of the service; Captain Kellett gave me no further orders, and I proceeded.

208. Did you state your intention of running your ship into the ice?—Certainly not by signal. I was with Captain Kellett on board his own ship, and there we talked of it, and I told him it was my intention to go in.

209. Admiral *Walcott*.] Your opinion was that Captain Collinson had preceded you?—Yes; but I found afterwards that Captain Collinson had not come up to Behring's Straits. He had left Oahu before me, but he had not arrived at Behring's Straits. I was there a fortnight before him.

210. Captain *Scobell*.] Supposing Captain Kellett had not communicated to you by Lieutenant Pim, had you formed any design what your next step would be?—Yes; I had made arrangements for sending half my crew home.

211. In what way?—Eight of them were to go by the "Mackenzie," and the remaining 20 by Beechey Island; they were to start six days after Lieutenant Pim arrived on the 15th, the day on which they ultimately started to come to Captain Kellett.

212. How long would that have been after Lieutenant Pim reached you?—I had made arrangements for them to start nine days after the day on which Lieutenant Pim arrived.

213. What provisions had you left?—I had 12 months' provisions for the crew I intended to retain on board; I intended to retain half till 1854, in the hope of navigating the ship through in the season of 1853.

214. Knowing what you now do of all the circumstances, what do you think would have been your prospect of escape, if Captain Kellett had not sent Lieutenant Pim to you?—My opinion is the same now as it was then; I consider that we should have lost four men; there were four men so weak that I thought they would have perished upon the road.

215. Do you think you would have made your escape?—I do.

216. If you had not found provisions in Beechey Island, there was another depôt that you knew of?—Yes; I was with Sir James Ross when it was planted there, and from the notice I received from Captain McClintock I thought the road was perfectly secure. The depôt at Beechey Island was a small one, but the other was a large depôt, with 12 months provisions for 140 men.

217. Mr. *Ellice*.] Who first laid down upon the chart the outline of Banks Land?—I did.

218. Was the channel, which appears laid down here, delineated in any previous chart?—Not at all.

219. In short, the whole of Banks Land, and the north-west part of Prince Albert Land was laid down first by you?—The whole of Banks Land (or Baring Island, with the exception of the part from Point Hamilton to Point Russell,) and Prince Albert Land from Wynnias's furthest to Prince Albert Sound.

220. Captain *Scobell*.] What was the whole period from your entering Behring's Straits to your reaching England?—We entered Behring's Straits on the 26th of July 1850, and we arrived in England on the 30th of September 1854.

221. Sir *R. Peel*.] You said that you went up twice, or rather you remained for the winter in Prince of Wales Strait?—We remained there one winter.

222. I understand you to say, when you got up to the top of Prince of Wales Strait,

Strait, you went across to Melville Island?—No; in Prince of Wales Strait I left the ship, and travelled to Point Russell only.

223. You went round by Baring Island to Mercy Bay?—Yes.

224. And from Mercy Bay you went across to Melville Island?—Yes.

225. And then you returned to Mercy Bay?—Yes.

226. And afterwards an exploring party from Captain Kellett came across to you at Mercy Bay?—Yes.

227. If that exploring party had not come across to you at Mercy Bay, was it your intention to have endeavoured to continue round through Barrow Straits?—Yes; I was going to send half my crew home, and to retain the other half to endeavour to navigate home.

228. You said that you proposed sending your men by Barrow Straits?—Twenty of them.

229. How did you know that there was a passage that way?—Because Parry came up that way.

230. If you were going to send your men by Barrow Straits in the following year, why did not you go yourself and make the passage at once?—Because I wanted to bring the ship home.

231. If the exploring party from Captain Kellett had not joined you, would you still have continued the passage which you were successful in making?—Certainly, that was my intention; I had made arrangements for it. In my letter to the Admiralty I stated that that was the course I intended to pursue.

232. Mr. *Gordon.*] And you believe that you would have been able to carry that out?—Yes, with the loss of those four men.

233. Sir *R. Peel.*] It was your determination to have continued the passage?—Certainly.

234. Captain *Scobell.*] What was the disease of those four men whom you thought you should have lost?—Scurvy, from insufficiency of food; they were on very scanty allowance; only eight ounces of meat.

235. Your men were on short allowance?—They were on very scanty two-thirds allowance the last 20 months.

236. Mr. *Gordon.*] The arrival of the party from Captain Kellett converted what was before a possibility into a certainty?—Yes; I think there is no doubt that many of them would have got home perfectly safe under any circumstances.

237. Sir *T. Herbert.*] When you left the “Investigator,” you left considerable property in her, did you not?—I left all my things behind, with the exception of a portmanteau.

238. Did you get any remuneration for what you left?—I did; I received 100*l.* from the Admiralty.

239. Was that the full value of what you left?—No, it was not the full value; I made no specific demand. I asked for the allowance due to my rank, and I received 100*l.*

240. Did your men receive anything for what they left in the ship?—They received 3*l.* a man, according to the instructions.

241. Was that equal to the value of the property which the crew had in the ship?—No, it certainly was not equal to it; but they received a great quantity of presents.

242. Presents from whom?—Presents from the Admiralty in clothing. They gave them an excellent suit of box-cloth and flannels every year.

243. Sir *R. Peel.*] In fact, as regards remuneration, they were satisfied?—I think so.

244. Captain *Scobell.*] And the men had double pay?—They had double pay the whole time.

245. After you left Captain Kellett, did you at any time run your ship into the ice, and take your chance in the ice?—Only once or twice I did that. It is only in cases of emergency that you do that, because the great object is to keep out of the ice, so as to have the vessel in command, for when once it is in the ice, it is helpless.

246. Mr. *Gordon.*] A previous witness has stated that in his opinion, if your ship had been furnished with any steam power, you would have been able, when you saw open water towards Melville Island, to force your way into it, and to have made your passage; is that your opinion?—Yes, I certainly am of opinion, knowing what has been effected since by steam-vessels, that if I had had
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steam power. I should have gone through in 1851. It was a very open season, and my impression is that I should have got through, especially as the uncertainty of the nature of the ice is so great, that what appears entirely to-day impossible, is to-morrow changed, and becomes perfectly open water; although Captain Kellett's testimony upon the subject is certainly worthy of consideration. But that is my impression.

247. You think you would have been able to perform the passage if you had had steam power?—I think so; but I might have met with the same result as the "Resolute."

248. Captain *Scobell*.] You left notices for Captain Collinson?—I was not aware that Captain Collinson was behind me; but I left notices which he ultimately found.

249. You saw no trace of Captain Franklin?—None whatever.

Veneris, 6^o die Julii, 1855.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Mackinnon.
Admiral Walcott.
Sir Thomas Acland.
Mr. Gordon.
Captain Scobell.
Sir Thomas Herbert.
Sir Robert Peel.

Mr. Ellice.
Mr. Wilson.
Mr. Jackson.
Mr. Ker Seymour.
Mr. Butt.
Mr. Stephenson.

WILLIAM ALEXANDER MACKINNON, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Sir *Roderick Impey Murchison*, called in; and Examined.

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250. *Chairman*.] WILL you have the kindness to state your position in connexion with the Royal Geographical Society?—I have been on former occasions President of the Royal Geographical Society. I am now Director-General of the Geological Survey of the United Kingdom.

251. In your capacity of President of the Royal Geographical Society have you turned your attention to the Polar Regions; have you paid much attention to the different expeditions which have been ordered in that direction for the purpose of discovering a North-west Passage?—Unquestionably I have. I may state, that in the year 1845 I was President of the Royal Geographical Society, and it was in that year that my old friend, Sir John Franklin, sailed from this country. I was privy to all the preparations for that expedition, and took, very naturally, a warm interest in it. Having known Sir John Franklin for upwards of 20 years, and having watched his progress through life, I, of course, was greatly interested, perhaps more than most civilians, in the success of his efforts to effect the North-west Passage. I may add, that in the years 1852 and 1853 I was again President of the Geographical Society, and as public interest and public sympathy were at that time to a great extent excited by the feeling that there was little hope of recovering Sir John Franklin if strenuous efforts were not made, I took an active part, as President of the Geographical Society, in stimulating Her Majesty's Government to make those exertions which other geographers as well as myself thought most desirable. I had on those occasions every reason to hope for a successful termination of the search after Sir John Franklin, seeing the able officers that went out in command of the various ships.

252. Have you had an opportunity of ascertaining the conduct of Captains Collinson, McClure, and Kellett?—I have never hesitated to say, and have expressed my opinion elsewhere, that Captain McClure was decidedly entitled to any recompense or honour that Her Majesty might be pleased to confer upon him, for having been the first person who, to our knowledge, had gone through from the east to the west, in attempting to make that passage. But whilst I make that observation, and am extremely anxious that Captain McClure should have

have due honour and recompense, I am bound to say, that a discovery has been made since I formed the above opinion, which ought, I think, to induce any public body who assigns honour to Captain M'Clure, not to forget that which is due to the memory of the brave men who have died, Franklin and others. For that those men whose relics were found near the mouth of the Back River have effected what must be called a North-west Passage, cannot be doubted by any person who has studied the subject. I am not now going to offer my opinion (which is worthless probably) as to where Sir John Franklin may have been, or how occupied, in that space of time which elapsed between the period when we know that he was at Beechey Island and the period when his party were last seen alive in the latitude of King William's Island, or farther to the south, near the mouth of Back River. It is very possible, as some geographers think, and I am disposed to think so myself, that, with his adventurous and bold character, Franklin did endeavour to proceed to the north; and I confess I was always one of those who thought that, having failed to get to the south, he would try to get to the north through Wellington Channel. It is not by any means clear, because we have now heard of his efforts near to his old adventures along the north coast of America, that therefore he did not previously attempt those extensive northern explorations which many of us gave him credit for. But be that as it may, we have I think unquestionable proof, as derived from the articles belonging to him, from the evidence of the Esquimaux, and from all the facts narrated by Dr. Rae, that his party arrived very near to the mouth of Back River; and it is fair, I think, to infer that his ships were not very far from him, because a party was seen dragging a boat, if not boats. Now, in doing this, he strictly obeyed the orders of the Admiralty. He and his party lost their lives in steering to the south-west, and had absolutely reached the mouth of the river which had been explored by Sir George Back. Now, as the delineation of the coast of America, and the existence of a water-channel along it, were previously ascertained, it follows, that when the mouth of the Back or Fish River was reached from the North-east, the North-west Passage was accomplished.

253. What evidence have you that he got there by water; is not it possible that he got one of his boats and dragged it over land in the hope of meeting with water?—It is possible, but I think there are other grounds for the inference that the ship might not be very far off. The Esquimaux stated that books and utensils, besides the ornaments which were brought away, were carried by the party. I think it is very unlikely that men struggling for their lives would carry books, particularly heavy books. I therefore apprehend that the ships were not far off, and that they probably were plundered by the Esquimaux; I however only state this as a hypothesis. But in answer to the question, allow me to say, that if Sir John Franklin got to the mouth of Back River, partly by water, partly by sea, and partly by ice over water, he did exactly by another route, that which Captain M'Clure has since done in the "Investigator;" for there is no passage open to a ship by the northern part of Banks's Land. I beg to state emphatically, that I do not make this observation with a view to detract in the slightest degree from the merit of Captain M'Clure; I think him eminently entitled to all the honour and reward that may be awarded to him. But I hope that this Committee, in recording their opinion of the merits of Captain M'Clure, will couple it in some way with a record of their high sense of the merits of my illustrious friend, Sir John Franklin, who had accomplished so much, and had obeyed his orders so faithfully.

254. Can you state what was the flow of the tides in that particular channel?—We know that better from the evidence of Dr. Rae than from any other source. He states that on the 20th of August in the year 1851, when he was upon the eastern coast of Victoria Land, blocks of ice were flowing southward. Then, again, if you collate the facts, that blocks of ice and the current of the stream were flowing southward, that Dr. Rae had defined the land up to that point, and had discovered portions of wood which he believed might have come from one of those ships, with this other fact, that Captain Collinson has brought home remnants which he has no hesitation in stating, belonged, in his belief, to the "Erebus" and "Terror," I think you have all the evidences before you which should entitle you to pay the compliment which is due to the merits of Franklin and his associates.

255. Is there not a dispute about the tide flowing, as you say, from the north;

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could it not have gone through Barrow Strait, or some other opening on the east side?—From Barrow Strait it would come down Peel Sound, no doubt. There is no other real opening that I am aware of.

256. Is it not possible that there might have been some channel on the east side?—You must examine persons more competent than myself to speak to that point. But I beg to observe that the east side of Boothia is well defined. With respect to the little channel which goes by the name of Bellot Channel, it has even been doubted (as geographers will tell you) whether it is a channel. It was frozen over when surveyed, and that is the only little channel (and if it exists as such, it is a very narrow one indeed) by which anything could have gone through. The only really navigable track for vessels must have been down Peel Sound.

257. Mr. *Ellice*.] You have no doubt that Captain M'Clure is the first person who has passed from sea to sea?—Not a doubt.

258. And that he has defined upon the chart a passage between sea and sea, on both sides of which passage the land has been surveyed and marked?—Certainly.

259. And that that passage has been discovered and laid down only by Captain M'Clure?—I am aware that between the western point of Melville Island and the north-eastern point of Banks's Land, there is a frozen mass which has never been seen to melt: no ship can pass it.

260. I observe on this chart that the only passage between the one ocean and the other which has been perfectly surveyed is this between Baring Island and Prince Albert Land (*pointing out the same*); will you tell me by whom the outline of that land has been surveyed and traced?—The outline of all this land was unquestionably first surveyed and traced by Captain M'Clure. It was subsequently surveyed by Captain Collinson, who came up to this point (*pointing out the spot on the map*), and went a little beyond the spot to which Captain M'Clure had advanced; and then he returned and went as far as that on his return. But it was first surveyed by Captain M'Clure; and it was of course by the assistance of Captain Kellett, and the party that he sent, Lieutenant Pim and others, that Captain M'Clure and his crew were enabled to traverse this strait.

261. Therefore we have in evidence the fact that M'Clure was the first officer who made the only passage which is delineated upon the chart between ocean and ocean; because this other channel to which you have referred is only a supposititious one, and is in part undefined?—The other channel is to a considerable extent undefined.

262. That channel has not yet been determined by any survey, and its existence is supposititious?—The conclusion to which many geographers have come, including the former Hydrographer of the Admiralty, who has prepared a notice on this subject, is that which I have expressed.

263. But upon the chart that channel remains undefined?—It does; but it is known that the boat and the people had got down to near the mouth of the Back River.

264. Admiral *Walcott*.] I understand you to state that you are decidedly of opinion, that no question remains upon your mind as to the fact that Captain M'Clure has perfected the passage from ocean to ocean?—Certainly.

265. With respect to Sir John Franklin, I am sure the feeling of the Committee goes entirely with yours as to his eminent merits, and we do not question the possibility of Sir John Franklin and his ships having got close to King William's Land; but we have no positive proof that he did reach there with his ship, and that he might not have hauled his boat over land; whereas we have positive proof that Captain M'Clure, partly in his ship, and partly by treading upon frozen water, completed the passage from ocean to ocean?—Clearly. With regard to Sir John Franklin, I leave it to the Committee to make such allusion as they think right, after hearing the evidence. It is certain, I repeat, that he or some of his party did reach the mouth of Back River.

266. Mr. *Ellice*.] Are you aware what Captain Kennedy says, who commanded Lady Franklin's expedition, as to this supposititious channel; he says, "Having satisfied ourselves that we were upon the west side of North Somerset, it became a question how far the sea or channel before us might prove continuous with the opening laid down in our chart between Cape Walker and Cape Burney. We had arrived at a point where, in pursuance of a plan I had the

the privilege of submitting to Lady Franklin before leaving England, the future direction of our route must be regulated by the appearance this western sea might present; if such as to afford a reasonable prospect of Franklin's having passed through to the south" (that is by this western channel), "our proper course would have been south also, but on examining the coast line to the northward nothing could be seen but a continuous barrier of land, extending from North Somerset to an extensive land which we could distinguish on the other side of the channel, and which we have since ascertained to be the Prince of Wales' Land of Captain Ommaney." Now if Captain Kennedy is right in that, it would seem to contravert the supposition of there being a through channel there?—Since that time the coasts have been surveyed on each side of Peel Sound. The coasts of the land to the south of Cape Walker and Prince of Wales' Land, and North Somerset, have been defined on both sides, as you see by the Admiralty charts; consequently Peel Sound is not a thing of imagination: and a ship might go down that sound under favourable circumstances. It is only a question as to the small distance between the point where Franklin's ships were supposed to have got, and the extremity of that sound as already defined. But give me leave to say, that if Captain Kennedy had followed the suggestions (I will not say instructions) of Lady Franklin—for he commanded one of the several ships that that noble-minded woman has sent out in search of her husband—if he had followed her suggestions to go direct south, he positively would have come upon the remains of Franklin's party, and would have been the first person to have discovered them.

267. I understand that the reason why he did not go south, but went north, was because of that barrier which he perceived to exist, and which he describes as "a continuous barrier of land." Has there been any subsequent survey to disprove that?—Captain Kennedy says that the land extended to the north, and was united as he thought to the land he was upon. He made an immense journey to define the outline of North Somerset, but he made no effort to go to the south.

268. Captain *Scobell*.] With respect to Sir John Franklin, is not what you have stated, with respect to part of his route, at the most only a probable supposition?—I only wish, with all deference, to rely upon that which is fact with respect to Sir John Franklin, that he arrived at the mouth of Back River.

269. Supposing he arrived at that point in the most favourable way you suppose for your theory, yet when the question is with respect to a North-west Passage from sea to sea, could you compare that circuitous route with the comparatively direct route of Captain M'Clure?—My answer is, that if this route by the coast of America should prove to be the only navigable route by water, or by lines of water (which is the opinion of many eminent navigators, including Sir Francis Beaufort), then unquestionably the man who made it, if he was alive, would deserve the honour; but I admit that Captain M'Clure has been the first to make this passage in his own person. On that account, and for his geographical exploration of this very difficult region, and for having absolutely passed over this portion of ice, which separated the one from the other, I repeat that he is highly deserving of honour. I only suggest that the word "a" might be substituted for the word "the," by calling it "a North-west Passage," in case it should, as I believe it will certainly turn out that there are two North-west Passages.

270. Sir *T. Acland*.] Is not the principal object of the evidence you have given to recommend that in any report which the Committee may make respecting the exertions made to discover a North-west Passage, we should not attempt to anticipate the future by speaking of "the" North-west Passage, when, according to your belief, it may appear that there are other passages which have been very nearly, if not quite, attained by other exertions?—It is not merely my belief, but the belief of men whose opinions are entitled to very great weight. Among them is the late Hydrographer to the Admiralty, who supervised all the Arctic charts, who was privy to the origin of every expedition which has been sent out, and whose opinion upon any Arctic question is entitled to as high credit as that of any man alive.

271. You stated that you had seen a very valuable paper upon the general subject, drawn up by Admiral Beaufort?—Yes.

272. Will it be possible for the Committee to have that paper before them if they should

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should so desire it?—I am not authorised to communicate any such paper; I have here, however, a short extract from it, which perhaps the Committee will allow me to read. Admiral Beaufort writes, “When future navigators, whalers, or others, induced by their pursuits, and encouraged by open seasons, dash through, to whom will they look back as their real pioneers? Banks’ Strait and Investigator Strait will never be attempted by them, but a few hours’ fair wind and fine weather would run down the track of the “Enterprise” from the westward, and lead direct up Peel Sound, through which the “Erebus” and “Terror” must have passed, if the ships themselves bore their unfortunate but heroic crews to the entrance of Fish River. Those, then, are the men whom future navigators will honour as the *bonâ fide* discoverers of the North-west Passage. Let due honours and rewards be showered on the heads of those who have nobly toiled in deciphering the puzzling Arctic labyrinth, and who have each contributed their hard-earned quota; but let the name of discoverer of the North-west Passage be for ever linked to that of Sir John Franklin.” That is the opinion of Admiral Beaufort.

273. Will you have the goodness to inform the Committee whether Captain Collinson did not, both by ship and upon land, proceed immediately in the direction of Peel Sound towards the spot which you suppose Sir John Franklin to have reached?—Unquestionably; it is quite manifest.

274. So that the value of Captain Collinson’s expedition in the direction of Victoria Strait will depend in a great degree upon what discoveries Sir John Franklin may ultimately be found to have made; the two things are connected together?—Yes: Captain Collinson has the great merit of having proceeded in a ship from the west to the east further than any other navigator, and of having conducted that ship under very difficult circumstances between the packs of ice and the land, and of having reached so far, that he was within a very short distance of the point where he might have rescued Sir John Franklin and his crews, had they been alive. I may further be allowed to say that the honour of having extricated himself from all those difficulties, and having brought back his ship safe to England, is a distinction which merits the gratitude of the country, and any recompense which it may think fit to grant him. That which I have stated with respect to Sir John Franklin is not merely the opinion of Admiral Beaufort, but also of Sir John Richardson, as expressed in the “Times” newspaper, and of the American geographers who have sifted the question. It is the opinion of Dr. Hawk, of the Geographical Society of New York, and of Mr. Grenel, who has spent more money in the search after Franklin than any other person in America, having nobly sent out entire expeditions for that purpose. I am not merely the spokesman for myself, but for many geographers, both in this country and in America.

275. Sir *T. Acland.*] Did I rightly understand you to say that the discovery of Peel Sound and Victoria Channel, if it ever be thoroughly substantiated, is much more likely to be practically important than any other that has been brought before us?—That is the opinion of Sir Francis Beaufort and of those persons who understand the subject much better than myself; and the Americans think that the route Captain Collinson has taken is likely to become the course which whalers and other ships will follow for mercantile purposes.

276. *Chairman.*] I wish to ask you a question upon another subject, which I consider of very great importance for our consideration; I think that, some time ago, you stated to the Royal Geographical Society that, in your opinion, those individuals who had explored the Arctic seas had shown so much courage, so much devotion, and so much perseverance amongst the hardships to which they were exposed, that if they did not meet with a substantial reward, they ought, at least, to receive from the country the reward of some honorary distinction, such as a medal. Do you continue of that opinion now?—I not only continue of that opinion, but I feel more strongly than ever that the country owes this distinction to every one of those brave men who were ready to sacrifice their lives, and underwent such perils as the Arctic explorers did. I am of opinion that not only geographers, but that all naval and military men, will consider that the men who have so perilled their lives, and have shown so much nautical skill, combined with such perseverance and courage, ought to be distinguished exactly in the same manner as those who peril their lives in war. I am sure that I only express the general feeling of the country that all those
 brave

brave men ought to be so honoured; and, if you will allow me to say it, I think that there are some of them, at least three, who well merit still higher honours.

277. Will you name the three?—In the order of naval rank in which they stand, Kellett, Collinson, and M'Clure.

278. Captain *Scobell*.] In suggesting the very proper reward of a medal for the navigators in the Arctic Ocean, do not you think that if given at all, it ought to be extended to the officers, and to every seaman?—I meant it so.

279. Sir *T. Acland*.] You alluded also to higher honours as being due to some among them?—Yes; if I may be allowed to extend my wish, I should include another naval captain, who though he did not make the passage, did much service in that cause. I mean Captain Inglefield, whose first voyage I have always thought very remarkable in exploring to a more northern point than any one else in search of Sir John Franklin. Looking at the whole case, geographers have but one feeling, which is that of admiration of all the men who have been employed in this search.

280. Mr. *Ellice*.] You think it very desirable that in every case a medal should be given to all those officers and men?—Unquestionably. I am of opinion that all the seamen, as well as the officers, should receive an Arctic medal. I further think that all the explorers in search of Franklin, whether by land or by water, and whether they be in Her Majesty's service or not, should be honoured with an Arctic medal. Such men as Rae, Penny, Kennedy, Stewart, Sutherland, and others, should not be omitted; and I would suggest that the American officers, De Haven, Kane, &c., who have aided so ably and fearlessly in the search, should also have the same honour.

William Thomas Domville, M.D., called in; and Examined.

281. *Chairman*.] YOU have been in the Arctic regions?—I have.

282. Will you state to the Committee what information you may possess with reference particularly to Captain Kellett's case. You were in the ship with him?—I was surgeon of Captain Kellett's ship, the "Resolute."

283. Mr. *Gordon*.] Were you sent by Captain Kellett to report upon the condition and health of Captain M'Clure's ship's company?—In March 1853, a portion of Captain M'Clure's crew, 26 in number, arrived on board the "Resolute" at Dealey Island. In consequence of the state of those men, Captain Kellett considered that it was advisable that the remainder should be examined to determine upon their state of health. I was then sent across to examine and report upon those men, and the conclusion which was come to at that time is already in one of the Arctic Blue Books, at page 70. As this report is made conjointly with the surgeon of Captain M'Clure's ship, I would wish it printed *in extenso*, if admissible.

284. Did you not make another report, which does not appear in the book, on the state of the crew?—I kept a Nosological Journal, which we keep to return to the Admiralty.

285. Do you happen to have any portion of that journal with you?—I do.

286. Will you have the goodness to read any portions of that journal which will give the Committee a general idea of the state of health of Captain M'Clure's crew at that time?—Captain M'Clure arrived on the 19th of April at Her Majesty's ship "Resolute," and he remained on board until the 2d of May, when another party from his ship arrived. "Until this period Commander M'Clure had been detained by Captain Kellett, the defective condition of his sledge's crew (who had doubtless been selected as the most efficient) being such as to cause some apprehension for the capabilities of the remainder to make a further sojourn in these regions; and most forcibly did the appearance of the above detachment justify the measure. Some vague information of their enfeebled condition had preceded them, the stern reality now presented itself; one officer, subject to periods of mental aberration; one man in a state of *dementia*" (or imbecility), "his condition and appearance rendered still more pitiable from severe frostbite of the fingers; two men carried on the sledges, the one with scurvy, the other with urinary disease and phlegmonous inflammation of the leg; the remainder all more or less affected with scorbutic disease and debility, as indicated to the spectator in the tottering gait, attenuated form, and care-worn expression of countenance, occasionally lighted up as the truth and recollection of their altered disposition flitted across the imagination; a

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change (as some expressed themselves) difficult to realize. For several months past had their thoughts been pregnant with the uncertainty of the future, to which no definite results could be assigned."

287. Mr. *Ellice*.] When was this journal written?—At the time.

288. What was the time?—"Copy of Sick List, and of Remarks appended to Nosological Return for quarter commencing 1st April, ending 30th June 1853."

289. Then that is the year before Captain M'Clure returned to this country?—Yes.

290. Was that the second year after he had wintered in that region?—He had already been three winters.

291. Mr. *Gordon*.] How long was that meeting with the men which you describe there after the two ships' companies first met?—The day that they arrived at the "Resolute" I inspected them.

292. This was the result of your first inspection of them?—Yes. "In expectation of their arrival due preparation had been made, and every facility that our resources would admit of placed at my disposal by Captain Kellett, who had also ordered the lower deck of the 'Intrepid' to be fitted as a 'Sanitarium' for their reception, this space being ample in its dimensions, and possessed of the advantages of daylight and ventilation. The means of isolation were thus afforded, and to it the worst cases consigned immediately on arrival.

293. That was the condition of the men who came over from Captain M'Clure's ship to Captain Kellett's; will you now give us an account of the investigation which you afterwards held on the remainder of Captain M'Clure's ship's company, whom you subsequently inspected?—That is also reported in the Blue Book, page 70. Of the 30 men who were on board during the first fortnight in May, no less than 18 were under medical treatment; those were the men who arrived in the first week.

294. Mr. *Ellice*.] Those were the men that arrived and were taken on board Captain Kellett's ship?—Yes.

295. Mr. *Gordon*.] The question refers to the remainder of the crew?—Of the remainder, five-sixths were affected with scurvy, as is stated in my Report, where the names are given.

296. How many did the crew consist of that were left with Captain M'Clure?—Thirty-four men.

297. Mr. *Gordon*.] You have stated that the part of the ship's company who came over to Captain Kellett's ship were all, more or less, in an enfeebled and enervated condition. What was the condition of the remainder on board Captain M'Clure's ship?—They were in a very enfeebled state indeed. One officer among them, a lieutenant, was unable to come with the first party; I brought him over; he died a few weeks afterwards. They were all in a very bad condition.

298. Of those who were left, how many were sufficiently strong and active to be in a condition to do hard work?—There were not certainly 20 men who were fit to do work at all.

299. Speaking as a medical man, what do you think would have been the condition of that crew if they had had to undergo the rigours of another Arctic winter?—A great number of them must have fallen; they had no remedial measures left in the ship.

300. What is your opinion as to the possibility of their having effected their escape from that position without the assistance that was afforded to them?—Unless the expedition had been sent from England, I do not think they could have found their way to England.

301. Mr. *Jackson*.] Were the crew of Captain M'Clure in such a state as not to be able to move on if the season permitted them?—I think they were; we know the state in which they arrived on board the "Resolute," and if they had had a journey of 58 days to perform instead of 16, and if they had had to carry their provisions for 58 days instead of 16, I cannot but infer that they must have been in a very much worse condition than that in which we saw them.

302. Do you mean to infer that if the relief had not arrived, they must, most or all of them, have perished?—I do; because when they had arrived after 58 days' journey at Port Leopold it would be a matter of doubt what the state of that

that depôt was. The depôt that was found in those regions was found to be totally inapplicable, as described in Captain Pullen's journal, Blue Book, p. 800.

303. Captain *Scobell*.] Captain M'Clure has stated in substance this: that he had four men in such a condition, that had he not seen Captain Kellett at all, he should have left his ship, and that part of the crew would have been sent to the coast of America, and a large part would have gone with him to Beechey Island, and from thence to another depôt of provisions to the southward; and that he thinks that he should have lost four men, but that he should have saved all the others, even if Lieutenant Pim had never reached him; do you think he is wrong in that opinion?—I do not know what number of the men he intended to send in that direction; if I knew the names of the men he intended to have sent in that direction, I could judge better.

304. Mr. *Ellice*.] Could any of them have gone?—Some might have gone.

Rear-Admiral *William Alexander Baillie Hamilton*, called in; and Examined.

305. *Chairman*.] YOU know the instructions we have from the House of Commons to enter into the case of Captains Kellett and Collinson; will you have the goodness, as being fully acquainted with the subject, to state to the Committee your opinion upon the subject?—I was here this morning when Sir Roderick Murchison was examined; and I have also heard the evidence of Dr. Domville, and of one or two more witnesses, and that which may be gathered from their evidence is the same that I should have to repeat. Probably, if required to state anything in corroboration, I may allude in particular to Dr. Domville's evidence when he spoke of the assistance rendered by Captain Kellett to Captain M'Clure's crew. You have heard what he stated as to the condition of the men; of course you will know what weight to attach to his opinion as that of a medical man. Looking back, as I did last night, to a little work, drawn up by a very able hand in the office of the Hydrographer of the Admiralty, I met with several letters, both public and private, and I was struck by a passage in one of Captain M'Clure's letters to a near relation; he there speaks of Captain Kellett as his preserver; he styles him his preserver; and both in his public letters to the Secretary of the Admiralty as well as in two other private letters, he speaks of the despondency of his crew at the time, or rather before he heard of Captain Kellett's arrival; and he contrasts the different condition of that crew after hearing of Captain Kellett's arrival with that which existed previously, and he describes it as a state changing from despondency to joy. These are his own words, both officially and privately; and they are the more remarkable because, in his private letters as well as in the public, there is no variation of phrase; the same continues throughout; and although he appears to have hoped still to make his way through these perils, I believe that the very bravery of spirit and devoted courage, which alone could have enabled him to have carried his ship and his crew through the perils they had to encounter through three Arctic winters, led him to entertain, and candidly and honestly in his own mind to entertain, a more sanguine view as to the capability of his crew than the facts and circumstances warranted; and I think that when he contemplated sending one part of his crew by Behring's Straits and another to go by Port Leopold, although in the abstract there was a possibility of accomplishing both objects, yet he did not sufficiently take into consideration the condition and circumstances of the men, attenuated and exhausted as they would have been by another winter, and depressed as they would necessarily have been by the uncertainty of what was before them. Although the men did a positive amount of work in proceeding to join Captain Kellett, they then had a certainty before them which kept their spirits up; and their having performed a journey with such certainty before them, was no measure of their power and capacity to perform a much longer journey with great uncertainty; for supposing that there was at Port Leopold (which in itself is only a contingency) a supply of provisions, they would probably have had to winter at Port Leopold. Then what would have become of the crew in a fourth Arctic winter, with all the uncertainty as to a supply of provisions at Port Leopold, which might or might not have existed there. Then he would have had to go through Barrow Strait to Pond's Bay, and thence to Disco, as he said he should have tried to do if he found no whalers in Pond's Bay. I recollect

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lect an expression in his letter to the Admiralty to this effect: "After Port Leopold, I shall try to get to Pond's Bay, which I know is annually frequented by whalers. Supposing I should be too late in arriving there, I shall endeavour to push on with such boats as I have to Disco Island;" a very perilous voyage, comprising the whole width of Baffin's Bay, and when he arrived there he would still be in uncertainty. He hoped, he said, to be able to engage, by hire or purchase, one of the schooners that annually trade between that point and Denmark. But there would have been great uncertainty as to finding any vessel at Disco that he could purchase or hire, and even if he found one, it might be too late to make the voyage that year; and, if so, that would have involved a fifth winter, in what may be termed an Arctic region. Now, I do not want medical, if there is any naval officer here, who has passed two or three winters in an Arctic region; he can speak better than I can as to the effect that every additional winter has upon a ship's company in those regions. Therefore, when I look back to Captain M'Clure's own expression in writing to his sister, when he says, "To-morrow I hope to see my preserver," I cannot help thinking that he wrote what he really felt at the time; and therefore I think the utmost credit was due to any officer who, by his exertions in carrying out his instructions, removed all those doubts, and rendered the preservation of Captain M'Clure and his crew, a matter of certainty. And this credit was certainly due to the energetic and judicious exertions of Captain Kellett.

306. Mr. *Gordon*.] Is it not the fact, that in the official despatches Captain M'Clure, very much to his credit, and in a very heroic manner, desired that no expedition might be sent to look for him in case he was not heard of within a given time; and does not that fact in itself show that he considered there was considerable uncertainty as to whether he should be able to effect his return?—He did say, certainly, "If you do not hear of me in a certain time, there will be an end of us." Whether that related to the possibility of his not being able to get provisions for another year, or to the danger of his being nipped where he must perish, and could not reach provisions, I cannot say; but he certainly did say, "If you do not hear of me within a certain time, do not risk another expedition," or in shorter words and more emphatic.

307. Does not that fact, in your opinion, prove that he thought it matter of uncertainty whether he should be able to effect his return?—At the time he wrote that, it did, but subsequently he got into a better position.

308. Captain *Scobell*.] Was that certain time which he spoke of expired when he first met Lieutenant Pim?—Yes.

309. *Chairman*.] Does it not help to show the great perseverance and courage of Captain M'Clure?—Certainly; I conceive that the condition in which his people were, and the salvation of the crew, were owing, in the first instance, to his indomitable spirit, fine temper, courage, and resolution; and secondly, to that which he himself stated in his public despatch, the unwearied care, skill, and tenderness of Dr. Armstrong, his medical officer. I am glad of an opportunity of paying tribute to him.

310. Admiral *Walcott*.] You stated that Captain M'Clure, in addressing the Admiralty officially upon the subject, stated the way to which he intended to have recourse, in case he should be obliged to leave his ship. May not that letter to the Admiralty be understood merely as meaning to ask them not to send succour in the direction in which his ship was, as he would probably have left that spot, and not as saying that he anticipated that he should be irrecoverably lost?—I read the expression as applying to their actual destruction, their not surviving. That is the way in which I understood the expression.

311. Mr. *Butt*.] He appeared to consider that there was great risk of his never returning from the expedition?—Certainly; there is always a risk; there is a risk from first to last.

312. Any one going on such a journey over a frozen ocean, must anticipate great probability of being lost?—Certainly; that is a probability which must be borne in mind throughout the whole of such a search.

313. Captain *Scobell*.] Are the Committee to understand that you consider that Captain M'Clure has performed what may be called the North-west Passage by various means; by taking his ship to where he left her, by walking over the ice to Melville Island, and then returning home by the Atlantic?—The evidence which I have heard upon that point this morning, is that which I should concur in;

in; Captain M'Clure certainly clearly determined what is water, or rather ice upon water.

314. Admiral *Walcott*.] He passed from ocean to ocean?—He passed from ocean to ocean.

315. Sir *T. D. Acland*.] But it is your opinion that it is not certain that Captain M'Clure and his crew could ever have arrived in England without the assistance of Captain Kellett?—That is of course a matter of opinion; but I do think that some of them would.

316. Captain *Scobell*.] Perhaps you can tell whether when Captain Collinson or Captain M'Clure got their last instructions from home, they had any expectation that a vessel would be sent to meet them entering at the opposite end?—No, they had no assurance upon that point.

317. Part of Captain M'Clure's instructions were ultimately to make for Melville Island, and it appears that he had made for Melville Island some time before Captain Kellett arrived there, and that he had left; there was a notice of where he was to be found. Therefore he must have calculated upon some probability of meeting with aid?—He might fairly calculate upon it, for it was known that we should continue to send both ways.

318. That was a point which Sir Edward Parry had reached many years before?—Yes.

Captain *Robert John Lemesurier M'Clure*, R. N., called in; and further Examined.

319. *Chairman*.] IS there anything further that you wish to state to the Committee?—Perhaps I may be allowed to say a word with respect to Dr. Domville. When I went over with my men to the "Resolute," they were immediately placed under Domville's charge, and he paid the greatest possible attention to them in their enfeebled state; and I think that some tribute is due to Dr. Domville for his great attention to them.

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Captain
R. J. L. M'Clure,
R. N.

Captain *Richard Collinson*, R. N., called in; and Examined.

320. *Chairman*.] THE Committee have received instructions from the House of Commons to reopen the question which is before them, by considering your services and those of Captain Kellett; will you have the goodness to state to the Committee the course which you took, and whatever you think necessary to bring before them, as far as you are concerned?—I would first observe that in the year, 1850, on getting up to the ice, I was 18 days behind Captain M'Clure, and then I consulted with my officers, and they were of opinion that attempting to proceed easterly that season would be a useless waste of time; so that the remainder of it was devoted to an attempt to get into the Polar Sea to the northward instead of proceeding easterly along the coast. Having reached 73½°, and being stopped entirely by the ice, I came down to the southward again, and knowing that I could be of no use in those seas (the "Plover" being in a position to supply the "Investigator"), for the purpose of replenishing my provisions I went to Hong Kong, and returned the following year. Arriving early in the season of 1851, I followed the track of Captain M'Clure to the eastward; into the Prince of Wales' Strait, and there I found that he had passed the winter in the neighbourhood of Princess Royal Island. Supposing that he had gone to the north-east, I followed up to the head of the straits, where the ice blocked the entrance, here I remained a short time, but I found that it was coming in too fast to afford any likelihood of my getting out to the north-east this season, so I then went on the west side of Baring Island, where I again found traces of the "Investigator"; but, for the want of any idea as to what Captain M'Clure's intentions were, I came to the conclusion, from the quantity of provisions which he had left in Princess Royal Island, that he had gone back to Point Barrow. I did not think that he was to the northward of me on Baring Island; but the sea being still open, I went 70 miles further. Then I felt assured that if a westerly wind occurred, my retreat would be cut off. There was no harbour that I could get into, and very likely my vessel would be wrecked; therefore I returned, and took up my winter quarters at the entrance of Prince of Wales' Strait, where I should have an opportunity of examining the depôts left by Captain M'Clure, and also of seeing

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whether another strait did not exist between Wollaston Land and Prince Albert Land. The travelling parties in April and May of 1851 reached Melville Island, and examined the coast to the southward, entering the inlet now called Prince Albert Sound. This was in April and May. We did not get to the bottom of it, but I thought that it would take me into the centre of the Archipelago, where I should have a greater probability of meeting with Sir John Franklin than by pursuing a more northerly course. I therefore proceeded to see whether that was a Sound or Strait the first thing the next season, which proved a very bad one indeed, and I may mention as an instance of it, that although we left our harbour on the 5th of August, and we were in sight of it on the 5th of September. The ice hemmed us in on both sides, and it was the 13th of September before I ascertained that which I supposed to be a Strait, to be a Sound, and that Prince Albert land was joined to Wollaston land. I then came to the determination that the best course for me to afford assistance to the missing ships would be to proceed to the south-east corner of it; I therefore went through Dolphin and Union Straits, and succeeded that season in getting into Cambridge Bay, and had the condition of the ice next year been favourable I should have reached the point gained by Sir James Ross, when he came down the coast in the year 1849; so that the whole coast would have been completely examined. But in consequence of the hummocky condition of the ice, 160 miles remains unexplored and it is here, I am almost certain, that the ships were abandoned.

321. Sir *T. D. Acland*.] What was the furthest point you reached?—Gateshead Island: it is in longitude 100°. The furthest point reached by Sir J. Ross is Point Bird; the interval being 160 miles. That is the only part which has not been searched in the whole sea. I felt assured that with the trained crews which I had, and the assistance of the Esquimaux dogs, I should have reached the furthest point gained by Sir James Ross, viz., Bellot Straits; but immediately we came to 69th degree of latitude, I found the ice in such hummocks that we were obliged to take both crews to one sleigh, consequently we did not accomplish so much as we expected. This hummocky state of the ice, I think, is one great reason why it may be assumed that the strait is open, because the hummocks were 20 feet high, and they could not have been formed without immense pressure, and must therefore come from Barrow's Strait. If this were a bay, the ice would have cleared out in the same way as I found it in Dease Strait, which had scarcely a piece of ice in it, thus establishing, in my opinion, the fact of a communication between Peel's Sound and Victoria Strait; and I thought myself quite as likely to make the passage home in the ship by this route as by returning to Point Barrow, and should have taken that course, but on examining our coals, we found we were 18 tons short, and therefore it became incumbent upon me to return before the ensuing winter to a country where drift wood could be obtained. I therefore returned to the westward, and passed a third winter in Camden Bay, which is in the Russian territory, from whence our egress was comparatively short and easy the third summer.

322. You passed through Behring's Straits?—Yes.

323. And there you found the "Plover"?—We found the "Plover" at Point Barrow. I may mention that when we were at Camden Bay a native came to us from the eastward, and brought with him a paper which had been printed on board the "Plover," which informed me that she was at Point Barrow, and also that the "Investigator" had not been heard of since 1850. I then, for the first time, came to the conclusion that she must have been on the north face of Baring Island; and, in order to enable Captain Maguire as soon as possible to obtain provisions, in order that we might return, I sent a boat from Camden Bay to Point Barrow to communicate with the "Plover," that she might collect provisions, so as to enable us to return to the eastward in the same season, to the assistance of our consort, who we then did not know had communicated with the eastern expeditions.

324. Admiral *Walcott*.] You sailed in company with Captain M'Clure; where did you part company with Captain M'Clure?—At the Straits of Magellan, and I never saw the "Investigator" again.

325. Captain *Scobell*.] How long was it from the time that you lost sight of Captain M'Clure till you next met him?—It was from April 1850 to April 1855: five years.

326. Did you give him any special orders when he left you different from the Admiralty

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Admiralty orders?—Having arrived at the Sandwich Islands before him, I came to the conclusion that I should be up to the ice before him; I did not consider it possible that he would get there first, and so only entered in my official despatches into the question of what should happen if I proceeded without waiting for him, and I told him in that contingency what to do. By the advice of Captain Kellett I followed up Cook and Beechey's track. But in my private letter to Captain M'Clure I stated that Captain Kellett had come through the Straits of Amoukta, and that if he was late, perhaps it would be worth while risking that passage. He fortunately went that way, and arrived at the edge of the ice 18 days before me. Being relieved in a great measure of the responsibility which ensued in consequence of that paragraph in their Lordships' letter which enjoined the two ships keeping together, he with a daring, which I honour, boldly pushed in. I might be ahead of him, and he took the best alternative that could possibly have been taken. Instead of waiting, he went forward, either to succour the missing crews, or to follow me, as he might have supposed he was doing.

327. Admiral *Walcott*.] You say that you left orders for him at the Sandwich Islands; did you also address to him a private letter, and did he ever receive those orders or that private letter?—He received the orders.

328. Did he receive the private letter?—I am not aware.

329. Had you the means within your power of keeping company with Captain M'Clure from the time you left England?—Most assuredly.

330. Why did you not?—Because I thought the service would be performed better by the ships separately, until we arrived at the edge of the ice.

331. What were the orders that the Admiralty gave you upon that point?—They cautioned me against suffering the two vessels to separate, but until we arrived at the ice I thought it more likely we should make a quicker passage, as one vessel might have the advantage in sailing in light winds, and the other in strong breezes.

332. *Chairman*.] Had you appointed any place to meet at in case of separation?—Yes, at the Straits of Magellan, as the Admiralty had ordered; and next at the Sandwich Islands.

333. Sir *T. Herbert*.] Your first object was to get to the Sandwich Islands as fast as possible?—Yes.

334. You had no object in keeping together till you got through Behring's Straits?—No; the object of my getting first to the Sandwich Islands was, that I might enter into the contract for provisions.

335. Did you give to Captain M'Clure a copy of your Admiralty orders?—Captain M'Clure was supplied with a printed copy.

336. Mr. *Ellice*.] I suppose there is no doubt that, taking all those orders into consideration, what Captain M'Clure did was consistent with the orders he received?—Perfectly so.

337. Captain *Scobell*.] Was Melville Island mentioned in the orders?—We were not ordered to go to Melville Island. Their Lordships left the course to be pursued, after passing Point Barrow, to my discretion and judgment.

338. Was not Melville Island mentioned?—The Parry Islands are mentioned incidentally, but not particularly.

339. When and where did you first overtake indications of Captain M'Clure's advance?—At Princess Royal Island, in August 1851, in Prince of Wales' Strait.

340. When was your excursion made to Melville Island?—The excursion to Melville Island was made in the next spring, in 1852.

341. Did you yourself go upon that excursion?—I went as far as the north end of Prince of Wales' Strait, and then I followed the north coast to the eastward, being desirous to see whether it was practicable for the ship. Lieutenant Parks, the third lieutenant, went from Prince of Wales' Strait to Melville Island.

342. Do you know how long that was after Captain M'Clure had first reached Melville Island?—Twenty days.

343. Do you mean that you were there only 20 days after his first reaching Melville Island, when he went and found no one there?—That was all.

344. Sir *T. D. Acland*.] Did your officer find that he had been there?—No; he saw the sleigh tracks, but thought they were Esquimaux's.

345. Admiral *Walcott*.] But Captain M'Clure had entered Prince of Wales'

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Inlet previously to your being there?—He had entered it 10 months previously.

346. It was your original intention to have endeavoured to reach Melville Island through Prince of Wales' Inlet?—Yes.

347. Finding you did not succeed, you then made the other attempt?—I made another attempt. In consequence of the journey I made up the Prince of Wales' Strait, I came to the conclusion that it would be very difficult for a ship to get round Peel Point, and I thought that Prince Albert Sound, which had been examined, but not to its end, might have been another strait which would have led me up to Cape Walker, where I knew Sir John Franklin was ordered to go.

348. Captain *Scobell*.] Did you find any indications of any ships having been there?—We picked up on Finlayson's Island, near Cambridge Bay, a piece of wood, which Dr. Rae says was not left by him, and it can only be accounted for by its having come from one of the missing ships. It has the Queen's mark upon it, the broad arrow.

349. Was it oak?—No; a piece of fir, three feet long. It was part of a door; it was the portion of the door that the handle goes into.

350. Is it usual to put the broad arrow upon that?—There was a copper latch with a broad arrow upon it.

351. Admiral *Walcott*.] What has become of it?—It is in Mr. Barrow's possession; I believe it has been sent to the dockyard to get an opinion whether it was part of the fitting of the missing vessels. It had two coats of paint; the coat of black had been primed, which is never done in the merchant service. In the merchant service they paint black in the first instance, and then paint black over black, but in the dockyards it is invariably primed with a coat of paint of a different colour; the underside was painted white, over a coat of green.

352. Was not that piece of wood sent to the dockyard, and a report made upon it to the Admiralty in reply, and can you state what that report was?—I have not heard.

353. *Chairman*.] What was your impression as to that piece of wood?—I think it must have formed part of the fitting either of the "Erebus" or the "Terror."

354. Admiral *Walcott*.] Your impression with respect to that piece of wood is, that it must have drifted through the channel that is now unexplored?—Yes.

355. Sir *T. Herbert*.] Where was it found?—On the east side of the Finlayson Islands, on the beach.

356. Admiral *Walcott*.] Are you satisfied that it could not have belonged to your ship?—Perfectly; one of the men picked it up when I was close beside him.

357. Captain *Scobell*.] Does the current set from the northward there?—The current is governed entirely by the wind. In Dease Strait I found no sensible current, except from the wind.

358. Sir *T. Herbert*.] What was the prevailing wind?—The prevailing wind is easterly during the latter portion of the summer, and north-westerly during the spring.

359. Admiral *Walcott*.] Had you any power of ascertaining the strength of that current?—I had tidal observations made. The ship was in Cambridge Bay, excluded from the tide in the Straits, and immediately the ice cleared away we sailed to the westward; but on leaving Cambridge Bay we were carried by the current to the eastward.

360. Had you been with any previous Arctic navigator?—I was in the South Seas, not in the Arctic Regions.

361. Sir *T. Herbert*.] Do you suppose that that piece of wood was drifted by the wind, or carried by the tide?—I think it was carried by the tide. It was rubbed at the corners, and it appeared that it had been drifted along by the tide. The fracture was evidently not new.

362. Was it part of a panel?—It was part of a panel; the two ends of the panel were worn away.

363. Did you ascertain what was the rise and fall of the tide there?—Two feet.

364. Captain *Scobell*.] You said that this piece of wood was painted white; do you suppose from that that it belonged to an officer's cabin?—I think it belonged

belonged to the companion hatchway. When I found nothing else, I came to the opinion that one of the screw steam vessels had made the passage, and that being short of wood they broke up the hatches of her engine-room for fuel, and a small piece had dropped overboard. That was the impression I came to, until I heard that no vessel had been there but ourselves.

365. *Chairman.*] Did you form an opinion as to which way the flood came?—No; there we found the set of the tide entirely governed by the wind.

366. Can you say which way the tide comes in?—I had a great number of observations made, and I found that the pieces of ice, when they floated away, floated entirely in the direction that the wind was going. The experiment was made with pieces that were nearly level with the water, as well as with pieces that would be affected with by the wind.

367. *Sir T. Herbert.*] The current was governed by the wind?—Principally by the wind; the observations are not many, because the moment the ice broke up, we left the bay, and went to the westward.

368. Did you find the current running to the westward stronger than to the eastward?—During the time we were navigating it, I found it running strongest to the eastward, because the westerly wind prevailed in the commencement of the summer.

369. Is it more difficult to get to the eastward than to the westward?—I think it is more difficult to get to the west.

370. *Captain Scobell.*] Were your officers and crew healthy generally?—The average during the time they were on the ice was a little more than six per cent. on the sick list. The last year was the healthiest of the three.

371. What provisions had you remaining when you left the Arctic Sea?—Two months'.

372. *Sir T. D. Acland.*] How many deaths had you?—Three deaths in the time we were in the Polar Sea.

373. When you got to the Pacific did not you go back to the ice again?—Yes. After rounding Point Barrow I went round to the southward, and communicated with an American ship, which told me that our three ships were at Port Clarence; a thick fog ensued, in which the "Plover" passed us on her way to Point Barrow.

374. How did you communicate with her?—When I arrived at Port Clarence, at 10 o'clock at night, Captain Trollope informed me that she had sailed two days previously. I sailed the next day to recall her.

375. You went after her yourself, having just got out of the ice?—Yes.

376. Did you find her at Point Barrow?—Yes; I found her at Point Barrow, and brought her away; she was then preparing to take up her winter quarters.

377. How far did you go back to Port Clarence from Point Barrow?—About 500 miles.

378. How long had you been in the ice yourself?—Three years and two months.

379. *Mr. Stephenson.*] What amount of new coast did you explore?—In the "Enterprise" we added but little to geographical knowledge; what we went over had been previously explored by Captain McClure and by Dr. Rae, but unknown to us; so that the principal geographical feature we accomplished was the positive ascertainment of the junction of Prince Albert's Land with that of Wollaston and Victoria. Dr. Rae had previously gone up Victoria Strait, and we have just added a small portion there.

380. *Sir T. D. Acland.*] I observe that Dr. Rae's furthest is called Point Pelly; you mentioned Gateshead Island; is that to the north of Halkett Island?—Yes.

381. Was not the "Enterprise" the first ship that sailed through Dease Straits?—She was.

382. Therefore you have established the fact that from Victoria Sound to Prince of Wales Strait there is a clear navigation?—The navigation from Barrow Strait to Cambridge Bay has been established by the "Enterprise." From England a vessel would reach the furthest point to which we went, and in all probability the Magnetic Pole itself, in 10 months by following the route of the "Enterprise" through the Behring Sea.

383. Are you of opinion that if there be an open channel from Gateshead Island to Cape Bird, there is in that direction through Victoria Channel a complete passage by water?—That is the only way in which the passage can be

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made, as I conceive. After the two years in which Parry attempted to get from Melville Island to Banks's Land, and the two years in which Kellett attempted to get in that direction, and the three years in which M'Clure watched it on the other side, and the one year which I looked at it in Prince of Wales Strait, I think it may be said that, unless something very unusual occurs, there never will be a navigable passage in that direction; and, therefore, this remains the only one now that has not yet been tried with the same degree of determination which has been applied to the others.

384. And the hummocks of ice, 20 feet high, of which you spoke do not present an insurmountable obstacle?—They come down every year, and they gradually get to the southward and waste away; but unless there was a clear strait through there, those hummocks would never be of that size.

385. Mr. Stephenson.] Was there any indication, from the formation of those hummocks, in what direction the pressure was made?—The pressure was from the north-east; they were pressed upon the shore from a northern direction.

386. Did they appear to be pressed by the current, or by the wind, or by both?—I should say both combined.

387. You spoke of the tides being small and irregular; do you consider that they were lunar tides, or tides influenced by local winds or currents?—The rise and fall was a lunar tide, but the current was so weak that it was overcome by the wind.

APPENDIX.

No. 1.—RETURN from the ADMIRALTY relative to ARCTIC DISCOVERIES since the Year 1819.

YEAR OF DEPARTURE.	OFFICERS' NAMES.	SHIP'S NAME.	WHEN SAILED.	WHERE WINTERED.	COASTS DISCOVERED.	RETURNED HOME.
1810-20	Lieut. W. E. Parry Lieut. M. Liddon	"Hecla" "Griper"	8 May Ditto	-- Winter Harbour in Melville Island, 20 September.	-- Shores of Lancaster Sound, Barrow Strait, Melville Sound, Banks Strait.	September 1820.
1819	Lieut. Franklin Dr. Richardson Mr. R. Hood G. Back	Land Expedition	23 May	Fort Enterprize	{ -- Coronation Gulf and Bathurst Inlet. American Coast from Coppermine River to Point Turnagain.	July 1822.
1821	Captain Parry Lieut. G. Lyon	"Fury" "Hecla"	8 May	{ -- Melville Peninsula, Fury and Hecla Strait.	-- Eastern shores of Melville Peninsula, and those of the Strait of Fury and Hecla.	October 1823.
1824	Captain Parry Captain Hoppner	"Hecla" "Fury"	8 May	{ -- Port Bowen, 27 Sept. "Fury" lost, 21 August, 1826, on Fury Point, in Prince Regent's Inlet.	-- Shores of Prince Regent's Inlet to about 72° South.	October 1825.
1824	Captain Lyon	"Griper"	16 June		Part of Southampton Island	November 1824.
1826	Captain Franklin Dr. Richardson Lieut. Back E. N. Kendall	Land Expedition	{ 16 Feb, and N. York 15 March	-- Fort Franklin, Great Bear Lake, on 6 September	{ -- American Coast west of the Mackenzie to Return Reef, and east to the Coppermine River.	September 1827.
1826	Captain Beechey	"Blossom"	10 May		{ -- American coast, from Icy Cape to Point Barrow.	12 October 1828.
1827	Captain Parry	"Hecla"				October 1827.
1829	Sir John Ross	"Victory"	23 May	Felix Harbour, Boothia	{ -- Shores of Boothia and Strait of James Ross.	October 1833.
1833	Captain Back	Land Expedition	February, 1833	1833-4 at Fort Reliance	Course and estuary of Back River	September 1835.
1836	Captain Back	"Terror"	14 June	Off Southampton Island		November 1837.
1837-8	Dease and Simpson	H. B. Company's Do.	6 June	Fort Confidence	{ -- Arctic Coast, between Point Barrow and Return Reef in the West, and between Point Turnagain and Back River in the East, with an opposite portion of Victoria Land.	
1846	Sir J. Franklin Captain Crozier Com. J. Fitzjames	"Erebus" "Terror"	1 June 1846	{ -- Last trace of in April 1846, at Beechey Island, also table plate, &c., found at the mouth of Back River, by natives, in 1850, and obtained from Esquimaux in July 1854, and brought home by Dr. Rae.		

No. 2.—ARCTIC DISCOVERIES.

Year of Departure.	Officers' Names.	Ship's Name.	Where Wintered.	COASTS SEARCHED.			Days absent from Ship.	When returned Home.	REMARKS.
				N A M E.	Extent in Miles.	Newly Discovered.			
1818	Com. T. E. L. Moore Captain Kellett, c.n.	"Plover" "Herald"	Kamchatka, Chumisso Is. Returned to Surrey.	Coast East of Point Barrow	-	-	-	-	Jan. 16, Commander Maguire succeeded Commander Moore, in the "Plover," and wintered 1852-3, returning home in 1855.
1818	Sir James Ross Captain E. J. Bird	"Enterprise" "Investigator"	Port Leopold	{ Maxwell Bay, Coast of Pr. R. Inlet, N. & W. Coast of N. Somerset, { Between Mackenzie and Coppermine River.	700	-	Nov. 1819.	-	-
1818	Sir John Richardson Dr. Rae	Land Expedition	-	-	-	-	Nov. 1818.	-	-
1819	Mr. Saunders	"North Star"	Wolstenholin Sound	-	-	-	1850 -	-	{ Carrying Provisions for Sir James Ross.
1850	Captain Collinson, c.n.* Lieut. Phayre " Jago " Parkes † J. W. Skead G. Fowler	"Enterprise"	-	N. America, Banks Land	658 18 786 315 135	-	138 2 156 82 8 33	May 1855.	-
1850	Com. Pullen Lieut. Hooper	Boat Voyage	Mackenzie River	From Icy Cape to Cape Hathurst	1,000	-	-	-	-
1850	Com. Maclure †	"Investigator"	Mercy Bay, Banks Land	{ Coasts of Banks Land and Maclure Strait.	900	{ Coast of Banks Land, and Prince Albert's Land	1851.	-	-
1850	Lieut. Haswell " Cresswell " Wynniatt	-	-	-	120 326 480	-	-	-	-
1850	Captain Austin, c.n. Captain Ommaney Lieut. S. Osborn " W. H. Browne " G. F. Meacham " J. B. Cator Mr. V. Hamilton " G. Eccles " F. I. Krabbe Lieut. R. D. Aldrich F. L. McClintock Mr. A. R. Bradford " R. B. Pearce " W. W. May " W. B. Shellabeer " J. P. Cheyne " R. C. Allen " G. F. McDougal	H.M.S. "Resolute," and "Assistance"; with "Pioneer" and "Intrepid" Tenders.	Griffith and Cornwallis Islands	Coasts and Islands of Arctic America	1,226 480 506 375 474 198 175 226 550 760 663 208 416 136 181 338	205 70 150 80 70 40 155	Sept. 1851.	-	Miles of Coast Westward of North Somerset and Cornwallis Island

* Left Winter Cove Prince Albert's Land on 12 April,—16 May, arrived at Cape Providence, Melville Is., after 31 days' journey.
† Left Mercy Bay 11 April,—arrived 26 April at Cape Providence, after 15 days' journey.
‡ Besides Journey to Melville Island of 800 miles.

LETTER from Lady *Franklin* to *W. A. Mackinnon*, Esq., M.P., Chairman.

Appendix.

Sir,

60, Pall Mall, 6 July 1855.

I VENTURE to trespass a few minutes on your time and that of the Committee over which you preside, in behalf of the claims of my late husband, Sir John Franklin, and his companions, as connected with the subject you have under discussion.

When it is remembered that these brave and unfortunate men, after years of intense privations and suffering, were found dead of starvation upon a spot which they could not have reached without having first solved that geographical problem which was the object and aim of all these painful efforts, and when it is also remembered that they are beyond the reach of their country's rewards, you will not, I think, refuse them the just acknowledgment that is due to their memories.

It would ill become me, and is far indeed from my wish, to attempt to question the claims of Captain M'Clure to every honour his country may think proper to award him. That enterprising officer is not the less the discoverer of a North-west Passage, or, in other words, of one of the links which was wanted to connect the main channels of navigation already ascertained by previous explorers, because the "Erebus" and "Terror" under my husband had previously, though unknown to Captain M'Clure, discovered another and a more navigable passage; that passage, in fact, which if ever ships attempt to push their way from one ocean to the other, will assuredly be the one adopted. And it can never be denied to Captain M'Clure that he is the first who has by his own skill, and by means of the timely assistance of the brave men who were in search of him, made his individual way from one ocean to the other. Such a transit, though not the object which has engaged the attention of the civilised world for centuries, is a distinction of which any man may well be proud.

What I presume to claim for those who can urge nothing for themselves is the first discovery of a navigable passage for ships in that unknown space which lay between the discoveries of former navigators, for to such connecting channel has the solution of the geographical problem for many years past been reduced. My husband was specially warned by his instructions not to seek it in the quarter where the "Investigator" lies, lest impenetrable ice should, as was anticipated, arrest his progress, and he found the passage by acting (in conformity with his instructions) on those theoretical convictions which, as Sir John Richardson has shown, he deliberately formed.

Convinced, Sir, that it must be your desire, and that of the other honourable Members of the Committee, to do justice to the dead, while you duly and generously honour the living, and believing that these two objects do not clash, but may be harmoniously combined, I have presumed thus to address you.

I trust you will pardon the widow and the friend this last effort in behalf of those who have nobly perished.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Jane Franklin.*



