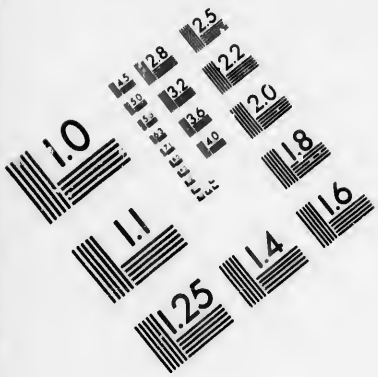

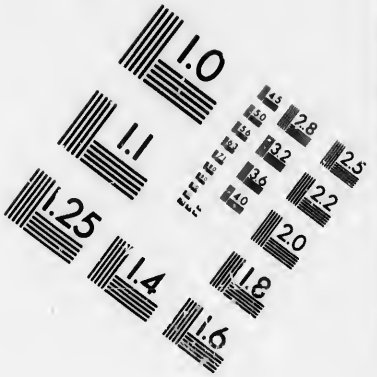

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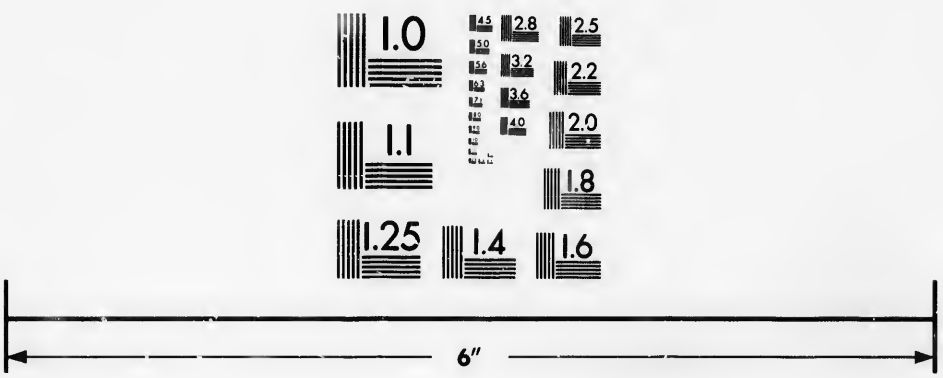

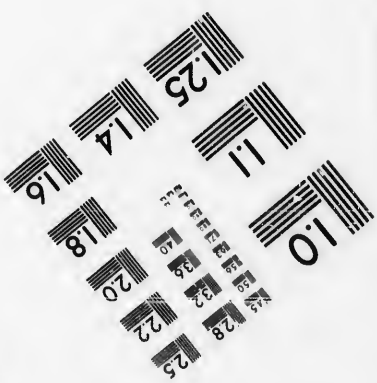

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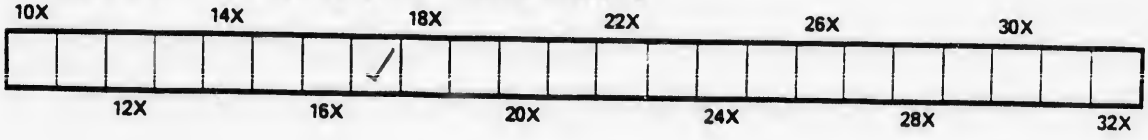

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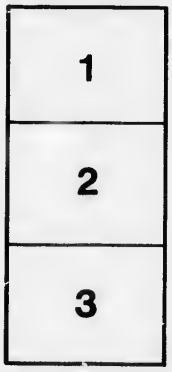


VOYAGES AND DISCOVERIES

IN THE

ARCTIC REGIONS.

EDITED BY F. MAYNE.

'Tis pleasant by the cheerful hearth to hear
Of tempests and the dangers of the deep,
And pause at times, and feel that we are safe;
Then listen to the perilous tale again,
And with an eager and suspended soul
Woo terror to delight us.

SOUTHEY.

LONDON:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS.
1855.

PREFACE.

THE greater part of the work now offered to the Public, was originally prepared for publication in a weekly Periodical, and appeared some six months ago.

A desire having been expressed for its republication in a separate form, the author has been induced to add two chapters, embodying the most recent accounts of Arctic enterprise that have reached us: and she would fain hope that this attempt to give, as it were, a bird's-eye view of so deeply interesting a subject, will secure some portion of public favour.

THE ARCTIC REGIONS.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY VOYAGES.

WILLOUGHBY'S EXPEDITION IN SEARCH OF A NORTH-EAST PASSAGE.

"Miserable they
Who, here entangled in the gathering ice,
Take their last look at the descending sun;
While full of death, and fierce with tenfold frost,
The long, long night incumbent o'er their heads
Falls horrible. Such was the Briton's fate,
As with first prow (what have not Britons dared!)
He for the passage sought, attempted since
So much in vain, and seeming to be shut
By jealous nature with eternal bars.
In these fell regions, in Arzina caught,
And to the stony deep his idle ship
Immediate seal'd, he with his hapless crew,
Each full exerted at his several task,
Froze into statues; to the cordage glued
The sailor, and the pilot to the helm."—THOMSON.

THE early annals of maritime adventure afford few records of voyages to the frozen waters of the North, or discoveries in the inhospitable ice-bound lands which they embrace. It required stronger inducements than such a region could afford, to tempt the navigators of the olden time to brave the perils of an element, of which the best of them knew so little; for we must not forget that, before the invention of the mariner's compass, the voyagers who ventured out of sight of land, had no guides to trust to but the stars, which often proved sadly precarious ones, and when clouds or mists veiled their friendly light, the small, ill-made craft was left to drift helplessly at the mercy of wind and tide. We cease to wonder, therefore, at the trifling amount

of maritime discovery which marked the early ages, otherwise so rife with conquest and adventure. The bravest spirits quail before unknown dangers, and the perils of the deep, exaggerated by fiction, daunted the courage which would have defied on land the best disciplined army. Some few voyages, however, even more adventurous than the famous Argonautic Expedition, stand recorded in the pages of the classic writers, and prove that even in days of darkest ignorance, brave, earnest spirits will ever find or make a way to knowledge. Thus we have mention of Himileo, an adventurous Carthaginian, who, sailing from his African home, coasted Spain and France, reaching even the southern shores of Britain; and a little later Pytheas, a native of the Greek colony of Marseilles, followed in his steps with still greater enterprise. Not only did this fearless man track the coast of our island to its northern extremity, but he boldly adventured six days' voyage on the unknown seas beyond it, and at length was rewarded by reaching an island named *Thule*. Here Pytheas found, to his unbounded astonishment, that even at midnight there was no darkness; a phenomenon well calculated to excite the surprise of one, who had gazed night by night at the brilliant stars of his southern clime, and now found them superseded by the clear twilight which broods over the Shetland Isles, during those few hours, in their long summer days, when the sun sinks below the horizon. Deeply amazed at the wonders he met with, Pytheas pursued his way still further towards the untraversed regions of the west; but his course was soon arrested by a barrier unknown to his sunny land. This he describes as "neither earth, air, nor sky, but composed of all three;" and before this mysterious obstacle he turned back, believing he had reached the furthest limits of nature. Yet for all that, Pytheas was a brave man, and a daring sailor for his times; though with fuller knowledge, some may be inclined to hold in light honour this pioneer of Arctic discovery, who took six days to sail in his clumsy galley from Dunnet-Head to the Shetland Isles, and when there, was turned back by a thick sea-fog!

The Romans, amidst all their greatness, were utilitarians, and never encouraged expeditions which did not directly tend to the

dignity or advancement of the Empire. The barbarous forest-clothed countries which lay beyond its northern boundary afforded little inducement for invasion, and there was still less hope of finding fertile lands over the vast stormy waters that washed their western shores.

During the centuries of darkness and barbarism which followed the downfall of the Roman Empire, the spirit of enterprise slumbered, and expeditions *from* the north became the terror of Europe. The touching simplicity of a passage in the Litany used at that time,—"From the fury of the Northmen, good Lord deliver us!"—proves the dread with which these fierce pirates were regarded. Truly, it must have been a fearful day for the peaceful inhabitants, when a wild viking landed with his ruthless followers upon the defenceless coast of France or England; for pillage and plunder were the elements they lived in, and when they returned to their ships, burning villages, rifled stores, and the corpses of the unoffending possessors, slain by their own hearthstone, proved how effectually the work of destruction had been completed. Yet, even among these untamed marauders, one or two are known who preferred the excitement of adventure to pillage. Thus, Ohthere, a Norwegian chief, rounded the North Cape, and penetrated as far as Russian Lapland; and Nadodd, in 861, discovered Iceland, whither many of his countrymen afterwards emigrated. From thence, in 982, some of the most adventurous, under Eirek of the Red Hand, crossed to Greenland, where they founded a colony; and a century later, the pirate Biarni forestalled the discoveries of Columbus and Cabot, by landing on the mainland of America, below the St. Lawrence.

During the early part of the middle ages the spirit of maritime adventure seems to have been transferred to the Republican cities of Italy,—then at the height of their prosperity,—but here traffic was the object, and their principal trade lay through the Mediterranean, with the costly merchandise brought overland from India and the East. With the exception, therefore, of two Italian merchants, driven by stress of weather far out of their course, and thrown respectively on the coast of Norway and the

Shetland Isles, the stillness of the Northern Seas was undisturbed by the keel of an intruding vessel for five long centuries. The close of the fifteenth century, however, opened a new era in the history of navigation; the long dormant spirit of discovery was aroused, the genius of Columbus had re-discovered the forgotten secret of the Atlantic, and thrown open to the astonished eyes of Europe an unknown, undreamed-of land. True, they were yet ignorant of the extent and importance of the newly-found territory, which they regarded as the western coast of Asia; but still a grand exploit was achieved, a voyage across those mighty waters had been safely accomplished, and instead of arriving at the end of the world—as was predicted by some of the gravest philosophers of the day—Columbus had reached a land which seemed a paradise of rare and bewitching beauty. At his return, the fever for adventure spread through Europe, and there was scarcely a beardless 'prentice lad who did not long to cross the seas, and emulate the fame of the Genoese, by discovering in his turn unknown lands.

This excitement of course gave rise to numberless expeditions, with objects as various as their equipments and originators; but as our business is only with the early Arctic voyages, we shall pass over even the history of John Cabot,—who made the important discovery of Newfoundland, and whose adventurous prow first touched the mainland of America,—to speak of the expeditions projected during the reign of Edward VI. in search of a North-East passage to India.

In the vague and imperfect geography of those days, little was known regarding the true extent or position of India and "Cathay"—or China,—which were generally coupled together, and seem to have been regarded as one great treasure-house of wealth, from which all Europe might draw without fear of diminution. Still greater was the general ignorance concerning the north of Asia, as may be inferred from the course marked out for the first expedition. It was proposed to coast along the northern shores of Europe, and to ascend some large river,—the position of which they did not pretend to define,—by following which to its source they would easily reach the heart of the

charmed regions of which they were in search. Chimerical as was this plan, it was set on foot by sundry London merchants, —"men of great wisdom and gravity," we are especially informed, —and warmly advocated by Sebastian Cabot, the son of the well-known navigator, himself the Grand Pilot of England, and the acknowledged oracle of the day on all nautical matters. Under such auspices the project met with general encouragement, the sum of £6000 was easily raised by shares, and employed in the equipment of three vessels: the like of which, we are assured by the Grand Pilot himself, "was never in any realm seen, used, or known!" This squadron, provisioned for eighteen months, was placed under the guidance of Sir Hugh Willoughby, a man of high birth, and "renowned in war," but possibly not much fitted by nautical experience for the dangers and difficulties of a voyage of discovery. His second in command was Richard Chancelor, a *protégé* of Sir Henry Sidney, and particularly recommended "for the many good parts of wit in him." A letter was addressed by King Edward to "all kings, princes, rulers, judges, and governors of the earth," exhorting them to use hospitality towards his servants; and Cabot drew up a code of regulations for the use of the officers and crews, some of which are truly admirable, and others irresistibly absurd. Of the first class may be instanced his directions that prayers should be read on board each ship morning and evening; his prohibition of all "ribaldry and ungodly talk, dicing, carding, tabling, or other devilish games;" as well as his caution against "conspiracies, part-takings, factions, false tales, which be the very seeds and fruits of contention!" He particularly directs that any natives they meet are "to be considered advisedly, and treated with gentleness and courtesy, without any disdain, laughing, or contempt;" but we cannot commend the next hint, that it may be advisable occasionally to allure one on board, and make him intoxicated, because "if he be made drunk with your wine or beer, you shall know the secrets of his heart." The "liveries" of the sailors were to be carefully put by, and only worn on special occasions, when it was desirable to appear "in good array, for the honour and advancement of the voyage." Possibly these

treasured garments might be furnished to counteract the effect which Cabot apprehended from the outlandish appearance of the natives; for he especially desires them not to be "affrighted," if savages meet them dressed in lions' and bears' skins, with bows and arrows in their hands, as this formidable array would only be assumed to intimidate them. The most earnest warnings, however, in the document are directed against "persons armed with bows, who swim naked in various seas, havens, and rivers, desirous of the bodies of men, which they covet for meat." Possibly some vague ideas concerning sharks or alligators may have suggested this extraordinary passage; physicial geography being little understood by Cabot or his compeers.

The 10th of May, 1553, beheld the departure of the three vessels from Greenwich. The hand of death was already laid upon the young king, and he was unable to grace the spectacle by his presence, but even this circumstance scarcely shadowed the brightness of the scene. The courtiers and grandees crowded to the palace-windows, the populace lined the shores, the ships fired salutes, and "the mariners shouted in such sort that the sky rang with the noise thereof."

Very different from the hope and confidence excited by that triumphant commencement of the voyage, must have been Willoughby's feelings when a tempest overtook them off North Cape, with such "flawes of wind and terrible whirlwinds," that they were forced to take to the open sea, and let the ships drift as they would. The admiral had previously assembled his commanders, and exhorted them to keep together as much as possible, but in case of unavoidable separation to regard Wardhuys, in Finmark, as the place of meeting. His voice was now heard in the lulls of the storm calling earnestly to his comrades to keep close together; but his vessel carried so much sail that it was impossible to obey him, and, amidst the darkness of that tempestuous night, Chancelor and Willoughby parted,—never to meet again. The dawning light of the next morning showed the admiral that he was alone, but his smaller vessel, the "Confidence," soon rejoined him, and together they continued their voyage.

The imperfect maps of the time were often totally at variance

with the real position of the land, and Willoughby seems to have spent the largest part of the brief northern summer in following their guidance till he found himself totally at fault, and then retracing his course to the point from which he had diverged. Each check, too, was rendered doubly mortifying by the knowledge that winter was coming on, and that he should have been far on his voyage, instead of still beating about in much the same spot, without having even gained certain knowledge of the right direction in which to proceed. After his separation from Chancelor, the admiral groped his way in much perplexity for many days; and land was hailed with a cry of joy as it rose before the glad eyes of the weary voyagers. As they drew near, its appearance gave little promise of comfort; the snow-covered cliffs rose cold and desolate from the dark sea, all was bleak and barren, and no sound met the ear but the wailing cry of the circling gulls, and the occasional crash of falling ice as it broke away from the frozen surface of the cliff. On this inhospitable coast of Nova Zembla they vainly endeavoured to effect a landing; but their efforts being baffled, they returned again to their ships, and, in total ignorance of their real situation, sailed on far into the Northern Ocean, in the vain hope of reaching Norway, which they had in fact left to the south. At length they discovered their mistake, and changing their course they steered S.W., and after many days saw the coast of Russian Lapland.

Our sympathies are strongly called forth for these brave countrymen of ours, who set out with so much courage, and so little knowledge, on an enterprise so fraught with danger. Sadly and wearily must the time have passed for them, as they drifted day after day on the dark, pitiless waters; and even the stoutest heart among them must sometimes have quailed while musing on the unknown fate of their comrades, and their own uncertain destiny. How they must have longed, amidst that weary monotony of sea and sky, for the green fields and smiling valleys of dear native England; and how mockingly and sadly memory must have pictured the remembered features, the sweet home-faces, while each day made it more doubt-

ful if their living eyes would ever gaze upon the loved originals again!

Amidst all these doubts and fears, the intensity of the arctic winter came upon them, heralded by sleet, and frost, and driving snow, which rendered yet more drear the gloomy prospect around. Then appeared the stern, awful icebergs, menacing destruction as they approached, and huge floating fields of ice gathered round the devoted vessels, closed in, and held them helpless prisoners in that deadly clasp. It must be remembered, too, that all these rigours were unmitigated by the thousand contrivances which inventive ingenuity has framed to render the climate endurable to seamen of the present time; and were sustained by men unprepared by previous information or experience to expect such hardships. They were, no doubt, rendered yet more trying by the absence of that blessed sunlight, which the captives had never so loved and prized as now that they were deprived of it. Amidst all this bodily and mental suffering, we cannot doubt that the passionate home-yearnings of the exiles were rendered yet more bitterly intense by a prophetic foreboding that they were hopelessly vain!

Meanwhile months rolled by, and many loving hearts in England reckoned up the time, and looked out anxiously for the return of those who never came. It is the same old tale, told over and over again in this sorrowful world, yet never losing its melancholy interest! "Hope deferred" lingered on through time which sorrow lengthened out into a long life of suffering, till tidings came at last—tidings that some Russian sailors, wandering by chance along that desolate coast, had seen with astonishment two large ships, apparently deserted; had entered them, and found them floating sepulchres, tenanted only by the dead! A note, dated January, 1554, proved that some at least had survived till then, but no other word or sign remained to cast a gleam of light on the dark and mysterious fate of the first English Admiral, and his gallant crew, who vainly strove to penetrate the frozen regions of the north.

We have yet to notice the less melancholy fate of Richard Chancelor. After parting company with Willoughby, he

reached Wardhuys in safety, and there waited patiently for seven days, at the end of which time, not being joined by his companions, he seems to have given them up in despair, and again set sail towards the east. In course of time, he found himself in "an extensive bay,"—in reality the White Sea,—and on landing made himself so popular by gifts and courteous bearing to the half-savage natives, that crowds came from all parts to gaze at the new-comers, who were reported to be "of a strange nation, of singular gentleness and courtesy;" and by them Chancelor found himself abundantly supplied with provisions and every other necessary. He further contrived to learn from his new friends—*how*, it is difficult to imagine, since the two parties can scarcely have possessed any common medium of communication—that their country was called Muscovy, or Russia, and was governed by a Czar, who bore the unmusical name of Ivan Vasilovitch, and held his court at Moscow. Thither Chancelor, who possessed a most indomitable spirit of enterprise, determined to proceed, and notwithstanding the immense distance, and his total inexperience in the only practicable way of travelling—with sledges over the snow—he safely accomplished his journey, and brought back, on his return to England, a far more substantial benefit than the discovery of the imaginary north-east passage, in the permission of the Czar for the establishment of trade between England and Russia. The "Muscovy Company" was in consequence speedily formed, a regular system of traffic between the two countries was organized, and Chancelor again set out for Russia, furnished with credentials from Philip and Mary. This second voyage, having no connexion with arctic discovery, it is out of our province to describe. Suffice it to say, that he returned homewards with four ships heavily laden with Russian commodities, having on board his own the Czar's ambassador. The home voyage proved singularly unfavourable, and he had the mortification of seeing two of his vessels wrecked off the coast of Norway; the third reached London in safety, but that which contained the commander himself, was carried by a violent tempest as far as Pitsligo, in Scotland, in which bay it was wrecked. Chancelor made one last effort to save

himself and the ambassador in a small boat, but fortune was against them ; the skiff was upset, and though the Russian reached the shore and the capital in safety, the brave Englishman, who had outlived the perils of the northern seas, perished amid those stormy waves, within sight of his native shores !

CHAPTER II.

BARENTZ WINTERS IN NOVA ZEMBLA.

"So Zembla's rocks (the beauteous work of Frost)
Rise white in air, and glitter o'er the coast;
Pale suns, unfelt, at distance roll away,
And on th' impassive ice the lightnings play;
Eternal snows the growing mass supply,
Till the bright mountains prop th' incumbent sky;
As Atlas fix'd each hoary pile appears,
The gather'd winters of a thousand years."—POPE, *Temple of Fame.*

THE tragic issue of Willoughby's voyage seems to have stamped a melancholy and unsuccessful character on all subsequent attempts; and after two more expeditions, sent out in 1556 and 1580, had returned without making any advance towards the discovery of the wished-for passage, the English were contented to abandon the enterprise. It met with cordial support, however, in the United Provinces. These had just struggled into independence, and now counted upon obtaining by commerce that position among the European states which could in no other way be held by so insignificant a territory. But the ordinary lines of approach to the treasure-lands of the East were strictly guarded by the fleets of Spain; and the Dutch, unable to cope with such formidable rivals, caught eagerly at the idea of a northern passage. Could such a way be discovered, they might yet obtain a lion's share in the precious merchandise of Cathay, without the risk of encounter with a foe whose power they feared, but could not equal. They had yet to learn that the ice-fields and mountains of the northern seas were enemies more hostile and invincible than all the armadas of Spain! The first essay was made by a private company of merchants, who prepared three ships and a small yacht, and appointed as pilot

and general superintendent William Barentz, one of the most experienced seamen of the day. The expedition sailed from Texel on the 6th of June, 1594, but separated into two divisions when they arrived at the island of Kilduin; Barentz, with his two vessels, chose the bolder course of coasting Nova Zembla, and finding for himself a more northerly passage than had yet been attempted; while his less adventurous partner in command was contented to follow the beaten track through the Straits of Waygatz. The first land at which the latter party touched after their separation was the little island of Waygatz, then garbed in all the beauty of its brief, bright summer. Very pleasant and "delightsome" to the voyagers was this oasis amidst the watery desert through which they had so lately passed; indeed, the old Dutch chronicler waxes eloquent while dilating upon its verdant appearance, and the abundance of flowers, herbs, and plants it produced, not forgetting "a great store of leeks!" On one of the capes of this island they discovered a large number of wooden images, with from four to eight heads, ranged in order, with the faces turned towards the east. From this circumstance the headland received the name of the Cape of Idols, the Dutch very naturally supposing, from the bones and fragments that lay near, that the Samoiedes, a people inhabiting the neighbouring coasts, were in the habit of sacrificing, and paying idolatrous worship to them. One writer, however, in detailing the circumstance, stands forth as champion to the Samoiedes, pronounces them guiltless of idolatry, and suggests that these hideous images were erected in memory of departed friends. With all desire to preserve the furthest extent of charity, we own to a little difficulty in accepting this explanation, involving, as it does, the necessity of assigning to these "departed friends" the unusual privilege of possessing six or eight heads apiece! Proceeding onward through the Straits of Waygatz and the Sea of Kara, our adventurers found themselves involved in the ice which lined the coast of Nova Zembla; but this proved only a temporary obstacle, and was forgotten, together with all the other trials and sufferings of the voyage, in the joy with which they hailed the sight of a clear expanse of blue open sea, stretch-

ing onward as far as the eye could reach, while the Russian coast trended away rapidly towards the S.E.

In these days of diffused knowledge, when the youngest school-child gains by his map a far more accurate notion of the northern regions than the brave seamen of whom we have been speaking ever won by all their deeds of daring, we can scarcely realize how very scanty, and often how entirely erroneous, was the information collected for their guidance. The best geographers of that day were still the humble disciples of Pliny, who lived and wrote hundreds of years before, and the correctness of whose teaching may be estimated by his theory concerning Asia. The northern boundary of this vast continent he held to terminate in a promontory named Tabis, from whence the voyage was short and easy to its eastern and southern shores. It was very natural, under such teaching, that these Dutch adventurers, weary with their long voyage, and eager to reach the golden regions for which they were bound, should leap hastily to the joyful conclusion that they had rounded the promontory of Tabis, and by following the coast southward could not fail speedily to reach Cathay. Could they but have known the reality, how it would have damped their hopes! What dreary news it would have been to hear that they had only reached the Gulf of Obe, and that a hundred degrees of longitude still lay between them and the goal to which those swift-winged hopes had flown so speedily! Satisfied with the prospect of success, they did not press onward to test its reality, but turned their prows westward, and started in full sail for Holland, eager to convey their joyful tidings without delay.

In the mean time, Barentz pursued his northern way, coasting Nova Zembla, but disappointed in his hope of speedily obtaining an easterly passage. Almost the only incidents recorded of this voyage are a few encounters of some of his crew with bears and walruses, in all of which the bipeds seem to have suffered the mortification of defeat. Having arrived at the northern extremity of Nova Zembla—a higher latitude than any navigator is recorded to have reached before—we feel almost surprised to hear that Barentz turned back, before strong opposing winds

and floating ice, just as the passage eastward opened before him. In courage, however, this great man was never found wanting, and many circumstances connected with his ship or his crew may have made him willing to postpone to a future day his chance of discovery, and seek safety in present return. Off Russian Lapland he fell in with his companions, and the four vessels returned together to Texel.

The issue of this voyage was considered so highly successful, that a large expedition was fitted out immediately, at the expense of the States-General, consisting of six vessels, laden with all kinds of merchandise. A light yacht was added, which was to bear them company as far as the imaginary promontory of Tabis, and from thence was to return, bearing the good news of their preservation through the most perilous part of their voyage. In northern navigation the superiority of small compact vessels over large massive ones is now an acknowledged fact; it was then a question to be tried, and the ill success of the great Dutch squadron of 1595 might well have decided it! This luckless expedition was long in reaching even the familiar Waygatz Straits, and, when arrived there, turned back in utter despair of ever making way through the masses of ice which choked the passage, and returned in a crestfallen manner to Holland, without having accomplished any one of the objects for which it had been sent out. Although great disappointment was felt at this failure, the scheme was not wholly abandoned; and, though the States-General prudently declined supplying any more funds for equipments, they offered a reward to any one by whom the object of the voyage should be successfully accomplished. The more onerous duty of supplying ways and means for making the experiment was undertaken by the Town-Council of Amsterdam, who were sensible enough to fit out their two vessels for discovery instead of traffic. They proved their good judgment also by selecting the pilot, Barentz, as commander of one vessel, though the choice of John Corneliz Ryp for the other does not seem to have been equally happy. But that over which these worthy burghers chuckled most heartily was, their own wonderful sagacity in providing against any risk of home-sickness, by

forming the crews entirely of unmarried men; never conceiving the possibility—good simple men that they were—that even a phlegmatic Dutch sailor might fall in love, and that visions of some rosy-cheeked, flaxen-haired damsel might visit the day-dreams of more than one of that bachelor crew, even amidst the chilling snows of the north.

Barentz and his party set sail on the 16th of May, 1596, under the cheering influence of bright weather, and confident expectations of success. Their first adventure, however, was not a happy omen, nor did they so safely escape from the onset of their ursine foe as on a former occasion. In the quaint narrative of their voyage by Gerrit de Veer, who was himself an eye-witness of all the incidents he relates, the catastrophe is deemed worthy of a pictorial representation, "showing," as the label attached to it states, "how a frightful, cruel, big bear tare in pieces two of our companions." After a voyage of twenty-five days, they had ocular demonstration of their near approach to the regions of ice. "One of our men walking on deck," says De Veer, "on a suddaine began to cry out with a loude voyce, and sayd that hee sawe white swannes: which wee that were below hearing, presently came up, and perceived that it was ice that came driving from the great heape, showing like swannes, it being then about evening." They soon became beset by a very inconvenient flock of these "white swannes," which greatly retarded their progress, and forced them to sail at a slow rate until they reached a small island of very bleak and desolate appearance. Some of the party effected a landing, but found nothing to repay the effort; they climbed one of the hills, and when arrived at the summit, finding it impossible to gain footing for their descent, were obliged to lie down and try the hazardous experiment of letting their own weight carry them down the steep glassy surface. They tried once more the oft-repeated experiment of taking a bear alive by means of a noose, and, having failed in all their attempts, set sail in disgust; naming the highest peak "Mount Misery,"—in memory, perhaps, of their very uncomfortable mode of descent;—and commemorating their last disappoin nt, by bestowing upon the newly-discovered

spot the name of "Bear Island." Still pursuing their course to the north, they reached Spitzbergen; and, after coasting its western shores for some time without finding any passage eastward, they returned to Bear Island, where Barentz and Corneliz, who seem never to have cordially acted together, differed in opinion, and finally parted company. Corneliz returned safely the following year to Holland, and as his voyage has never been chronicled, we may conclude it led to no important results. That of Barentz, however, was rife with incident; and we must plead for our readers' indulgence, if we somewhat exceed ordinary limits, while relating the adventures of this brave man and his companions, whose courage and endurance carried them so nobly through the untried horrors of an arctic winter.

As early as the beginning of August we find our voyagers involved in the ice, and still further perplexed by a dense fog. While this continued, they moored their vessel to a large berg for safety, and, as the weather cleared, they began cautiously to work their way from one of these masses to another, breaking as they went through the ice, which was now forming over the whole surface of the water, and "making it crack on all sides." Strange and awful must have been the scene which now presented itself to their unaccustomed eyes! The wide fields of ice covering the sea,—the blue "lanes" of water which afforded a precarious passage amongst them,—and, above all, the majestic icebergs, towering into a thousand fantastic forms; some of a deep sea-green, others wrapped in a white snow-mantle; some rooted immovably in the ocean depths, others, that had broken from their hold, and now drifted slowly at the bidding of wind and tide—grand even in their ruin—threatening destruction, as they passed, to the puny vessel which had so boldly ventured into their silent realm! Silent, indeed!—No cry, no sound of life, broke that awful stillness; nothing but the thundering crash which announced the fall of a mighty fragment from some decaying iceberg, and then the startled echoes woke from rock and berg around, till it seemed as if every crag and cliff gave back a separate voice to swell the doleful chorus.

Through such scenes the vessel advanced slowly to the most

northern point of Nova Zembla, the crew being cheered by the tidings that from the high cliffs of Orange Island, clear open water had been seen to the S.E. The effort to reach this inviting channel—which seemed to promise a speedy realization of the object of their voyage—was frustrated by the ice, which gathered about the ship as it lay near shore, and gradually collected under and around it, till it was raised far above sea-level on the summit of "a huge grounded ice-hill." All hope of return before winter now vanished, and the cheerful courage and devout resignation with which these brave sailors submitted to their fate, might teach a lesson to many in our more enlightened age. "It grieved us much," says their simple chronicler, "to lye there all that cold winter, which we knew would fall out to be extreame bitter; but, being bereaved of all hope, we were compelled to make necessitie a vertue, and with patience to attend what issue God would send us." They did not, however, sit down in idleness to await this "issue," but set vigorously to work to build a house upon the land; a necessary step; for the vessel had sustained so much injury from the pressure of the ice and the intense cold—which, acting upon the juices of the wood, caused it to split and crack—that they feared it would not long hold together. It was not easy in that inhospitable region to find materials even for the humble hut which they proposed erecting. "We had not much stuffe to make it withall," confesses De Veer, "in regard that there grew no trees nor any other thing in that country convenient to build it withall." In nothing discouraged, however, Barentz went to "view the country, and to see what good fortune might happen to them,"—and perseverance brought its own reward. "At last," says the original narrative, "we found an unexpected comfort in our need, which was that we found certaine trees, roots and all, which had bin driven upon the shoare, either from Tartaria, Muscovia, or elsewhere, for there was none growing upon that land, wherewith (as if God had purposely sent them unto us) we were much comforted, being in good hope that God would show us some further favour; for that wood served us not only to build our house, but also to burne and serve us all the winter long; otherwise,

without a doubt, we had died there miserably with extreame cold." The vessel continuing to crack and give signs of speedily breaking up altogether, they worked at the house with increased diligence, though the intense cold was nearly beyond endurance, and almost every thing they touched with the naked hand, froze to it. One man, while working, incautiously put a nail between his lips; it froze instantly, and when torn off brought skin and blood with it; an accident which taught them a lesson of care for the future. Their difficulties in building the hut were greatly increased by the loss of the carpenter, who died soon after the commencement of the undertaking. The ground was so hard and frost-bound, that they tried in vain to dig a grave, and the poor fellows were constrained to content themselves with laying their dead comrade in the cleft of a rock—the best interment they were able to give him. The work was carried on in great fear of the bears, which were numerous, and very bold. One day, Barentz, from the deck of the vessel, saw three bears stealthily approaching a party of his men, who were labouring at the hut; he shouted loudly to warn them of their peril, and the men, startled at the near approach of danger, sought safety in flight. One of the party, in his haste and perturbation, fell into a cleft in the ice, but the hungry animals fortunately overlooked him, and continued their pursuit of the main body. These gained the vessel, and began to congratulate themselves on their safety, when, to their horror, they perceived that their foes, instead of beating a retreat, had actually scaled the ship's sides, and seemed determined to follow up their advantage. Matters now became serious. One of the sailors was despatched for a light, but, in his hurry and agitation, could not induce the match to take fire; the muskets were thus rendered useless, and the sailors in despair kept their enemies off by pelting them with whatever articles came first to hand. This unequal conflict continued for some time; the invaders retreated for a minute under the influence of some well-aimed blow, but speedily returned to the charge, and the stock of available missiles was growing terribly low, when the combat was happily ended by the decisive stroke of a halbert, which produced such a forcible impression

upon the largest bear, that he promptly retired from the field, attended by his two companions. By the middle of October, the hut was completed; and, though the accommodations it afforded were scanty, they were glad to take up their abode in it at once. A sick comrade was drawn in a sledge from the ship by eight of the able-bodied men, and to him was assigned the most comfortable position by the centre fire, while all the rest arranged their beds as best they could, on shelves which had been built round the walls. They now commenced an examination into the state and quantity of their provisions, which led to one or two mortifying discoveries. They had on board several tons of fine Dantzic beer unopened; and it must have been extremely vexatious to find the iron-bound casks broken to pieces, and the contents existing in the form of solid masses of ice, which, when melted, had all the taste of bad water! In quick succession, upon this investigation, follows the statement of the reduction which of necessity took place in the allowance of food. On the 8th Nov., "We shared our bread among us, each man having four pounds and ten ounces for his allowance in eight daies; so that then we were eight daies eating a barrell of bread; whereas before, we ate it up in five or six daies." Next week the sharing of their wine is recorded. "Every man had two glasses a day; but commonly our drink was water, which we molt out of the snow." A little later still the narrator informs us very simply, that they "had but seventeen cheeses, whereof one we ate amongst us, and the rest were divided, to every man one for his portion, which he might eat when he list." As the winter advanced, and the scarcity of food was still more felt, they tried the plan of setting traps; by these they caught a good many small arctic foxes, which proved very tolerable eating. The skins also were very serviceable made into caps, "to keepe them warme from the extreame cold." One of their chief difficulties was in washing their clothes; for directly they took them from the hot water and began to wring them, the linen froze hard in their hands; and as for drying, the side furthest from the fire was frozen as the things hung before it! Soon, however, to add

to their sufferings, firing itself began to run short, and a heavy fall of snow having moreover stopped up their attempt at a chimney, they ran great risk of being at once frozen and suffocated. For some time they denied themselves the luxury of a fire, and tried to substitute hot stones passed from bed to bed; but this experiment completely failing, they resolved for once to be warm, cost what it might. In pursuance of this determination they lighted a large fire of sea-coal in the middle of their hut, carefully stopped up every aperture by which cold might enter, and fell asleep in the enjoyment of a most delicious temperature. In a short time, however, one or two awoke in a state of suffocation, and contrived to totter dizzily to the door; by opening which they probably saved the lives of the whole party, who were long before they wholly recovered from the effects of their indulgence. The sun had now entirely taken his departure, and during the dreary three months' night, when the wild storms and intense cold prevented them from venturing beyond the walls of their hut, they had much difficulty in preserving right reckoning of time, as the cold had stopped their clocks. They several times disputed as to whether it was day or night, and, at last, were forced to construct a rude sandglass, which measured time tolerably. There is a touching sentence of De Veer's, picturing their sufferings at this time: "We lookt pitifully one upon the other," he says, "being in great fear that if the extremity of the cold grew to be more and more we should all die there with cold; for that what fire so ever we made would not warm us." The ice was now two inches thick upon the walls, and even on the sides of their sleeping-cots; their principal occupation was mending their stockings, in which they continually burnt holes without warming their feet; and the very clothes they wore were whitened with frost, so that as they sat together in their hut they "were al as white as the countrymen used to be when they come in at the gates of the towne in Holland with their sleads, and have gone all night." Yet amidst what we should consider unmitigated misery, these hardy men kept brave and cheerful hearts; and so great was their elasticity of spirit, that, remembering the 5th January was "Twelf Eve,"

they determined to celebrate it as best they might. It would be little short of a sin to give this unique detail in any other words than those of the old chronicler himself. "And when we had taken paines al day, we remembered ourselves that it was Twelf Even; and then we prayed our maister that we might be merry that night, and said that we were content to spend some of the wine that night which we had spared, and which was our share, (one glass,) every second day, and whereof, for certaine daies, we had not drunke; and so that night we made merry, and drew for king. And therewith, we had two pounds of meale, whereof we made pancakes with oyle, and every man had a white biscuit, which we sopt in the wine. And so supposing that we were in our owne country and amongst our friends, it comforted us well as if we had made a great banket in our owne house. And we also made trinkets, and our gunner was King of Nova Zembla, which is, at least, eight hundred miles long, and lyeth between two seas."

A few weeks more, however, brought a partial mitigation of their sufferings. The friendly face of the sun appeared again, and was welcomed with universal delight—nothing damped by the doubts of Barentz, who, being unacquainted with the refracting power of the atmosphere, strove to convince his companions, by all manner of elaborate calculations, that the luminary they so gladly greeted, had no right to appear for fifteen days more. The severity of the cold did not yet begin to abate, but the gales and snow-storms ceased; and they were thus able to brave the outer air, and indulged for many hours each day in running, leaping, and athletic games. As the spring advanced and a thaw commenced, they began to examine into the condition of their imprisoned vessel, which, contrary to all expectation, still held together. Its position, however, afforded little comfort; for as the large sea-floes dispersed, immense fragments of ice came drifting shorewards with every tide, and added to the insurmountable barrier which already encircled it. In March, these "ramparts" could be crossed by seventy-five paces; at the beginning of May, their breadth was increased to five hundred! This fact dispelled at once any hopes the ice-bound adventurers might

still have entertained of seeing their good ship free once more, and sailing back in it to Holland. The only prospect of escape from their dreary prison, was afforded by the two boats. These they filled with provisions, and rigged them out under the gunner's direction, from the spoils of the poor deserted vessel, which seemed to be abandoned as a sort of propitiatory sacrifice to the offended deities of frost and snow.

The whole party finally quitted the scene of so much suffering on the 14th June, 1596, with glad hearts; rejoicing too much in their deliverance from that long imprisonment, to estimate in its full extent the danger which attended a voyage of nearly 2000 miles in two open boats through waters still encumbered with masses of ice. Happy were they, too, in their ignorance of the sorrow which was still further to darken that perilous voyage. But though they knew it not, the hand of death was already coldly laid upon the brave and noble "master," whose encouragement and sympathy had cheered them on to duty, and the silent eloquence of whose example had preached, during those long months of pain and captivity, lessons of fortitude and self-devotion never to be forgotten.

On the fourth day of their voyage, the frail boats became surrounded by immense quantities of floating ice, which so crushed and injured them that the crews, giving up all hope, took a solemn leave of each other. De Veer had proved himself of good service in several former emergencies, and to his presence of mind and agility the whole company owed their lives on the present occasion. With a well-secured rope he leaped from one fragment of ice to another till he gained a firm field, on which first the sick, then the stores, the crews, and finally the boats themselves, were safely landed. Their progress was here arrested while the boats underwent necessary repair; and during this detention, upon a floating ice-raft, in the midst of the desolate region where he had overcome dangers, and survived hardships, such as no European had before endured, the gallant Barentz closed the troublous voyage of life! He died, as he had lived, calmly and bravely; thinking less of himself than of the welfare of his crew; a chart of these perilous seas was spread out before

him, and his last words were directions as to the course in which they were to steer. His death was bitterly mourned by the rough men under his command, whose warm hearts were quick to appreciate true nobility of soul. They loved and revered him as a friend and father; and even the joy of their anticipated arrival was damped by the remembrance that he who had shared in all their sufferings, could not partake of their consolation. The onward progress of the two boats amidst the besetting ice was tedious and dangerous in the extreme. By the 28th of July, they had only reached the southern extremity of Nova Zembla, where they fell in with two Russian vessels, the crews of which could scarcely be persuaded that of the Dutch expedition, the strong vessel and hardy seamen, which some of them had seen the previous year, nothing was left but these two battered boats, with their feeble, wasted occupants. The Russians "exchanged presents," we are told, but do not seem to have offered any real assistance to the poor weary mariners, who soon parted company with them, and, at the end of August, arrived at Kola. Here, to their pleasant surprise, they found their old comrade, John Corneliz, who received them on board his vessel, and conveyed them to Amsterdam.

CHAPTER III.

FINAL ATTEMPTS TO DISCOVER THE NORTH-EAST PASSAGE.—VOYAGES TOWARDS THE NORTH POLE.

And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold,
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen;
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken,—
The ice was all between.

COLERIDGE.

Up! up! let us a voyage take;
Why sit we here at ease?
Find us a vessel tight and snug,
Bound for the Northern Seas.

There shall we see the fierce white bear,
The sleepy seals aground,
And the spouting whales that to and fro
Sail with a dreary sound.

And while the unsetting sun shines on
Through the still Heaven's deep blue,
We'll traverse the azure waves, the herds
Of the dread sea-horse to view.

WILLIAM HOWITT.

THE disastrous issue of Barentz's last voyage effectually prevented his sober-minded countrymen from engaging any further in such a perilous enterprise, and the English undertook again the responsibility of carrying out a scheme which they had been the first to originate. A new generation had succeeded to the one which witnessed the triumphant commencement of Willoughby's voyage, and mourned and shuddered over its terrible conclusion. Science had made wondrous advances during the fifty intervening years; the experience of every unsuccessful ex-

plorer was so much valuable information, for the guidance of his successors in the career of discovery; clear water had been seen, by nearly every expedition, beyond the ice barrier which arrested their advance, and finally, "if such a passage to India really existed, why might not England obtain the glory and advantage of its discovery?" Thus reasoned sundry members of the worshipful Company of London Merchants, and so conclusive did those arguments appear, that without loss of time they placed a vessel under the command of Henry Hudson—who had already given promise of his future prowess during a voyage to Spitzbergen—and saw him weigh anchor and drop down to Blackwall, on the 22nd April, 1608. Profiting by the experience of others, Hudson avoided the usual track through the Straits of Waygatz, and steered boldly northward, with the purpose of rounding Cape Zelania. The surrounding ice, however, arrested his progress before he had passed lat. 75°, and, having extricated himself with some difficulty, but only "a few rubs," he shaped his course according to the wind towards the E. and S.E., and on the 26th gained the coast of Nova Zembla. About ten days before they reached the land, two of the crew, Thomas Hilles and Henry Rayner, "solemnly averred," that whilst standing on the deck they had been favoured with the sight of a *mermaid*. Their account of this Lady of the Waters answered generally to the received descriptions of her mythical order, only she lacked the mirror, and her hair was black instead of the sea-green tresses supposed to be the distinguishing property of the marine sisterhood. Moreover, these sight-seers inform us "her tail was as of a porpoise, but speckled like a mackerel." Although June was not yet past, Hudson decided—rather prematurely we think—that a more northerly route offered no chance of success that summer, and determined on trying the old Waygatz passage. His impression of Nova Zembla in its summer guise is a curious contrast to the dreary picture of the N.E. coast, drawn by the companion of poor Barentz. "It is, to man's eye, a pleasant land," says the English sailor, "much mayne land with no snow upon it; looking in some places green, and deer feeding thereon." The Waygatz course was given up that they might follow the

opening afforded by a large sound, which they confidently hoped would furnish a passage to the other side of the island, while the commander calculated that a little slaughter among the herds of morse frequenting the banks would materially lighten the expenses of the voyage. This newly discovered sound, however, soon brought them to a river, where the boats came to anchorage in one fathom's depth of water; the morse too so cleverly avoided coming to close quarters that not one was killed, and when Hudson retraced his course, intending once more to try his fortune in the open sea, he found his passage impeded on all sides by immense masses of ice, "very fearful to look on." He devoutly records "the mercy of God and his mighty help" in guiding his vessel safely through the dangers that surrounded it, and in granting them ultimately a safe return to England. A subsequent voyage by this brave navigator, under the auspices of the Dutch East India Company, was even more profitless and unsatisfactory than the one of which we have been speaking; indeed, it was only when engaged in the career of north-western discovery —which we hope to relate in future chapters—that the genius of our gallant countrymen fully displayed itself.

One final attempt in a north-easterly direction was made by Captain John Wood, an enthusiastic advocate of this most chimerical of schemes. He induced the Admiralty to intrust him with two vessels, and started to achieve the passage in 1676; but his hopes were prematurely blighted by a storm which wrecked his own ship, the "Speedwell," off the further coast of Nova Zembla, and compelled him and his crew to take refuge on board the "Prosperous Pink," in which vessel he returned home, "a sadder and a wiser man" than when he left it. Wood's voyage stands on record as the last in that series of N. E. expeditions, which marked the infancy of modern navigation, and combined so much singular incident and individual heroism with such universal ignorance and credulity. Long before this last attempt, however, we must bear in mind that more inviting fields of discovery had drawn away general attention to the north and west; and consequently, the final relinquishment of this N. E. search may be attributed far more to the general advancement of know-

ledge, than to the failure of the expeditions that successively attempted it.

In our anxiety to preserve this detail from confusion, we have followed the series of north-east voyages to their conclusion, without pausing to notice other efforts at northern discovery, which, though prosecuted during the same interval of time, were directed to a different object. We should be but unfaithful chroniclers, however, did we not afford a passing notice to the early voyages towards the North Pole. These do not certainly afford any of the romantic incidents which lend so strong a charm to the records of the north-eastern and north-western expeditions, yet they are not wholly destitute of interest, for two of the most noted men in Arctic history, Hudson and Baffin, commenced their career in these Polar voyages. The project of reaching India by this northern route was soon proved to be impracticable, yet much solid benefit was gained to England by the attempt. Hitherto, a few morse or whales, caught near the shores of Scotland, had furnished a scanty supply of skins and oil; but now that the treasures of the Polar Seas were more fully revealed, the London merchants speedily reaped a plentiful harvest from the discovery. We may thus truthfully aver that to the unsuccessful search for a Polar passage, England owes in a great measure her extensive and valuable whale fisheries.

In 1603, eight years after the last voyage of Barentz, Sir Francis Cherie, a London alderman, fitted out a vessel named the "God-speed," and sent it, under the command of Stephen Bennet, to try its fortune in the icy regions, without apparently any matured plan or defined object. Possibly a vague notion of discovering the best whaling localities may have influenced the course of the commander, who, after pursuing the old track round the North Cape, on reaching Kola changed his direction entirely, and steered the ship N. W. till it reached the "Bear Island," where the Dutch had landed on their outward voyage. Ignorant of its previous discovery, Bennet proudly named it after his patron Cherie; and having caught thereon two foxes and a few fish, and discovered the teeth of a defunct morse, "proving that those animals did use there," he complacently

considered the achievement sufficiently distinguished to authorize his return to England. He made his appearance accordingly in London about the middle of October, and so satisfied his easy-tempered patron that he was sent out during several subsequent seasons, in the same ship, and fulfilled his vocation as morse-slayer to the satisfaction of his employer's mind equally as to his own.

In 1607, the first real Polar voyage was undertaken by Henry Hudson, who set sail under the auspices of the Muscovy Company, with the hope and intention of reaching India by crossing the Pole. This daring design is the more singular from being the first effort in this direction, and also the first voyage undertaken by the brave seaman whose name is equally imperishable in the New as in the Old World. The devout spirit in which this voyage was commenced, finds a beautiful expression in the name given by this commander to the first strange land which greeted his eyes. It was "a high castellated mountain," which rose coldly up from behind a bleak snow-covered headland; but the earnest-hearted, cheerful mariner found beauty and comfort even on this barren coast of Greenland, and his grateful spirit displayed itself in calling that desolate eminence "The Mount of God's Mercy." A more northerly cape which broke upon his sight after a long continuance of heavy fog, he named, under the same feeling, "Hold-with-Hope."

A few days after this we find Hudson changing his course, and keeping a N.E. direction; and on the 27th of June he approached Spitzbergen, which Barentz had discovered just twelve years before. Along the shore of this island Hudson coasted, threading his way among the ice until, according to his own calculation, he reached lat. $81\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, whilst he saw land to north as far as 82°. As the northern extremity of Spitzbergen only reaches 81°, there must have been some error here in his reckoning, or the wide ice-fields stretching far on into the distance were mistaken by him for land; and truly in such a quarter, where sea and land wear alike one uniform hue of cold and deadly whiteness, whilst the craggy outline of the precipitous shore is matched by the fantastic ruggedness of vast

ice mountains and up-piled floes breaking the level surface of the ocean, it must be a difficult matter to discern the boundary-line which separates the two. Very little was actually gained by this voyage; but the young captain who had conducted it felt more confidence in his own powers, and had acquired moreover precious experience for his next attempt; nor were his employers discontented with the issue of their experiment since by it they had obtained certain and satisfactory intelligence of the immense herds of morse and seals which frequented the coast of Spitzbergen.

In the next expedition the Muscovy Company prudently resolved to combine profit with experiment, and the Captain, Jonas Poole, was informed that, though discovery was the principal object, he might "catch at intervals some morse," or "even one or two whales," by way of defraying the expenses of the voyage. Unfortunately for the cause of science, Jonas Poole seems to have possessed such an eminently practical mind as to read his instructions in an inverted order, and, consequently, when they reached Fair Foreland, in Spitzbergen—although there was a free, open sea ahead, and every encouragement to proceed—a large herd of morse unluckily appearing in sight, he considered it his duty to devote himself to the pursuit as a mighty hunter; and throughout the remainder of the voyage we find not a word on any subject of higher interest than the slaughter of deer and walrus, and now and then the capture of a whale. On his return, Poole brought back so propitiatory an offering of oil and morse-teeth, that the Company forbore giving him the reproof he deserved for neglecting the primary object of the voyage, and sent him out again, with the old instructions, the following year, in command of the "Elizabeth," although they had so clearly proved on the previous occasion how incapable he was of combining the two objects of profit and discovery. The result was a just and well-deserved, though severe, disappointment.

The "Mary Margaret" whaler, went out in company with the "Elizabeth," and the latter was to join her in taking whales and morse during the outward voyage; parting company with

her when they reached the limits of the fishing territory. Fogs and storms soon separated the vessels, and when Poole reached the coast of Spitzbergen, he found three boats full of drenched, miserable sailors, the survivors from the wrecked "Mary Margaret." Receiving these on board his own vessel, he set to work diligently as before on his hunting and fishing expeditions, though the overloaded state of his small ship, with the additional crew, should have been a powerful argument against the proceeding. He succeeded in securing a cargo of oil, skins, and teeth, amounting to twenty-nine tons; a tolerable burden, he triumphantly remarks, for a vessel of fifty! But such greediness of gain ended in peril and utter disappointment. The last spoils overweighted the little ship, which sunk with its encumbering freightage, barely allowing the men time to escape with their lives, whilst the avaricious commander fought hard for his amidst the floating staves, spars, and other *débris* of the foundering barque. Thomas Marmaduke, commanding a Hull whaler, picked up these unfortunate mariners; and his charity in the time of their need, Poole repays by such a catalogue of complaints and accusations, that his biographer Purchas apologises for omitting them on the ground of their length!

We gladly turn from so painful an evidence of ingratitude and obstinacy, although the next expedition—six well-armed ships—under the command of William Baffin, cannot enlist our full approbation. The object of the armament was less that of discovery, than of empire. It proposed to chase from the Greenland Seas all foreign vessels that might attempt to fish there, though on what ground England claimed an exclusive right on these coasts, which her sons neither discovered nor colonized, it is difficult to imagine. The following year, we rejoice to add, this unworthy assumption was abandoned, and the sails were again unfurled in the honourable career of northern discovery.

Thomas Fotherby, in the "Thomasine," with Baffin as pilot, set out in 1614, in company with the great Greenland fleet, to explore the seas to the north of Spitzbergen.

This "fleet" consisted of ten ships and two pinnaces, all engaged in the whale fishery, so that Fotherby could rely little

upon their assistance or company. They all, however, shared in the general calamity of imprisonment early in the voyage-eleven ships being fast in the ice at once! But time, which relieves so many misfortunes, brought theirs to an end also, and, by the 6th of June, the Thomasine had reached Hakluyt's Headland; there, however, the ice again arrested them, not by imprisoning the ship itself, but, as in stalemate at chess, by blocking up every avenue of exit or egress. Magdalena Bay—Maudlen Sound, as Fotherby calls it—was lined unbrokenly from shore to shore; to the north of Hakluyt's Headland the ice again presented an impenetrable barrier; and though he sailed for twenty-eight leagues to the west, he could discover no opening towards the north, and returned baffled to his former position.

Two Dutch ships, sent out with a like mission to his own, gave up hope, and disappeared to the south on their homeward way; but Fotherby determined on a final effort, and pushing off from Cape Barren, he gained twenty-four leagues before he came face to face with the relentless ice again. Nothing daunted by the severity of the climate, or even by the murmurs of the crew, who were impatient to follow the Dutchmen's example, the commander ventured up Redcliffe Sound in a boat, after the weather had forced the ship into harbour. The ice had formed upon the water even there to the thickness of a half-crown piece, and they were glad to return to the ship. On their way back they observed that the Dutch had been busy with a cross which they had put up on the shores of this sound, with the king's arms and a sixpenny-piece nailed upon it. These their good friends had lowered from their exalted position,—"sixpence and all," says the narrator, in a paroxysm of indignation at the insult,—and the arms of Prince Maurice were substituted in their stead. The English sailors had the satisfaction of setting this matter to rights before they rejoined their waiting vessel.

In the mean time, a general thaw gave ground of sanguine hope that the north passage might yet be accomplished, and the Thomasine pushed gallantly onward till she reached the latitude of 80°. Here the stillness of the sea was broken by "a mighty noise of waves, breaking as it were upon an extensive shore."

Fotherby had, in fact, reached a gigantic barrier of ice which seemed to guard the approach to the mysterious regions of the Pole, and which he vainly strove to penetrate. Failing in this last attempt, and fearing the approach of winter, he took advantage of a north wind, and reached home in safety by the beginning of October. The following year he tried his fortune again in the "Richard," a pinnace of only twenty tons. But this voyage was in a great measure a repetition of the preceding one. Fogs, ice, and storms alternately forced him into harbour. Immense ice-fields drove his tiny vessel before them from Hakluyt's Headland to latitude 76°. Still further south, the mist so bewildered him that the little island of Jan Mayen appeared as "a snowy hill very high amid the clouds," and the fog "lying on each side made it appear like a great continent." In short he met with very little success in his last voyage; and though he still counselled the "worshipful company" to make "a yearly adventure of £150 or £200 at the most," in the cause of northern discovery, his last report gave such slender encouragement that for many long years no further attempt of the kind was made.

CHAPTER IV.

EARLY VOYAGES IN SEARCH OF THE NORTH-WEST PASSAGE.

Ah! not to crush the vaunting foe,
In combat o'er the main,
Nor perish by a glorious blow,
In mortal triumph slain,
Was their unutterable fate;
That story would the Muse relate,
The song might rise in vain;
In ocean's deepest, darkest bed,
The secret slumbers with the dead.

On India's long-expecting strand
Their sails were never furl'd,
Never on known or friendly land
By storms their keel was hurl'd;
Their native soil no more they trod,
They rest beneath no hallow'd sod;
Throughout the living world,
The sole memorial of their lot
Remains,—they *were*, and they *are not!*

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

We have reserved this division of our subject until the North-east and Polar voyages had received due consideration, in order to avoid the confusion consequent on mixing them up with others in the order of time. We have also reserved it on account of the peculiar interest excited by the incidents connected with it, and because the search for a passage to India—which was speedily abandoned in other directions — has here been prosecuted even to our own times, and the long riddle of three hundred and fifty years at last solved by the undaunted perseverance of our gallant countryman, M'Clure. Although these reasons have induced us to place the north-west voyages last in order of recital, we must bear in mind that they commence in reality before either of the other schemes for reaching India were originated.

We must look for the first of these, in fact, as far back as A.D. 1500, when the strange New World, brought to light by Columbus eight years before, was still the great centre towards which the thoughts and hopes and wishes of Europe all converged. The spirit of enterprise had been early aroused in Portugal, and to her belongs the honour—second only to that of Columbus—of discovering the passage round the Cape of Good Hope. Not content, however, with this brilliant achievement, one of her most illustrious houses—that of Cortereal—embraced the career of northern adventure. There are grounds for surmising that the fame of discovering Newfoundland, generally awarded to our countryman, Cabot, might be assigned with greater justice to John Vaz Cortereal, nearly a century earlier. Without pausing to enter upon this disputed question, we can safely affirm that whatever distinction the father won or deserved was fully sustained by his son, Gaspar Cortereal, who, in 1500, set sail for the west, with a spirit kindred in its energy to that of the great Genoese himself. Much doubt and ignorance at this time prevailed respecting the extent and position of the new continent; many believed it to be the further coast of Asia, whilst those who came nearest to the truth greatly underrated its extent, and, after the manner of Pliny, assigned to it an imaginary north cape, by rounding which a short and easy passage would open to the shores of India. To find this speedy route was the self-imposed mission of the brave Portuguese. The broad waters of the St. Lawrence tempted him to ascend it for some distance, hoping that he had at once discovered the object of his search; the lessening width of the channel, and the descending current of the river, undeceived him at last, and, returning to the open sea, he steered to the north. The coast of Labrador —now visited by Europeans for the first time, since Biorn Heriolfson, the Icelander, discovered it in A.D. 1001,—bears the name of Cortereals in maps of early date, which are still preserved. The timber with which this region abounded seems to have engaged his special notice, both from its abundance and the sombre character of its verdure, the gloomy primeval forests of fir and pine presenting, doubtless, a strange contrast to the olive and chestnut groves of

his own bright land. The natives he found "a small and friendly people;" but we think he might have repaid their kindness better than by carrying off fifty-seven of their friends and relations on a compulsory visit to Portugal! This first voyage terminated safely, though the southern seamen, who had only hitherto pursued their calling on the warm waters of the Mediterranean or the Indian Ocean, were not a little discomposed and terrified by the piercing winds, sharp snow-storms, and threatening icebergs which visited them before their commander could be induced to quit the shores of America. With high hopes of eventual success, Gaspar Cortereal beguiled the winter season by preparing two vessels for the prosecution of his design; and with the first favouring summer breezes he bade adieu once more to his native land. Ah! was there no sign, no portent, no foreboding to stay his course, and bind him to the home which, once quitted, he should never re-enter? The two vessels bore each other faithful company across the great Atlantic, and Cortereal steered directly for the channel which we now know as "Frobisher's Strait." But at its entrance his doom overtook him. The floating ice which filled the strait separated the vessels, and in a terrible storm which followed, "one was taken, and the other left." The crew of the companion-ship searched long and anxiously for their dauntless commander, but the dark, silent waters yielded no confession of their secret, and the sorrowing survivors came disconsolately back to Portugal. At home the missing adventurer had a brave brother, who needed but the impulse of fraternal anxiety to rouse his soul to deeds of heroic daring. Miguel Cortereal had permitted Gaspar to go forth alone on his glorious path to fame; but the charm of love is mightier than that of ambition, and he waited but the earliest burst of coming spring to weigh anchor with three good ships in search of that dear lost brother. The vessels severed at the entrance of what is now called "Hudson's Bay," and proceeded to examine the different inlets and creeks with which it abounds. They were long divided, but at length two again met, and returned home with tidings rife with terrible uncertainty. And Miguel's own ship, with its fine crew and noble-hearted com-

mander? Nothing of its dark fate has ever been revealed;—of Miguel himself we know that one day during that eventful summer he and his long-sought brother met again, in that far-off land where there are no more partings! A third brother yet remained, and he besieged the throne with petitions for leave to seek, in his turn, for his missing kindred; but the King refused permission. Two of the brightest ornaments of his court had perished, he said, and he could afford to lose no more. It seems a strange ordering of events that the pioneers of modern discovery in the north-east and north-west should in both cases be overtaken by so drear and mysterious a fate; nor do we wonder that, after this tragic commencement, Portugal abandoned the enterprise, which England has prosecuted with varying success from that to the present day.

Of the two first expeditions from our own shores we have only vague and unsatisfactory knowledge. A Mr. Robert Thorne, of Bristol, possessed sufficient influence at the Court of Henry VIII. to induce that Sovereign, in 1527, to send out two vessels, containing "divers cunning men," on a mission of northern discovery. It is greatly to be regretted that no record of this voyage can be found; our gleanings only serve to this amount, —that one of the ships was named "Dominus Vobiscum;" that the "cunning men" numbered amongst them a canon of St. Paul's, skilled in mathematics; that one of the vessels was wrecked in "a deep and dangerous gulf" to the north of Newfoundland; and that the other, having made observations on Cape Breton, and the neighbouring coasts, returned safely to England. The next attempt can scarcely be reckoned among the regular expeditions, since it was not only destitute of any systematic plan, but must have owed its very existence to the most hare-brained folly and ignorance. Thirty young gentlemen—of good family, but for the most part utterly devoid of the knowledge or experience needful to their success as adventurers or colonists —put themselves under the guidance of Mr. Hore, a wealthy citizen, and landed, after a two months' voyage, at Cape Breton. They subsequently proceeded to Newfoundland,—for what object it is difficult to guess;—and there, it would seem, they establish-

ed themselves. Famine, with all its attendant miseries, soon stripped their adventure of whatever romance yet lingered around it; and after living for some time on the fish which they found in the sea-birds' nests, they were driven at last to the horrible expedient of cannibalism. One victim was thus sacrificed, but before the lots were drawn for a second, a French vessel approached the shore, and the English party, with the strength of desperation—for the well-fed, well-armed crew, and the famished colonists, must have been ill-matched antagonists, —gained by some means the mastery of the ship, recommended the ejected sailors to be contented with the barque they had themselves long abandoned, and without delay made a speedy return to England in the vessel they had thus forcibly taken from its lawful owners.

This strange narrative is furnished by Hakluyt, the industrious chronicler of early northern navigation, who professes to derive his information from personal intercourse with Dawbeny and Buts, two of the adventurous volunteers, who were still living at the time he wrote. The latter—Buts—informed him, that on his return he was so altered in person, by the sufferings of those few months, that it was long before his parents could recognize him as their son. The French crew, meanwhile, found their way home in the deserted English vessel bequeathed to them by their victors, and were so loud in their complaints of what certainly was unwarrantable treatment, that Henry VIII., weighing the grievances of both parties, with more regard to strict justice than he evinced in many other cases, refunded from his private purse the loss which the foreigners had sustained.

The attempts at discovery during the reigns of Edward VI. and Mary, took a north-eastern direction, as we have already detailed; but in the days of Elizabeth, the question of the N.W. passage was again revived, and, through the interest of the Earl of Warwick, Martin Frobisher—who had solicited merchants and nobles during fifteen years for means to undertake "the only great thing left undone in the world,"—pursued the search in 1576, with three little vessels of thirty-five, thirty, and ten tons, respectively. During July and the early part of

August, this little squadron coasted Greenland and Labrador, but were prevented by the ice from effecting a landing. They fell in about this time with some Esquimaux, of whom they give the following quaint report: "They are like to Tartars, with long black hair, broad faces, and flat noses, having boats of seal-skin, with a keel of wood within the skin." These natives proved rather shy, and were with difficulty allured on board; unfortunately the English did not reciprocate their distrust, and five sailors, who rowed their visitors back to land, were induced to accompany them still further, and were never again heard of. This first voyage was little remarkable in itself, but its accidental results tended much to the advancement of northern research. Frobisher dignified the coasts he had discovered with the euphonious title of Meta Incognita, and being somewhat perplexed how to satisfy the numerous requests he received for some relic or curiosity from this new country, he broke in pieces a large glittering stone which he had brought back with him, and distributed the fragments. One of these precious pieces accidentally fell into the fire, and when taken out its brilliancy had so increased, that the goldsmiths to whom it was submitted, with one accord pronounced it a genuine specimen of the precious ore, congratulated Frobisher upon his wonderful discovery, and, by their sapient decision, threw all England into a ferment of joyful excitement. No difficulty was experienced *now* in procuring money or vessels. The Queen herself contributed the "Ayde," a ship of 180 tons, furnished means for fitting out the "Michael" and "Gabriel," two smaller vessels of thirty tons each, and granted Frobisher a parting audience, at which he kissed her hand, and received her best wishes for his success.

"A merrie wind" carried the little barques speedily on their way, and they reached without hindrance the region of continual light, which they very justly pronounced to be "particularly cheering to such as wander in unknown seas and long navigations, where both the wind and raging surges do pass their common course." After some delay and bewilderment from fog, Frobisher reached the entrance of the strait which bears his name, and proceeded for some distance in boats among

the floating ice which intercepted the progress of his ships. How lucid were his geographical notions our readers may judge, when we tell them that he firmly believed the land on one side of this channel was Asia, and on the other America! On the American side he erected a column, in honour of his patron, the Earl of Warwick, and encountered a large party of natives, who at first appeared friendly, but soon saluted the English party with such a shower of arrows as put an end to all amicable understanding.

When Frobisher regained his ships outside the strait, he found them tossing at the mercy of a violent gale; the surrounding ice rendered their position one of great peril, and they were forced to tack fourteen times in four hours. A day or two after this, however, all such troubles were forgotten in the delight of discovering a large mass of the glittering stone they so earnestly sought. "We were all rapt with joy," exclaims the narrator of the voyage, Dionese Little, "forgetting both where we were, and what we had suffered." Then follow sundry reflections upon "the glory of man,—to-night looking for death,—to-morrow devising how to satisfy his greedy appetite with gold;" which brevity compels us to omit. In their encounter with the Esquimaux the ship-party had taken one prisoner, through whom they fancied they obtained some clue to the fate of those five seamen who had been lost the preceding year. A party of forty men were sent inland to pursue the natives and force them to confession, but no certain intelligence was gained, and suspicion darkened almost into conviction of the worst kind, on the discovery of a shirt, a girdle, three shoes for contrary feet, and an English canvass doublet, in one of the native boats. A letter, with pen, ink, and paper, for an answer, was left in this boat, and the party returned to the ship enriched only by the capture of two Esquimaux females, one of whom was speedily set at liberty, whilst the other was probably carried to England in company with the prisoner taken in their first encounter. Very little progress towards "Cathay" was made during this summer, but 200 tons of the imaginary gold were secured, and as the delusion regarding it continued, the expedition was considered as emi-

nently successful. A large squadron of fifteen vessels was fitted out in consequence for the summer of 1578, commissioned not only to bring back an untold amount of treasure, but also to take out materials and men to establish a colony on the shores of Meta Incognita—the name bestowed upon all the country surrounding the entrance of Hudson's Bay.

The fate of this grand effort presents no exception to the ordinary doom of all cumbrous expeditions to the stormy north. The "Dennis," a large vessel, was so crushed by an iceberg at the entrance of Frobisher's Strait, that it sank almost before the startled crew could reach the other ships. Nor did these wholly escape disaster. The gale increasing to a storm, huge masses of ice struck the sides of the trembling vessels, whilst all the sailors could do in defence of their "wooden walls," was to suspend planks and poles over each side, with a view to break the force of blows powerful enough to shatter in pieces planks three inches thick. "At length," says the devout old navigator, "it pleased God with his eyes of mercy, to look down from heaven;" the wind subsided, the ice drifted away, and the squadron was enabled to proceed. A thick fog prevented any clear view of the shore, along which they sailed for some considerable way before Frobisher could be convinced they were not actually proceeding up the strait already alluded to. Had he persevered in the course before him, he would doubtless have gained the distinction won by his successor, Hudson, through the discovery of that fine bay which bears his name; but finding this course was really a new one, Frobisher resolutely turned back, and in time reached his former station. Here a consultation was held. The materials brought out for building a house of timber were very incomplete; one portion having sunk in the "Dennis," and another having been destroyed in warding off the ice. Captain Fenton of the "Judith," proposed to brave the winter, with sixty men, in such a hut as could be constructed with the remainder; but the carpenters required two months for such a work, and, with the ice gathering around, the ships could only remain half that time at the most. In despair, Frobisher suggested that some effort at discovery might yet cast a redeeming lustre over their luckless

voyage; but here again his captains perplexed him with doubts, and urged the shortness of the time, and the danger of the intricate channels, so forcibly, that he finally yielded to their opinion, and steered direct for England. What reception they met with on their return, and how their patrons bore their disappointment, we are not told. Frobisher himself followed Sir Francis Drake to the West Indies, commanded one of the largest vessels opposed to the Spanish Armada, and ended his active life while attacking a small French Fort, on behalf of Henry IV., during the war with the League.

A more careful investigation must soon have proved the utter worthlessness of the "glittering stone," since no further mention is made of it; and when sundry London merchants again "cast in their adventure," and sent out John Davis, in 1585, his mission was solely to seek for a north-west passage to India. The two ships with which he was entrusted bore the luminous appellations of "Sunshine," and "Moonshine," and besides all usual and necessary equipments provided for the expedition, a band of music was attached to it, in order, we find, "to cheer and recreate the spirits" of the natives! Before Davis arrived in sight of Greenland, his ships were surrounded by icebergs; and when land at length broke on their view, its aspect was dismal in the extreme. The south-west coast he describes as "deformed, roeky, and mountainous, like a sugar-loaf standing to our sight above the clouds. It towered above the fog like a white mist in the sky, the tops altogether covered with snow, the shore beset with ice, making such irksome noyse, that it was called the Land of Desolation." The very sea which bordered this dreary coast was "blaek and thick like a standing pool," and the voyagers were glad to turn from such a gloomy shore—being prevented all near approach by the ice—and steer through the open water to the north-west, "hoping, through God's mercy," adds the commander, "to find our desired passage." A few days later he again sighted land, which, though the northern part of the same coast, presented a less inhospitable appearance. A body of natives here met a party of the sailors, when the latter advanced towards them, making gestures of friendship, and

dancing merrily to the music of the band. We do not learn if grave John Davis footed it with his shipmates, but the Esquimaux appeared decidedly propitiated by the exhibition of Jack Tar's agility; and the seamen having imitated the signs of the natives, by pointing to the sun, and beating their breasts, a friendly understanding was forthwith established. A few trifling presents served to gain skins, furs, and even the clothing they wore. The next day brought a still larger party, equally eager to maintain this unequal traffic, and the barter continued until a brisk wind carried the strange visitants away from their simple-minded friends. The remainder of the season Davis employed in sailing up a broad channel, twenty or thirty leagues wide, and free from ice, which appeared to tend to the north-west, and afforded him sanguine hopes of accomplishing the often-baffled project. This noble passage still bears the name of its discoverer, and is now familiar to all as Davis's Strait. The approach of winter compelled him to return before he had followed this new track of promise further than sixty leagues; but he managed to inspire those at home with a portion of his own ardent enthusiasm, and so plausibly was the prospect set forth, that no difficulty was found in refitting the vessels, and Davis looked to the approaching summer for complete success.

CHAPTER V.

EARLY VOYAGES IN SEARCH OF THE NORTH-WEST PASSAGE.

On the frozen deep's repose,
'Tis a dark and dreadful hour,
When round the ship the ice-fields close,
And the northern night-clouds lower.
But let the ice drift on!
Let the cold blue desert spread!
Their course with mast and flag is done,—
Even *there* sleep England's dead.

MRS. HEMANS.

Thy soul was nerved with more than mortal force,
Bold mariner upon a chartless sea,
With none to second, none to solace thee!
Alone, who daredst keep thy resolute course
Through the broad waste of waters drear and dark,
'Mid wrathful skies, and howling winds, and worse—
The prayer, the taunt, the threat, the mutter'd curse,
Of all thy brethren in that fragile barque.

TUPPER.

THE "Sunshine" and the "Moonshine" were joined in this their second voyage by the "Mermaid," a vessel of 120 tons, and left the British coast under the control of the same steady hand which had guided them so well during the previous summer. Stormy weather prevented the expedition from reaching its former anchorage—lat. 64°—until the 29th of June, 1586, though they were within sight of the southern extremity of Greenland on the 15th ult. On landing, Davis and his men were immediately recognised by the natives with whom they had been familiar during the first visit, who now crowded round the sailors with an abundance of signs and unintelligible greetings. Davis confirmed these friendly feelings in the Esquimaux by the munificent gift of twenty knives, which converted the chief men of the tribe from acquaintances into devoted

adherents. For some time the natives occupied themselves harmlessly, in foot-races, wrestling and leaping matches, with their new associates; but as they grew more familiar they greatly shocked the latter by "many and solemn incantations," the mention of which Davis couples with a devout expression of thanks for their failure. During the time spent on this coast, the commander undertook an expedition into the interior of the country; here the "broad river," which he proposed to follow to its source, proved to be only a shallow creek, and though he tried to mount various eminences suitable for observation, "the mountains," he says, "were so many and so mighty, that his purpose availed not." On his return to the coast he was assailed by the angry complaints of his men against the Esquimaux, whose thievish propensities had long irritated the sailors, though, to the commander, such acts had only "ministered an occasion of laughter." The system of depredation had now, however, grown serious; even the cables and boats belonging to the expedition were not safe; and after vainly endeavouring to intimidate, by having two pieces fired over their heads, "which," says the narrator, "did sore amaze them,"—some loose iron being abstracted ten hours afterwards, and kindness and gifts equally failing to work a reform,—the chief ringleader, a "master of mischief," was detained as prisoner, and his companions fled precipitately before the advance of their former allies. A brisk wind favoured the project of the adventurous captain for pushing across the bay, and on the 17th of July, he summoned his crew on deck to gaze on the strange new country which they were rapidly approaching. Far as the eye could reach extended a high line of coast, diversified by numerous creeks and inlets, and lofty mountains stood boldly out in their snowy majesty against the clear background of the sky, excluding effectually all view of the scenery beyond them. Already the elated navigator saw himself hailed as a renowned discoverer—already he had peopled this *terra incognita* with a new race—already he had seen in fancy beyond that mountainous range, sheltered valleys whose scanty verdure looked enchanting to the eye, wearied with the sterile whiteness of the long coast-line—already he beheld this new-found territory

explored, named, and defined in the chart of these northern seas which lay spread out on his cabin-table—when a cry of disappointment from those on deck hastily summoned him to the mortifying discovery, that the land of his proud hopes was in reality nothing but "a most mighty and strange quantity of ice!" The centre of Baffin's Bay is often filled with an immense tract of ice for the greatest portion of the season, and this mistake on the part of the explorers was the natural result of their ignorance as to the character of these "floes." After following for some days the coast of this enormous field, a fog came on, during which ropes, sails, and cordage were alike fast frozen, and the seamen, hopeless of accomplishing the passage, warned their commander that "by his over-boldness he might cause their widows and fatherless children to give him bitter curses." Unable wholly to resist this appeal, Davis left the "Mermaid" and "Sunshine" to return home, and pushed on in the "Moonlight" with the boldest men of the three crews. In this ship he reached the opposite shore of Baffin's Bay at the beginning of August, and coasted southward from lat. 66° 30′, in hopes of finding some opening westward; he did not attempt either Cumberland or Frobisher's Straits, however, and, by some unaccountable oversight, missed the magnificent channel opening into Hudson's Bay. Off the coast of Labrador, two of his sailors were killed by the natives; and September being ushered in with a violent tempest, Davis gave up further attempts for the year, and returned to England. One more chance was granted to his earnest entreaties, and the 16th of June, 1587, saw him once more nearing Greenland, in his old-tried barque the "Sunshine," in company with the "Elizabeth" and a pinnace. The supplies for this voyage being furnished under the express condition that the attendant expenses should be lightened as much as possible by fishing at all suitable times, the two large ships were stationed for that object near the part of the coast which they had formerly visited; whilst Davis steered forward in the small vessel, which alone remained at his disposal, and which must have been ill-suited for such an enterprise, since it was found to "move through the water like a cart drawn by oxen."

In the face of such discouragements this earnest-minded navigator reached lat. 72° N. by the 28th of June, and named the point at which he touched "Sanderson's Hope:" from thence he tacked to the W., in which direction his course was arrested by the mighty ice barrier which had so deceived him and his crew on the previous voyage. Time and perseverance wrought out a deliverance here, and by the 19th July he had crossed to the opposite side of the Strait which bears his name, and sailed for two days up Cumberland Strait, which, it will be remembered, he discovered on his first expedition. It is difficult to imagine what prevented Davis from following up this promising commencement, but the fact is on record; he returned to the main channel in the belief that Cumberland Strait was an enclosed gulf, and, after passing the entrance to Hudson's Bay without an effort to investigate it, repaired to the rendezvous appointed for the whaling vessels to meet him on their way to England. To the consternation of Davis and his men, they discovered that their unworthy companions had spread their sails across the Atlantic, unmindful of the peril to which the small pinnace would be necessarily subjected in braving alone the homeward voyage. The courage of these stout sailors did not fail them, and by the good Providence which ever befriends the true-hearted, the little barque—hardly sea-worthy, short of provisions, and with barely half a hogshead of water on board—lived through the storms and dangers of the Atlantic; and its crew furled their sails at length in safety.

Manifold must have been the perils and privations of that homeward voyage; want of space forbids our even faintly sketching them; but we love to record the fact, wherein fortitude and courage triumphed over such an array of physical suffering and impending danger. Harder than the war of the elements and the desertion of his companions, was the after experience of disappointment to the energetic voyager. In vain did Davis strive to promote the despatch of another expedition, for which he prophesied, with the sanguine temper of a true sailor, certain and infallible success. The spirit of the nation was chilled by three successive disappointments; and all that

even Mr. Sanderson—his most steady and influential friend—could offer by way of consolation, was a globe made by Molyneux, the first artist of that day, setting forth fully all Davis's discoveries. This curious production of early art is still preserved in the Middle Temple Library.

After a pause of fifteen years, northern discovery again found favour in the eyes of the merchant-princes of London, and Captain George Weymouth set sail for India by the north-west route, with two vessels, the "Godspeed" and "Discovery," under the united auspices of the Muscovy and Levant Companies, A.D. 1602. Passing Greenland—which appeared to him "a main bank of ice"—Weymouth gained sight of the American coast by the end of June, and proceeded by the usual track up Davis's Straits. The progress of this expedition was greatly retarded by fogs, which prevented all knowledge of the real position of the ships, and often exposed them to great danger from their unknown proximity to bergs and icefields. On one occasion a party having landed on a "floe" to procure ice for melting, imagined themselves near the land from the sound of the waves as if breaking upon an adjacent shore, but examination proved it to be only "the noise of a great quantity of ice, which was very loathsome to be heard." The impenetrable mist around seemed rather to thicken than disperse, and as progress was out of the question when they could not see two ships' length before them, the Captain issued orders for the sails to be taken down. So well had the strong northern frost done its work, however, that even in "this chiefest time of summer they could not be moved," and, upon renewing the attempt the following day, it was only by cutting away the ice from the ropes that they succeeded. The sailors, unused to the severities of an Arctic climate, took panic at these symptoms of premature winter, and much secret consultation led to a unanimous conspiracy to overpower the captain, confine him as a prisoner to his cabin, and "bear up the helm for England." Weymouth, acting with the prompt energy which formed a striking feature of his character, on the first intimation of this design assembled the whole crew, with "Mr. Cartwright, the preacher," and "Mr. Cobreth, the master," as

witnesses upon his side, boldly taxed them with the intended mutiny, and appealed to them for an explanation of such conduct. The crew maintained a resolute position, but without violence in word or act; they produced in writing their reasons for the step, insisted on a change of course, but pledged themselves to serve with heart and will in any attempt at discovery in a more southerly direction. Resistance to such a powerful and united movement was worse than useless, and Weymouth was too sensible a man for one moment to attempt it. The helm was "put about" by the men, while he retired to his cabin to deliberate, and though he punished the ringleaders afterwards, he was wise enough to pass over the offence at the time. The remainder of the fleeting summer was spent in sailing up a promising inlet, which seemed to afford good hope of the wished-for north-west passage.

According to the commander's own calculations the two ships penetrated 100 leagues up this channel, before a violent storm drove them back to the open sea, but from his own account of his course the distance is manifestly overstated. This part of his progress forms by far the most important feature of the voyage, and some consideration is due to the man who nearly forestalled Hudson in his great discovery; and in reality paved the way for his more fortunate successor, by drawing public attention to this inlet, now so well known as the entrance to Hudson's Bay. A terrible storm marked the homeward voyage, but "the Lord delivered his unworthy servants," and they reached England in all safety.

A melancholy issue awaited the next attempt. In 1606, the Muscovy and East India merchants took heart once more, and sent out John Knight—a brave sailor who had gained experience in the Greenland seas—with a vessel of forty tons. Misfortunes attended this voyage from its commencement; the ship was detained in the Pentland Frith for upwards of a fortnight by stress of weather; during her passage across the Atlantic she was cruelly used by wave and wind; and finally, as she neared the coast of Labrador, was so crushed and bruised by the icebergs with which she came in contact, that the crew were

thankful to take shelter in the first cove that presented itself, and lost no time in drawing their frail craft high up on the dry sand beyond the tide mark, where she might undergo the necessary repairs. This position, however, proving far from commodious or satisfactory, the captain manned his boat next day, and while the rest of the crew were briskly at work, sailed across to the other side of the inlet in hope of discovering some more convenient anchorage. Leaving all the men, except the mate and one other, in charge of the boat, Knight with his two companions landed to explore the strange coast. They climbed the steep acclivity of the shore, lingered for a moment on the summit of the cliffs—their figures showing clear against the sky, as they exchanged gestures of greeting and farewell with the party in the boat,—and then they disappeared on the other side, and the eyes of their messmates had looked on them for the last time—for they never came back again! Those who remained waited on the shore till evening with their boat, marvelling much that their three companions returned not; muskets, trumpets, and earnest voices praying for some response, all failed to evoke an answering sound, and when evening had darkened into night, and eleven o'clock arrived without any sign or signal of the missing party, they returned sadly enough to the ship with these dreary tidings. During this melancholy night—which the forlorn crew passed in alternate lamentations over the loss of their brave commander and comrades, and plans for search and rescue, —the ice had so accumulated in the channel which poor Knight crossed the day before, that though the boat was speedily rigged for the expedition, and the party who occupied it were one and all uncontrollably impatient to start, the morning light convinced the most daring of the impossibility of venturing into such an ice-encumbered sea. Thus passed two miserable days, the suffering of which was greatly aggravated by the inactivity in which these restless ardent spirits were forced to remain.

On the night of the last, Saturday, June 28, the little encampment was furiously attacked by a large party of natives, who commenced the assault by launching a shower of arrows through the darkness, and, coming into closer quarters, crowded into the

shallop, surrounded the little camp, and broke the stillness of the night by wild and discordant cries. The English, startled from their sleep, and bewildered by the sudden and unexpected onset, collected themselves as none but English sailors would, and although they were only eight in number, and the natives, at the most moderate computation, must have exceeded fifty, they marched out in such formidable array, with a large dog at their head, and the unanimous volley with which they greeted their visitors did such execution, that the invaders, appalled at such an unexpected reception, made off with all possible speed. The ice detained them within musket-range for some little time, and the shots by which the sailors continued to express their vexation at this disturbance of their night's rest, took good effect, as the retreating party were heard "crying to each other very sore." The aggressors are described as a diminutive, tawny-coloured, flat-nosed, beardless, and *man-eating* people. Of the latter attribute those who thus depicted them had happily no opportunity of judging.

Several days had now elapsed since the loss of the master, and this attack, while it left little doubt of his fate, proved only too clearly the danger which surrounded them, and the certain destruction to which a longer tarriance would expose the whole party. These considerations induced them without loss of time to brave the homeward voyage, though their vessel was minus a rudder, and the leaks were so numerous that the pumps were worked without even half an hour's cessation during the three weeks which elapsed between the time of setting sail and reaching Newfoundland. Here they received most friendly hospitality, their vessel was again made sea-worthy, and after a good passage they carried their tale of disasters to headquarters in London.

The next individual in the well-filled list of these Arctic heroes, has already become familiar to us in the career of N.E. and Polar voyages, but it is by the search for the N.W. route that Hudson has made himself a name and memory in the hearts of his countrymen, and this no less by his grand discovery than by his dauntless perseverance and energy through discord and insubordination, harder to battle with than the perils of

wind and tide; while all that is gentle and pitiful in the human heart must shrink and tremble at the dark fate which ended the eventful career of this bold leader in northern discovery.

Hudson commenced his eventful voyage under the patronage of Sir John Wolstenholme and Sir Dudley Digges, who do not seem, however, to have contributed much beyond their names to the expedition, which was fitted out on a very inexpensive scale, consisting only of one vessel of fifty-five tons, provisioned for six months, and manned by a crew who speedily proved themselves in every way unworthy of the name of British sailors. The ship left the Thames on the 17th April, 1610, and after rounding Cape Farewell, the commander found himself by the end of June in the same broad channel which Weymouth had already in some measure explored. The navigation of these straits was very intricate, large masses of ice encumbered the surface of the water, and the danger which menaced the vessel of being drifted by one of the frequent eddies or currents against some of the numerous grounded ice-islands, was rendered yet more imminent by the dense fogs to which they were continually subject.

Amidst these difficulties, the crew—shamefully different from the brave, hardy men who had shared so unmurmuringly the perils of Willoughby and Barentz—repined and despaired, and their own companion, Abacuk Pricket, who, by his own narrative, stands convicted as a mean-spirited coward, confesses that many of them fell sick through fear. Their dauntless commander, willing to rouse them by kindly means from this faint-heartedness, assembled the entire crew, spread out his chart before their eyes, pointed out the undeniable fact that they had outstripped all former navigators in this direction by a hundred leagues, and finally appealed to the malecontents themselves, whether, with such a prospect of success before them—almost within their reach—they would tamely relinquish it, and return? Had any latent nobility of soul existed in the breasts of his sullen auditors, it would have kindled into flame at this manly, energetic address; but though one or two caught a momentary glow from his enthusiasm, and spoke "honestly respecting the good of the action," the majority voted for return at all risks, and Hudson, disgusted

by the total absence of enterprise and ambition which this decision displayed, dismissed them from his cabin, and followed his own course. Pressing forward along this unknown channel, they reached at last a fair island, covered with vegetation, and peopled by large herds of deer and flocks of sea-fowl. Here the indolent crew craved leave to rest and enjoy themselves, and their enmity to their commander was not a little increased by his refusal; though he had on his side cogent arguments, in the shortness of the yet remaining summer, and the necessity of pressing forward, to reach, if possible, some more temperate clime before winter fairly set in.

A few days more passed on, spent by the crew in murmurs and discontent, and by the commander in earnest longing and ardent expectations of success; and then the repinings were checked, and the ambitious dream was satisfied, for the shores between which they sailed suddenly trended away to the right and left, and revealed a boundless blue expanse of water, rippling and sparkling in the morning sunshine. Hudson's Bay lay before them, but the discoverer himself was happy in the belief that the north-west passage was indeed accomplished, and that his glad eyes looked upon the bright waters of the Pacific.

It was now the beginning of August, and the crew considered that the passage had been accomplished, and nothing prevented a speedy return home; but Hudson was bent upon completing the adventure, and wintering, if possible, on the sunny shores of Cathay itself. For the next three months, therefore, they tracked the south coast of this inland sea, considering it as the northern boundary of America. November arrived before they had reached any comfortable haven; the ice closed round, and the explorers were left to brave the winter without possessing among them that spirit of cheerful unanimity which would have enabled them contentedly to endure the hardships it entailed. Their six months' supply of provisions was now nearly exhausted, and though "Providence dealt mercifully" in sending white partridges and fish, they were reduced ere the spring to eat frogs and moss. The time must have past drearily enough to poor Hudson, who not only shared in all their privations, but was

regarded by all as the cause; but conscious rectitude, and the earnest following out of a great purpose, would sustain a noble-hearted man in even yet more trying circumstances; and amidst the loneliness of that unfriendly companionship, he may perhaps have realized in feeling what a modern writer has so forcibly expressed in words—"The isolated state is the highest grandeur upon earth, if a man knows that the Supreme Judge is his friend, or at least his one confidant."

The spring, to which Hudson had looked forward as the termination of all this bodily and mental suffering, brought the dark tragedy to its conclusion. The ship was again afloat; and when the day broke on the 21st of June, 1611, the captain came forth from his cabin, refreshed by sleep and strong in body and mind, to meet the duties and trials of the day. As he stepped on deck, his arms were suddenly pinioned, and he found himself helplessly in the power of three of his men. He looked round the deck in momentary dismay. On every side were surly, cruel-featured men, their faces darkened by evil passions, and their hands fully armed. Inquiry, expostulation, entreaty, and command, failed alike to elicit a word, and the unfortunate commander at last resigned himself as only a brave man can, and looked on calmly at the ominous preparations which were going forward. A small open boat was in waiting, and into this, Hudson—his hands being previously tied behind his back—was lowered; some powder and shot and the carpenter's box came next, followed by the carpenter himself, a strong, brave fellow, Hudson's one devoted adherent among the rebellious crew. The boat's cargo was completed by all the sick and infirm sailors, who could be of no use on board the ship; and, with an unheard of refinement of cruelty, were thus abandoned by their messmates, while their presence nullified the slender chance of escape which a vigorous crew might have afforded their unfortunate commander. If any thing could still further aggravate the iniquity of this most atrocious proceeding, it would be the fact that Henry Green, the chief ringleader, had gained admittance into the crew by Hudson's humanity, after having been cast off by all his friends, and was regarded with particular favour by his kind deceived patron.

All being ready, at a given signal the boat, with its unhappy freight, was cast adrift, the sails of the vessel were spread, and the last despairing cry for mercy was borne faintly past the mutineers by the breeze that whistled through their cordage, and carried them briskly over the foaming billows on their homeward course. The evil deed was effectually done—no tidings or traces of the deserted commander were ever gained, and until that day when "the sea shall give up her dead," and the murderers and their victim shall once again stand face to face, it must remain one of those secrets to which Time, the great revealer of mysteries, brings no elucidation.

CHAPTER VI.

EARLY VOYAGES IN SEARCH OF THE NORTH-WEST PASSAGE.

In storm and in sunshine,
Whatever assail,
We'll onward and conquer,
And never say fail!

ANON.

BUT the mutineers did not escape wholly unpunished. The strictest search through the private cabin of their unfortunate commander brought no hidden store of provisions to light, and during a fortnight's imprisonment among the ice, they sustained life by the cocklegrass found on a neighbouring island. Having reached at last Cape Digges—"the Cape where fowles do breed," as Pricket expressed it—their guns procured food in plenty, and they established friendly relations with a party of natives who met them on landing. "God so blinded Henry Green," adds the conscience-stricken narrator, that he believed their professions of cordiality, and a large party were lured on shore and taken at a disadvantage by their treacherous allies. Green died before the boat could be pushed from the shore; two others expired soon after they reached the ship, and a fourth two days after; Pricket himself escaped, severely wounded. Thus perished the *chief* actors in that infamous conspiracy, by a doom as certain and unexpected as that to which they had consigned their victim! Ivet, the last survivor of the ringleaders, sunk under the hardships of the homeward voyage, which was performed under the extremity of famine; their whole stock of provisions being only 300 birds, shot off Cape Digges. Half a bird was the daily allowance of each man, and it was considered an indulgence to be allowed to fry them in grease obtained from candles, which were distributed every week for this purpose.

The account of the great expanse of sea which had been reached stirred public curiosity not a little, and Sir Thomas Button set sail the next year with Pricket and Bylot—another of the mutineers—as guides. He pushed boldly across the bay, and to his great mortification, instead of reaching Japan, found himself confronted by a range of bleak coast,—the western boundary of the great bay,—which he named in his disappointment, "Hope Checked." He examined the western and northern shores without finding any indication of a channel in the right direction; but the London merchants, unwilling to abandon all their highly raised hopes on his single testimony, sent out, in 1614, Captain Gibbons; who was pronounced by Button himself "not short of any man that ever yet he carried to sea." This voyage did not add much to his reputation; all he achieved was an entanglement among some loose ice, which ended in his spending the whole summer blocked up in a bay on the coast of Labrador; named in compliment to the exploit, "Gibbons His Hole!" Next went Bylot, now promoted to the rank of commander himself, with Baffin as his pilot. He too skirted the northern shores of the bay, and came back in despair of any success from efforts in that quarter. The same men were sent out again in 1616, with directions to try their fortune beyond Davis's Straits. Of this voyage—one of the most important of the series, if we regard results as the criterion—we possess only a few meagre details furnished by Baffin himself. They followed the Greenland coast from Sanderson's Hope northwards, and made the circuit of the immense bay now called Baffin's, naming the different points they passed after the chief patrons of the expedition, who are still commemorated in "Cape Dudley Digges," and Wolstenholme, Smith, Jones, and Lancaster Sounds. It is curious to notice the cursory indifferent manner in which Baffin speaks of these several inlets, upon which he never seems to have bestowed a thought of investigation; indeed, directly after mentioning Lancaster Sound—the highway to fields of later western discovery—he observes that his hopes of finding a western passage diminished daily! His report of this vast enclosed bay, with no indication of a western channel, greatly dis-

couraged any further attempts, and the next effort was made by Jens Munk, a Dane, who set out with two good vessels, under the patronage of his king, Christian IV., 1619. This worthy met with no better success than his predecessors in his survey of the coasts of Hudson's Bay, and was fain to take up winter quarters at the mouth of Chesterfield inlet. Here the scurvy—that scourge of sailors—began its ravages, and, ignorant of the right way of treating it, the only remedy employed was spirits; this soon frightfully aggravated the disorder, the number of sufferers increased daily, provisions began to fail, and when Munk, after four days spent in his lonely hut without food or solace, crept feebly out, he met two miserable shadow-like beings, the sole survivors from the fifty-two fine healthy men, who had set sail with him from Denmark. How these three men gradually rallied into strength again, how they rigged out the smallest of their vessels, and navigated it with so few hands, and how, finally, after a voyage fraught with perils, they reached home once more, would tax time and space too much to relate. King Christian, discouraged by their failure, sent out no more expeditions, and England, believing nothing farther was to be hoped from Baffin's Bay, confined all efforts to Hudson's Bay. In this direction Captains Fox and James set out and returned in 1631–2, without accomplishing any thing. Knight and Barlow were despatched on the same errand, 1719. Not returning as expected, Captain Scroggs was vainly sent the next summer to search for them, and their fate remained a mystery for fifty years, till the wrecks of two vessels, discovered on Marble-island, afforded a probable solution. In 1741, Captain Middleton sailed up Roe's Welcome, tried Wager Inlet and Repulse Bay in vain, and returned home. His patron, Mr. Dobbs, discrediting Middleton's report, so wrought upon the public mind that £10,000 was subscribed for a new equipment, and £20,000 offered as the reward of success.

Captains Moor and Smith set out with it, 1746, ascertained the already well-known fact that the Wager afforded no passage, and—came back! The Admiralty papers contain notices of the armed brig "Lion" being sent out in 1776 and 1777, to

meet Captain Cook, should he succeed in making the passage by Behring's Strait, but nothing was accomplished by either of the commanders. We have now concluded the record of early N.W. voyages, and it only remains to give a brief sketch of what has been accomplished in this direction during the present century.

We crave our readers' pardon if we have appeared to dwell too long on unsuccessful attempts, or to prolong our narrative unnecessarily by repetition of detail. In reply to the last charge, we would remind them, that sameness must unavoidably attach to any description of successive voyages undertaken for one object, in a particular quarter, within a given space of time; yet had we altogether omitted such details the residue would have been a mere dry catalogue of vessels, commanders, and results—still more uninteresting, we submit, than the narrative in its more lengthened form. With regard to the first objection, we consider it the duty of all faithful historians to pass over no earnest effort after knowledge and advancement, merely because it fails of success.

One of the most beautiful features in the protracted struggle of Arctic discovery, is the way in which one party after another go bravely out, nerved to endure all extremities, and undaunted by the sufferings, or perils, or disappointments, or even the death of their predecessors, like soldiers in a hard-won battle, who march boldly to the breach, though the path they tread be paved with the bodies of their comrades. It is because these northern veterans were truly heroes, "without fear and without reproach," that we should record their deeds and cherish their memory; and if our readers have condemned our prolixity, let their national pride in the gallant achievements of the early commanders of the British navy, plead our best excuse.

CHAPTER VII.

MODERN VOYAGES TO THE NORTH POLE.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around;
It crack'd and growl'd, and roar'd and howl'd,
Like noises in a swound.

COLERIDGE.

ALONG the course of more than two centuries our readers have patiently gone with us—closing up a series of expeditions with the date 1741. From that period we now pass at once to within eighty years of the present time, and if our gentle readers will accompany us, we will imagine ourselves on a bright summer's morning, surveying the various sail assembled at the Nore, like birds preparing to spread their wings for a distant flight. A pleasant breeze ruffles the surface of the water, and stirs the pennons floating from the masts of two vessels lying at anchor. They are the "Racehorse," and the "Carcase," under Captain Phipps, windbound at the mouth of the Thames since the 21st of May, and only awaiting a favourable breeze to proceed direct to the North Pole. Brave hearts and true are on board; never did bolder officers command a finer crew; and among the former stands the young cockswain of the "Carcase," Horatio Nelson, destined in after years to shed such glory on the annals of England, and to establish the supremacy of her naval power throughout the world! We can see the busy sailors running to and fro, swarming up the rigging, swinging from rope to rope, now lost amid the voluminous folds of an enormous sail, now appearing again upon the end of a small upper-yard, which to our eye looks scarce bigger than a hair. Now the broad white sails unfurl in the sunlight—now the wild sailors'

chorus is wafted faintly to our ear, as the ponderous anchor rises slowly and unwillingly to the surface of the water—now a long, deafening cheer breaks from the light-hearted tars, swelled and prolonged by the multitudes that line the shore, and so the ships take their course over the "vasty deep." All speed to the venturous mariners who, on this 4th of June, 1773, have thus inaugurated the career of modern northern discovery!

Resuming our narrative in the appropriate past tense, we can report but indifferent success to the efforts of Captain Phipps, whose mission was less to attempt the direct northern route to India, than to penetrate, if possible, to the Pole itself. The ice to the north of Spitzbergen baffled every endeavour to proceed, and after vainly trying east and west to find a passage round, or amongst it, the ships at last became surrounded, and when thus ice-bound, little chance seemed to offer for their escape. Saws made very slight impression on ice twelve feet thick, and the slow advance such means would effect towards the west, was more than counteracted by the rapid progress eastward of the ice-field in which they were imbedded. Under these circumstances an effort was made to drag the boats over the ice, in the hope of reaching some Dutch whalers returning homewards; as the English had neither provisions nor equipments to brave the winter. This was slow work, however, and before many miles had been accomplished, a providential thaw, together with a brisk N.E. wind, enabled the ships to fight their way again into clear water. After this deliverance, and a brief refit in the harbour of Smeeremberg, they made a speedy return to England.

We are indebted for some of the most interesting modern researches connected with the Polar regions to Mr. Scoresby, who, familiarized from early youth with the perils and adventures of the whale fishery, combined much practical knowledge with an earnest love and desire for the advancement of science. To him belongs the distinction of having advanced nearer to the Pole than any previous voyager. In 1806, he attained lat. 81° 30′, when a distance of only five hundred geographical miles

lay between him and the Pole. Nor must we overlook his examination of the eastern coast of Greenland—previously little known—which alone would furnish subject-matter for a most interesting narrative.

In 1818, another attempt to reach the Pole was made by Captain Buchan, with the ships "Dorothea" and "Trent." After much difficulty, these vessels gained lat. 80° 34′, north of Spitzbergen; but were obliged speedily to withdraw, and try their fortune off the western edge of the pack. Here, however, a wild war of ice and waves prevailed, so that choice and necessity equally induced the bold experiment of dashing through it, to take shelter in the pack. First went the "Dorothea," and then the "Trent," whose crew seemed to a man imbued with the dauntless spirit of the Lieutenant in command—Franklin—the gallant officer whose fate we have now to deplore. A dreadful pause preceded the critical moment. "Each person," says Beechey, in his narrative, "instinctively secured his own hold, and, with his eyes fixed upon the masts, awaited in breathless anxiety the moment of concussion. It soon arrived—the brig, cutting her way through the light ice, came in violent contact with the main body. In an instant we all lost our footing, the masts bent with the impetus, and the cracking timbers from below bespoke a pressure which was calculated to awaken our serious apprehensions." The gloominess of the scene and circumstances was not cheered by the dolorous tolling of the ship's great bell, which never sounded of itself in the roughest gale, but now was so swung by the violent motion of the ship, that its deep tones pealed forth like a death-knell, and the officers, fearing the awakened superstition of the crew, ordered it to be muffled. A few hours released the vessels from their imprisonment, but the "Dorothea" was found to be completely disabled. A short time at Fairhaven in Spitzbergen was spent in necessary repairs, and even then she was unfit for any further service than the voyage to England. Franklin volunteered to prosecute the enterprise with the "Trent" alone, but the Admiralty orders opposed such a proceeding, and the vessels returned home in company.

Five years later, the nature of the northern ice was again tested by the "Griper," gun-brig. On board this little ship was Captain (now Colonel) Sabine, whose name is so deservedly distinguished by various arduous scientific experiments. He had before this been engaged in an important series regarding the comparative length of the pendulum as affected by the principle of attraction, both at Sierra Leone and the West Indies. A similar course of observations in the higher latitudes being very desirable, the "Griper," under the command of Captain Clavering was commissioned for this service; and, after a short delay at Hammerfest, in Norway, Captain Sabine was landed on a small island to the north of Hakluyt's Headland, Spitzbergen. Here Captain Clavering left him, with a party of eight men, and the launch stored with six months' provisions, as a resource in case of accident overtaking the "Griper," which now spread her sails and stood boldly for the Pole. Clavering was ultimately compelled, however, like his predecessors, to retire baffled before the unyielding ice, which closed all approach to a higher latitude than 80° 20′. The next station occupied by Captain Sabine was one of two small islands off the east coast of Greenland, named, in commemoration of the experiments carried on there, Pendulum Islands. Not a trace of civilisation now remains on this desolate eastern coast, where, in A. D. 1400, there existed such a flourishing Danish colony, with its cathedral—within which seventeen bishops were enthroned in succession—its sixteen parishes, and its two hundred and eighty farms. The wilderness has reclaimed its own, and possesses it in tenfold desolation. Clavering describes the northern point where they landed as a spot to which "Spitzbergen was a paradise." During an excursion of thirteen days, which brought them to the shores of the great bay or basin discovered by, and named after the old Dutch voyager, Gael Hamkes, in 1654, they met only one dwindled tribe of Esquimaux, numbering in all twelve persons; and though they followed the coast south to Cape Parry, the aspect still remained the same. The little "Griper" suffered a terrible storm on her way home, the blows she received would have "knocked a Greenlandman (whaler) in pieces," according to her captain's

own opinion; and the anchors with which she was moored to an iceberg, gave way one after another, till before daybreak she was left helplessly to the mercy of the gale. However, she battled through, and after some weeks' detention at Drontheim, carried her crew and passengers in safety back to England.

In 1827, Captain Parry—whose qualifications as a northern voyager might be guessed from the fact that, in the preceding nine years, he had accomplished four voyages and passed four winters in the arctic seas—laid before the Admiralty a plan for reaching the North Pole by boat and sledge travelling over the ice. Novel and daring as was the scheme, it appeared so feasible, especially under such able management, that Parry was speedily despatched in the "Hecla," which was to be housed in some safe cove in Spitzbergen, while her captain prosecuted his experiment. Two strong, flat-bottomed boats, twenty feet long and seven broad, were constructed for the enterprise, and each fitted with provisions, nautical instruments, a bamboo mast, a sail (which also served as an awning), fourteen paddles, a steer-oar, boat-hooks, &c. These boats were available for dragging over the ice when necessary, though they could not supply the place of the four sledges which conveyed baggage and provisions. Eight reindeer were taken on board at Hammerfest, to facilitate still further the plan of sledge-travelling; but the first view of the ice showed how totally useless they would be, and as no further mention is made of them, it is probable they met the doom to which they were reserved from the first in case of necessity, and did good service to the hungry sailors, in the form of "savoury meat." The ice-fields over which Parry and his men were to travel, little accorded with Mr. Scoresby's description, on which he had founded so much of his scheme. "I once saw," says Mr. Scoresby, "a field that was so free from either fissure or hummock, that I imagine, had it been free from snow, a coach might have been driven many leagues over it, in a direct line, without obstruction or danger." This ice, on the contrary, was composed of loose, rugged masses, to cross which the boats were unladed, and four, five, and six journeys backward and forward over the same ground was the necessary consequence.

In some places the ice took the form of sharp pointed crystals, which cut the boots like penknives; in others, sixteen or eighteen inches of soft snow made the work of boat-dragging both fatiguing and tedious; and one day, when heavy rain melted the surface of the ice, four hours of vigorous effort accomplished only half a mile. Sometimes the men were obliged, in dragging the boat, to crawl on all-fours, to make any progress at all; and one day—which may serve as a sample—five hours' work accomplished an advance of a mile and a half, though at least ten miles had been traversed in carrying the provisions, &c., and the boats had been launched and hauled up four several times, and dragged over no less than twenty-five separate pieces of ice! All these discouragements and labours our brave countrymen bore not only with courage, but with cheerfulness; and when after a hard night's labour they lay down to rest, more jokes were cracked, more stories told, and more hearty peals of laughter rang out through the clear, cold air, than are heard round many a warm fireside in England. Parry adopted the plan of night-travelling because the snow was harder then; because they thus obtained the greatest amount of warmth during the hours of sleep, when it was most needed; and most of all, because, while the constant light afforded them every facility for travelling, they thus escaped in some measure that violent inflammation of the eyes known by the name of snow-blindness, which the glare of the snow in full daytime renders it almost impossible to escape. It may be imagined how difficult it was, in this inverted order of things, to distinguish day from night; even the officers were constantly making mistakes, and several of the men honestly confessed that they never knew night from day during the whole time of the expedition! The party generally rose at the sounding of a bugle in the evening, had prayers, changed their fur-lined sleeping-dresses for travelling ones made of strong blue box-cloth, breakfasted upon hot cocoa and biscuit, packed the sledges, and set off. After five hours' travelling, they stopped for an hour, and dined off pemmican,—a kind of pounded meat prepared for the use of the navy,—of which nine ounces formed the daily allowance for each man, and then their

toil recommenced, and was continued for six or even seven hours. When morning came, they halted "for the night," as they phrased it, hauled up the boats, changed their generally dripping garments, ate their supper, smoked their pipes, and after a while set the watch—which was regularly kept, both against bears, and for the purpose of drying the wet clothes—and lay down to rest.

For some days, Parry and his officers were at a loss how to account for the strange contradiction which every observation showed between the latitude and the record of actual distance. Thus, on the 20th July, he says, "great was our mortification in finding that our latitude, by observation at noon, was only 82° 36′ 52″, being less than *five* miles to the northward of our place at noon on the 17th, since which time we had certainly travelled *twelve* in that direction." And on the 26th, they were bewildered to find themselves three miles *southward* of the observation taken on the 22nd, since which they had certainly travelled ten or eleven due north. The ice which they travelled was in reality drifting to the south at the rate of more than four miles a-day! When this fact was ascertained, the hopelessness of any further effort in a northerly direction became apparent; and after halting for one whole day, to allow the weary sailors the rest and refreshment they so much needed, Parry commenced his return amidst the general regrets of officers and men, who, though they saw the impossibility of accomplishing the scheme, yet had identified themselves with its success too fully not to feel the bitterest disappointment at its failure. The highest latitude gained was 82° 45′, and the distance journeyed—taking the frequent retracings of the road at a very moderate computation—was at least six hundred and sixty-eight miles; which distance in a direct line would have taken them nearly to the Pole itself. The number of miles traversed in going and returning, Parry estimates as eleven hundred and twenty-seven. The return was easy in comparison to the outward journey; the glare of the sun was no longer in their faces, and the southward drift so facilitated their progress, that, of the forty-eight days during which they were absent from the vessel, thirty-three were consumed in the out-

ward, and only fifteen on the homeward journey. Hecla Cove was reached without any remarkable adventure, and their good little barque bore them safely home before the winter. Since this voyage, interest and effort have been alike concentrated on the north-west passage, and the avenues to the Pole are likely, for some time longer at least, to remain unexplored.

CHAPTER VIII.

RECENT NORTH-WEST EXPEDITIONS.

> Even so doth God protect us if we be
> Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and waters roll,
> Strength to the brave, and power, and deity;
> Yet in themselves are nothing! One decree
> Spake laws to them, and said that by the soul
> Only the nations shall be great and free.
>
> WORDSWORTH.

WE must now glance hastily at the progress of north-west discovery from the year 1818. Up to that time no material knowledge had been gained since the days of Bylot and Baffin. The immense expanse of sea between Greenland and America was regarded as an enclosed bay, affording no chance of an opening westward; Hudson's Bay, too, had never been examined after the failure of the unlucky expedition under Moore and Smith, and England, deeply engaged in internal defence and European war, could give no thought to the subject of the north-west passage. But after the proclamation of peace, public attention was again directed to the enterprise which for three centuries had been encouraged and prosecuted by our greatest navigators, and Sir John Barrow, by his memorials and representations, induced the Admiralty to send out, in 1818, four vessels. The course of two which were bound for the Pole we have already followed: the "Isabella" and "Alexander" which remained, were commissioned under Commander John Ross for the exploration of Baffin's Bay, with regard to the north-west passage, as increasing knowledge only deepened the conviction of its existence in the minds of the most experienced seamen and learned geographers of the time. It is much to be regretted that Commander Ross was placed at the head of this important expedition,

since, though admirable as a practical sailor, he had neither the knowledge, perseverance, nor enthusiasm, so necessary for the prosecution of a voyage of discovery; and to the absence of these qualities may be attributed in great measure the failure of the expedition so auspiciously commenced. The circuit of Baffin's Bay was made, it is true, but instead of exploring Smith's, Jones', and Lancaster Sounds—which recent voyages have proved to be each and all grand open channels to the Polar sea—Ross contented himself with Baffin's assertion that they were enclosed by land; never even approached the first by sixty miles; was satisfied with an almost equally distant view of the second; and after sailing for some little distance up the last, he imagined a range of mountains extending right across the passage, and concluding it useless to persevere in this course, left Lancaster Sound with all speed, to the great astonishment and mortification of his officers, who had confidently calculated on achieving by this route the north-west passage. The authorities at home were so little satisfied with the result of this voyage, that another expedition was fitted out for 1819, consisting of the "Hecla" and "Griper," under Lieutenant Parry, who had accompanied Captain Ross as second in command, and was now sent out for the express purpose of thoroughly exploring the promising opening which had been so unaccountably neglected. Captain Sabine, to whose scientific attainments we alluded in our last chapter, shared this voyage as well as that of Captain Ross.

Parry reached the entrance to Lancaster Sound a month earlier than the previous year, by sailing across Baffin's Bay instead of rounding it. The channel opened clear and wide before them, no trace of Captain Ross's "Croker Mountains" were to be seen, the soundings were taken with deep sea-chains, and a fresh east wind carried the vessels rapidly forward. Some interruption from ice occurring after they had past Barrow's Straits, Parry employed himself in exploring a large inlet on the south coast. Its breadth, and the southerly direction in which it extended, were both highly promising, but it soon became choked with ice, and Parry, having bestowed on it the name of Prince Regent Inlet, returned to the main channel. Much

notice was excited about this time by the variations of the needle, which so much increased as they proceeded westward that the compass was virtually useless; "the directive power of the needle becoming in lat. 73° so weak as to be completely overcome by the attraction of the ship; so that the needle might now be said to point to the North Pole of the ship."

On the 22nd of August, Parry discovered and named Wellington Channel, and soon after had the satisfaction of announcing to his men, that having reached 110° W. long., they were entitled to the king's bounty of £5000, secured by order of council to "such of his Majesty's subjects as might succeed in penetrating thus far to the west, within the Arctic circle." After passing and naming Melville Island, a little progress was still made westward, but the ice was now rapidly gathering; the vessels were soon beset, and after getting free with great difficulty, Parry was only too glad to turn back and settle down into winter quarters. To get to the harbour they had fixed upon was no easy matter; the ice had formed thickly, and we think one of the greatest achievements of that marvellous voyage, was the formation of a canal, two miles and one-third in length, cut through solid ice, of seven inches' average thickness, in three days. The two vessels were immediately put in winter trim; the decks housed over; heating apparatus arranged; and every thing done to make the eight months' imprisonment as comfortable as possible. A theatre was established; a weekly gazette issued, of which Captain Sabine was editor; and regular daily exercise was taken within a given distance of the ship; the men being obliged to run round the decks to the tune of a barrel-organ, when the weather forbade their leaving shelter. Captain Sabine found constant occupation in his observatory, which was erected immediately that the ships were in safety. A small house was also built near it to contain the clocks and instruments which he required. This unfortunately took fire on the 24th of February, and the intense cold may be estimated by the sufferings of the men who rushed on shore to extinguish it. The thermometer was at the time 43° to 44° below zero, and the faces of nearly the whole party grew white and frost-

bitten after five minutes' exposure, so that the surgeon and two or three assistants were busily employed in rubbing the faces of their comrades with snow, while the latter were working might and main to extinguish the flames. One poor fellow, in his anxiety to save a valuable instrument, carried it out without drawing on his mittens; his hands were so benumbed in consequence, that when plunged into a basin of cold water, it instantly froze from the intense coldness imparted to it. He lost, in consequence, nearly all the fingers of both hands.

The 3rd of February was a memorable day, the sun being visible from the maintop of the "Heela," from whence it was last seen on the 11th of November. After this the worst of the winter seemed over, though the cold continued in full intensity; and on the 16th, the thermometer descended to 55° below zero, and stood for fifteen hours at 54°! During the tedious weeks when the ships moved in free water, but were encircled on all sides by ice, Parry undertook a journey across Melville Island. The island proved, for the most part, very dreary, but they killed a few birds, fired at a musk-ox, and discovered a little cove on the western coast, quite verdant in appearance. Here Captain Sabine obtained a ranunculus in full flower—a treasure indeed in those bleak solitudes; and here, perhaps, might have been discovered the unhappy little caterpillar which was so carefully preserved and carried to England! On the 1st of August, the ships left Winter Harbour after ten months' imprisonment. Parry stood boldly for the west; but no amount of skill or patience could penetrate the obstinate masses of ice, or insure the safety of his vessels under the repeated shocks they sustained. All that man could do to insure success Parry did; but at length he was forced to unite with his officers in the conviction, that this year nothing more could be effected. Under this belief, therefore, the heads of the "Heela" and "Griper" were turned eastward on the 26th of August, and the voyagers reached London, November 3, 1820.

It may easily be imagined that Parry's reception on his return to England was warm and enthusiastic. The general satisfaction with which his report was received was in proportion to

the general discontent which had justly repaid Captain Ross's inefficiency; and, indeed, the issue of this one voyage raised Parry to the highest position yet occupied by a northern voyager.

Before we notice his next voyage we must not wholly forget the expedition up the Coppermine River, to examine the unexplored shores of the Polar Sea to the east, which was conducted by Captain John Franklin—the same gallant officer for whose fate all England has long cherished so trembling an interest. Four Englishmen accompanied him, Dr. Richardson, George Back, and Robert Hood, two Admiralty midshipmen, and John Hepburn, a noble, true-hearted English sailor; to these were added, during the course of the journey, six Canadian voyageurs, three interpreters, and an indefinite number of Indians. The party reached York-factory, in Hudson's Bay, on the 30th August, 1819, and after a boat voyage of 700 miles, arrived before winter at Fort Cumberland. The next winter found them 700 miles further on their journey, established during the extreme cold at Fort Enterprise. During the summer of 1821 they accomplished the remaining 334 miles, and commenced their trial of the Polar Sea in two birch-bark canoes, on the 21st of July.

The object of this voyage was chiefly to ascertain good harbours for any future expeditions, and to lay down accurately the north coast line of America from the Coppermine River east. For this purpose they had tracked the deeply-indented shores 555 geographical miles, to Point Turnagain, when the rapid decrease of their provisions, and the shattered state of the canoes, imperatively obliged their return. The route preferred by Franklin was up Hood's River, and across a wide extent of barren country, to Fort Enterprise. Two small new canoes were constructed at the mouth of Hood's River, which further detained the party, so that their homeward journey was not fairly commenced till the 1st September. We have not time or courage to enter fully into the details of the next two months, which witnessed sufferings and heroism never surpassed in the darkest days of famine. A lichen, called by the Canadians *tripe de roche*, (rock-tripe,) afforded them precarious subsistence, and when that

was no longer procurable, hunger was satisfied as best it might be with scraps of roasted leather. Old shoes formed a very important article in their scanty bill of fare, and any bones which the wolves might have abandoned were eagerly burnt and eaten in a pulverized state. The two canoes had been recklessly broken up by their weary bearers, and on reaching a branch of the Coppermine River several days were consumed in vain attempts at framing a raft on which to cross it. Dr. Richardson attempted to swim across with a rope, but failed from weakness, and was drawn back to the bank in a nearly lifeless condition. At length a canoe was framed with great difficulty, and the whole party crossed. But the strength of all was failing. One or two of the Canadians had already fallen behind, and never rejoined their comrades, and now three or four sank down and could proceed no further. Back, with the most vigorous of the men, had already pushed on to send help from Port Enterprise; and Richardson, Hood, and Hepburn, volunteered to remain with the disabled men, near a supply of the rock-tripe, while Franklin pursued his journey with the others capable of bearing him company. Several of the latter, however, soon turned back to join Richardson, and must have perished by the way; and when Franklin, with the remaining five, reached Fort Enterprise, all the greeting they found was a note from Back stating he had gone in pursuit of the Indians. Some discarded deer-skins, and a heap of old bones, enabled the wanderers to keep the vital principle from total extinction, and after eighteen miserable days they were joined by Richardson and Hepburn, the sole survivors of *their* party. They brought the melancholy intelligence of poor Hood's death, not indeed from the slow agony of famine, but by a base and treacherous shot from the hand of a Canadian voyageur, whom they had before suspected of the murder of two of his missing comrades, and were at last obliged to shoot as a matter of self-defence. Franklin's two faithful Canadians died a day or so after their arrival, and the three Englishmen dragged on a melancholy existence till the 7th of November, when three Indians sent by Back brought them timely succour; after a while they were enabled to join this valuable friend—whose sufferings

had fully equalled theirs—at Moose-deer island, and the following year brought them in safety back to England.

The issue of Parry's last voyage inspired the most sanguine hopes of success, and the "Hecla" and "Fury" were prepared with all despatch for another northern trip. A general opinion prevailed that Regent's Inlet, which had been only partially explored the previous summer, was connected with Hudson's Bay, and it was thought probable that a communication thus opened, a westerly channel might be discovered in a lower latitude than Barrow's Strait. To ascertain the truth of these suppositions was Parry's present mission. During the summer months of 1821 the expedition attained the north shores of Hudson's Bay, and minutely examined Southampton Island, Repulse Bay, and Frozen Strait, proving in almost every particular the truth of the report given by the much maligned Captain Middleton, who, it will be remembered, first explored these localities seventy-nine years before. Little way was made, however, owing to the large masses of ice in these waters, which held the ships helplessly in their grasp, and often carried them back in a few days to the very spot which they had left a month before. Owing to these circumstances winter came while their enterprise was yet in its commencement, and the ships took up their quarters in "an open roadstead," to the south of Melville Peninsula. The winter passed much in the same way as before; many of the officers and crew had shared Parry's former voyage, and though the novelty of the scene had worn off, experience brought with it increased comfort from the power of accommodating themselves to circumstances. The theatre was again established, musical parties were got up, a magic-lantern frequently exhibited, and to these was added the more solid benefit of an evening-school on board each ship. At Christmas sixteen well-written copies proved that instruction had not been lost upon men who two months before could hardly form a letter, and by the time the ships returned, Captain Parry had the gratification of knowing that "every man on board could read his Bible." The monotony of the winter was diversified during February by visits from a party of Esquimaux, who proved gentle and friendly, and

after a prolonged stay on board conducted some of the party to their own abode. The sailors found a complete cluster of snow-houses, each built in a dome seven or eight feet high, with a piece of clear ice let in at the top as a window. The neatness and dexterity with which these habitations were raised calling forth the sailors' warm praise, the natives readily reared one that they might see the process, the women assisting with the greatest alacrity to shape the blocks of snow employed in its erection. These simple people grew intimate with the strangers; and so far from exhibiting the thievish propensities which had so annoyed former explorers, they proved scrupulously honest, not only abstaining from pilfering, but carefully returning any article the sailors might have left in the huts. One of the women, Iligliuk by name, proved singularly different to her tribe in both mind and manners, and had she enjoyed the advantages of civilisation, would doubtless have been an ornament to her sex. Parry describes her love for music as amounting to a passion, and her quickness of comprehension such that she soon became an established interpreter between her own people and the English. The nature of a map having been explained to her, she readily sketched the outlines of the adjoining coast, and being desired to continue it further, she delineated, to the extreme delight of the spectators, the eastern shore of Melville Peninsula, and the abrupt turn which it makes to the west and afterwards to the S. W.

This information greatly encouraged the whole party, and its truth was eagerly tested as soon as the ships could move again, which was not till the 8th of July. After sustaining extreme danger from the ice, the vessels reached an island correctly laid down in the Esquimaux chart, and called by the natives Igloolik. Here they had the mortification of finding the entire passage choked with ice, and as it showed no symptoms of melting till the following summer, Parry crossed the intervening land to examine in person the channel which Iligliuk had placed between Melville Peninsula and Cockburn Island. It afforded every prospect of success for the next summer, and having named it in joyful anticipation the Hecla and Fury Strait, he returned

to the ships, which were already placed in dock for their second winter. A scheme had been arranged between Parry and Lyon, to send the "Hecla" home next summer under command of the latter, while the "Fury," reinforced with all the superfluous provisions of her companion, might prolong her voyage till 1825, by which time they calculated upon the necessary accomplishment of the north-east passage. But the third summer, when it came, showed such a general failure in the health and spirits of the sailors, that their brave commander shrank from carrying out his plan; and as, on the ships regaining their freedom on the 10th August, scarcely six weeks of navigable weather remained, he was easily persuaded to abandon the design and return home, which the vessels reached by the middle of October, 1823, when their prolonged absence had extinguished almost every hope of their preservation.

During the next year, 1824, Captain Lyon was sent out in the "Griper," for the purpose of tracing the northern coast of America. His orders were to land at Wager River off Repulse Bay, cross Melville Peninsula, and proceed overland to Point Turnagain, where Franklin's journey terminated. The "Griper" was fitted for this service in point of strength, but was lamentably deficient in all sailing qualities, proving heavy, sluggish, and inconvenient. Even across the Atlantic she was towed continually by the "Snap," which accompanied her with provisions, and when they parted company at the commencement of the ice, the "Griper" soon got into difficulties. Notwithstanding such slight accidents as striking on a rock, and "continually shipping heavy seas," the little vessel reached Southampton Island, and proceeded up the Welcome by the 22nd of August. The compasses here ceased to afford any guidance, and amidst thick fogs and a heavy sea their situation was one of extreme peril, as the waves broke every instant over the decks, and the surf upon the neighbouring beach defied all chance of escape, should the tide drive them upon it. The boats were prepared, and officers and men drew lots for them with the utmost composure, though they well knew, as Lyon tells us, that "two of the boats would have been swamped the instant they were lowered." The gale continuing through the

night, all hope of being saved was taken away; with true British fortitude the men dressed themselves in their warmest clothing, that "life might be supported as long as possible," and the officers secured their most valuable instruments for observation, about their persons. Then their commander assembled them all on deck, spoke to them calmly on the fate which was so closely approaching, and concluded with prayer; thus fortified and prepared, no vain regrets or lamentations were indulged, but officers and men alike lay down in the most sheltered parts of the deck, and, while seeking the temporary repose they so much needed, awaited with composure and fortitude the final shock. But from this great peril they were delivered, the tide sank no lower, the next morning saw them in comparative safety in the centre of Roe's Welcome, and the scene of their late deliverance received the appropriate name of "The Bay of God's Mercy."

They succeeded shortly afterwards in reaching the mouth of Wager River; but here another gale overtook them, the cables parted one after another, and the ship having, contrary to all expectation, survived the night, was found by morning light to be in such a crippled condition that an immediate return to England afforded the only chance of safety, and was happily accomplished. Though thoroughly disabled for active service, the "Griper" still survives, and is spending its old age as a hulk in Chichester harbour.

The two voyages made by Parry, although both to a certain degree successful, had been arrested in each case short of the desired object. Prince Regent's Inlet, discovered in his first voyage, presented the most promising field for a new attempt; the ice-barrier which had then intercepted his progress, was one of those which so frequently give way in a single night, and there was every probability that a communication would be found to exist between this noble channel and the sea north of America, which had been discerned from the Fury and Hecla Strait. To ascertain this, the same well-tried vessels were sent out again in 1824, under Parry, with Captain Hoppner as second in command. An unusually severe season had so increased the ice in Baffin's Bay, that the 10th of September had arrived before they

made their way through it, and arrived at the entrance of Lancaster Sound, which proved, "as usual, entirely free from ice, except here and there a berg floating about in solitary grandeur."

The season was too far advanced to do any thing in the way of discovery, and Parry thought himself fortunate to reach Regent's Inlet, and get his ships safely placed in Port Bowen before the winter set in. This season passed in much the same way as the former one; masquerades were substituted for theatricals, and the evening school was, as usual, eagerly attended, and productive of both pleasure and advantage. The intensity of the cold may be estimated by the fact that the thermometer stood below zero for a hundred and thirty-one days, not rising above that point till the 11th April; this circumstance Parry records as unparalleled in his experience. During the spring several travelling parties were despatched to survey accurately the neighbouring coasts, and by the 19th of July the vessels were again free and in good sailing order. Parry eagerly set forward, therefore, this time coasting North Somerset, as in his former voyage he had followed the east shore of the inlet to Cape Kater. It would have been well, however, if he had again followed his former route, for the present instance proved no exception to the general rule, that the western shores of bays and inlets are usually more encumbered by ice than the eastern ones.

At first a narrow channel between the ice and the shore afforded free room for advance, but by the 28th of July the ice was in rapid extension towards the land, and the ships were immediately and helplessly encompassed. From this time all real advance ceased; the vessels sometimes got afloat for a short time at high water, but were speedily driven aground again by the ice, not without a great deal of straining and "nipping" from violent pressure between the ice and the shore. This hard usage so injured the "Fury," that though a vigorous attempt was made to repair her in a sort of dock cut with great labour in the pack, she was speedily driven ashore again by the coast-ice, and was found to be in a hopelessly shattered condition. It now became a matter of necessity to abandon her, and as the choicest part of the summer had been wasted in fruitless attempts

to save her, there was little hope of making any material discovery in the short remaining time. The crew and valuables of the "Fury" were, therefore, received on board the "Heela," the provisions were left for the solace of any wandering Esquimaux who might chance to visit the spot, and the poor disabled ship was given up to the mercy of the relentless ice, while her companion made the best of her way to England.

Among all the instances of hopeful enterprise, under full knowledge of attendant suffering and danger, which a detail of Arctic navigation furnishes, we think few are more striking than the voluntary offer made by Captain Franklin, in 1825, to undertake the command of an expedition to the same North American shores where he had suffered such extremity of hardship four years before. Lieut. Back and Dr. Richardson, his former companions in misfortune, were equally ready once more to bear him company, and many distinguished officers were eager to be placed under his command. Taught by experience, a far more adequate preparation was made for the necessities of their projected journey than previously; and before the members of the expedition settled down for the winter at "Fort Franklin," on the shores of Bear Lake, a journey of investigation, down the Mackenzie River to the sea, had been successfully prosecuted. Early in the next summer, the whole party set out in two divisions, of two boats each, commanded respectively by Franklin and Richardson; the former proposing to explore the western coast, and the latter the eastern. Space will not allow us to follow in detail either of these expeditions, which were happily unclouded by the incidents which gave so painful an interest to the particulars of the former terrible journey. It was well ascertained that this passage was unfit to be attempted by large ships, as Franklin found no harbour suitable for a tolerable sized vessel in all the line of coast he traversed, and Richardson found only one, which was rendered difficult of access by masses of sunken rocks. On the 21st September, the two parties met again at Fort Franklin, in health and safety; the western detachment having traversed 2048, and the eastern party 1980 statute miles.

In 1829-33, an irregular expedition was undertaken by Captain, now Sir John, Ross and his nephew in the "Victory," at the expense of a private individual, Mr. Felix Booth, in compliment to whom the tract of land which Commander James Ross succeeded in discovering, was named Boothia Felix; to him also we owe the discovery of the magnetic pole,—indeed all that was accomplished during this protracted voyage seems to have been effected by the nephew. While proceeding down Regent's Inlet, the captain of the "Victory" helped himself liberally to the stores of the deserted "Fury"—every other trace of which had by this time disappeared—and these additional provisions enabled him to brave the hardships of such a prolonged detention. During these five years of absence, the western shore of Regent's Inlet, and much of the adjacent country was explored by travelling parties from the vessel, which suffered a more continuous imprisonment among the ice than is usually experienced even in such high latitudes. In her first winter quarters at Felix harbour, she remained exactly a year, being set free on the 17th September, 1830. On the 23rd of the same month, after advancing *three* miles, she was frozen in again for eleven months; and after being warped into open water, 28th August, 1831, and sailing *four* miles, she was again enclosed by the ice on the 27th September. Seven miles in two years was a rate of progress affording little hope of ever seeing old England again; the only chance left was, to abandon the vessel, and endeavour by means of the boats left among the Fury's stores, to reach Hudson's Bay, and get a homeward passage in some whaler. Accordingly, the "Victory's" colours were nailed to the mast-head, as the last service they could do her, and their officers and crew took leave of the ill-fated little vessel on the 23rd April, 1832. The journey to Barrow's Straits was performed on foot, and rendered very tedious by the necessity of dragging on sledges the needful large amount of provisions, and when the party reached the N.E. extremity of North Somerset, although they built a canvass house there—dignified by the title of Somerset House—and remained till the 1st of August fitting up the boats, the season was too far advanced for such an experiment, and they were fain to retrace their steps,

and spend the winter of 1832–33 on Fury Beach. The ensuing July found them again in company with their boats at Batry Bay, waiting eagerly during a month of painful suspense for favourable weather. On the 15th of August they were at length enabled to commence their perilous journey, and on the 25th they reached Navy Board Inlet, fell in with, and were taken up by the Isabella of Hull, the very vessel in which Captain Ross had made his unfortunate voyage to these seas in 1818. At home great anxiety was excited by such a prolonged absence, and Commander Back, in 1833, voluntered his services to go for the third time to the northern shore of America, with a party for Ross's relief. Before he reached his destination, tidings met him of the "Victory's" safety; his energies, therefore, found occupation in tracing to the sea that current which is now known as Back's River.

In 1836, Commander Back was sent out again, in the "Terror," with orders to reach, if possible, Wager River, or Repulse Bay, and there leaving the ship, to cross the intervening land to Regent's Inlet; while another detachment of the crew were to journey north to the Fury and Hecla Strait, and a third to proceed along the American coast to Back's River and Cape Turnagain. All, or as much as possible of this work, was to be accomplished that year, and the rest to be left undone; for Captain Back was especially requested to return home that same season. It is curious to see how these orders were, from unavoidable circumstances, disobeyed in every particular. The "Terror" was involved among the ice before she reached the entrance of Frozen Strait; and not only was her further progress stayed, but she was compelled perforce to winter in the pack. The ice gradually accumulated under and around the vessel, till it was raised high above the surrounding sea-level, and long after the rest of the floe had broken up, the "Terror" remained, helplessly elevated upon the ice-cradle, which carried her hither and thither at the mercy of wind and tide, and did not disperse till the 11th of July, when the vessel proved so "crazed, broken, and leaky," that the voyage home was far from being the least anxious part of the expedition.

The survey of the North American coast was further prosecuted in 1839, by Dease and Simpson, two officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, who did good service to the cause of geographical knowledge by tracing the shore westward from Franklin's Return Reef to Cape Barrow, and eastward from Port Turnagain to the Gulf of Akkolee.

The 26th of May, 1845, witnessed the departure of Sir John Franklin with the "Erebus" and "Terror," two strong and well-tried vessels, provisioned for three years, and mustering with the united crews 140 men. His mission was to attempt once more the north-west passage, and sanguine hopes were entertained, from the well-known character and experience of the commander, that by these means the long-vexed question might be set at rest. The issue of this voyage, as far as is known, and of those which have been undertaken in search of the gallant commander and his crew, are the only northern expeditions that remain for our consideration.

We are well aware of the imperfections of the present sketch —how cursory it needs must be, and how little justice it does to the gallant actions and gallant men of whom it treats; nevertheless, we trust that our readers will not close our brief record of the brave deeds done in those regions of danger and intense cold, both in ancient and modern times, without exclaiming with Purchas, the graphic chronicler of the early northern navigators —"How shall I admire your heroicke courage, ye marine worthies, beyond names of worthiness?"

CHAP. IX.

RECENT NORTH-WEST EXPEDITIONS.

There are to whom that ship was dear,
For love and kindred's sake;
When these the voice of rumour hear,
Their inmost heart shall quake,
Shall doubt, and fear, and wish and grieve,
Believe, and long to disbelieve,
But never cease to ache;
Still doom'd in sad suspense to bear
The Hope that keeps alive Despair.

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

WE need not repeat the oft-told tale of disappointment! General converse or the public prints must have made all our readers long since acquainted with the uncertainty which broods over the fate of the veteran commander and his gallant men, and perchance this page may meet the eye of some to whom that fate is no mere matter of passing import, but one of vital and heart-stirring interest;—some whose lives are bound up with one cherished life on board, whose hearts with true magnetism of affection, still turn instinctively to the north, and who, through all the alternations of hope and fear, expectation and disappointment, still love and pray for the lost ones. God comfort all such, and send that their prayers and patience may not be in vain! A letter from Sir John Franklin, dated from the Whalefish Islands, Baffin's Bay, July 12, 1845, is the last communication from the expedition ever received in England: their first winter-quarters have been discovered, as we shall relate presently; but from the spring of 1846 all traces vanish; no grave, no cairn, no relic marks their progress; no broken spar or shattered mast give even the melancholy certainty of shipwreck and death; the waters and the wilderness guard their strange secret well, and

"there is neither voice nor any that answereth," to guide the progress of the noble-minded men who voluntarily dare the same dread fate in their search for their missing comrades. How arduously and well that search has been prosecuted, it will be our object briefly to relate.

Sir John Franklin's official instructions directed him to proceed through Barrow's Straits until he reached Cape Walker (lat. 74° 15 N., long. 98° W.), and then to steer S. W. direct for Behring's Straits. In January, 1848, the brig "Plover" was despatched to the last-mentioned locality to assist the "Erebus" and "Terror" on their arrival, should they prove much disabled by their conflict with the ice. This duty, however, was never required of her, and we need only notice this little barque further, to say that she was afterwards joined by the "Herald," and still continues on service, having been moved to Point Barrow as a store-vessel.

During the ensuing spring anxiety at the prolonged absence of the "Erebus" and "Terror" became general, for their return had been confidently expected at the close of 1847; and while two vessels were in preparation to carry Sir J. C. Ross to their rescue, Sir John Richardson—the old tried friend and companion of Franklin, in his memorable journey up the Coppermine River—set out once more on the 25th March, 1848, accompanied by Mr. Rae, reached the mouth of the Mackenzie by the 4th August, and commenced a minute investigation of the coast between that river and the Coppermine, in which he was greatly assisted by boat parties from the "Plover" and "Herald." He was unable personally to conduct the expedition during the whole of the time, but Mr. Rae proved a most able substitute, and followed up the search indefatigably, though unsuccessfully, first on the American coast, and subsequently in 1851 on Wollaston Land and the whole surrounding district, in the intricate, ice-choked channels of which he had vainly hoped that the missing vessels might be found. Sir James C. Ross, in the "Enterprise" and "Investigator," set sail in June, 1848, three months after Richardson's departure. After encountering much difficulty from the ice in Baffin's Bay, they entered Barrow's Strait, and had examined it nearly to the entrance to Wellington

Channel, when the close of the season drove them into winter quarters.

The explorers established themselves at Leopold Island, which lies at the entrance to Regent's Inlet, and is only separated by the intervening strait from the quarters occupied by Franklin's party two winters before. Some singular fatality must have prevented them from discovering this circumstance, for Sir James Ross made the most of the spring by sending out exploring parties in all directions, and himself surveyed nearly the whole coast of North Somerset, while another detachment examined the north shore of Barrow's Strait, and must have been close upon Cape Riley when they turned back with the report that no traces existed in that district! Sir J. C. Ross's intention on getting clear of the ice in 1849, was to sail up Wellington Channel and examine the shores of Melville Island. As the vessels stood out from shore the prospect around was singularly cheerless.—no open sea,—not even a narrow channel between floes and icebergs,—nothing but a white, compact body of ice to the north and west, as far as the eye could reach. The unfortunate voyagers had not even time to deliberate on the best course to pursue, for even while they gazed on the whitened plain around, the demon of the Polar seas was binding them also fast in his cold crystal fetters. The loose pack ice came driving up around them, and quickly settled into a solid mass, the thermometer fell to zero, ridges and heaps of ice—technically known as "hummocks"—collected over any original slight inequality, and by the early days of September the whole of Barrow's Strait had become impassable. Here, then, the hardy sailors cheerfully prepared to spend another winter, though no summer liberty had separated it from the preceding one; but before they had settled themselves for their new captivity, the wind changed from east to west, the body of ice, still firm and impenetrable, became detached from the shore, and the occupants of the two vessels found, to their no small consternation, that they were drifting to the east at the rate of eight or ten miles a-day, with the prospect of almost certain destruction on their arrival at Baffin's Bay, from the grounded icebergs which line its shallow

western coast. For days this terrible suspense continued, and the sufferers, powerless either to avert or postpone the catastrophe, learnt at last to look forward to it with composure and resignation. Its near approach was announced by the sight of a range of icebergs forming a barrier across the mouth of Lancaster Sound. Onward drove the ice, bearing on its bosom the devoted ships, while the officers and men gathered on deck, gazed calmly and solemnly on the death that drew so near to them. Onward, onward still!—there is a death-like stillness in earth and sky,—a terrible pause of expectation for the shock which shall send the crushed vessels and their freight to the dark waters below! Hark! a loud, sharp report breaks the silence,—another,—and another,—suddenly, as at some appointed signal, the vast ice-field is broken into a thousand fragments, which uprear themselves in the tossing water and crash against each other with mad and impotent fury, while the emancipated ships plough their way proudly through the angry ice-waves, and soon reach the clear open water! It was of course impossible to make their way back through the tumult of warring ice and ocean from which they had just escaped, and duty and inclination agreed in inducing Ross and his men to steer direct for England, where their absence had begun to cause much anxiety, and where the detail of their narrowly escaped fate scarcely tended to lessen the apprehension felt concerning the luckless crews of the "Erebus" and "Terror."

A doom very similar, and as narrowly avoided, threatened the "North Star," a small vessel sent out with provisions for Sir J. C. Ross, which became involved in an ice-field near Melville Sound, at the very same time as the ships to whose relief she was sent. In this case the corner of the field struck an immense iceberg, which threatened to overwhelm it, and the shock turning it round and rending it open, afforded the "North Star" a free passage out. The disappointment which Sir J. C. Ross's failure produced, only seemed to urge on further efforts for the relief of those who had now been lost for three years beyond the rightful time of their return.

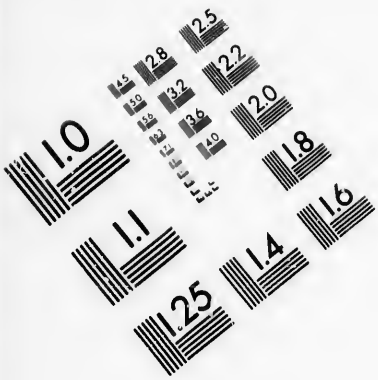
The "Enterprise" and "Investigator" were sent out again,

in 1850, under Captain Collinson and Commander M'Clure, to Behring's Straits; while an efficient force was despatched to prosecute the search through the more familiar route of Baffin's Bay. The vessels engaged in searching this district during the summer of 1850 were no less than ten in number; they were distributed thus:—1. A squadron, under Captain Austin, consisting of his own ship, the "Resolute;" the "Assistance," Captain Ommanney; and the "Intrepid" and "Pioneer," two steam-tugs, commanded by Lieutenants Cator and Osborne. 2. Two fast-sailing brigs, the "Lady Franklin" and the "Sophia," under Mr. Penny, an experienced seaman, for many years captain of a whaler in Baffin's Bay. 3. The "Felix," with the "Mary" as tender, under the command of Sir John Ross. 4. Two American vessels, the "Rescue" and "Advance," fitted out by the liberality of Mr. Henry Grinnell, a New York merchant, and commanded by Lieutenant De Haven and Mr. Griffin. 5. The "Prince Albert," a small sailing-vessel, the private property of Lady Franklin, under Commander Forsyth.

It is neither in our wish nor our power to enter into full detail of the varied fortunes of each gallant vessel; the narratives published by many of the officers afford both interest and information to all who have leisure and opportunity to peruse them; our object is merely to recount in few words what has been done and discovered by these worthy successors to the heroic navigators of the olden time. Overcoming all difficulty from the Baffin's Bay ice by the powerful aid of the steamers, Captain Austin's squadron reached the entrance to Lancaster Sound—Penny keeping pace with them. There they separated, and while the "Resolute" and "Pioneer" lingered to examine the neighbourhood of Pond's Bay, Captain Ommanney enjoyed the enviable distinction of discovering the first traces of Franklin's expedition yet brought to light. Captain Austin and his attendant screw, Penny, and the Americans, soon joined the "Assistance" at Cape Riley; and minute investigation only confirmed the importance of the discovery, and proved this to have been the scene of Franklin's first winter quarters. A hut, solidly built in a circular form, neatly paved, and furnished with

a fireplace, in which still lay the ashes of the last fire they had kindled, was discovered north of Cape Spencer, and from thence to Cape Riley traces abounded. The site of an encampment was marked as distinctly by fragments of paper written and printed, bones of animals, empty pemmican tins, staves of casks, pieces of oak and other wood, ends of navy rope—easily distinguishable by the peculiar "middle yarn,"—washing-tubs, coal-bags, and broken bottles, as by the more important remains of a carpenter's shed, a forge, and a large store-house, and—most touching relic of all—a little garden, shaped into a neat oval, and filled with moss, lichens, poppies, and anemones—the only plants which that bleak clime would nourish, but which had pleasantly beguiled the idle time of some flower-loving sailor, who had cherished by them, perchance, a dearer memory of the bright little garden before some sweet white English cottage. Death had crept in among the adventurers thus early on their outward voyage; for three graves, bearing the names of W. Braine and John Hartnell, of the "Erebus," and John Torrington, of the "Terror," sanctify the solitude. Ah! if the tenants of these lonely graves could have been roused, and questioned of their comrades—how they had fared, and whither they had bent their course when summer set them free! In vain. The silence of death rests alike upon the quiet sleepers here, and upon those who left them in such buoyant life and hope; and no cairn or mound contained the slightest documentary evidence of their future course, though diligent search for such was made in all possible and impossible places. Papers were left at Cape Riley by each ship in its turn, and the "Assistance" landed provisions at Whaler Point, for the succour of Franklin's crew, should they ever reach that place.

The winter was now rapidly approaching, and little more could be done that season. Penny pushed up Wellington Channel as far as Cornwallis Island, but turned back before an impassable barrier of ice, beyond which he had both the pleasure and mortification of discovering open water as far as the eye could reach. The "Lady Franklin" and "Sophia" took up their winter



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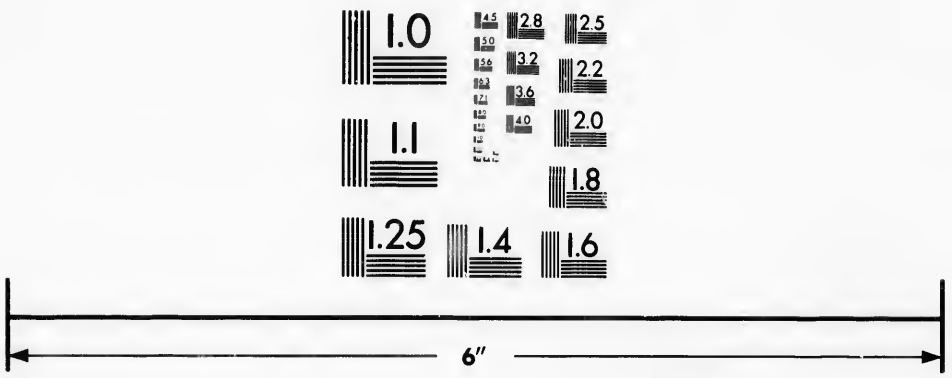

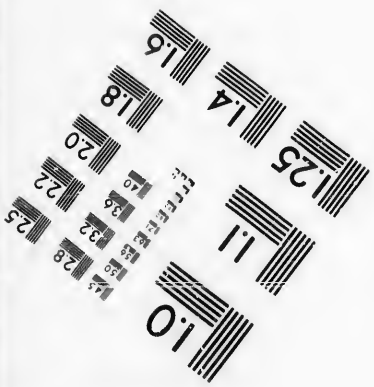

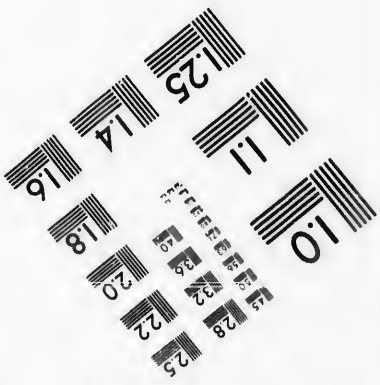

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quarters in Assistance Harbour, at the southern extremity of Cornwallis Land; they were speedily joined by Sir John Ross's vessel, the "Felix;" and Captain Austin's squadron soon became fast fixed in the floe which filled up the channel between Griffith's Island and Cornwallis Land. The "Prince Albert" set sail for England before winter set in, and her example was followed by the American vessels; but for these fate had reserved more perilous adventures than a simple passage for New York could have furnished. The Stars and Stripes parted company with the Union Jack on the 13th of September, below Cape Hotham, and De Haven, who had anticipated an easy homeward passage, was not a little disturbed to find his voyage arrested at its commencement by the ice, which gathered strength hour by hour, and soon deprived the Americans of all hope of escape for the winter. The ice-field in which they were thus fixed now carried them helplessly along with it; by the 18th they had drifted as far north as Cape Bowden, and each succeeding day saw them steadily advancing up Wellington Channel. By the end of the month they had passed through it into Maury Channel, which is now known to lead into the noble Queen's Channel, but then had never been explored. During the whole of October and November this state of things continued. The Americans suffered severely from the climate, a winter's sojourn in these regions having been neither contemplated nor provided for; their ships were drifted to and fro at the caprice of every changing wind and tide, and both vessel and crew were exposed to imminent peril should the ice-field on which they were cradled break up. It held together, however, and carried them on its restless journeys up and down Wellington Channel till the beginning of December, when a violent storm drifted it clearly into Barrow's Strait, and on to Lancaster Sound. Several times during this perilous passage they were in imminent danger from the ice opening round the vessels, and closing suddenly again; on such occasions they only escaped being "nipped" by their small size and strong build, which enabled them to rise *above* the opposing edges instead of being crushed *between* them. Even on their arrival in Baffin's Bay they were not immediately liberated:

"lanes of water" continually appeared in the most tantalizing manner beyond intervening ice, and it was not till the 9th of June, 1851, that they were entirely freed from their eight months' imprisonment in the pack. After recruiting the exhausted crew at Disco Island, the gallant commander determined to return and prosecute the search during the remainder of the season; but the discouraging reports of the whalers induced him to change his purpose, and the ships and crews reached New York at the beginning of October, having passed through perils such as few have endured, and still fewer have lived to recount.

In contrast to such a season of restlessness and anxiety, it is quite pleasant to return to the quiet quarters of our seven English ships; and that you may better realize how cheerfully that winter passed for the brave tars on board (and how the present days and weeks are now being spent by many of the same men in Sir Edward Belcher's squadron), we would crave permission, gentle reader, to transport you for a while to these arctic solitudes, and invite you, in Captain Austin's name, to spend a day on board the "Resolute."

Although no vehement gale has occurred lately, the ice offers a very rough uneven surface to the foot, but being well shod and muffled we get on tolerably, for the strong exercise and the clearness of the atmosphere prevent us from feeling the intense cold in any thing like the degree we expected, though the thermometer is far below zero, and the moisture of our breath alone fringes hair and eyelashes with ice. The clear full moon renders every object as distinct as by daylight, and as our eye wanders over the strange and novel scene, we are forced to own it is not without its own peculiar beauty. The wide expanse of whiteness,—the huge, fantastic snow-wreaths which the wind has piled around,—the ridges of broken ice glittering in the moonlight, and casting their deep shadows on the plain beyond,—the cliffs and headlands of Cornwallis Land bounding the scene with their undulating line; while nearer lie the dark masses of the ice-bound ships—the only objects that speak of life amidst the cold, stern grandeur of this land of desolation; and then, as we raise our eyes, the glittering beauty of the indescribably brilliant stars,

which fill the deep blue sky with ten thousand radiant points; and the large bright moon shedding over the white world beneath a flood of light, cold and pure as the snow on which it falls, to say nothing of the fitful glories of the aurora borealis; say, gentle reader, have you not already ceased to regret both fire and sunlight, and do you not thank us for bringing you to a scene of such strange loveliness? But we are bound for the good ship "Resolute" which lies yonder, and on we come at a rattling pace, not heeding in this calm weather the friendly line of guide-posts which wind away in the distance for the benefit of wandering sailors passing in a snow-storm from one vessel to the other. Ah! honest Jack has been exercising his skill in modelling to good purpose here—what an array of snow sculpture! The smooth space round the ship is half filled with this heterogeneous assemblage of sphinxes, vases, and cannon, presided over by Britannia herself, as large as life, "ruling" not "the waves," but the ice at present. The deck where we now stand is, you see, completely roofed over with a kind of penthouse, and cleared of every unnecessary article; here the men take exercise when the weather will not allow them to leave the vessel. The stoves keep up a comfortable temperature —50° above zero—in the lower decks and cabins, as we discover while descending thither; for we are early visitors, and all hands are below at breakfast. The atmosphere here is rendered thick and misty both by the steaming cocoa, which occupies a prominent position at every mess-table, and by the candles and oil lamps, which look decidedly vulgar in contrast with the moonlight we have just left; nevertheless, the honest tars seem thoroughly to enjoy themselves, and their merriment is so contagious, that in five minutes we find ourselves laughing heartily at one of the jokes which are circulating so freely. Now there is a general move; breakfast is over, and while some remain to "clear away" and prepare for dinner, the majority array themselves in all manner of warm garments, and appear on deck for the morning muster. Very odd figures many of them look, but when the thermometer stands at 40° below zero, it is not the time to be particular about appearance. Besides, after all, an

arctic toilette is a very elaborate thing in its way, as you may judge by this list of requisites:—

Indoors.—1 flannel shirt with sleeves; 1 cotton ditto; 1 waistcoat with sleeves, lined with flannel; 1 pair of drawers, flannel; 1 pair of trousers, box cloth, lined with flannel; 1 pair of thick stockings; 1 pair of thin ditto; 1 pair of horsehair soles; 1 pair of carpet boots. *Additional clothing for walking.*—Box cloth pea-jacket; Welsh wig; sealskin cap; beaver skin mitts; shawl, or comfortable; and men with tender faces require a cloth face-cover from the wind.

Thus equipped, and the daily muster over, the officers and men disperse, and from the deck we can see the various groups running races, leaping, and walking, some of the latter with guns, on murderous thoughts intent with regard to the bears, for the hares and foxes soon learn the feelings entertained towards them by the intruding bipeds, and generally possess the prudence to keep out of gunshot range. A busy group is collected under the lee of the vessel, and as we join it a merry-faced sailor informs us they are "sending off the postman;" this functionary being a poor little white fox, who, less wary than his brethren, was last night beguiled into a trap, and is now to be set free, invested with a hollow copper collar containing intelligence concerning the whereabouts of provisions, which, though a great incumbrance to himself, will be of essential service to Sir John Franklin, if ever the four-legged messenger should come in his way, and he should be in a condition to profit by the tidings.

Thus passes the time till noon, and now we may inspect the sailors' dinner, which consists of soup or preserved meat, and occasionally preserved potatoes. Then comes the officers' dinner, at two P.M., to which we are invited; a short walk on the ice or deck, and the intelligent converse of some of our kind entertainers, agreeably fills up the three succeeding hours; and after tea we are introduced to the evening-school. Very curious it is to see some veteran seaman, whose strong fingers have reefed the top-sails in many a storm, now serving his apprenticeship to the grey-goose quill, and bewildered amidst all the preliminary

difficulties of pot-hooks and hangers. Another by his side is buried "fathoms deep" in the contemplation of a sum in simple addition, and records the results he arrives at in figures which bear the slightest possible resemblance to the characters to which we are accustomed. Others, more advanced, are busied with maps and calculations of an alarmingly intricate appearance; some are engrossed with books, or with the "Illustrated Gazette," which is regularly issued every week; and more than one tall able man is repeating a lesson by rote with all the gravity and docility of a "pattern-boy;" while the self-constituted teachers are pictures of busy importance. In the officers' cabin the scene though less noisy is quite as varied. Reading and writing are going on here likewise; some are drawing, as best they may, by candle-light; chess, cards, and draughts, are all in request; and, at one end of the cabin, some really choice music is heard from two or three instruments and several harmonious and well-blended voices. This is a quiet evening they tell us, but had they been apprised beforehand of our visit, they would have arranged some entertainment in our honour; for they manage really creditable concerts among the men. They have a theatre where the performance is considered—under the circumstances—first rate, and only last week they got up a fancy ball, where the characters embraced every variety, from "Sir Charles Grandison" and an "old English gentleman," to a "Capuchin friar, and a "Spanish dancing girl!" But it is time for us to bid adieu to our friends, who honour us at leaving with three hearty cheers, and a parting ovation of skyrockets, which, by the way, they use occasionally on the chance that their missing comrades may be near without knowing that help is at hand. Fire-balloons are sent up in the same hope, and sometimes, when the wind favours, to one of these is attached a cage, containing a carrier-pigeon freighted with tidings, and so arranged that at a given time the bird may be set free, having been in the mean time borne far upon its journey.

As the spring advanced, the space between the "hummocks" became filled up with snow, and as soon as a tolerably even surface was thus formed, the sledges were prepared, and searching

parties organized. The four ships sent out in all fifteen sledges, and an hundred and five men, so that only seventy-five hands were left in charge of the vessels. Want of space again forbids us to give any full detail of these well-planned and brave attempts, the prosecution of which involved more hardship than had been endured throughout the whole of the winter preceding. Fatigue, caused by drawing heavily laden sledges over rugged and often precipitous ice—suffering from the intense cold and piercing wind, which no amount of clothing could counteract—continual cases of frost-bite—and, worse than all, that terror of the arctic voyager, snow-blindness, which prevailed to such an extent that in one party of thirty, sixteen men and one officer were blind at the same time; all these told heavily against them, and to these was added the still heavier weight of disappointment. Each party returned sorrowfully to the squadron, hoping, that though they had failed, fortune might have favoured their companions, and each in turn told the same tale—no sign of the lost ships—no trace of living being—no footstep—no ruin—no relic—not even the mournful certainty of a grave! Several parties from the "Lady Franklin" were sent up Wellington Channel; one of these Penny commanded himself, and finding the channel too open to admit of sledge-travelling, he returned to his vessel, provided himself with a boat, commenced his journey anew, and after a series of adventures and difficulties, which he overcame with courage worthy of a hero, he penetrated up Queen's Channel as far as Baring Island and Cape Beecher, where most reluctantly he was compelled to turn back. A fine open sea stretched invitingly away to the north, as far as the eye could reach, but his boat was small and fragile, his men were few, and he had neither provisions nor equipments for a voyage of discovery. Penny seems to have been honestly persuaded that Sir John Franklin had gone by that route, and that if his ships were ever to be discovered they must be sought upon the untracked waters of the Polar Ocean. He failed, however, in convincing Captain Austin of the truth of his theory, and as without that officer's co-operation nothing could be effected by staying out a second winter, Penny was compelled, however unwillingly,

to follow the course pointed out by the Admiralty squadron, which, after two ineffectual attempts to enter Smith's and Jones' Sounds, returned to England.

Lady Franklin's little vessel, the "Prince Albert," did not stay to share with her companions the inclemencies of an arctic Christmas, but leaving them preparing for winter-quarters, she brought home the welcome intelligence of the discoveries at Beechy Island, which inspired all interested in the cause with lively hope, and served not a little to expedite preparations for prosecuting the search during the next season. No time was lost in refitting the brave little craft, which was placed under the charge of Mr. Kennedy, the second in command being Lieutenant Bellot, that noble volunteer in the cause of humanity, whose generous self-devotion has procured him a brother's place in the hearts of all true Englishmen, and whose untimely fate cannot be more deeply deplored in his own country than it is in ours. The object of the present voyage was principally to examine Regent's Inlet and the coast of North Somerset, an important district for which no provision seemed to have been made in the Admiralty plan of search: for nothing could then be known in England of the sledge parties by which Captain Austin was at that very time partially supplying the deficiency. The easterly gales had formed a barrier of ice across Barrow's Straits, cutting off all access to Cape Riley or Griffith Island, so the little vessel was fain to turn at once into Regent's Inlet, and take temporary refuge from the wind in Port Bowen. As it was very undesirable, however, to winter on the opposite coast to that along which lay their line of search, Kennedy, with four of his men, crossed to Port Leopold amid masses of ice, as well to reconnoitre the western line of coast as to ascertain whether any documents had been left at this point by previous searching parties.

After an hour spent in examining the locality and seeking for papers, they prepared to return, but to their dismay found their passage cut off by the ice, which had closed together, leaving only large fissures here and there, which proved hopeless impediments when they attempted to reach the vessel on foot. A more

deplorable situation can scarcely be fancied. Darkness was fast closing round them, the mass of ice on which they stood was drifting rapidly down the channel, and the ear was deafened by the crashing of huge ice-blocks, which dashed furiously against each other, and threatened momentarily to shiver in fragments the field they occupied. A speedy return to shore was the only alternative, and having reached it below Cape Seppings, they spent the night as best they might, having no shelter but their boat, under which each man in turn took an hour's rest; the others, wearied as they were, seeking safety in brisk exercise, for the cold at this season—September 10th—was intense, and their clothes were little else than a mass of ice. Under these circumstances, it may be imagined with what feelings they discovered by the early light of morning that the ship had disappeared! There was now no resource—they must brave the winter as well as they could, and endeavour in the spring to rejoin their vessel, which must have drifted down the inlet with the ice, and by this time was most likely imprisoned by it. Fortunately the depôt of provisions left by Sir James Ross at Whaler Point was easily accessible, and finding all in good preservation, they began, with all the ingenuity of contrivance which sailors so remarkably possess, to fit up the launch, which had been left at the same time as the stores, for a temporary abode. The mainmast was laid on supports at the bow and stern, two sails spread over it with a little arrangement made a tolerable roof, a stove was set up, and in a short time the brave fellows were sitting comfortably round a cheerful fire, carrying on winter preparations by the manufacture of garments—cut out from the blanket bags found at the depôt, and sewn with sail needles and twine,—and shoes, for which they could find no better material than the old canvass housings of Sir James Ross's "Somerset House." After having thus resigned themselves to their fate, it must have been a most joyful surprise when, on the 17th October, the stillness around was broken by the sound of well-known voices, and M. Bellot appeared, with a party of seven men, who had dragged the jolly-boat with them all the way from Batty Bay. It appeared that this gallant officer had made two attempts before to reach the

deserted party, who now forgot all the miseries of their five weeks' detention as they accompanied their friends back to the ship.

The long winter passed on board the Prince Albert in much the same routine that has already been described; the monotony of their days having one agreeable alleviation from the barrel organ, so kindly presented on their departure by the illustrious Prince from whom their little vessel derived its name. A few excursions took place, either to form provision depôts for their contemplated sledge journey, or to survey the icy prospect, and calculate how soon they might start. On the 25th February, the grand expedition departed! It consisted—exclusive of the fatigue party, which accompanied it as far as Brentford Bay—of Kennedy, Bellot, and six men, together with four sledges, two of which were drawn by five Esquimaux dogs, assisted by two men at each sledge, and the other two the rest of the men took between them. With this slender equipment, it is truly astonishing to contemplate what these brave men effected. They traced the coast of North Somerset to its south extremity, crossed Victoria Strait, explored thoroughly Prince of Wales' Land, visited Cape Walker, and followed the north coast of North Somerset to Batty Bay again, having in an absence of ninety-seven days accomplished a journey of eleven hundred miles, without illness or accident.

After the breaking up of the ice, the "Prince Albert" repaired to Cape Riley, where the "North Star," Captain Pullen, was stationed as depôt-ship to Sir Edward Belcher's squadron. Mr. Kennedy and M. Bellot were at first anxious to remain out another season, and contemplated sending the vessel back under the charge of the master, and remaining as volunteers in the present expedition. Circumstances, however, induced them to abandon this project, and the little vessel reached Aberdeen, with her full complement of men, on the 7th October, 1852.

The entrance to Smith's Sound, which had baffled Captain Austin, was subsequently obtained by Captain Inglefield, during the summer of 1852, in his small screw schooner, the "Isabel." This officer commenced his voyage with the avowed intention of

exploring the sounds to the north of Baffin's Bay, as, should they prove to be open channels, either one might be Franklin's route in returning from the Polar Sea, and at all events in that locality he might have sustained an accident on his homeward voyage, concerning which intelligence would best be gained from the Esquimaux of that neighbourhood. Most of our readers are well aware that on this most essential point of all, his researches failed to cast any light; but in the cause of geographical advance, he has done much by his adventurous cruise. By pushing boldly up Smith's Sound, he has proved it to be, instead of the narrow inlet by which it is represented even in recent maps, a noble channel, wide and deep, opening in all probability directly into the mysterious Polar Ocean. He next attempted Jones' Sound, and entered it sufficiently to see it expand into a wide channel, which he was prevented from exploring by ice and contrary winds. On his return, he passed through Barrow's Strait, reached Sir Edward Belcher's squadron, and communicated with the officers left in charge, the commander himself and the largest part of his crew being absent on searching expeditions. Having received and imparted the latest intelligence, the "Isabel's" prow was once again turned homewards, where she arrived safely after her four months' absence.

Captain Inglefield's second cruise, last year, in the "Phœnix," was equally prosperous in its course, but was clouded by the melancholy death of the brave French officer, M. Bellot, who had volunteered his services a second time, and was lost in the fissure of a large ice-field. On its return, the "Phœnix" brought home Lieutenant Cresswell, the bearer of Captain M'Clure's despatches, and the first man who has ever performed the north-west passage, having entered the arctic regions by Behring's Straits, and quitted them by Baffin's Bay! This long-standing question may therefore be considered as virtually solved. M'Clure's last despatch is dated April 5th, 1853, from Mercy Bay, Baring Island. In it he gives cheering accounts of the health of the crew, and the promising nature of his own prospects. Lieutenant Cresswell was sent home in charge of those sailors who had suffered from the climate, but

the commander announces his own intention of remaining in the "Investigator," until the passage so happily begun is successfully accomplished. In the course of the ensuing summer, therefore, we may anticipate his return. The only unexplored part where we may still cherish hopes of discovering traces of our lost countrymen lies to the north of Wellington Channel, which our most experienced navigators concur in pronouncing to have been Franklin's probable route.

There are now five ships employed in the search—viz., the "Assistance," Sir E. Belcher; "Resolute," Captain Kellet; "North Star," Commander Pullen; "Pioneer," Commander Osborne; and the "Intrepid," Commander Cator. The whole strength of this squadron is directed to the examination of this one district, and we would fain hope that when the next report of their proceedings reaches us, it may convey at least some clue—some trace of the lost ones: of their restoration after nearly nine long years, we scarcely dare to dream. Yet who shall say what untold blessings may crown the patience of an earnest and loving search? Far be it from us to cast even a momentary gloom over any lingering hope which the cold finger of time has not yet withered; rather let us honour with full trust and confidence the hero-hearted men who count not their own lives dear for the sake of those to whom most of them are bound by nought but the link of a common humanity! Surely to them we may say in the words of the poet,

> "Go forth and prosper, then, emprizing band;
> May He who in the hollow of His hand
> The ocean holds, and rules the whirlwind's sweep,
> Assuage its wrath, and guide you on the deep!"

The preceding part of this volume having been prepared before the return of Sir E. Belcher and Dr. Rae, the two concluding chapters have been added to finish up the history of the Arctic proceedings to the present time.

NOVEMBER, 1854.

CHAPTER X.

"The summer went, the winter came,
We could not rule the year;
But summer will melt the ice again,
And open a path to the sunny main,
Whereon our ships shall steer.

"The winter went, the summer went,
The winter came around;
But the hard green ice was strong as death,
And the voice of Hope sank to a breath,
Yet caught at every sound."

THE voyage of the "Investigator," from the 30th of July, 1850, to the 5th April, 1853, is fully detailed in the published despatches of Captain M'Clure; a short abstract of which is necessary to make this slight sketch complete. At the commencement of the narrative, the "Enterprise" and "Investigator" had already parted company, and the latter was working its way along the edge of the pack. On the 8th August a party landed to erect a cairn on Point Drew, and fell in with a party of Esquimaux, who furnished satisfactory proof that Franklin's vessels had not reached their coast, by the astonishment they evinced at the sight of the ship. The masts they imagined to be large trees, and the great "omiac" they distinguished, for want of a better word, as "the fast moving island." M'Clure moved slowly along this coast for several days, holding frequent intercourse with the natives—who came in crowds to behold the marvellous sight—and trying to discover whether any report or even faint rumour existed, of white men having reached their territories. In this he was disappointed, the "pale-faces" were evidently a strange, new race; however, their gifts and conciliatory behaviour quite gained the hearts of the simple tribe, who

lamented their departure, and took leave, promising, "if any of their brothers came, to be very kind, and give them plenty of deer's flesh." Another tribe, with whom our voyagers fell in shortly after, were equally friendly and ignorant; they were particularly attracted by the size of the sails, which they termed "handkerchiefs," and scarcely knew how to value sufficiently the magnificent gift of a boat pennon, bestowed on them in consideration of their undertaking to forward a despatch for the Admiralty, to the Russian post on the Colville. On the 24th, the "Investigator" approached Port Warren, and a party landed, hoping to find that the natives traded with the Hudson's Bay Company, and that through this channel another despatch could be transmitted to England. Great was their surprise, therefore, at being received with brandished knives, bended bows, and cries of defiance, which warlike demonstrations were only pacified with much difficulty. After a friendly footing had been established, some of the party observed a brass button of European manufacture suspended from the ear of the chief, and questioned him concerning it. To their surprise he candidly confessed that it had belonged to a white man, one of a party who had arrived at Point Warren—no one knew from whence; they had no boat or means of conveyance, but had built a house, and after staying there some time, had finally departed inland. The owner of the brass button had wandered from his company, had been killed by one of the natives, who had now fled at the sight of the great ship, and the chief and his son had buried him on a neighbouring hill. With regard to time, however, the chief's account was singularly vague, and he could by no means be induced to fix any more definite date than "it might be last year, or when he was a child." This story of course gave rise to a thousand conjectures; many were of opinion that the wandering white men could be none other than Franklin's party, and all agreed in the necessity of thoroughly testing the truth of the report, by a personal examination of the relics still remaining. A thick fog, which compelled them to return to the ship, prevented them from reaching the white man's grave; but a searching party, on the following day, discovered two huts in the situation indicated

by the chief. All the hopes any might have cherished of finding even traces of their missing comrades, vanished, however, before the sight of these frail tenements, which were evidently of ancient date, and overgrown with moss and weeds; while the decayed wood which composed them, bore not the slightest trace by which to glean information of the former tenants. The interpreter believed the story to have its rise from an affray between some early discoverers and the ancestors of the present race, who cherish the tradition, and adopt purposely a vague phraseology, in order to identify themselves, if possible, with so important an event. At all events, there was nothing upon which to establish the slightest connection with Franklin's fate, and therefore nothing to cause further delay in their onward voyage. Another tribe of Esquimaux was encountered about the end of August, off Cape Bathurst, who proved friendly, and undertook to convey to the Hudson Bay Company those despatches which it had been found impossible to transmit by the Point Warren tribe. A distribution of trifling presents of course took place in return; and M'Clure gives an amusing account of the way in which the women gradually grew unmanageable as the tempting display of treasures was unfolded, and finally broke the line of boundary, waded to the boat, broke through the sailors, and, lifting one another in, seized without compunction upon whatever met their eyes and hands! Order was at length restored; but though they parted amicably, it was with great difficulty that their *acquisitive* propensities were checked.

On the 5th of September great excitement prevailed on board; a volume of smoke, which had been observed for two days about twelve miles S.W., had excited considerable speculation and interest. It was agreed that no traveller would remain so long in one spot for pleasure; and now the interest mounted rapidly to fever heat, when the deep tones of the ice-mate announced, that from the crow's nest he could clearly distinguish some white tents pitched in the hollow of a cliff, and persons dressed in white moving about them. Of course, these could only be some of Franklin's men, and, full of the most sanguine expectations, a boat hastened to the shore. Bitterly were the

eager inquirers disappointed, however, to find the tents transformed into fifteen small volcanic mounds of a sulphurous nature, while the tracks of reindeer, coming for water to a neighbouring spring, clearly explained the mystery of the white moving figures! The "Investigator" continued slowly coasting the shores of Prince Albert Land till the end of September, when the ice began rapidly to form, and it became necessary to choose winter quarters without loss of time. A suitable harbour was discovered on the east coast of the Prince of Wales' Strait, and there, on the 8th of October, their "perplexities terminated" for the season. A short sledge excursion to the northern part of the strait, filled up the succeeding interval between the business of getting fixed in winter quarters, and the long dreary season of ice and snow which held the vessel prisoner till the following July. On the 18th of April, 1851, three exploring sledge parties were sent out under Lieutenant Haswell, Lieutenant Cresswell, and Mr. Wynniatt, respectively to the S.E., N.W., and N.E., with six weeks' provisions each. By these gentlemen's observations, the surrounding coast lines were accurately laid down, but no traces of the missing vessels could be discovered. A tribe of friendly Esquimaux were discovered by the first mentioned party, and subsequently visited by Captain M'Clure; they proved remarkably intelligent, and readily traced on paper the coast line of Wollaston and Victoria Lands, thereby determining the long disputed point, whether or not these districts belonged to the mainland of America. Above eight hundred miles, in *direct* distance, were traversed by these three parties, who diligently erected cairns and deposited documents wherever they would be likely to arrest the attention of wanderers, and all returned to head quarters, convinced, from the total absence of trace or sign, that Franklin could not have penetrated to these regions.

The ice, which had so long held the vessel prisoner, began to yield about the middle of July, and M'Clure shaped his course for the north-east, intending if possible to round the northern shores of Melville Island. At the outset of her voyage, the "Investigator" had a narrow escape; the floe to

which she was temporarily attached gave way, and the detached portion being whirled round and crushed together by the pressure of the surrounding ice, bore down with tremendous velocity and force upon the devoted vessel. To let go warps and cables, and so to free the ship from the floe, was the work of a well-spent minute; for, before they could be drawn on board, the shock came, but the vessel, no longer held stationary, was driven onward by the blow, and "by warping and towing," says the narrator, "we speedily got beyond its influence!" A mass of driftwood—some of the pine trunks so fresh, that their branches must have waved in their deep native forest two years before — obstructed the progress of the voyagers near Point Armstrong, and for some time after fogs, drift-ice, and contrary winds, obliged them to anchor in the floe. It was soon discovered that a close barrier of ice forbade all hope of exit at the north extremity of Investigator Sound, and the only alternative seemed to be that of sailing southward, to round Cape Lambton, and then press on northward, along the western shore of Baring Island. This course they followed with tolerable ease till the 20th August, when they were driven between the ice and the beach, a little north of Prince Alfred's Cape. Here they lay till the 29th in comparative safety, but were then threatened with imminent peril from the immense floe, to which they were attached, being raised edgeways out of the water by the pressure of surrounding ice, and elevated perpendicularly thirty feet! A few minutes of awful suspense showed all on board how easily a slight additional pressure would turn the delicately poised mass completely over, and how the helpless vessel would be crushed like a nutshell in that terrific fall. But an Almighty hand preserved that fearfully precarious balance; a large piece from underneath was rent away, and after one or two frightful oscillations, the floe righted itself, and drifted onwards over the surging waters, bearing the ship unharmed upon its course. During the succeeding month, every day abounded in new perils, many as imminent as that we have just described. Now forced ashore by the pressure of the ice, now hurried along amidst its enclosing masses, now expecting momentarily to be

crushed between its opposing edges, and now gaining temporary freedom by blasting the huge masses which pressed around,—in this way the brave adventurers crept along the northern coast of Baring Island, and anchored at last for the winter, in what was truly, after so many perils, a harbour of refuge, and as such was named by them "Mercy Bay." Here, then, the winter of 1851-2 was passed in as great comfort as the circumstances permitted. The cold was less severe than what they had experienced the previous year, nearly 1½ degrees more to the south, and, as plenty of game remained on the island, shooting parties were sent out regularly, and proved an agreeable break to the monotony of the season, besides conducing greatly to the general health of the crew, by the constant supply of fresh provisions.

Directly they were settled in winter quarters, Mr. Court was sent out with a party to connect their position with the point reached by Lieutenant Cresswell, in the previous May. A perfect survey of the coast line of the island was by this means completed. During April another excursion was made by M'Clure, and an accompanying sledge party, to Winter Harbour, on Melville Island. It will be remembered that the "Hecla" and "Griper" wintered here in 1819-20, and M'Clure was probably desirous of making himself acquainted with some of the neighbouring localities, in event of being finally compelled to abandon his ship. Meantime the summer came slowly on, flocks of wild-fowl arrived, grass and flowers sprang gaily into life, and little streams, released from their icy fetters, made a pleasant noise of waters in the island. But no release came for the imprisoned vessel—day by day its tenants looked over the white frozen plain in hope to see some fissure, some disruption, some friendly "lane" of water, but no change came over the firm cold surface; the long summer days softened not its density, the flowers faded and the summer passed, and the vessel still was there! On September 24th, the anniversary of their arrival, a pathetic contrast is drawn between the two days—"We entered the bay with the temperature at 33°, and not a particle of ice in it; to-day the thermometer stands at 2°, with ice that has never moved." And so another winter came quickly on, and the brave fellows settled

down again contentedly to their protracted captivity, and Christmas was celebrated with mirth and rejoicing, and a worthy feast, consisting of haunches of venison, hares and ptarmigan, soup and sea-pies, and real English plum-puddings, weighing individually 26 lbs! But such long confinement, however cheerfully borne, could not fail to tell upon the health of the crew; symptoms of illness soon began to appear, and at one time the sick-list contained nineteen names. The judicious commander determined therefore to send home those who had suffered most from the climate, while he himself stayed bravely by his ship, and tried the chances of another summer.

Before they started, however, the arrival of Lieutenant Pym from the "Resolute" produced a change of plan, and very fortunate was the circumstance, for the travellers elect were by no means equal to the fatigue of so laborious a journey. As it was, Lieutenant Cresswell and Mr. Wynniatt accomplished the distance to Beechey Island, where they fell in with the "Phœnix," under Captain Inglefield, and were by him conveyed home last year. The fate of those who remained by the ship will be detailed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XI.

"They should have died in their own loved land,
With friends and kinsmen near them:
Not have wither'd thus on a foreign strand,
With no thought save Heaven to cheer them.
But what recks it now? Is their sleep less sound
In the port where the wild winds swept them,
Than if home's green turf their graves had bound,
Or the hearts they loved had wept them?

"Then why repine? Can they feel the rays
That pestilent sun sheds o'er them?
Or share the grief that may cloud the days
Of the friends who now deplore them?
No! their barque's at anchor, its sails are furl'd,
It hath 'scaped the storm's deep chiding;
And safe from the buffeting waves of the world,
In a haven of peace is riding."

Altered from A. A. Watts.

THE abandonment of five ships, well-provisioned and in good condition, and the return of their crews, form a startling conclusion to the career of northern adventure; and Sir E. Belcher has at least the satisfaction of originality, since no predecessor, even in extremity of peril, ever proceeded to such lengths. However, our object in this chapter is neither to pronounce censure nor to criticize motives, but simply and briefly to recount the occurrences with which the recent court-martial has made us acquainted.

The squadron under Sir Edward Belcher set sail April 21st, 1852, commissioned for a twofold object; to prosecute the search after Sir John Franklin, and to afford relief to the long absent crews of the Enterprise and Investigator. It consisted of the "Assistance" and "Resolute," under Sir E. Belcher and Captain Kellett; two steam tugs, "Intrepid" and "Pioneer;" and the "North Star," under commander Pullen. The expedition kept

well together till Beechey Island was reached, when a division of forces took place; and the "North Star" being stationed there as a depôt ship, Sir E. Belcher commenced his voyage of discovery up Wellington Channel with the "Assistance" and "Pioneer," while Captain Kellett with the two remaining vessels proceeded westward to Melville Island, to lodge there a supply of provisions, clothing, &c., for the ships under Captain Collinson. The 7th of September had arrived by the time the latter party reached Winter Harbour, and the discovery of a safe shelter during the dreary season that was drawing on, became daily a matter of more importance. Winter Harbour offered no inducement, and a survey of Skene Bay ending in the same result, they cut into the floe off Dealey Island, Bridport Inlet, and there wintered. The "Assistance" and "Pioneer" had even a shorter time of liberty; when first they started Wellington Channel was clear and free from ice, but their progress was arrested at the head of Northumberland Sound before the month of August was out, and there they remained till the following July.

The energetic spirits on board the "Resolute" allowed little even of this dreary time to pass in idleness. No sooner was the vessel settled in her winter quarters, than Commander M'Clintock set out on what one of his shipmates calls the "herculean task" of conveying provisions across Melville Island, to form a depôt at Hecla and Griper Bay for the spring travelling parties. This autumn journey is even more trying than that for which it is a preparation. In the early months the winter snow gives a certain equality of surface, but in September and October the brief summer heat has reduced the ground to its original bareness, and its wide stony plains, rugged precipices, and deep rocky ravines, are displayed in all their desolate grandeur. The difficulties of travelling with sledges over this character of country, may be imagined by the length of time necessary to accomplish the journey,—which occupied nineteen days, though the distance in a direct line did not exceed thirty-six miles! Another party under Lieutenant Mecham were fully employed at the same time in laying down depôts for another intended expedition by way of Winter Harbour and Liddon Gulf. The news which this

officer brought on his return was as welcome as it was unexpected, and stirred up on board a perfect fever of excitement and enterprise, which seemed before to have been quietly laid to sleep for the winter. At Winter Harbour documents were found from M'Clure, bearing date of the preceding April, which established beyond doubt his claim to the discovery of the N.W. passage, and added the welcome intelligence, that the "Investigator" and her crew were safe and well, though closely blocked up in the Bay of Mercy, Baring Island, at about one hundred and seventy miles' distance. The 26th October brought back M'Clintock from his second trip across the island, and by the 1st November the decks were housed over, and nothing remained but to wear away the long winter as patiently as might be. In a former chapter we have fully described the ordinary occupations and amusements of a ship's crew in these regions through a winter's day, and—as the reader may easily believe that much variety is unattainable in such a locality—the dates and names being changed, the sketch will prove faithful, whether applied to Captain Kellett's party off Dealey Island, or Sir E. Belcher's in Wellington Channel. Necessary preparations for the spring journeys, too, afforded a fund of wholesome occupation, graphically described by an eye-witness. "Never," says this officer, writing from winter quarters, "did the interior of a beehive, with its industrious inmates, exhibit a more busy or bustling scene than did the lower decks of the 'Resolute' and 'Intrepid' during the months of January and February at Dealey Island; carpenters making masts and yards for the sledges—sail-makers making and altering sails for the same purpose—cobblers making canvass boots—tinkers getting kettles, pans, and water-bottles into order—while the sailor, in his capacity of 'jack of all trades' was busy aiding and assisting all parties."

On the 9th March, 1853, Lieutenant Pym commenced the spring campaign by starting for the Bay of Mercy, to carry greetings and help to the "Investigator" if she still remained there, or, if she had departed, to discover which route she had taken; and a month later three several expeditions set forth, Commander M'Clintock to Hecla and Griper Bay, and thence from Cape Fisher, to pursue a N.W. course as the land might trend;

Lieutenant Mecham by Winter Harbour and Liddon Gulf, his further course westward to be regulated by the direction of the land, and prosecuted as circumstances might permit; while Captain Kellett himself proposed to conduct the th d party, but subsequently delegated his authority to Lieutenant Hamilton, with orders to travel in a N.E. direction by Cape Mudge, and use every effort to reach the rendezvous appointed by Sir E. Belcher the previous summer. This last expedition was more scantily provisioned, and returned sooner than the others, Lieutenant Hamilton bringing Captain Kellett his despatches on the 21st of June. On the outward journey he had an unexpected rencontre with Commander Richards of the "Assistance," who had undertaken this pleasant little journey of five hundred miles to pay a friendly visit to Captain Kellett! Before his return, however, another party had reached the "Resolute;" worn, pale, emaciated men they were, whose wa:ted frames and haggard faces bore token to no ordinary toil and suffering. Slowly and wearily they travelled over the uneven ice, and a stranger might have marvelled that so forlorn a party should be hailed with such heart-thrilling cheers, and greeted when they reached the deck with such warm and friendly welcome; while the eager, trembling response of the new-comers, their uncertain, half-bewildered air, and earnest gaze around, as if the sight of friendly faces was new and strange to them, might equally excite his wonder. Little cause for marvel was there, however; for strange and sweet was the sight of honest kindly faces, and the sound of hearty greetings in the friendly English tongue to M'Clure and his heroic crew, who had abandoned their ship after three long years' imprisonment in that desolate wilderness of ice, and now, after their long isolation from kindred humanity, felt this meeting with fellow seamen as an earnest and foretaste of their restoration to friends and home.

Lieutenant Mecham made his appearance on the 5th of July, and last of all came M'Clintock, with all his party safe and well, though wearied, as indeed they had good right to be, having travelled in their one hundred and six days' absence, no less than one thousand two hundred miles!

An achievement this without parallel in the previous records of arctic research, though Lieutenant Mecham's journey comes only second to it, as he accomplished upwards of a thousand miles in ninety-three days! Those—less fortunate—whose duty kept them quietly on board, had beguiled the weary interval by building a house on Dealey Island, storing it with six months' provisions for sixty-five men, and watching with mingled hope and fear for the first sight of the sledges, when the time for their return drew near. Each successive arrival, however, only added fresh confirmation to the conviction which gradually overpowered even the most sanguine hopes—that patient toil and heroic energy were alike bestowed in vain, and that no sign or track of the long-lost expedition would in this quarter reward their anxious investigations.

Nor did the detachment in Wellington Channel meet with better success; and although Sir E. Belcher was untiringly active in sending out sledge parties, and himself sharing their privations and fatigues, his conviction of the utter hopelessness of such attempts, is best expressed in the following sentences from his defence at the late court-martial at Sheerness. "The spring search of 1853 was carried to the limits of every land where, by possibility, Captain Sir John Franklin's party could have proceeded. If they ever reached the limits to which the 'Assistance' proceeded, I have the opinion of Commander Richards and others, who travelled over the ice between our winter quarters and Cape Lady Franklin with his division of sledges, 'That no opening has existed there for years.' Indeed that channel is as much barred as the strait which impeded Captain M'Clure from bringing the 'Investigator' to Melville Island. * * * * Where, then, I would inquire—in what direction was search to be prosecuted? for every known land had been sufficiently explored. Over the vast area, comprising half the circle, of vacant space, without even a loom of land, or a water sky, no object invited! Speculators alone, ignorant of these truths, might dream of Franklin being somewhere within the Polar waters; but I believe the common-sense and intelligent portion of the officers of the squadron, do not credit that his ships passed the meridian of Beechey Island!"

The summer season of 1853 was late, and though the ships in Wellington Channel got released from the ice in July, the "Resolute" and her tender were only freed by a heavy gale on the 18th August. Nor had they any length of liberty; the "Assistance" and "Pioneer" were frozen in again on the 1st September, about thirty-six miles north of Beechey Island, and Captain Kellett's progress eastward was soon arrested by drift ice and "sludge;" and though the "Resolute" proved worthy of her unflinching name, and struggled bravely against it, she was finally fixed again in the floe, and there wintered twenty-eight miles S.W. of Cape Cockburn.

The winter was unmarked by any extraordinary occurrence in either division of the squadron until April, 1854, when Lieutenant Mecham set out on that unparalleled journey to the Prince of Wales's Straits, which throws even M'Clintock's wonderful exploit of the preceding spring into the shade. This gallant young officer and his party, with two sledges, left the ship on the 3rd of April, and arrived at the Princess Royal Islands on the 4th May. Here, it will be remembered, were M'Clure's first winter quarters; and here, to the great satisfaction of the present explorers, was found a document, stating that "H. M. S. Enterprise had in 1851 passed up the strait to Point Peel, returned, and after following the west coast of Baring Island to lat. 72° 55′ N., had wintered in 1851-2 in lat. 70° 35′ N., long. 117° 40′ W., and that information of her movements would be found upon an islet in lat. 71° 36′ N., long. 119° W." This discovery of course incited the whole party to redoubled exertions, and, provisioning the sledge for ten days, they pressed onward to make further research. The documents were found on Ramsay Island; they are clear and full, embody the substance of documents from M'Clure, found by Collinson at Princess Royal Islands, and contain the information, that parties from the "Enterprise" had visited Point Hearne on Melville Island, and had examined the north and south shores of Prince Albert's Land—finding, however, no traces of Franklin—and that, on the vessel leaving its present quarters, it was purposed to pursue a channel between Prince Albert's and Wollaston Lands, which a boat party had previously

navigated for upwards of one hundred miles. This channel is marked in ordinary arctic maps as Russell Gulf. The latest date among these documents is August 27, 1852, and reports all on board in good health. Together with these papers, both at the Princess Royal Islands and at Ramsay Island, were found careful lists of localities where provision depôts had been made, and appended to each record was a notice in English, French, Spanish, Danish, Dutch, and Russian, requesting whoever found the same to forward it to the Secretary of the Admiralty, London, with a note of the time and place where it was found. It was now high time for the party from the "Resolute" to retrace their steps, as the state and amount of their provisions, no less than their own overtasked powers, betokened. The return journey was rendered very trying by strong easterly winds and snow storms, which subjected the whole party to attacks of snow-blindness; however, they reached the house on Dealey Island by the 27th of May, and, much to their surprise, found there directions awaiting them to proceed at once to Beechey Island, Sir E. Belcher's orders to abandon the "Resolute" and "Intrepid" having reached Captain Kellett after their departure. To Beechey Island, therefore, they at once proceeded, and reached it on the 12th June, "all in good health," as Lieutenant Mecham reports two days afterwards, though "the men are much reduced by their exertions." The distance traversed during this expedition was upwards of thirteen hundred miles, and the whole was accomplished in seventy days! Four depôts of provisions were likewise formed, and seven records deposited. At Ramsay Island, particularly, a communication was left for Captain Collinson from Captain Kellett, informing him of the present position of the search, and advising him by no means to proceed eastward, but to return by way of Behring's Straits.

The "North Star" now became rapidly filled. The crews of the "Investigator," "Resolute," and "Intrepid," were already on board, and on the 25th August Sir E. Belcher gave decisive orders for the abandonment of the "Assistance" and "Pioneer." These vessels had remained fixed in the ice since the preceding September; between twenty and thirty miles of floe intervened

between them and open water, and an attempt at blasting gave them no assistance; half a mile was cleared by sixteen hours' labour and seven or eight hundred weight of powder, under very favourable circumstances, but after that even this last resource failed them. Under these circumstances there seemed little hope of getting free from the ice this summer; but whether Sir Edward Belcher—with abundance of provisions, ships in perfect condition, and the power of sending home his invalided men, and supplying their places by the healthiest among the united crews on board the "North Star"—was justified in shrinking from the trial of another arctic winter, and abandoning those vessels which government had intrusted to his care, we feel neither competent nor desirous to decide. He has been pronounced by those best qualified to judge, free from all blame; but we can scarcely help feeling that his conduct on this occasion savours more of the timid caution of the landsman than of the bold, generous courage of the British sailor.

Meantime, it is sad to think of these poor doomed vessels, which, in nautical fashion, we have invested with so much of personality, that we detect in our meditations something very like pity for them—deserted thus in that lone, white wilderness! We can fancy in the long coming winter how weird and strange they will appear in the clear moonlight—the only dark objects in the dazzling plain around. How solemn and oppressive the solitude and silence all around them! No more broken by the voices, and full-toned shouts, and ringing laughter, which so often woke the echoes far and near; varied only by the unearthly sounds that sweep over these dreary regions when a fissure opens in the great ice fields, or the wild mournful wailing of the wind among the slender shrouds and tall tapering masts, that stand so sharply defined in their blackness upon the snowy background. There they may remain, silent memorials of England's last attempt to discover and save her missing children. The moonlight of many winters may silver their glittering spars, and through many a summer day the sun may look upon their blanching timbers, as they lie tenantless and inactive, like quiet corpses from which the soul has fled. And so, perchance, long years

will pass, till the snow and ice may have crept round and over them, and they bear less resemblance to noble English vessels than to shapeless masses of glittering crystal; or, more likely, some coming winter storm may rend the bars of their prison, and drive them out in its fury to heave and toss once more for a brief minute upon the surging waves, until the angry ice again gather round its prey, and, crushing them like nutshells in its mighty grasp, send a sullen booming roar over the water—the knell of these last intruders on the ancient arctic solitudes!

It is something, however, to know that the "Enterprise" has escaped the fate of her less fortunate companion, and will not swell the number of devoted ships. Tidings have been received, since the return of Sir E. Belcher's expedition, that she was safe in Port Clarence, Behring's Straits, the 23rd of August last, with all hands on board in good health, having only lost three of her crew. From this we may conclude, that Captain Collinson found and profited by Captain Kellett's advice, or, at least, discovered some of the documents left by Lieutenant Mecham, and acted upon the information they conveyed. We are now relieved from all anxiety respecting any fellow-countrymen imprisoned in those inhospitable regions. We have no longer to seek for the living, but the dead—for, as the following particulars only too plainly prove, Franklin and his unhappy companions must now be reckoned among that number. Collinson has not been more successful in the search than others, and we have still to rest contented with Dr. Rae's narration.

Meanwhile, though we have relinquished the search, an American expedition, under the auspices of Mr. Grinnell—the same philanthropic merchant who sent out the "Rescue" and "Advance," in 1850—is at this present moment feeling its way over the waters, or along the shores of Smith's Sound. The "Advance," which bore the winter trial so bravely, is now sent out again, but the chief feature of the expedition is to be sledge travelling, which the commander had projected on a more adventurous scale than any before attempted; intending to leave the ship directly she is safe in winter quarters, and start with a light Idnia rubber boat—constructed to propel either on ice or

water—and some dog sledges. Provision depôts for spring journeys are to be formed on the way; and when they have reached their furthest limit they intend to leave boat and provisions, on the chance of seeing them again in the spring, but exposed, meantime, to weather, bears, and other mischances, and return on foot to the ship. There is something very bold and original in this plan, which has the advantage of giving the greatest amount of toil before the men have been tried by the winter, and relieving the spring parties from the necessity of venturing on untried tracks, or burdening themselves with any great weight of provisions. All honour to their disinterested and noble effort; though, from the startling information lately brought by Dr. Rae, we know too well that search in that direction can only end in disappointment.

Dr. Rae's report, gathered from the Esquimaux, was avowedly transmitted through two or three individuals, and is painfully vague and unsatisfactory; still the very ideas it dimly suggests are so full of hopelessness and horror, that we would fain hope it may have gained some particulars through frequent repetition. Making every allowance, however, for exaggeration and embellishment, we fear it cannot be doubted that at least thirty of our unhappy countrymen perished miserably from starvation in 1850! Dr. Rae's report to the Secretary of the Admiralty is as follows. —It should be premised that these particulars came to light in the course of his researches at the head of a party in the employment of the Hudson Bay Company.

"REPULSE BAY, *July* 29.

"SIR,—I have the honour to mention, for the information of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that during my journey over the ice and snow this spring, with the view of completing the survey of the west shore of Boothia, I met with Esquimaux in Pelly Bay, from one of whom I learned that a party of 'white men' (Kablounans) had perished from want of food some distance to the westward, and not far beyond a large river, containing many falls and rapids. Subsequently, further particulars were received, and a number of articles purchased, which places the fate of a portion, if not of all, of the then sur-

vivors of Sir John Franklin's long-lost party beyond a doubt—a fate terrible as the imagination can conceive.

"The substance of the information obtained at various times and from various sources was as follows :—

"In the spring, four winters past (spring, 1850), a party of 'white men,' amounting to about forty, were seen travelling southward over the ice, and dragging a boat with them, by some Esquimaux, who were killing seals near the north shore of King William's Land, which is a large island. None of the party could speak the Esquimaux language intelligibly, but by signs the natives were made to understand that their ship, or ships, had been crushed by ice, and that they were now going to where they expected to find deer to shoot. From the appearance of the men, all of whom, except one officer, looked thin, they were then supposed to be getting short of provisions, and purchased a small seal from the natives. At a later date the same season, but previous to the breaking up of the ice, the bodies of some thirty persons were discovered on the continent, and five on an island near it, about a long day's journey to the N.W. of a large stream, which can be no other than Back's Great Fish River (named by the Esquimaux Doot-ko-hi-calik), as its description, and that of the low shore in the neighbourhood of Point Ogle and Montreal Island, agree exactly with that of Sir George Back. Some of the bodies had been buried (probably those of the first victims of famine), some were in a tent or tents, others under the boat, which had been turned over to form a shelter, and several lay scattered about in different directions. Of those found on the island one was supposed to have been an officer, as he had a telescope strapped over his shoulders, and his double-barrelled gun lay underneath him.

"From the mutilated state of many of the corpses, and the contents of the kettles, it is evident that our wretched countrymen had been driven to the last resource—cannibalism—as a means of prolonging existence.

"There appeared to have been an abundant stock of ammunition, as the powder was emptied in a heap on the ground by the natives out of the kegs or cases containing it; and a quantity of

ball and shot was found below high-water mark, having probably been left on the ice close to the beach. There must have been a number of watches, compasses, telescopes, guns (several double-barrelled), &c., all of which appear to have been broken up, as I saw pieces of those different articles with the Esquimaux, together with some silver spoons and forks. I purchased as many as I could get. A list of the most important of these I enclose, with a rough sketch of the crests and initials on the forks and spoons. The articles themselves shall be handed over to the Secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company on my arrival in London.

"None of the Esquimaux with whom I conversed had seen the 'whites,' nor had they ever been at the place where the bodies were found, but had their information from those who had been there, and who had seen the party when travelling.

"I offer no apology for taking the liberty of addressing you, as I do so from a belief that their lordships would be desirous of being put in possession, at as early a date as possible, of any tidings, however meagre and unexpectedly obtained, regarding this painfully interesting subject.

"I may add that, by means of our guns and nets, we obtained an ample supply of provisions last autumn, and my small party passed the winter in snow-houses in comparative comfort, the skins of the deer shot affording abundant warm clothing and bedding. My spring journey was a failure, in consequence of an accumulation of obstacles, several of which my former experience in arctic travelling had not taught me to expect.—I have, &c.,

"JOHN RAE, C.F.,

"*Commanding Hudson's Bay Company's Arctic Expedition.*"

To such a tragic detail as this nothing can be added. There is little from which to draw consolation, and imagination requires no aid to portray the weary longing for rest and home, which not even the agony of hunger could subdue—vain desires, hopeless cravings, never to be realized on earth; but can we for a moment doubt, that the merciful All-Father looked pitifully down upon the homeless ones, and, in his tender love, closed their long wanderings, and gave them a calmer home and a

more perfect rest than the best that earth could offer! There is much to speculate upon in this brief narrative. What had become of all the rest? One hundred and forty men left these shores full of health and vigour, nine short years ago. This painful narrative accounts only too clearly for forty, but where are the Hundred? Then, again, another question arises, how had the intermediate time been spent between the winter passed at Beechey Island, 1845-6, and the piteous tragedy of 1850? Searching parties have visited every probable spot where they could have touched, and since some were certainly alive at such a comparatively recent date, it seems quite inexplicable that we should not have come upon some traces, either of winter quarters, sledging parties, or shipwreck. How was it, again, that while the Esquimaux lived comfortably through the winter, the English party in the same district were a prey to all the agonies of starvation? Questions like these might be multiplied to any extent, but how shall they be answered? We are thankful to find that there is every probability of a searching party being organized next spring, to proceed overland to the proposed scene of the melancholy occurrence, and make every investigation, both in the vicinity, and among the neighbouring tribes, for relics and documents. By this means we earnestly hope some certainty as to the fate of our gallant countrymen will be obtained. The fact that the last trace of their progress was a grave at Cape Riley, conveyed a melancholy portent which we were slow to perceive till now, when no knowledge of intervening events mars the force of the touching contrast between the dead sailor, tenderly laid in his quiet grave by his sorrowing comrades, and those very comrades themselves dying slowly on a distant shore, their last hours unsoothed, unattended, and their bones left to whiten in the sun and wind! It is said sometimes that the age of mystery and romantic adventure is past—let those who utter the unthinking words study the details of arctic research within the last nine years, and then decide, whether history or romance ever furnished any thing more heroically brave, more darkly mysterious, or more cheerlessly sad, than the career of Franklin and his followers!

APPENDIX.

LADY FRANKLIN'S Letter to the Lords of the Admiralty we only mention, in order to express—in common with the general number of those who have read it—our heartfelt respect and admiration for the noble woman by whom it was penned. We cannot but join in her indignant protest against the cold-hearted inconsisteney by which—while a fine squadron was in full aetivity of seareh, and while additional provisions were sent out before the original term of absence had expired—those who, by their very ardour of inquiry, they professed to believe alive, were suddenly treated as dead, their names erased from the Navy List, their pay stopped, and their places filled! Nor did this act derive any shade of exeuse from time or cireumstances. No discouraging report had been reeeived; no expedition had lately returned unsuceessfully; the latest aecounts of the preceding autumn were full of hopeful anticipation from the results of sledge travelling during the ensuing spring. Surely common humanity might have suggested the suspension of the sentenee of death until we heard what had been the success of this last effort!

The eloquent and earnest pleading of the letter will best speak for itself; and, though reecnt diselosures have sadly shown how fallaeious were her fondly-eherished hopes, we gladly publish it, feeling that such a tribute to the memory of the gallant dead, and sueh an evidence of noble-hearted energy and womanly devotedness in the living, should not be left without more enduring record than the pages of a newspaper.

The following return to an address of the Hon. the House of Commons, dated Mareh 17, 1854, (for "eopy of letter addressed by Lady Franklin to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, dated the 24th of February, 1854, in referenee to their lordships' announcement in the *London Gazette*, of the 20th day of January, 1854, respecting the officers and crews of her Majesty's ships

'Erebus' and 'Terror,' and a copy of such notice,") was published just two days before the cruel sentence of death passed on Sir John Franklin and his missing companions was intended to be carried out:—

"NOTICE RESPECTING THE OFFICERS AND CREWS OF HER MAJESTY'S SHIPS 'EREBUS' AND 'TERROR.'

"ADMIRALTY, *Jan.* 19, 1854.

"NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that if intelligence be not received before the 31st March next of the officers and crews of her Majesty's ships 'Erebus' and 'Terror' being alive, the names of the officers will be removed from the *Navy List*, and they and the crews of those ships will be considered as having died in her Majesty's service. The pay and wages of the officers and crews of those ships will cease on the 31st day of March next; and all persons legally entitled, and qualifying themselves to claim the pay and wages then due, will be paid the same on application to the Accountant-general of her Majesty's navy.

"Security will be required in certain cases, for which special provision will be made.

"By command of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.

"W. A. B. HAMILTON, *Secretary*."

The above notice was inserted in the *London Gazette* of Friday, Jan. 20, 1854.

LETTER FROM LADY FRANKLIN TO THE LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY.

4, SPRING GARDENS, *Feb.* 24, 1854.

MY LORDS,—In a letter which I had the honour to address to the First Lord of the Admiralty on the 20th of January, and which, at my request, he kindly forwarded to the Board, I expressed, in language of deep emotion, the feelings of pain and wonder to which your summary and unexpected sentence on my husband, Rear-Admiral Sir John Franklin, and the officers and crews of the "Erebus" and "Terror," had given rise.

You have been pleased to explain to me, in terms of which I cannot but acknowledge the courtesy, that it is for the convenience of winding up the accounts of the financial year, which closes on the 31st of March, that you have fixed upon that mo-

ment for consigning 135 seamen in her Majesty's service simultaneously to the grave, unmindful of the discordant fact, that her Majesty's ships on the other side of the Atlantic are now, and will be on the 31st of March next, preparing to discover the abodes of these very men, considered as living beings, yet to be rescued.

My lords, I make no vain complaints of the manner in which your lordships' intentions have been communicated to the public, distressing as it is to the feelings of the living, and little respectful as it has the semblance of being to the memory of those who, if they have "died in her Majesty's service," might have been deemed entitled to more regretful mention. All who are most deeply concerned in this announcement must be well aware, that nothing could be further from your lordships' intentions than to produce such an impression; and we lose our painful sense of the hard official language of your *Gazette* notice, in the severer shock which its meaning gives to those hopes and that reliance which we have hitherto placed in you, as, under God, our sole help and refuge.

Neither, perhaps, can we presume to complain that an expenditure, which cannot be proved to be lawfully due, should be suspended, even had there been no immediate exigencies of the public service, if such exist, to justify its withdrawal. I believe there are few among the representatives of the absent who have not felt that the Admiralty have acted liberally, kindly, and generously, in continuing, during years of uncertainty, the pay and wages, as if certain of their returning to claim their own. The search might have gone on though the payment was suspended, and none would have doubted that on the safe return, however distant, of the rightful claimants, those wages, so hardly won, would have been paid them to the full, and their right standing in her Majesty's navy restored to them, even though other brave men had been worthily promoted to fill their vacant places. It is not, then, of the retrenchment, but of the reason on which you have thought fit to base it, that we have cause to complain.

Your lordships say, in your *Gazette* notice, that the officers and crews of the "Erebus" and "Terror" are, on the 31st of March next, to be considered as dead, if no intelligence arrive in the meantime to the contrary, your lordships being aware that the arrival of any intelligence before that date is physically impossible.

We know, my lords, that this sentence cannot realize the doom

of its victims, whose possible return you are compelled for your own financial security to admit; that it is null as touching the fact can be considered no evidence in a court of law, and leaves the truth, whatever it be, untouched.

Yet does it sound on the public ear, and more deeply in the ear of many heart-anxious listeners, as the knell of departed hopes, the warning voice that tells us we are to prepare for the abandonment of those unhappy men to their fate. And if it be not so, and that your lordships have used this language only as a means of legalizing your financial measure, would that you had explained to us that the search now carrying on would not be affected by it, but would be continued till its especial object was accomplished according to the expectations raised reasonably and inevitably by your lordships' own previous course of action. The special object of the present expedition was to search for the missing ships in that quarter of the Arctic Seas where they had not yet been looked for; it was recommended by a great majority of Arctic officers appointed to consider the question, who believed that my husband and his companions had passed that way, and were yet to be found alive.

The expedition of Sir Edward Belcher, founded on these conclusions, was provisioned for a certain absence of three years, and only six months ago was re-provisioned for a longer period. It is not yet two years since the expedition sailed, and it has not yet accomplished its mission, nor been absent its expected term of service, nor can we obtain any information as to its proceedings till next autumn, nor perhaps then, unless a special messenger be sent for the purpose, nor shall we learn, perhaps, at that period, the total result of the explorations made or yet making.

These facts, so inaccordant with your lordships' sentence of death, are the ground of my hopes that that decree may not involve the fatal conclusion as to your intentions, to which, by a too inexorable reasoning, it would seem to lead. Yet in the meantime an unauthorized impression is produced, most discouraging and painful, tending directly to extinguish hope, to paralyse exertion, and even to suppress the expression of honest sentiment.

I am under the necessity, in spite of my innate trust in your lordships' justice and compassion, of dealing with the *Gazette* notice as I found it, in its literal sense, and it must therefore be my endeavour to prove in this letter why I cannot accept

your lordships' sentence, but am compelled to record my respectful, but most earnest remonstrance and protest against it.

The grounds on which it appears to me reasonable that my husband and his companions in the "Erebus" and "Terror" should not be considered dead, but living, are these:—

First—Because no evidence has been discovered of any catastrophe having befallen them.

Secondly—Because the quarter of the Arctic Sea, where it is most probable that the missing parties would be found living, or their fate ascertained, has never yet, so far as we know, been explored; Sir Edward Belcher, when last heard of, having advanced only to the verge of the open sea to the north-west, but without entering it; and because the part thus indicated is one of the two courses pointed out to my husband in the Admiralty Instructions for him to follow, and also because it has been pronounced, after a thorough examination of the other course, that he could not have passed that way.

Thirdly—Because within this unexamined region the resources for supporting life are probably abundant; and,

Fourthly—Because my husband and his officers steadily contemplated, and from the first provided for, a detention extending over an indefinite period, should difficulties occur to prevent their return at the time expected.

I. And first, as to the absence of all signs of wreck or disaster. This negative evidence of the safety of the expedition has been gained in every part of the Arctic Sea which has yet been visited. Neither the bodies of men, nor parts of ships, timbers, spars, stores of any description, have been found, either afloat in the currents, or washed upon the shores. In Wellington Channel, where the missing ships are known to have been, nothing has been found (beyond the signs of their well-being at winter quarters) but some drift pine-wood, belonging to the forests of a milder climate to the north or west.

The captains of whaling ships, men the most experienced in such matters, concur in asserting that it is next to impossible that two ships like the "Erebus or "Terror" could be crush and destroyed, without any of their crews escaping, and without some traces of the disaster being found; and one of our most distinguished Arctic navigators has very recently declared, that he was never more strongly of opinion than he is now, that it is

utterly improbable that Franklin's ships, men and all, have been destroyed by any accident among the ice. I do not think it necessary to adduce any contrary opinions, because they appear to have been adopted rather as a last resort for the solution of a so-called mystery, than from any indisputable data.

There was a time, it is true, when it was somewhat unscrupulously asserted that both the ships had been swallowed up in the ice in their passage across Baffin's Bay, during their first summer, and this opinion, which was utterly devoid of even the semblance of justification, obtained some degree of credit till the discovery of their first winter quarters, on the other side of the supposed field of disaster, put a summary end to the gratuitous tale. And next we were assured that our brave navigators, whose high sense of duty had never been questioned before, had deliberately turned their backs upon the work before them, after only one winter's absence, and been crushed, or had foundered on their way home.

It would be presuming too much on your lordships' patience, to dwell on other absurd stories of murders, burnings, &c., invented by the mendacious half-caste Esquimaux, Adam Beck, when he desired to put an end at once to the search, in order to get earlier back to the home he had been enticed to leave.

But there is yet a more recent report, which, visionary as I am myself disposed to deem it on the authority of persons experienced in Arctic visual phenomena, has been deemed otherwise than necessarily a delusive appearance by persons entitled to every respect. And yet I need not argue in addressing your lordships against this spectacle of the supposed "Erebus" and "Terror" drifting away on the top of an iceberg from some unknown quarter to the banks of Newfoundland, since assuredly had your lordships believed it at the time the report reached England, which was in the spring or summer of 1852, you would not have lost a moment in taking steps to search the shores which those ships, if such they were, must have quitted, and where they must have left their human freight, still living, behind, since the spectators of the phenomenon affirm their conviction that there was not a living soul on board. And I am the more persuaded of this, since it was at this very period that I offered for the Admiralty's acceptance, nay, entreated their acceptance of, my little vessel, the Isabel, equipped and provisioned for Arctic service, which had fallen into my hands after the failure of Mr. Beatson's expedition, and thus a search of the shores alluded to, at no

further expense to her Majesty's government than the manning and officering of the little vessel, might have been effected without a moment's delay. I could not myself, however, have been expected to submit to the particular attention of the board a search after these iceberg ships, in which I had no faith, especially in the quarter to which it would probably have been directed, namely, the coast of Labrador. Nevertheless, if it should now be your lordships pleasure to cause inquiries to be made by any of your returning ships on the coast of Labrador for the unfortunate people alive so late as 1851, and thus, as it is supposed, bereft of their floating home and means of transport, I could not but regard the measure with grateful satisfaction, though I may humbly express my opinion, that it is not from the coast of Labrador that these supposed discovery ships could have drifted. But it is always an advance towards the undisputed settlement of our missing navigators' position, to know where they are not; and, indeed, I would really give heed to this, or any other not impossible conjecture which promotes search, if it were not that, by so doing, efforts are diverted from the only course which I believe to be the right one.

But before closing these observations on the absence of all evidence of any fatal catastrophe having happened to the missing expedition, I am reminded of a passage in a despatch of Captain M'Clure, deposited on Melville Island, which has been exultingly quoted by a writer in *The Times*, in confirmation of his opinions to the contrary.

Captain M'Clure says, "It is my intention, if possible, to return to England this season, touching at Melville Island and Port Leopold, but should we not be again heard of, in all probability we shall have been carried into the Polar pack, or to the westward of Melville Island, in either of which cases to attempt to send succour would only be to increase the evil, as any ship that enters the Polar pack must be inevitably crushed." And again he says, "A ship stands no chance of getting to the westward by entering the Polar Sea, the water alongshore being very narrow and wind contrary, and the pack impenetrable."

The value of these remarks of Captain M'Clure is, I conceive, to be limited by his personal observation and experience. It is evident he was speaking of that portion of the Polar Sea with which he was himself acquainted, without noting the distinction which appears to have been recognised of late years, between the sea lying within fifteen degrees around the Pole and that section

of it to the southward, between the chain of the Parry Islands and the face of the American continent, which, in the earlier annals of Arctic discovery, was included in the general name of Polar Sea, and is so called in the published narratives of my husband's overland expeditions.

We have had no description of ice seen in those northern seas which I believe the missing ships to have entered, corresponding to that encountered by Captain M'Clure in the narrow channels and in the ice-clogged shores of Banks' Land and Melville Island, where it is supposed to be caused by the prolongation of the land westward toward Behring Strait. Dr. Scoresby has justly observed, that had the chain terminated near the meridian of Mercy Bay, a far wider space of open water should have been observed there after the southerly gale than seems to have occurred. It appears, therefore, not reasonable to draw any unfavourable conclusion as to the safety of ships which entered a Polar Sea north of the chain of islands, from any appearances which come under the observation of Captain M'Clure in his lower latitude and confined position. And this reasoning, as it affects the safety of the "Erebus" and "Terror," will be the more readily admitted when it is remembered that the passage between Melville Island and Banks' Land, respecting which Captain M'Clure's observation was made, was expressly pointed out to Sir John Franklin in his instructions, to be avoided. It was the only part of the Arctic seas which he was enjoined not to approach; and whatever, therefore, may be the nature of the ice within or near, the missing expedition has assuredly avoided exposure to it. For this reason I have always been persuaded that there was no probability of the ships ever being found, or even retreating upon Winter Harbour, or any where on the south coast of Melville Island, which has been the object of so many attempts both from the east and from the west, and has become, in fact, in consequence of its halfway position, the rendezvous of the searching squadron.

I may add that, though in that portion of the Polar Sea which Captain M'Clure had in his eye, he believes no ships could live, yet that, towards that other part of the Polar Sea, which I doubt not my husband entered, a little solitary vessel, of less than 150 tons, bearing the American flag, is now dauntlessly pursuing her way, undeterred by any conjectural dangers, but aiming to solve in some degree, in subordination to the higher object of humanity, the geographical problem of what exists further north than any discoverer has yet penetrated.

II. I have ventured to make the assertion, that my husband and his companions have never yet been looked for in that part of the Arctic seas, where a great probability exists that they would be found.

By your lordships, who are acquainted with the proceedings of every successive expedition, of each division of the search, and of the results of the whole, this position will hardly be disputed. To the great majority of the public, who have heard of one costly expedition after another, and believe that by this time the superficial area of Arctic waters must well nigh be swept, it would appear a startling assertion difficult of acceptance. Yet it requires but a transient glance at the Polar chart, as it appears with the very latest geographical acquisitions, to see that between the meridian of Wellington Channel and Behring Strait there lies a blank space, in which neither sea, nor coast, nor island is laid down. It comprises about seventy degrees of longitude, or, if measured in the parallel of seventy-eight degrees (the most southerly which could apparently have been navigated by the discovery ships), between 800 and 900 miles. What discoveries my husband may have made in this space he has not returned to tell; no one has followed him there. And lest it should be objected that I assume too much in asserting that this must have been the course taken by the missing ships, allow me a few further explanations.

It cannot be denied that the Admiralty instructions presented to my husband two routes by which to endeavour to effect a passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The southern, by Barrow's Strait to the south-west, was recommended to him in preference, or in the first instance, and was the object of his own predilections, inasmuch as, if practicable, it would lead to the northern front of the American continent, already known to him by his own and other surveys. But my husband anticipated that before arriving on these familiar shores, he would probably meet, in particular latitudes and longitudes which he pointed out, with insuperable obstacles, and accordingly his mind was greatly occupied before his departure with the alternative course, or northern passage, which was wholly new, and moreover extremely popular amongst his officers. It was anticipated with enthusiasm by Captain Fitzjames, the commander of the "Erebus," that the ships would descend from a high northern latitude upon the coast of Asia, and that he would be sent home with my husband's despatches through Siberia.

One thing I can affirm with certainty, that it was my husband's determination to try both routes before his return; and so strong was the feeling of interest and importance attached, as it was said, by the Admiralty themselves to that which led to the unknown northern waters, that a confident expectation existed that, even should the ships effect a passage into the Pacific by the southern course, they would, on their return to England, be despatched afresh on another voyage of discovery to report upon the high Polar regions.

In confirmation of these facts, or of the inferences to be derived from them, we find the first winter quarters of the "Erebus" and "Terror" at the opening of Wellington Channel, where the northern route separates from the western one, and whence each could be watched with advantage. The passage westward was probably first tried, and found impracticable, as it afterwards proved to Sir J. Ross and Captain Austin, and thus with increased eagerness and solicitude would the commanders of the expedition fix their attention upon the northern passage. It has been found that their sledge tracks were multiplied in this direction, and, at a look-out station commanding it, papers were picked up, showing that the watches were unremitting. Who can doubt that the same open water, seen by Captain Penny from the heights of Cape Spencer, verified afterwards by himself and his parties, when so early as the month of May the progress of their sledges was arrested by it—who can doubt that this open water was first seen by the observers of the "Erebus" and "Terror," and that the earliest disruption of the intervening barrier of ice was the signal for their departure from Beechey Island, accomplished, as it evidently was, in haste, but without disorder? All the conjectural difficulties and impediments which were brought before the Arctic committee contrary to this presumption, have been overthrown by the undeniable fact, that Sir Edward Belcher has since carried his ships in clear water up the same channel, even to the very verge of an expanse of sea to the north-west, to which he saw no limit, and which is all we require to complete the presumptive evidence.

It has been wondered at and much deplored that no writings were found at the winter quarters on Beechey Island, to indicate to those who might come after them the course the ships were about to take. It appears to me that writings could scarcely have made it clearer; but it may be that the suddenness and hurry of their departure caused the eager voyagers to neglect

this precaution, or (which I think still more likely) that they left nothing behind them because they expected no one to follow. They were beyond the reach of the whalers, and consequently of all communication with England; were not contemplating disaster, but thinking only of progress; and looking rather to Behring Strait for succour if needed than to any thing in the rear. The answer made by my husband to the commander of the transport which left him at Disco, proves this fact. But, be the cause of the absence of records what it may, it is clear that all were alike influenced by it. Not an officer or a man in those two ships has deposited a line on the spot where he spent so many months of rest and leisure. It was not then to be expected that such documents were to be found higher up, at a greater distance from the winter settlement. None, I believe, have been found, nor any vestiges whatever, which seems to me so far from discouraging, that I do not see what more favourable evidence could be desired of their having passed without obstacle into the open sea, which retains no ship's track upon its bosom. There may be vestiges of their course, or rather of their second winter quarters, further on; but to this point they have not been followed. It seems to have been thought, until now, that one season was sufficient to overtake ships which may have been years striving to advance, till retreat, even if desired, was impossible.

On the negative evidence, in favour of my husband's having taken the northern passage, a few words will suffice. It is unnecessary to enter minutely into the researches of each expedition, especially as all, or almost all, had to go over the same ground before they could take a step in advance; and as this ground was minutely examined by each party in succession, we had the discouraging report of "no traces of Sir John Franklin" echoed and re-echoed, till it produced, I believe, upon the minds of many who were not aware of this explanatory fact, the painful and delusive impression, that it was of no use looking any longer for those who were not any where to be found.

The coasting expedition of Sir John Richardson between the rivers Coppermine and Mackenzie, first proved that the ships he was seeking had not arrived on that part of the American coast, and consequently, as it might be inferred, on the coast further to the westward. Thus the examination of this closing portion of the south-western route narrowed the search, but it could not prove that my husband had not taken that course, and been ar-

rested in it by obstacles in the nearer and earlier portion of it. This conclusion, however, was at length obtained by a branch of Captain Austin's expedition in 1851, when Captain Ommanney and Lieutenant Osborne, advancing beyond the limits of previous explorers, examined on foot the coast which trends southward beyond the one hundredth degree of west longitude, being the precise course pointed out to my husband in his instructions. These two officers came to the conclusion, not only that he had not passed that way, but that there was no navigable channel for ships in that direction. There remained no other reasonable alternative but that the missing ships had passed up Wellington Channel, which had always been little less probable than the other course, though as yet unexamined.

If my own steadfast convictions as to my husband's plan of action can give any additional force to the arguments I have already adduced, my Arctic friends will bear witness to the anxiety I have ever felt for the exploration of the route through and beyond Wellington Channel, from the earliest period. It was not, however, till the intelligence received from Sir James Ross, at the close of 1848, showed the improbability of its coming within the sphere of his operations, that I ventured to implore the Admiralty to make it a distinct and primary object of their attention. Failing to persuade them to allow the "North Star," then about to be despatched with supplies for Sir James Ross, to remain out for the examination of this strait, and failing also in my endeavours to equip a private vessel for the express purpose of examining at least the headlands of the channel, I went to Dundee and asked Captain Penny if he would undertake the search in case that the Admiralty could be induced to accept his services. His enthusiastic reply was followed (after the return of the government expedition the same autumn, 1849) by his submitting his wishes and plans to the Board of Admiralty, and grateful, indeed, did I feel for their ultimate acceptance of his proposals; and when Captain Austin's nobly-appointed expedition was organized, it appeared to me that both the south-western and the northern routes were now sure to be thoroughly explored.

It was not till then that I despatched my own little vessel, the "Prince Albert," into Regent Inlet (which was not included in the instructions given to either expedition), under the idea that if the crews of the "Erebus" and "Terror" had been forced to abandon their ships on the south-western route, for we were yet ignorant which route they had taken, they might retreat to-

wards the perhaps nearer and well-known resources in that quarter, rather than upon the more distant and more barren shores of North America.

The "Prince Albert," in her way back, touched at Beechey Island, and brought home in September, 1850, some small vestiges of the missing ships, which had been found on Cape Riley, and reported the traces of an encampment. It was the first gleam of light that had been shed on the expedition. A year elapsed, and then came accumulated and exuberant evidence of the winter quarters of the ships, and their prosperous condition at this spot up to the spring of 1846.

But it was the searching ships themselves that brought home prematurely the news. The south-western coast had been explored in vain, but this northern one had not been attempted. Doubt even was thrown on the open water expanding to the north, which had been seen by Captain Penny;—that most important discovery which alone at this critical period saved the pioneers in the "Erebus" and "Terror" from being consigned to destruction. But their doom was delayed.

In 1852, Sir Edward Belcher was sent out to make further researches in Wellington Channel, and in the autumn of the same year the "Prince Albert," touching again at Beechey Island, brought home the joyful intelligence that he had already passed up the channel in open water; and a month later Captain Inglefield arrived in the "Isabel," with the additional and satisfactory information that Sir Edward Belcher had not returned, and had, therefore, probably met with no obstacles. Both ships brought home despatches and letters, showing that additional supplies were urgently wanted, if the objects of Sir Edward Belcher and those of Captain Kellett to the west were not to be brought to a premature conclusion; and, accordingly, last summer large reinforcements were sent out in the "Phœnix" steamer, under Captain Inglefield, for the use of both branches of the squadron.

When this officer left the depôt at Beechey Island, on the 24th of August last, it was known that Sir Edward Belcher had verified the existence of the open sea to the north and north-west, beyond Wellington Channel; and it was also known that Captain Kellett had despatched a foot and sledge expedition, prepared for an absence of ninety days, across Melville Island to the north and north-west, with the view of exploring such portion of the northern shores of this land as could be effected with the resources at command.

This exploration, under the leadership of that most able and energetic officer, Commander M'Clintock, is one of the utmost importance, as being in the right direction; but, when Captain Inglefield sailed from Beechey Island its result was not known, the period not having elapsed for Captain M'Clintock's return.

This is the latest intelligence we have from the Arctic regions, and this, alas! is the moment chosen by your lordships for pronouncing authoritatively on the fate of the absent.

It is true that Captain Inglefield brought home also in the "Phœnix" the news from another branch of the searching squadron of the discovery of the N.W. passage. It was great and welcome tidings, of itself perhaps a sufficient compensation for all the pains and all the expenditure bestowed, with exclusive intention, as we have your lordships' authority for stating, on the other and still nobler cause of humanity. And yet the solution of the geographical problem appears to have sealed the doom of my unfortunate husband and his brave associates; of those without whose self-sacrifice for the same object, in the fulfilment of their duty, this geographical problem might never have been solved at all.

The intelligence of the N.W. passage was brought home in October last, and before the close of the year the removal of the names of the officers and crews of the "Erebus" and "Terror" was, if I am not misinformed, under deliberation, and was confidently announced in *The Times*, which paper, notwithstanding that your lordships assured me at the time that it had no authority for the statements, proved to be the correct exponent of your lordships' sentiments.

My lords, I cannot but feel that there will be a stain on the page of the naval annals of England, when these two events, the discovery of the north-west passage, and the abandonment of Franklin and his companions, are recorded in indissoluble association.

It is with reluctance I have spoken of my own efforts, for the purpose of proving that from the beginning, and not recently only, and in consequence of the failure of expeditions in other parts, or from an insatiable desire for random explorations, have I urged upon your lordships the examination of the Northern Sea, its coasts and islands, between Wellington Channel and Behring Strait, or beyond, as the quarter where the missing ships and crews have yet to be looked for.

The expedition of the "Isabel" screw-steamer, which, for two

successive seasons, it has been my endeavour to send to Behring Strait, has had the same object in view, namely, that of entering, though at the opposite extremity, this unexplored region, or, at least, of discovering a channel into it. Yet your lordships are well aware that it was only as, year after year, my entreaties that you would yourselves send effective steam-vessels to this quarter were unavailing, that I felt myself forced to resort to my own feeble resources.

The expedition of the "Isabel" met with the most cordial support and approval from the president and many distinguished members of the Geographical Society, from the hydrographer of the Admiralty, and from many Arctic officers, including all those whose experience in Behring Strait gave them the best title to judge of its utility. I was assured by the latter, that if I could succeed in getting my little vessel to reach the field of search in season, her services might be valuable.

Nor did your lordships, though declining to take the measures which were recommended to you at this period, refuse to help me in my own. Without your kind aid, or that of your predecessors in office in 1852, I could not have obtained possession of the vessel; without the facilities which last year you kindly gave me for her outfit, and especially without that valuable document addressed to your officers in the Pacific, which seemed to promise all the aid that could be required in time of need, I could scarcely have ventured to send the "Isabel" to sea.

My lords, I felt grateful for these benefits; yet, if I could have foreseen that on the first emergency, and when the greatest difficulties of the outward voyage were already passed, you would have denied the interpretation which, in the opinion of the commander-in-chief in the Pacific, it was capable of, and which would have enabled the "Isabel" to carry on her mission, it would have been a kinder thing to refuse me all. Much toil, anxiety, and money would then have been spared, and the vessel would not now be lying at Valparaiso, a monument of my own blighted efforts and of your unlooked-for desertion.

I have purposely omitted, as in no way affecting the question of the necessity of such an expedition as that in which the "Isabel" has failed, the researches of the "Enterprise" and "Investigator," in their course eastward from Behring Strait to Melville Island. In this course, Captain M'Clure has been fortunate enough to find that much-desired link between previous discoveries on the east and on the west, which, like the keystone of the arch, binds

the labour of former and present generations together. But as affects the fate of the missing expedition, his brilliant discovery leaves it untouched. Indeed it might have been confidently predicated of those ships, by those who knew the results of Captain Austin's expedition, which were unknown to their commanders, that on the route the "Investigator" was taking, and in which the "Enterprise" appears to be following her, the missing navigators could never be found. Hundreds of miles and intervening land separate the courses north and south of the opposite navigation.

III. Notwithstanding, the experience of Captain M'Clure, during his voyage and long detention in the ice, is not devoid of important deductions. It proves that men may be absent in Arctic climes three or four years, and need not on that account be given up for lost—nay, that they may return in full health and vigour, thus adding new force to the remarkable fact, that the loss of life in the Arctic service, whether arising from casualty or disease, is less than in any other part of the globe where our navy is employed, in spite of all the hardships and dangers which necessarily attend it. To bring forward the unknown fate of the "Erebus" and "Terror" in opposition to this statement, would evidently be a begging of the question. Rather may it be asserted, that justice has not been done to the favourable side of the argument. We know that Captain M'Clure was safe and well after nearly four years' endurance of icy imprisonment; that Sir John Ross, under much more unfavourable circumstances, and after a somewhat longer absence, returned home in safety to tell his fate; and that the four Russian sailors, thrown without resources of any kind upon the coast of Spitzbergen, were not liberated till after the lapse of between six and seven years. But shall it be affirmed in any of these cases, and especially in that of the Russian sailors, who endured the longest, and were yet found in health and good condition, that the moment of their liberation or rescue was the utmost term to which their existence would have been prolonged? And yet such is the conclusion too often involved in the reasonings upon this subject; and because at the end of seven or eight years the crews of the "Erebus" and "Terror" have not been rescued, or liberated, or heard of, they are considered to be dead! Indeed I think this is a rash and unjustifiable conclusion, and that it would be more reasonable to argue, that if they could

live six or seven years, as the Russian sailors did, who were still in health and vigour, they might live double that period or more.

It will be said we do not know that they have lived seven years. No, my lords, but we know nothing to the contrary; and it may be that the reason we do not know they are living men is, because your messengers of mercy and deliverance have not been to the spot where alone the truth is to be found, for their voices cannot reach you across the waste of waters, and they are helpless to extricate themselves. Captain M'Clure was shut up in a position from which he could, by abandoning his ship, fall back upon an inhabited coast, or advance on foot to a depôt of provisions of which he knew the existence at Port Leopold. Sir John Ross also was not so far distant from the fishing grounds of the whalers but that he could risk embarking in an open boat to reach them. The Russian sailors were on an island visited annually by ships; but the lost crews of the "Erebus" and "Terror" are presumed to be in a part of the Arctic seas where, having lost all locomotive power, they may hoist their signals of distress in vain. And if this be their position it may well move our deepest compassion, but it is not such as should lead us to despair of their prolonged existence.

One of the most experienced of Arctic explorers has consolingly assured us, that life may be maintained in the farthest Arctic lands under circumstances at first sight seemingly the most hopeless; and I believe the same accurate and philosophic observer has remarked how readily nature accommodates herself to circumstances, and that the hardships and sufferings of the first years would be mitigated afterwards.

But still farther. There are grounds for hope that in the high latitudes, where we believe our exiled navigators to be imprisoned, a dreary existence may be rendered more supportable by a climate of less intense severity, and by an increased abundance of natural resources. Even in the lower latitudes with which we are best acquainted, both sea and land are described, here and there, as "teeming with animal life;" but as Dr. Kane remarks, "at the utmost limits of northern travel attained by man, hordes of animals of various kinds (including the ruminating animals whose food is a vegetation) have been observed travelling still further north. Birds, of which such almost incredible numbers are occasionally seen, take their flight northward, and the highest waters yet attained are frequented by the whale, the walrus, and the seal, which furnish not only food, but fuel and clothing."

The experience of Captain M'Clure adds something to the mass of facts we already possessed on this subject, for he found a large island where only a blank space existed on our charts before, abounding in game of the noblest description, and supporting a race of well-conditioned and contented Esquimaux, whose existence in that part had never been suspected. Why should not such another island, or more than one, be found in that northern space, the white paper of the charts, of the nature of which we at home know nothing, though it may even now be the abode, and if not timely rescued by Divine or human interposition, may become the grave of our hapless countrymen?

Again, the experience of Captain M'Clure seems to add something also to our evidence in favour of a less inhospitable temperature in the north; for he tells us, though apparently without drawing any conclusion from the fact, that whenever the north wind blew it was warmer.

Nor should it be forgotten, in enumerating the elements of a reasonable confidence in the prolonged existence of the absent voyagers, that they were most abundantly supplied with ammunition, and that, as Captain Penny has judiciously observed, they were all the more likely to be preserved in health, because they would have to seek their subsistence, and thus have their minds and bodies actively employed.

IV. I shall not trouble your lordships by dwelling further on this head. My husband's conviction, that where Esquimaux can live, there also can Englishmen, with their superior intelligence and larger appliances, has been often quoted. But it is not so constantly remembered that Englishmen are also more provident than Esquimaux, and that at the very outset of his voyage, and while Captain Fitzjames was writing home, and so deep and heavily laden were the ships, that if they reached the Pacific that year some of the provisions must be thrown overboard for safety—while this sanguine officer was thus writing, my husband, than whom no one could know better what the day of need might require, was diligently adding to his already abundant stock, by means of the guns of his shooting parties, and contemplating a detention of several years.

The evidence of this latter fact, and of the early means he was taking to provide for it, is undeniable.

The deposition of Captain Martin of the "Enterprise," whaling-

ship, who was for some time in company with the "Erebus" and "Terror" in the middle ice of Baffin's Bay, was to this effect: that "Sir John assured him, in answer to questions put to him by Captain Martin, that 'he had provisions for five years, and if it was necessary, he could make them spin out seven;' moreover, that 'he would lose no opportunity of adding to his stock.' Other officers made the same declaration, stating also, that the ships would winter where they could find a convenient place, and in spring push out as far as possible, and so on, year after year."

This "solemn declaration" of Captain Martin was made before the provost of Peterhead, who has assured me, as have also several other respectable inhabitants of that place, that he is a man of the strictest integrity, truthfulness, and accuracy.

The declaration of Captain Walker, of the whale-ship "Union," who, at the time alluded to, was first mate of the "Enterprise," was also made before the provost of Peterhead, and was precisely to the same effect.

Your lordships are aware that there are letters from the expedition, dated in Baffin's Bay, of like purport; that from Mr. Blenby, ice-master of the "Terror," to his wife, begging her to let no one dishearten her as to the length of their absence, which might be six or seven years, has been published. Mr. Blenby had shared the rude captivity of Sir John Ross in Regent Inlet, and knew how the long absent may be given up for lost, and yet return again to their homes and country.

These last words of men so full of faith and hope, at a moment when they were about to quit the precincts of the known world to plunge into the unknown, seem to me a touching appeal to the long-enduring sympathy and untiring patience of their countrymen.

And even if their hopes may be considered too high, or that they can be convicted of rashness in entering into those unknown seas (were not all the Arctic seas once unknown?) without any harbours of refuge in advance, or any line of depôts in their rear, without assurance of reinforcements or relief from home, or any promise but that which their own heart-trust in their country and in you gave them of being looked after; even if this were rashness, is that a reason to abandon them? They went forth, my lords, at your bidding, and went to those seas, which you gave them liberty to explore; you gave them no restrictions, such as have abounded in the orders of those who have gone in search of them; they were not told to spare themselves,

not enjoined to run no risks, nor restricted in time, though their mission was evidently thought to be a much shorter and much easier matter than it has proved to be. They were themselves prepared, however, to do a work of unknown difficulty and danger, and I well know were not prepared to return till they had spent themselves in its attainment. They have deserved,—surely, I may say, they have deserved of their country that she should ascertain their fate!

And I need not tell your lordships that to follow them whither they have gone is not to encounter the same dangers that they have done; I could not urge it if it were so. But with such vastly superior ships as you have now in the Arctic seas, provided with powerful steam-machinery, and other appliances, with the experience in sledge travelling which has been of late years acquired, and with those large precautionary measures as to depôts in advance and in the rear, which you know so well how to devise, it could, I believe, be done with comparative safety. And, doubtless, it will one day be done. The most northern portion of our globe will not always be a *terra incognita*. When Arctic expeditions for the sake of the missing navigators have long ceased to be familiar to the public ear, and wars and rumours of wars have passed away, the interest in those geographical and other problems which were left unsolved in the year 1854, will again appear worthy of a great national effort for their solution; and then will arise, in touching association, the memory of the men who, in pursuit of this knowledge, and in obedience to their country's command, first penetrated into the fastnesses of the north and were left there to their fate. Perhaps it will be the wonder of that future generation that this should have been done, or that any discoveries of great scientific interest and importance should have been abandoned by the government at the conspicuous moment when it had at its disposal a fleet of invulnerable ships, fit, and fit alone, for Arctic service, and still afloat in Arctic seas, and a host of trained and brave explorers, better disciplined for their work than ever, a combination such as was never seen before, and may never be seen again.

Pardon me, my lords, that I express myself thus strongly. I would not appear ungrateful for what has been already done. When I look at that fleet of invulnerable ships, at that phalanx of gallant and devoted men in hard conflict with nature, yearning for the distinction of saving their fellow men, and consider the generous expenditure and the boundless sympathy which

have produced the noble spectacle, I pause, and for a moment doubt whether I should have written as I have done.

And yet it is still true that your noble work is incomplete, and that the glory which has hitherto invested it is about to set in clouds and darkness. It will remain an imperishable fact, that the search for these brave martyrs to their duty was given up, not because every part of the Arctic seas had been searched for them in vain, as it is too often asserted, but because you have not distinctly authorized, nor sufficiently enabled them to be followed where alone they are to be sought, with any probability of success. Any attempt to divert men's minds from this melancholy truth will, I am sure, eventually fail.

It is to record my own dissent from such a fatal conclusion, and respectfully to protest against the arbitrary decree you have announced, that I have just ventured to address you. Would that others who might prevail with you better than I can do, had rendered my hard task unnecessary; that they could induce you to feel that the blessing of them who were ready to perish might yet be yours!

My advocacy must be weakened, perhaps even my facts suspected, because I am too deeply interested, and indeed in some respects my position is a false as well as painful one; for as I could not have dared to plead with you at all unless I had had a husband's life at stake for my excuse, so it may look as if for his sake alone I pleaded, and expected such great things to be done.

There are some, I trust, amongst those who share with me a common sorrow, who will not judge me thus; and all I think must feel that, had my humble endeavours met with any measure of success, it would have been for the good of the whole, as well as of him whose name has sometimes been too exclusively used as the representative of a corporate misfortune.

As to the approbation or the censure to which any poor efforts on my part have been obnoxious, my heart has been too full, and is so still, to be either oppressed by the obloquy or elated by the praise.

It remains for me only to thank your lordships for the communication you have been pleased to make to me, that the widows of those who are to be considered as having died in the service of their country, after the 31st of March next, will be entitled to pensions, according to the existing regulations. Your lordships will scarcely require me to tell you, after what I have

written, that I do not feel it in my power either to claim or to accept a widow's pension.

Before concluding this long and painful letter allow me to express a hope that I have not now, nor at any time, abused the privilege which belongs to weakness and irresponsibility, or which has been accorded to me by your generous indulgence; and if any hasty expression, such as I ought to have avoided, has escaped my pen, I entreat you to overlook it, as not intentionally disrespectful.—I have, &c.,

(Signed) JANE FRANKLIN.

THE END.

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