

second in command, in the latter vessel, and having with him, then a mere boy, Nelson, the future hero of England.

From the year 1648, when the famous Russian navigator, Deshnew, penetrated from the river Kolyma through the Polar into the Pacific Ocean, the Russians have been as arduous in their attempts to discover a northeast passage to the north of Cape Shelatskoi, as the English have been to sail to the northwest of the American continent, through Baffin Bay and Lancaster Sound. On the side of the Pacific many efforts have, within the last century, been made to further this object. In 1741 the celebrated Captain Behring discovered the straits which bear his name. From the period when Deshnew sailed on his expedition to the year 1764, when Admiral Tchitschagoff, an indefatigable and active officer, endeavored to force a passage round Spitzbergen, and thence to the present times, including the arduous efforts of Captain Billings and Vancouver, and the more recent one of M. Von Wrangell, the Russians have been untiring in their attempts to discover a passage eastward to the north of Cape Taimur and Cape Shelatskoi. And certainly, if skill, perseverance, and courage could have opened this passage, it would have been accomplished.

An expedition was despatched under the command of Sir John Ross in order to explore the scene of the former labors of Frobisher and Baffin. Still haunted with the golden dreams of a northwest passage, which Barrington and Beaufoy had in the last age so enthusiastically advocated, our nautical adventurers by no means relinquished the long-cherished chimera.

A thorough knowledge of the relative boundaries of land and ocean on our globe has in all ages and by all countries been considered one of the most important features of popular information. But to no country is this knowledge of such practical utility and such importance as to a maritime nation like Great Britain, whose merchant marine visits every port which is dependent upon distant quarters for the greater part of her necessary supplies, whether of food or of luxuries, which her population consume, and which her arts and manufactures require.

CHAPTER XIV.

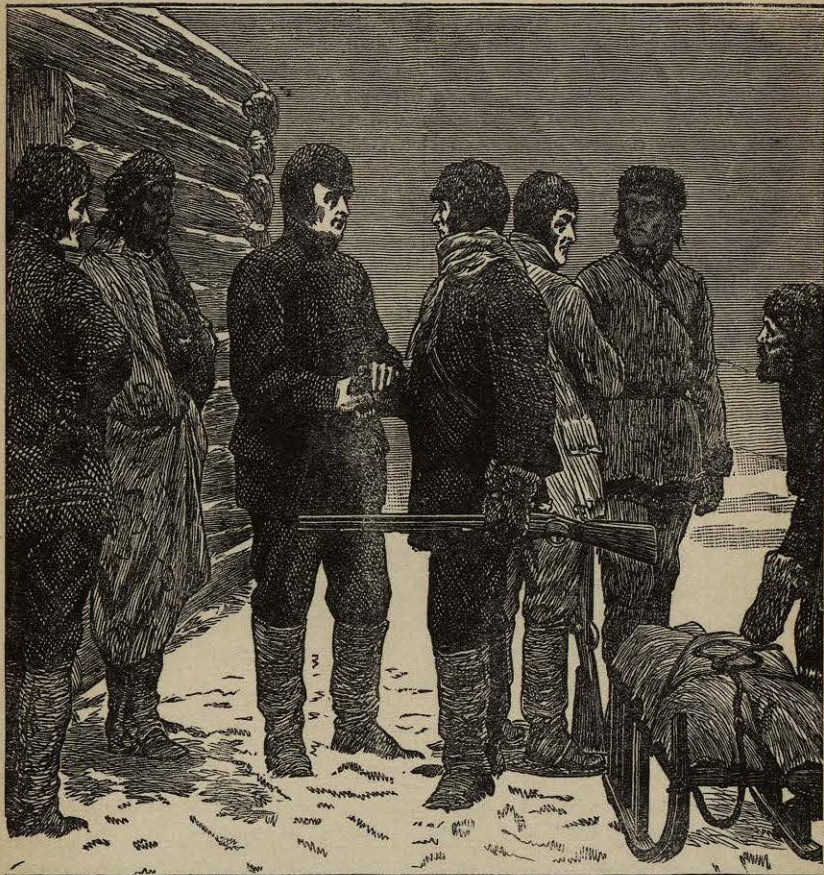
ARCTIC EXPEDITIONS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Sir John Ross—Captain Parry—Sir John Franklin—Russian Expeditions under Von Wrangell and Anjou—Captain Beechey—Captain Ross fixes the Position of the true Magnetic Pole—Back and Dr. King—Dease and Simpson—Dr. Rae finishes the Geographical Exploration of the North Coast of the American Continent—Sir John Franklin's last Expedition—Numerous Expeditions sent out in Search of him—Captain McClintock finds Proof of Franklin's Death—Commander Inglewood's Expedition—Sir John Franklin the Discoverer of the Northwestern Passage.

In the year 1818 two vessels were fitted out by the British government to proceed toward the North Pole. Captain Sir John Ross and Lieutenant Parry were appointed commanders. No former expedition had been fitted out on so extensive a scale, or so completely equipped in every respect as this one. The circumstance which stimulated the sending out of these vessels was the open character of the bays and seas in those regions, very large quantities of the polar ice having floated down into the Atlantic for the previous three years. This expedition had instructions to discover the northwest passage. Another, under Captain Beechey and Lieutenant Franklin, afterward Sir John Franklin, was to penetrate to the North Pole. The objects of the latter expedition were entirely scientific. It passed north between Greenland and Spitzbergen, but did not go farther than latitude $80^{\circ} 34'$. Captain Ross sailed about sixty miles up Lancaster Sound, and returned with the report that it was a bay, through which there was no outlet to the ocean beyond. A year later another expedition under Lieutenant Parry passed through Lancaster and Melville Sounds beyond the 110th meridian, wintered at Melville Island, and returned to Great Britain the next summer. From York Factory an overland expedition under Lieutenant Franklin was sent out the same year, with instructions to explore the north coast of America, from the mouth of the Coppermine River eastward. He proceeded 550 miles east of the Coppermine to Point Turn-again, and then, having suffered great hardships, re-

turned to York Factory in 1822 without accomplishing the object.

Franklin, in descending the Coppermine River, was accompanied by as heroic a set of officers and men as ever trod a deck; among the former were Dr. Richardson, Lieutenant Back and Lieutenant Hood, and among the latter a faithful



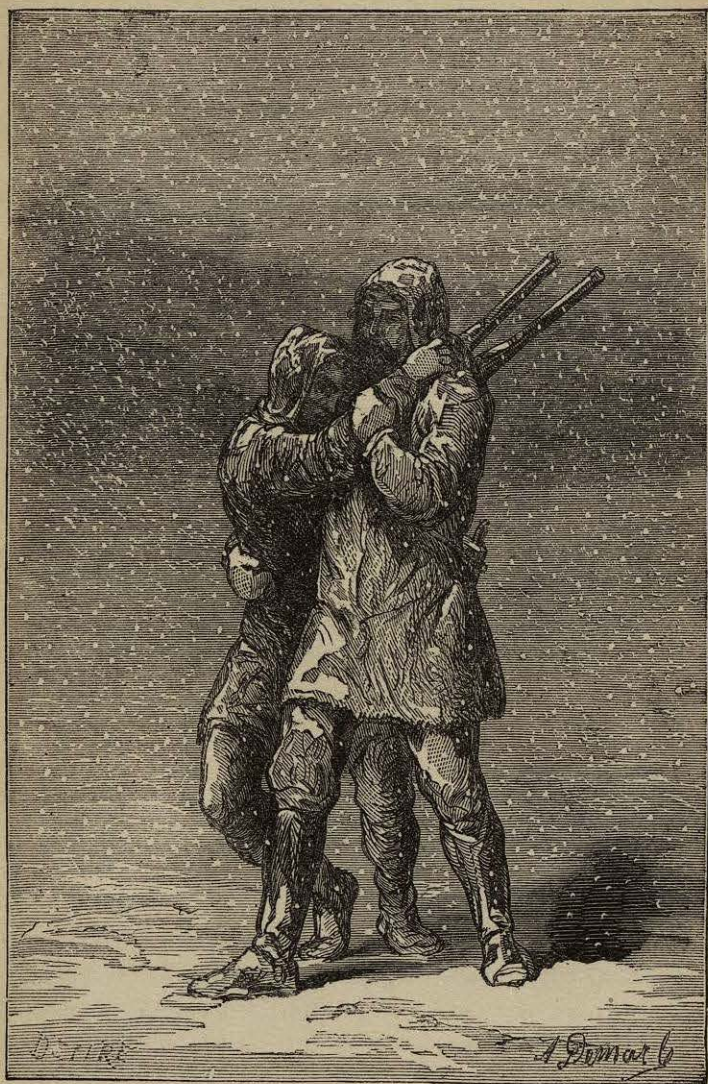
LIEUTENANT BACK'S START—A JOURNEY OF 500 MILES FOR FOOD.

seaman named Hepburn. The Coppermine River had never been thoroughly explored, and the enterprise was one of great danger. Ascending the Hayes River on their inland route to the Coppermine, they accomplished 700 miles of river journey, over rapids and falls and obstacles and difficulties innumerable. From the 9th of September to the end of October

they were engaged in this task, and then the setting in of the ice compelled them to relinquish their labors in that direction for the present. Franklin, however, was not idle—it was not in the nature of the man to be so—and therefore he, Back and Hepburn started off in January westward, working up 850 miles, until in March they reached Fort Chipewyan, where many important observations were made. In July he was joined by Richardson and Hood, and hoped to winter that year at the mouth of the Coppermine. A large party was made up, consisting of Franklin and his friends, seventeen French-Canadian *voyageurs*, three interpreters, and a considerable number of Indians who were to act as guides and hunters under the leadership of one Akaitcho. The start was all that could be desired, game plentiful, and everything promised well. But as they advanced to the north a change came over the spirit of their dream; food grew scarce, the difficulty of transit increased, and at last Akaitcho declared that to advance farther meant for the whole party to perish miserably. Franklin persisted, however, and would have braved all the prophesied risks, till Akaitcho said: "I will send some of my young men with you if you persist in going forward, but from the moment they set foot in your canoes I and my relatives shall mourn for them as dead." Discretion being the better part of valor, Franklin reluctantly determined to settle in winter quarters and continue the exploration in the summer. The place chosen for wintering was at Fort Enterprise, near the head of the Coppermine, and between 500 and 600 miles from Fort Chipewyan, the distance traversed by the gallant company in the course of the year 1820 having been 1,520 miles.

During the winter food grew scarcer and scarcer, until at last starvation was threatened. In addition to their own party, the Indians had to be provided for, and this greatly impoverished their resources. The Indians knew this, and, with a generosity which Christian men might sometimes imitate, gave their own food to the strangers who seemed more to need it. "We are used to starvation, you are not," they said. By-and-by a time came when the situation was gloomy in the extreme, ammunition and other articles, indispensable to the progress of the expedition, and food were fast failing. What was to be done? There was only one course open, and that was to journey on foot a distance of over 500 miles to Fort

Chipewyan, in the depth of an Arctic winter, for supplies. A volunteer was soon found. Lieutenant Back was not a man to allow his comrades to perish while he had strength and vigor to save them, and he undertook to perform the journey



DR. RICHARDSON, OF SIR JOHN FRANKLIN'S EXPEDITION, SAVING HIS COMPANION HEPBURN.

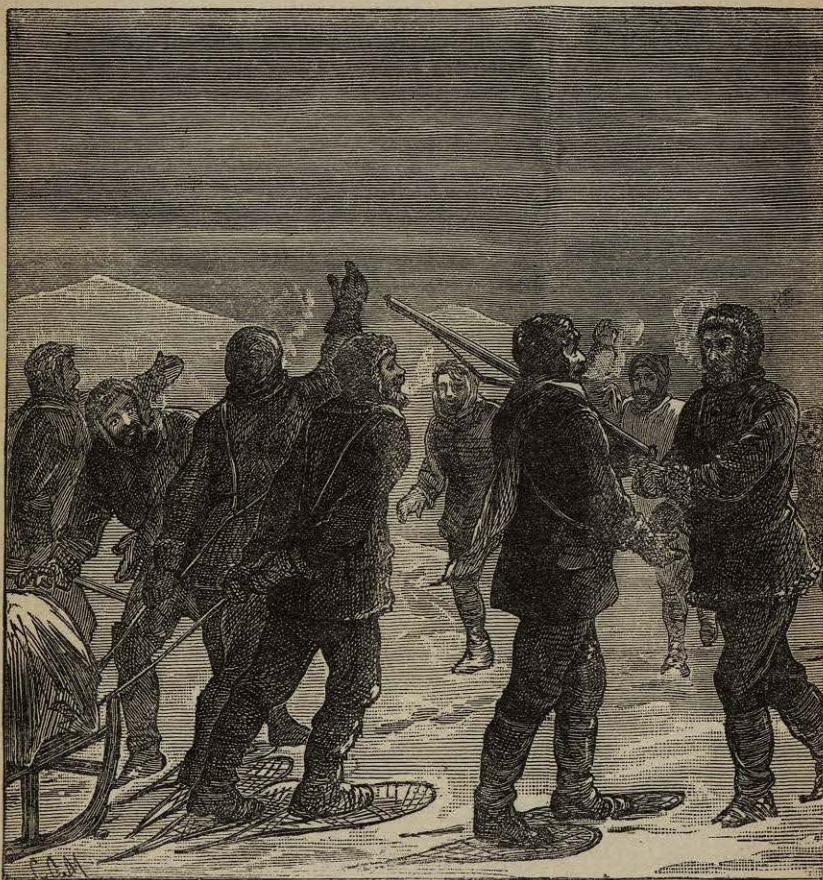
and obtain the needful supplies. Day after day he and his companions toiled on over ice and snow, and night after night braved the inclemency of the weather by camping out of doors. With snow-shoes galling their feet and ankles till

they bled profusely; with only sufficient food to keep them from starving, and, therefore, rendering them all the more susceptible to cold; with weather unusual in the severe region for its severity, on they went, until at last they reached the station, procured four sledges, laden to the full with needful things, and the promise of more to follow, and then, after a brief rest, set off again for Fort Enterprise.

During the journey Back travelled 1,104 miles, and when he rejoined his companions it was to find that his unprecedented journey was a success in every respect, for they had arrived at a stage in their experience when the aid he brought was indispensable.

In 1820 twenty-three Russian sledge expeditions were made by Von Wrangell and Anjou, who penetrated to latitude $70^{\circ} 51'$ and longitude $157^{\circ} 25'$ west, and reported an open sea in the distant north, which precluded further operations with sledges. In 1821 Captain Parry started on another expedition, and after proceeding through Hudson Strait and Fox Channel as far as Hekla and Fury Strait, returned in 1823. Two years later Franklin descended the Mackenzie River to the sea, and traced the coast for 374 miles. His voyage extended over 2,000 miles. About the same time Captain Beechey had sailed around Cape Horn, and through Behring Strait into Kotzebue Sound, but failed to meet Franklin. Captain Barry, in 1827, set out for the North Pole with sledge boats, which had been landed upon the northern shore of Spitzbergen, but soon returned, after reaching latitude $82^{\circ} 45'$. An expedition was fitted out in 1829 by Sir Felix Booth, and set out under the command of Captain Ross and Commander (afterward Sir James) Ross, in search of a northwestern passage by some opening leading out of Prince Regent Inlet. In 1831, while on a sledging expedition, Captain Ross for the first time reached and fixed the position of the true magnetic pole, in latitude $70^{\circ} 5' 17''$ and longitude $96^{\circ} 46' 45''$. After many hardships, Captain Ross returned in the autumn of 1833. In the meantime, Back and Dr. King had set out on an overland expedition in search of Captain Ross and his party. They navigated the great Fish (Fhleivee-choh) River, afterward called Back River, reached the ocean at latitude $67^{\circ} 11'$, longitude $94^{\circ} 30'$, and after pushing forward to latitude $68^{\circ} 13'$, returned. The Hudson Bay Company then sent out Dease and Simpson, who

descended the Mackenzie River to the sea, and then followed the coast to the west as far as Point Barrow. They discovered two large rivers, which they called Garry and Colville. They remained during the winter on Great Bear Lake, and in June, 1838, started on another expedition to the eastward. They reached the coast by way of the Coppermine,



BACK AND HIS ATTENDANTS REJOINING HIS FRIENDS.

and finding their progress stopped by the ice, a portion of the party set out on an overland expedition in an easterly direction. Passing Franklin's Turn-again, they discovered the Dease Strait, and at its eastern extremity a large headland. To the north they saw an extensive land, which they called Victoria Land. The sea beyond was entirely free of ice. In

1839 they sailed through Dease Strait, and reached the spot which had been visited by Back five years previous. The entire American coast line had now been explored, except that portion lying between Dease and Simpson's extreme point on the west and Felix Harbor on the east, and that portion lying between Felix Harbor and that point reached by Parry in 1822, at the entrance of the Strait of Hekla and Fury.

To settle the question whether it was possible to pass with ships between Bothnia and the American mainland, the Hudson Bay Company, in 1846, sent out Dr. John Rae, who proved that there is no outlet toward the west through Prince Regent Inlet. Dr. Rae explored Committee Bay, and reached a point from which he saw a headland, which he called Cape Ellice, within ten miles of Fury and Hekla Strait. Thus was finished, with the exception of Fury and Hekla Strait, a geographical exploration of the north coast of the American continent on May 27th, 1847.

Sir John Franklin, with the *Erebus* and *Terror*, each fitted out with a small steam-engine and a screw-propeller, and the two carrying 129 men and provisions for three years, in May, 1845, sailed on his last expedition to discover the northwestern passage. His instructions were to pass through Baffin Bay and Lancaster Sound, then west in about latitude $74^{\circ} 15'$ to about longitude 98° , thence to penetrate south and west toward Behring Strait. The vessels were last seen about the centre of Baffin Bay.

The *Terror* is the vessel in which Captain Sir G. Back made his perilous attempt to reach Repulse Bay, in 1836.

The *Erebus* and *Terror* were not expected home, unless success had early rewarded their efforts, or some casualty hastened their return, before the close of 1847, nor were any tidings anticipated from them in the interval; but when the autumn of 1847 arrived without any intelligence of the ships, the attention of the British Government was directed to the necessity of searching for and conveying relief to them in case of their being imprisoned in the ice or wrecked, and in want of provisions and means of transport.

For this purpose a searching expedition in three divisions was fitted out by the government in the early part of 1848. The investigation was directed to three different quarters simultaneously, viz.: 1. To that by which, in case of success,

the ships would come out of the Polar Sea to the westward, or Behring Strait. This consisted of a single ship, the Plover, commanded by Captain Moore, which left England in the latter end of January for the purpose of entering Behring Strait. It was intended that she should arrive there

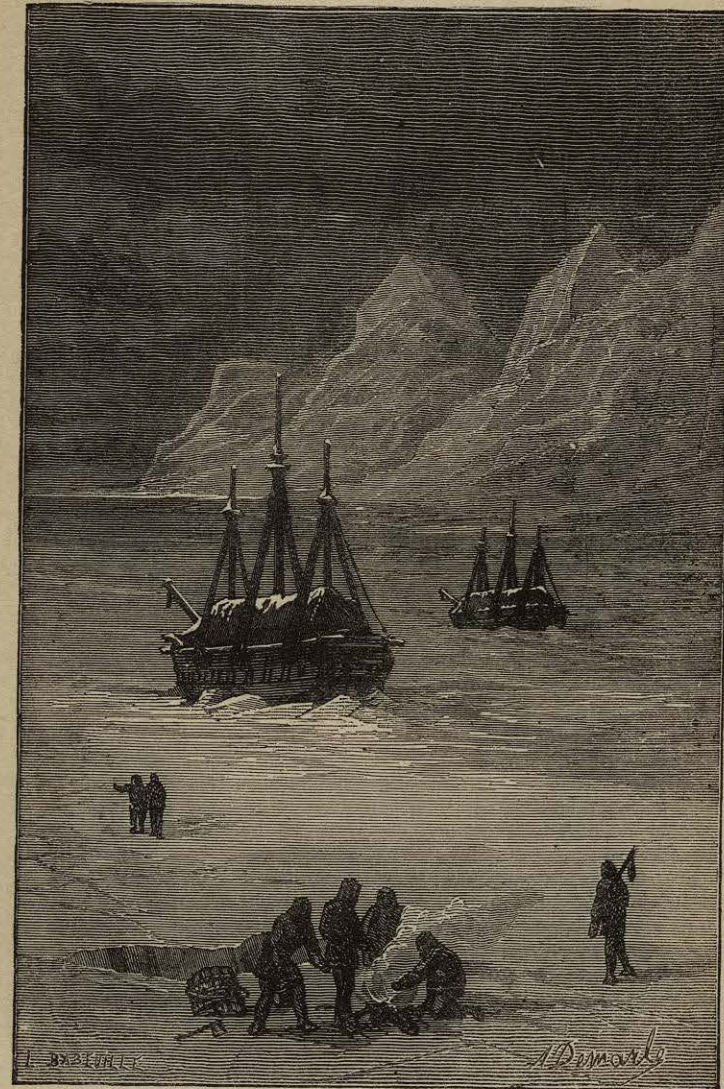


SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

in the month of July, and having looked out for a winter harbor she might send out her boats northward and eastward, in which directions the discovery ships, if successful, would be met with. The Plover, however, in her first season, never

even approached the place of her destination, owing to her setting off too late, and to her bad sailing properties.

The second division of the expedition was one of boats, to explore the coast of the Arctic Sea between the Mackenzie



THE EREBUS AND TERROR WINTERING AT THE HEAD OF WELLINGTON CHANNEL.

and Coppermine rivers, or from the 135th to the 115th degree of west longitude, together with the south coast of Wollaston Land, it being supposed that if Sir John Franklin's party had

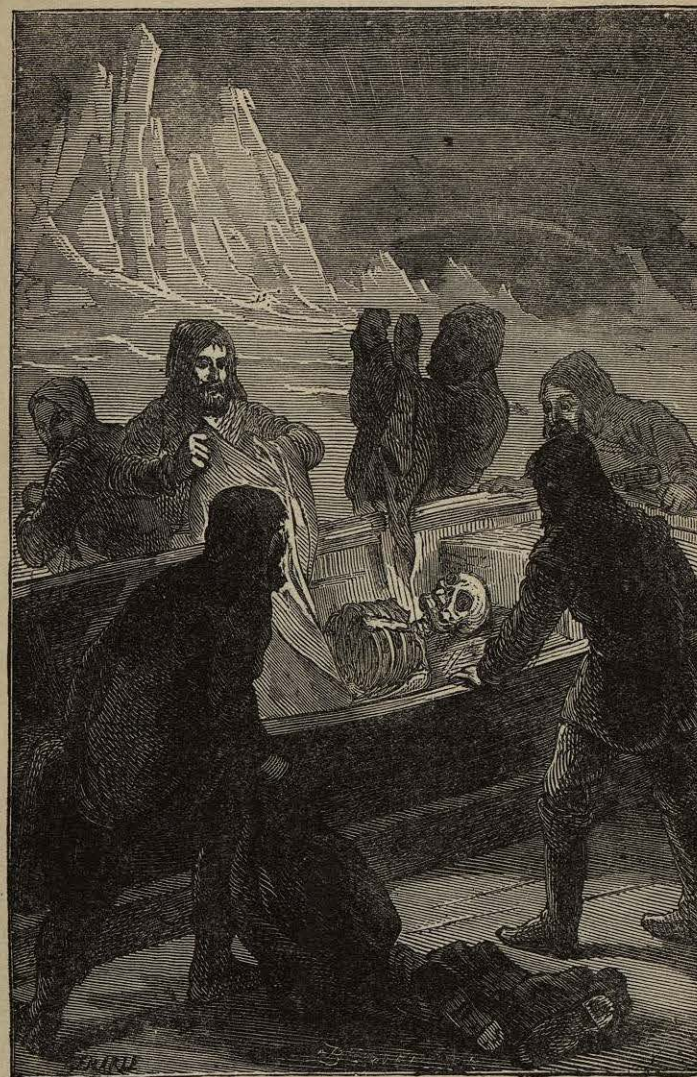
been compelled to leave the ships and take to the boats they would make for this coast, whence they could reach the Hudson Bay Company's posts. This party was placed under the command of the faithful friend of Franklin and the companion of his former travels, Dr. Sir John Richardson, who landed at New York in April, 1848, and hastened to join his men and boats, which were already in advance toward the Arctic shore. He was, however, unsuccessful in his search.

The remaining and most important portion of this searching expedition consisted of two ships under the command of Sir James Ross, which sailed in May, 1848, for the locality in which Franklin's ships entered on this course of discovery, viz., the eastern side of Davis Strait. These did not, however, succeed, owing to the state of the ice on getting into Lancaster Sound, until the season for operations had nearly closed. These ships wintered in the neighborhood of Leopold Island, Regent Inlet, and missing the store-ship sent out with provisions and fuel to enable them to stop out another year, were driven out through the strait by the pack ice, and returned home unsuccessful.

These three expeditions were followed by numerous others sent out by the British Government and by Lady Franklin. In 1850 alone, eight expeditions were out.

In 1851 Lieutenant McClintock reached, in longitude $114^{\circ} 20'$, latitude $74^{\circ} 38'$, the farthest western limit ever attained by explorers starting from Baffin Bay. In 1852 Commander Inglewood sailed up Smith Sound to latitude $78^{\circ} 28' 21''$, 140 miles further than any previous navigators had reached, and established the existence of a channel connecting Baffin Bay with the great polar basin. Traces of the Franklin expedition were found in 1850 at Cape Riley and Beechey Island, and articles belonging to Sir John Franklin's officers were seen in possession of the Esquimaux at Selby Bay in 1854 by Dr. Rae, but authentic information concerning the fate of Franklin was only obtained in 1859. An expedition sent out by Lady Franklin under Captain Francis McClintock passed in 1857 through Baffin Bay, Lancaster Sound, and Prince Regent Inlet to Bellot Strait, whence sledge expeditions were made to King William Land. Here, in 1859, were found relics of Sir John Franklin's expedition. At Point Victory was found a tin case containing a brief record dated May 28th, 1847, to the effect that the expedition

had passed the previous winter in latitude $70^{\circ} 5'$, longitude $98^{\circ} 23'$, and that of the previous year at Beechey Island after ascending the Wellington Channel to latitude 77° , and returning by the west side of Cornwallis Island. All the party



DR. RAE FINDING THE MUTILATED CORPSE OF ONE OF
SIR JOHN FRANKLIN'S MEN.

were then well. On the margin was another record dated April 25th, 1848, to the effect that 105 men under Captain Crosier had abandoned the two vessels on April 22d, five
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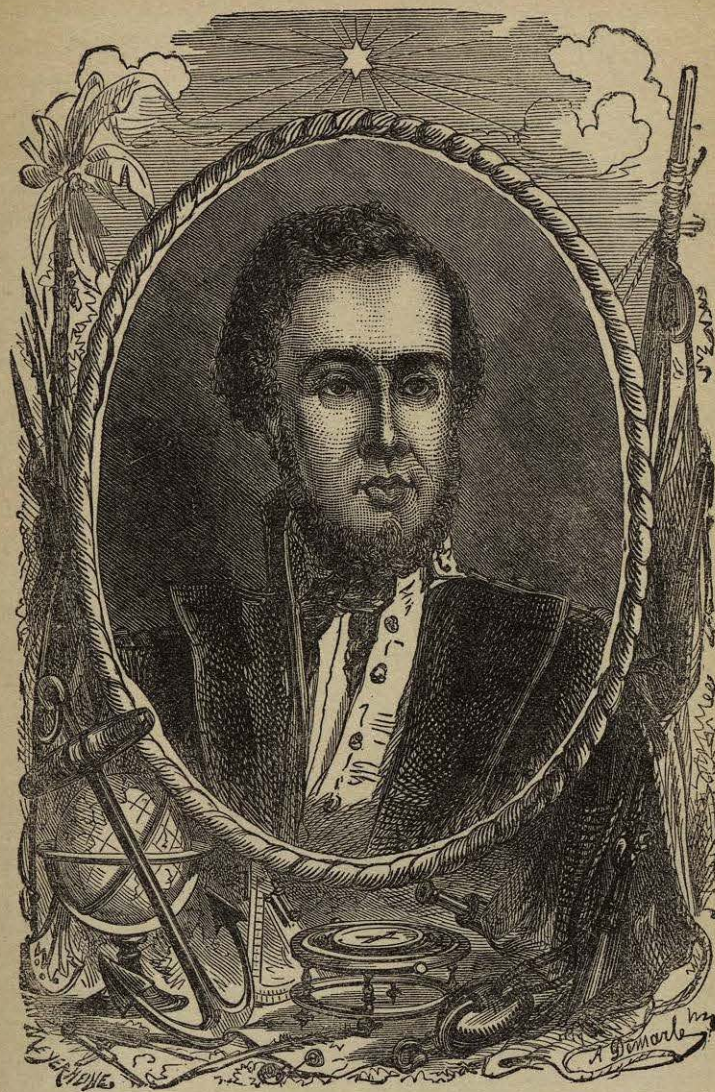
leagues N. N. W., and had landed at that place, latitude $69^{\circ} 37' 42''$, longitude $98^{\circ} 4' 15''$; that Sir John Franklin had died June 11th, 1847, and that the total deaths were nine officers and fifteen men. Quantities of clothing were found but no trace of the vessels. It was evident that the whole expedition had perished. It seems that Sir John Franklin passed up Lancaster Sound, explored Wellington Channel to a point farther north than was reached by those who were sent out to search for his party, Penny, De Haven and Belcher, sailed around Cornwallis Island, and wintered on Beechey Island. In the spring and summer of 1846 he either navigated Bellot Strait, or more probably pushed through Peel Sound, and finally reached Victoria Strait, and *thus supplied the only link wanting to complete a chain of water communication between the two oceans. Thus Sir John Franklin is the discoverer of the Northwestern Passage.* McClure, in 1850-53, had been the first to pass from Behring Strait to Baffin Bay.

It would be ungenerous in telling the story of some of the searches for Sir John Franklin to overlook the services rendered by Lieutenant Bellot, the representative of France. Bellot, who was of humble origin, rose to position by his own perseverance and industry. On his first expedition, in the Prince Albert, his conduct was such that he was received in England with enthusiasm; the British government made known to France how well satisfied it was with the zealous and intelligent co-operation of the young officer.

His second expedition was in the Phœnix. Arriving in the Polar regions, it was important that certain despatches should be conveyed to Sir Edward Belcher without delay, and Bellot, who knew that their transmission was one of the special and urgent objects of the mission of the Phœnix and that it was necessary they should be promptly delivered, himself volunteered to carry them, and with four men, a sledge and an india-rubber canoe started off. Bellot talked to his men of the danger of their position. He went forth to see how the ice was driving, and in a few minutes afterwards one of his men followed him. The wind was blowing with a terrific fury. Bellot was not to be seen. His name was shouted, but no answer came. On the opposite side of a crack about five fathoms wide was his stick.

And that was all! There could be no doubt that when he went forward to see how the ice was driving the wind carried

him off his feet and he slipped into the crack, from which he never arose again. Never was a young hero mourned more deeply than he. All France mourned him, and England



LIEUTENANT J. BELLOT.

mourned him, and even the Esquimaux, when they heard of his death, cried out with bitter weeping: "Poor Bellot! poor Bellot!"