

## Literature, &amp;c.

## THE SPIRIT OF THIS MAGAZINE.

From the Dublin University Magazine.

## CAPTAIN M'CLURE,

THE DISCOVERER OF THE NORTH-WEST PASSAGE.

It is with no ordinary feeling of pride and pleasure, that we claim the DISCOVERER OF THE NORTH-WEST PASSAGE as a countryman.

His father, Captain M'Clure of the 89th Regiment served with great distinction under Abercrombie in Egypt, and was beside that brave general when he fell mortally wounded at the battle of Aboukir. In 1806 he married Jane, only daughter of the venerable Archdeacon Elgee, rector of Wexford, but survived the marriage only four months. The posthumous child of this union was Robert John Le Mesurier M'Clure, the subject of our memoir; borne in Wexford, at the residence of his grandfather, Archdeacon Elgee, January 28, 1807, where he remained for the first four years of his life under the care of his young mother, who had the singular destiny of being wife, widow and mother in one year, and before she had attained the age of nineteen. The sponsor for the fatherless child was General Le Mesurier, hereditary Governor of Alderney, a man of immense wealth and noble character. A peculiar friendship had existed between him and the elder M'Clure; they were brother officers, and Captain M'Clure had once saved the General's life in Egypt. From this a promise arose, the General then having no children, that should his friend ever marry and have a son, he would adopt him as his own. Accordingly, when the young Robert was four years old, General Le Mesurier wrote to claim him, in fulfilment of his promise, and he was taken to Alderney by his uncle, the present rector of Wexford, who describes him as being then singularly attractive, and remembers well the fearless pleasure manifested by the child, even at that age, at being on the water for the first time. From that period till he was twelve years old, young M'Clure resided in the princely residence of the Governor, as the adopted child and son of the house. But then, an unlooked-for change took place in General Le Mesurier's family. After twenty-three years of childless marriage, his lady presented him in three successive years with three sons, the youngest of whom is now the inheritor of his father's vast wealth and magnificent spirit.

Young M'Clure was sent to Eton, and from thence to Sandhurst, but the military profession was distasteful to him; and in a short time, with the love of adventure instinctive to his nature, and the rashness of sixteen, he left the college with three young noblemen, fellow-students there, and proceeded to France, determined never to enter the college walls again.

With undiminished kindness General Le Mesurier now allowed him to select his own profession, and shortly after he was appointed midshipman on board Lord Nelson's old ship, the Victory.

With such associations he began his naval career.

During the next ten years he served in various parts of the globe; his animated, elastic nature, full of life, energy and mental force, along with the extreme fascination of his manners, gaining him the love of his brother officers, and the good will and affectionate interest of every commander he served under.

In 1836, he had already served six years as mate, and passed his examination as lieutenant, when, not being on active service, his destiny led him to the Admiralty to seek employment. On entering the audience-chamber, a high official then present exclaimed, "M'Clure, you are just the man we want. There is an expedition fitting out for the North Pole; will you join?"

The young officer was unable to pronounce at once. He retired to the ante-room, and sat down on a chair to meditate. The old porter, who was by, asked him "What he had on his mind." M'Clure told him, "Well said he, 'I saw Nelson sitting on that very chair, thinking just like you what he would do, and he took what they offered him. Do you do the same.'" M'Clure accepted the offer, went back, and volunteered to join the expedition then setting out under the command of Sir George Back.

This was the twelfth expedition undertaken since the year 1819, for the discovery of the north-west passage, that frozen phantom which had been haunting the minds of navigators and commercial men for centuries.

Within the limits of 23½ deg. from the shores of the known continent to the pole, the problem was to be solved. To search an area of the earth's surface above 8,000 miles in extent, yet untrudged beyond the arctic circle; to find the icy sea, and plough a channel through it from one great ocean to the other; or discover the fair and beautiful land, the Polynia, which the Russians dream lies beyond the eternal ice-barrier, up at the extreme polar limit; these were objects that might well kindle the imagination, and inspire daring hearts with courage sufficient to make them brave all the terrible desolation and unknown horrors of the icy zone.

During a long course of years, science and daring advanced far upon the frozen regions, baptizing cape and bay, and headland, with names that in themselves are histories of heroism and suffering unquelled in the annals of human progress, and still each step was a conquest upon the unknown. New seas, new lands revealed themselves to each successive navigator. The grand object was as yet unattained, but every brave man fancied, as he went forth heroically to the icy world, that perhaps the glory of success might be his. And when M'Clure at twenty-nine, gave up all the brilliancy and beauty of life for the sunless, silent frozen region where nature lies for ever a corpse covered with a snow shroud who can tell what starry prescient hope may have lit up his mind, that bled him the great problem of the centuries would at length be solved?

To understand fully the nature of the great achievement of which Captain M'Clure is the hero, we must take a glance at Arctic history; we must see how ten centuries had vainly dashed against the ice-barrier, which has opened but for him; how the fine brain and intellect of Europe warred ceaselessly for four hundred years against the frozen giants; and how still the best and bravest of Europe are found in the conflict, some as conquerors, some as martyrs, till you can track the progress of the combat by the memories of dead men in their icy graves.

From the earliest times, seafaring nations had tried to penetrate the mysteries of the Atlantic. The old Norse Vikings, as early as the ninth century, reached Iceland, where the Irish, it is said, had even preceded them; and a century later, Eric of Iceland, the first arctic navigator, "set forth west-

ward to search for other lands." The Scandinavians, for their wild sea-roving, brought back tales of lofty islands walled with glaciers, and others so fair, they named them Greenland and Vinland; but this land of grapes has never since revealed itself, though searched for subsequently in all directions, from Labrador to the Azores. Wandering mariners, too, in these northern latitudes, spoke of the strange barrier, neither earth, air, nor sky, but all three, through which it was impossible to penetrate. Here, in this unknown ocean, tradition and fable had placed their marvels: the island of St. Brendan, only visible at peculiar times, and to favored eyes; and that other strange island of gloom and mystery, five days' sail from the Orkneys, to which the souls of the dead were ferried over at midnight, according to the belief of the fishermen along the wild sea-coast of western Ireland. Here also Plato placed his Atlantis, and Strabo prognosticated that one or more worlds might be found there, inhabited by races different from the old continent; and still, as the presences of discovery haunted the human mind, all the great nations of antiquity came in turn, and gazed from the Pillars of Hercules upon the *mare tenebrosum*, whose waters they believed connected Europe with eastern Asia.

Two paths to India were indicated by tradition and science: the north-west by the Orkneys, the Faroe Islands, and Iceland, (that tried by the Vikings of Scandinavia); and the south-west, by the Canaries and Azores, tried by the mariners of the Phoenicians. But no great measures towards oceanic discovery were undertaken till the fifteenth century, when the Portuguese took the lead in adventure; their object being to effect a passage to India by Africa, in order to rival Italy, at that time carrying on her trade by the Mediterranean and Red Sea. Then the beautiful ocean islands were first revealed to Europe, and imagination filled with the idea that other lands as lovely lay circled by its waters, awaiting European discovery.

The Portuguese succeeded. The path to India by the Cape was found, and the great ocean highway, eastward, to the Indies opened for the nations. To rival the Portuguese, Columbus conceived the bold idea of a westward passage, across the untried waters of the Atlantic, and thus reaching the Spice Islands even sooner than the Portuguese by their new-found Cape. A presage of the possibility of the achievement had come down the stream of time, and he undertook the voyage confident of success. Thus the name of Columbus stands first on the list of those who attempted the western passage to India, and by so doing discovered a new world.

The impulse given by Portugal and Spain continued with daring rivalry amongst European powers through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Then was the great era of maritime progression through every zone and every meridian of the earth's surface—one of those singular epochs when the minds of men are all turned to one object—epochs which seem never to recur with similar unity and intensity of purpose. The traffic of the world was opened; Islands and Continents rose up in grand succession before the advancing prow of the daring ships; but one thing was wanting to the completion of geographical science—the knowledge of the north-west path to India across the Atlantic.

Great was the interest excited throughout Europe at the wonderful revelations of Columbus, especially at the Court of Henry the VII., where it was affirmed to be a "thing more divine than human to sail by the west into the east, where spices do grow, by a way never known before." So, five years after he had tried a south-west passage, and discovered the West Indies, Cabot led the first north-west expedition from the English shores, and the northern continent of America was discovered. Interest heightened with success, and Sebastian Cabot, the son, undertook a second expedition. With two civalers and three hundred men, he set forth bravely, and reached Labrador, "but durst pass no further for the heaps of ice." Twice afterwards he essayed the north-west passage, ever in the hope of finding Cathay, and reached to the sixty-seventh degree, when a mutiny amongst his crew obliged him to return. Still, even though he failed, honors, rewards and a pension were bestowed on him for his services, and his memory has been transmitted to posterity as the "great seaman."

The fifteenth century had now scarcely closed, yet all Europe was hastening to set forth her adventurers and victims to the ice-world; for all human progress seems to demand human sacrifice. Two expeditions, undertaken by the Portuguese, reached as far as Hudson's Straits, but perished there—their fate was never known. But failures are great teachers. When the icy barrier was found impassable that lay along the northern route to India, men turned hopefully to the south, and the Portuguese, had again the honor of the lead, when Magellan, in his ship the Victoria, passed from the Atlantic to the Pacific, through the straits that immortalize his name—passed to his death. A brief time after, he lay murdered in one of the ocean islands he had discovered.

East and west, southward, the Portuguese now voyaged to India, and a passage east and west, northward, was therefore deemed equally attainable. So, in the reign of the young Edward VI., a north-east expedition, by Spitzbergen and Nova Zembla, was organized under command of the ill-fated Sir Hugh Willoughby, the first Englishman who wintered in the arctic regions, and perished there. The year after his departure, some Russian fishermen found him lying dead and frozen in his ship, the Esperanza, his journal beside him, and all his crew lying dead around him, like so many ice-statues.

The efforts of Cabot had stimulated all Europe; and Cortez, not content with the conquest of Mexico, offered his services to Spain to discover the north-west passage, by simultaneous voyages along the Pacific and Atlantic coasts of America. His offer was not accepted, but Gomez, a Spaniard, actually undertook to find a passage due north, and proceeded some way, but had to return without achievement or discovery.

Thus, before even the close of the sixteenth century, we find the passages by the north-west, the north-east, and the due north had all been tried, and without success.

In the brilliant court of Elizabeth the idea again revived, and Frubisher sailed with three ships to find that north-west passage which he considered "the only thing in the world yet left undone by which a notable mind might be made famous." All England felt interested in the search; the stately Queen herself, who ever appreciated courage and intellect, waved her hand to him at departure from the windows of her palace; and on his return presented him a chain of gold with her own hand, and conferred on him knighthood and an estate. Frubisher made three voyages with eminent success, discovered the Straits that still bear his name, and for his bravery was "much commended by all men, and especially famous for the hope he gave of reaching Cathay."

(To be continued.)

## UNITE! UNITE!

BY MR. C. COOKE.

See how the giant wrongs are tottering

Federal forms begin to shake

Barbarous customs, near to falling,

Make barbarian hearts to quake.

Let reformers meet together—

Let the strong in faith unite,

Hand in hand, and onward pressing,

Labor earnest for the right.

Partisans of scheme and charter,

Aid the struggling where he can;

Throw aside all party feeling,

Be decided to a man.

Onward push the car of progress,

Be not barriers in its way;

Men of truth sleep on no longer,

Watch and labor night and day.

Working men, for right contending,

There's a rainbow in the sky;

Hope beams through the poor man's dwelling

And the day of victory's nigh.

Band together for the action,

Count the cost and span the ground;

Work in earnest, hope with reason,

And your fetters are unbound.

Statesman laugh to see your quarrels—

Whilst they rave, they sit and rest;

As their ports hourly strengthen,

Daily you are more oppressed.

Up and conquer, be united,

Or divided, you must fall;

Quarrel ever, and be bondmen,

Or unite and conquer all!

## BIOGRAPHY.

## PROFESSOR WILSON.

"Christopher North" is dead! The following obituary appears in one of the Glasgow journals:

"With the same sincere and profound sorrow in which we write—Scotland and many a place far away from it will hear—that Professor Wilson is no more with us. That great and good heart stirs not again on earth. Professor Wilson died on Sunday morning at ten minutes after midnight. We cannot, at this hour, venture to give feeble utterance to that grief which a nation will feel at the departure of one whose name has been to the present generation of familiar as a household word. We must reluctantly to-day simply record the sad event, which deprives our country of a bright glory, while it bequeaths to it a memory which will not merely be cherished as a national honour, but be dear to the humblest and truest affections of thousands wherever they may dwell. The son of an extensive manufacturer in Paisley, he was born in 1788, and was thus in his sixty-fifth year. At the age of 13 he commenced his studies at the University of Glasgow, and continued them for four years at Magdalen College, Oxford, where the genius which he possessed soon manifested itself, and enabled him, among other honors, to carry off the Newdegate prize for an English poem. At the end of that, when he left Oxford, and having purchased the estate of Ellersay, beautifully situated on the Windermere, he found, for a time, in that picturesque beauty of the district something to minister to his naturally high poetic temperament. He was even at this time highly distinguished by that fine physical development on which, even till lately, years produced but little effect, and which, among his college friends, had acquired for him so much pre-eminence in all the athletic exercises in which they engaged. Having been obliged, however, through some reverses, to abandon his romantic retreat, and all the charms—the society of Wordsworth included—which endeared it to him, he came to Edinburgh, and after passing Advocate, commenced that connection with Blackwood's Magazine, which for years after, indelibly won him all brilliant fancy and exquisite taste with which its pages were adorned. The productions of his eloquent pen were in 1812 published in a collected form, under the title of 'Recreations of Christopher North,' and which, in many respects, manifest that true poetry with which his other works were characterised. The chief of these are the 'Isle of Psalms' and the 'City of the Plague,' the former published in 1812, and the latter in 1816. Soon after this he was appointed to the chair of Moral Philosophy in our university; and by the fervid energy of his character and the eloquence with which his lectures were characterised, shed a lustre around it which will long continue and insure its celebrity among other academic institutions. He continued in the office till the close of the session 1850-1, when advancing years and declining health compelled him to resign. Rest and retirement brought, however, little relief; the sun had evidently set for ever, and now he has sunk into the grave to be honored for ages to come—regretted wherever the English language is known."

## PORTRAIT OF THE CZAR.

He is taller by a head than most of his courtiers, while the outline of his form is perfect. He is robust and muscular. The head, though somewhat too small in proportion to the rest of his body, is still in keeping with his broad chest. The usual expression of his face would suit a statue. A fixed severity and consciousness of majesty are the predominant characteristics. This expression certainly sometimes assumes a more friendly aspect; but it does not appear in the eye, which seldom beams kindly while the mouth never smiles. The latter feature, indeed, is regularly formed, but the sharp, thin lips indicate austerity and harshness. No sensuality is observable there, nor in any part of the lower face; neither do these lips tell that they have been used to give utterance to words of mildness, while the corners of the mouth betray too plainly contempt of men and a reserve that never spoke a word in the fulness of confidence. The ever-hanging eyelashes lend to his physique something lurking, even in simple conversation. When angry his eyes glare terribly; but they have no brightness for softer emotion. The finely chilled nose runs straight down from the high forehead, denoting, according to physiognomy, an incapacity for self-denial. His arrogant pretensions have entangled him in war with nearly the whole world. He is too obtinate to yield, and too weak for effectual defence; and it is not improbable that his cold heart will break long before the Western Powers shall dictate to him upon his own territory the equitable laws by which Russia is henceforth to be governed.

## THE SIEGE OF BELGRADE.

Constantinople fell, and no sooner had the Ottoman conqueror satiated his eyes with the sight of the trophies of the Greek emperors, than his followers had already subdued the greater part of Serbia. There, not far from the Hungarian frontier, Hunyadi fell upon Firmbeg, who commanded the Turkish van, routed his lines, and took him prisoner. Mahomet thereupon, instead of advancing, began to retreat; while Hunyadi, returning home crowned with laurels, narrowly escaped the homicidal designs of the Cillys and Garras, so vicious and unpatriotic heads of families, conspicuous for their hatred and envy of the fortune of the great protector. Mahomet did not, however, forget this defeat. He prepared thereafter incessantly for the invasion of Hungary, determined to take, at whatever cost, the fortress of Belgrade, which, from its position on the banks of the Danube, formed the bulwark of the Hungarian frontier. The Mussulman tents soon covered the plains surrounding that stronghold, while the neighbouring eminences were everywhere occupied by their batteries, recently improved by European skill. The general assault began in July. The Moslem artillery, after a cannonade of some days, boldly approached the walls of the fortress; and the janizaries, mingling the cry of "Allah" with the roar of the guns, forced their way, in the midst of volleys of fire poured upon them from the ramparts, to the very gates. At this critical juncture, Hunyadi, scattering the long line of armed Turkish vessels that floated on the Danube, effected an entrance into the fortress at the head of an army, accompanied by the Franciscan friar (Capistrano), whose zeal had assembled together a promiscuous body of monks, soldiers and crusaders. Mahomet, informed of the entry of Hunyadi, gave the order for a more deadly assault. The siege continued for more than a month. The Turks at length made their way to the ramparts over the bodies of the slain, which filled the ditches; the combat raged with intense fury, the besiegers and the besieged struggling grimly hand to hand, till at length the Mussulmans forced the passage of the drawbridge leading to the town. At once the houses were set on fire, and burning pitch and sulphur, mingling with the smoke of gunpowder (intentionally ignited by the despairing garrison), filled the air with their choking fumes. The Turks, confounded and almost suffocated, began to falter; those without the walls seeking refuge in retreat. Capistrano, urged by his zeal rather than by military skill, pursued the fugitives; the warriors of the cross were soon surrounded by their more numerous enemies; thousands of his un disciplined followers already strewn the field, when Hunyadi, perceiving the fatal extremity of his monkish comrade, sallied out to his assistance with the pith of his army, and, at the first onset, shattered the host of Mahomet, who, filled with dismay and fury, fled to the very gates of Adrianople. This was the most glorious martial feat of Hunyadi; and it Mahomet is immortalized by his capture of Constantinople, Hunyadi is no less so, by having repulsed the Ottoman conqueror from the walls of Belgrade (1456).—*Illustrated, Past and Present.*

## DESCRIPTION OF GALLIOLI.

Take dilapidated outhouses of farmers' yards in England—remove rickety old wooden tenements of Holywell street, Wych street, and the Borough—eat a up wherever you can, say ready, cracked, shattered structures of planks and tiles that have crept the ravages of time in our cathedral towns—carry off sheds and stalls from Ballinggate, and add to them the huts along the shores of the Thames between London bridge and Greenwich—bring them all to the European side of the Straits of the Dardanelles, and having pitched on the most exposed portion of the coast, on a bare round hill, sloping away to the water's edge, with scarcely time or shrub, tumble them "biggledy piggledy" on its declivity, in such wise that the streets may resemble, on a large scale, the devious traces of a bookworm through some old tome—let the roadway be very narrow, of irregularly varying breadth, according to the bulgings and projections of the houses and filled with large round slippery stones, painful and hazardous to walk upon—here and there throw a dirty gutter from a back street in Bologna—let the houses in parts lean across to each other so that the tiles meet, or that a few planks thrown across from over the door-ways unite and form a sort of "passage" or arcade—steal some of your popular monument, the shafts of various national testimonials, or Irish round towers—surround them with a light gallery about 12 feet from the top, put on a large extinguisher-shaped roof, paint them all white and having thus made them into minarets, clap them down into the maze of buildings—then let tall big stones all over the place—plant little windmills with odd looking sails on the crests of the hill over the town—transport the ruins of a feudal fortress from Northern Italy, and put it in the centre of the town, with a flanking tower extending to the water's edge—erect a few buildings of wood by the water-side to serve as *cafe*, *Custom-house*, and *Government stores*—and, when you have done this, you have to all appearance imitated the process by which the town of Gallipoli was created. The receipt, if failed, will be found to answer beyond belief. To fill it up you must, however, catch a number of the biggest breasted, long bearded dirtiest, and stottiest old Turks (to be had at any price in the Ottoman empire) provide them with pipes, and keep them smoking all day on little wooden stages or platforms about two feet from the ground, by the water's edge or up the main streets, as well as in the shops of the bazaar (one of the "passages" or arcades already described); see that they have no slippers on, nothing but stout woollen hose (their feet gear being left on the ground below) shawl turbans, (one or two being green, for the real descendant of the Prophet,) fur-lined flowing coats, and bright-hued sashes round the waist, in which are to be stuck silver-sheathed yataghans and ornamented Damascus pistols; don't let them move more than their eyes, or express any emotion at the sight of anything except an English lady; then gather a noisy, picturesque, and active crowd of fez-capped Greeks in baggy blue breeches, smart jackets, sashes, and rich vests—of soberly dressed Armenians—of intellectual-looking Jews, with keen flashing eyes—Cassars de Vincennes, Zouaves, British riflemen, *vivandieres*, sappers and miners, Nubian slaves, camel-drivers, commissaries, officers, and sailors, and direct them in stream through the streets round the little islets in which the smoking Turks are harboured, and you will do much to populate the place. It will be observed there are no women mentioned, but children are not by any means wanting. On the contrary, there is a glut of them, in the Greek quarter particularly, and now and then a bundle of cloathes, in yellow leather boots, and covered at the top with a piece of white linen, may be seen moving about, which you will do well to believe contains a woman neither young or pretty. Degré, so large, savage, tailless hairy, and curiously shaped, that Wombwell could make a fortune out of them if aided by any clever