

Doctry.

BIRDS IN SUMMER.

How pleasant the life of a bird must be,
Flitting about in each leafy tree;
In the leafy tree so broad and tall,
Like a green and beautiful palace hall,
With its airy chambers, light and boon,
That open to the sun, and stars, and moon,
That open unto the bright blue sky,
And frolicsome winds as they wander by.

They have left their nests in the forest bough,
Those homes of delight they need not now;
And the young and the old they wander out,
And traverse their green world round about:
And kark! at the top of this leafy hall,
How one to the other they lovingly call:
"Come up, come up!" they seem to say,
"Where the topmost twigs in the breezes sway!"

Come up, come up, for the world is fair,
Where the merry leaves dance in the summer air!
And the birds below give back the cry,
"We come, we come to the branches high!"
How pleasant the life of the birds must be,
Living in love in a leafy tree,
And away through the air what joy to go,
And to look on the green bright earth below!

How pleasant the life of a bird must be,
Skimming about on the breezy sea;
Cresting the billows like silvery foam,
And then wheeling away to its cliff built home,
What joy it must be to sail, upborne
By a strong free wing through the rosy morn
To meet the young sun face to face,
And piece like a shaft through the boundless space!

To pass through the bowers of the silver cloud,
And to sing in the thunder halls aloud!
To spread out the wings for a wild, free flight!
With the upper cloud wings,—oh, what delight!
Oh, what would I give, like a bird, to go
Right on through the arch of the sunlit bow,
And to see how the water drops are kissed,
Into green, and yellow, and amethyst!

How pleasant the life of a bird must be,
Whenever it listeth, there to flee;
To go when a joyful fancy calls,
Dashing down 'mong the waterfalls,
Then wheeling about with its mates to play,
Above and below, and among the spray,
Hither and thither, with screams as wild
As the laughing mirth of a rosy child!

What joy it must be, like a living breeze,
To flutter about 'mong the flowering trees;
Lightly to soar, and to see beneath
The wastes of the blossoming purple heath,
And the yellow furze, like fields of gold,
That gladden some fairy region old;
On mountain tops, on the billowy sea,
On the leafy stems of the forest tree,
How pleasant the life of a bird must be!

Miscellaneous.

DISCOVERY OF THE NORTH-WEST PASSAGE.

NARRATIVE OF THE EXPEDITION UNDER
MESSRS. DEASE AND SIMPSON.

FORT SIMPSON, Oct. 16, 1839.

HONOURABLE SIRS,—We have the honour to report the completion of all the primary objects of the expedition, the entire fulfilment of Governor Simpson's original instructions, under which it has been our good fortune to act, and something more, though, as we plainly told your honours last winter, it was quite out of the question, to think of reaching the Strait of the Fury and Hecla from the Coppermine River.

On the 22d June, we descended that impetuous stream of the Bloody Fall, where we remained until the 28th. This interval was employed by Mr. Simpson in exploring Richardson River, discovered in 1838, which discharges itself, as we then supposed, into the bottom of Back's Inlet, in latitude 67, 53, 57 north, longitude 115, 56 west. A party of about thirty Esquimaux were encamped there, all of whom fled precipitately to the hills, except one family, whose tent was placed on an island in this stream. With those last a communication was opened, through our interpreter Ooligback; but the circle of their little lives being confined to Berens Isles, and the borders of Richardson's River, they had no information to impart of any value.

On the 3d of July, the first slight opening occurred in the service of which we took instant advantage; but our first week's journey did not exceed twenty miles, and it was the 18th, after sad work, before we could attain Cape Barrow. From its rocky heights we beheld, with equal surprise and delight, the wide extent of Coronation Gulf, partially open, whereas, long after the same date in 1838, the whole party might have crossed it on foot. At midnight, on the 20th, we landed at Cape Franklin, just one month earlier than Mr. Simpson's arrival there, on his pedestrian journey of the year before. A violent easterly gale arrested our progress for the next four days; and on the 27th we encountered great peril in doubling Cape Alexander, amidst very heavy driving ice.

From Cape Alexander, situated in latitude 68, 56 N. longitude 106, 40 W., to another remarkable point in latitude 68, 33 N. longitude 98, 10 W., the Arctic coast may be comprised in one spacious bay, stretching as far south as latitude 67, 40, before it turns off abruptly southward to the last mentioned position. This vast sweep, of which but an inconsiderable portion was seen by Mr. Simpson last year, is indented by an endless succession of minor bays, separated from one another by long narrow projecting points of land, enclosing an incalculable number of islands.

From this description, it will be evident that our route was an extremely intricate one, and the duties of the survey most harassing, but whilst perplexed beyond measure in finding our way through these labyrinthine, we derived great advantage from the protection afforded by the islands from the crushing force of the seaward ice; and the weather was generally clear. In fact, the most serious detention caused by ice, on this part of the voyage, was from the 1st to the 5th of August, on a point that jutted out beyond the insular chain.

White Bear Point, as it is called, lies in 68, 7, 8, 5 N. 103, 36, 45 W.; variation 54, 45 E. These bays and masses of islands present a distinct succession of geological features, which can be best illustrated by our series of specimens of the rocks that compose this wild and barren coast. Vestiges of Esquimaux, and mostly old, were met with wherever we landed.

They appear to subsist in single families, or very small parties, and to travel inland for the deer hunt, in the month of June, not returning

to the sealing islands till the ice sets fast in October. A river twice the size of the Coppermine, which falls into the sea in 68, 2 N. longitude, 104, 15 W. is much resorted to by reindeer and musk oxen, in the summer season. Finding the coast, as already remarked, trending northerly from the bottom of the Great Bay, we expected nothing less than to be carried round Cape Felix of Captain James Ross, contrary to the conjectures hazarded by Mr. Simpson, in his narrative of last year's journey. On the evening of the 10th of August, however, (at the point already given) we suddenly opened a strait running into the southward of east, where the rapid rush of the tide scarcely left a doubt of the existence of an open sea leading to the mouth of Back's Great Fish River. This strait is ten miles wide at either extremity, but contracts to three in the centre. Even that narrow channel is much encroached upon by high shingle islands, but there is deep water in the middle throughout. The 12th of August was signalled by the most terrific thunder-storm we have ever witnessed in these regions. Next day it blew roughly from the westward, with a very dense cold fog, but we ran rapidly south-east, past Point Richards and Point Ogle of Sir George Back, and continued on till the darkness of night and the increasing gale drove us a shore beyond Point Pecheh. The storm shifted to north-east, and lasted till the 16th, when we directed our course, with flags flying, to the Montreal Island. On its northern side, our people, guided by Mackay, soon found a deposit made among the rocks, by some of Sir George Back's party, but as Mackay seemed to think, without that officer's knowledge. It contained two bags of pemican, and a quantity of cocoa or chocolate, all perfectly rotten, besides an old japanned tin vasculum, and two or three other trivial articles, of which we took possession, as memorials of our having breakfasted on the identical spot where the tent of our gallant, though less successful, precursor stood, on his return from Point Ogle to the Great Fish River that very day five years before. The arduous duty we had, in 1836, undertaken to perform, was thus fully accomplished; and the length and difficulty of the route back to the Coppermine would have amply justified our immediate return. We had all suffered more or less from the want of fuel and the deprivation of warm food, and the prospect grew more cheerless as the cold fall weather stole on apace. But having already ascertained the separation of Boothia from the American continent, on the western side of the Great Fish River, we determined not to desert till we had settled its relation thereto on the eastern side also. A fog which had come on dispersed towards evening, and unfolded a full view of the picturesque view of the estuary. Far to the south Victoria Headland stood forth so clearly defined, that we instantly recognized it by Sir George Back's exquisite drawing. Cape Beaufort we almost seemed to touch, and with the telescope we were able to discover a continuous line of high land as far round as north east, about two points more northerly than Cape Hay, the extreme eastern point seen by Sir George Back.

The traverse to the farther visible land occupied six hours unremitting labour at the oar, and the sun was rising on the 17th, when we scaled the bluff and singularly shaped rocky cape to which our course had been directed. It stands in latitude 68, 3, 56 N., longitude 94, 35 W. The azimuth compass by Jones settled exactly in the true meridian, agreed with two others by the same maker, placed on the ground.

From the proximity to the magnetic pole, the compass had latterly been of little or no use; but this was of the less consequence, as the astronomical observations were very frequent. The dip of the needle, which at Thunder Cove (12th August) was 89, 29, 35, had here decreased to 89, 16, 40, North. This bold promontory, where we lay wind bound till the 19th, was named Cape Britannia, in remembrance of our glorious country. On the beetling rock that sheltered our encampment from the sea, and formed the most conspicuous object on all this part of the coast, we erected a conical pile of ponderous stones, fourteen feet high, that, if not pulled down by the natives, may defy the rage of a thousand storms. In it was placed a sealed bottle containing the sketch of our proceedings, and possession was taken of our extensive discoveries in the name of Victoria the first, amidst the firing of guns, and the enthusiastic cheers of the whole party.

On the 19th, the gale shifted from N. E. to E. S. E. and after crossing a fine bay, due east, with no small toil and danger, the coast bent away northerly, which enabled us to effect a run of forty miles. Next day the wind resumed its former direction, and after pulling against it all the morning, among shoals and breakers, and gaining only three miles, we were obliged to take refuge in the mouth of a small river. From a limestone ridge, about a league inland we obtained a view of some very remote blue land, in the N. E. quarter, in all probability one of the Southern promontories of Boothia.

Two considerable islands lay far in the offing, and others high and distant stretched from E. to N. E. Our view of the low main shore, was confined to five miles, in an easterly direction, after which it appeared to turn off greatly to the right. We could therefore, scarcely doubt our having arrived at that large gulph uniformly described by the Esquimaux as containing many islands and with numerous indentations stretching down to the southward, till it approaches within forty miles of Repulse and Wager Bays. The exploration of such a gulph which was the main object of the *Terror's* ill starred voyage, would necessarily demand the whole time and energies of another expedition having a starting or retreating point much nearer to the scene of operation than Great Bear Lake, and it was quite evident to us that any further fool hardy perseverance could only lead to the loss of the great object already attained, together with that of the whole party. We must here be allowed to express our admiration of Sir John Ross's extraordinary escape from this neighbourhood, after the protracted endurance of hardships unparalleled in Arctic story. The mouth of the stream which bounded the last career of our admirable little boats, and received their name,

lies in lat. 68, 28, 27 N. long. 93, 7. W. variation of the compass, 16, 20. W.

The strong wind that had forbidden our advance gave wings to our retreat. The same night (Aug. 20) we landed once more at Cape Britannia, and next morning re-crossed the inlet direct to the Point Pecheh, with a heavy sea. On the 22d we explored a long narrow bay, on the west side of Point Ogle, which extends to the parallel of latitude. The north wind blew roughly, with sharp frost and next day we got no farther than Point Richardson. From thence we crossed over, on the 24th, to what had from the Continent, appeared like two islands, but which we rightly conjectured to form part of the southern shore of Boothia, or to speak with greater precision, of that land on which stands Cape Felix of Captain James Ross. This shore we had the satisfaction of tracing for about sixty miles, till it turned up to the north, in lat. 68, 41. 16. N., long. 98, 22. W., only 57 miles from Ross's Billow; the dip of the needle was 89, 28, 45. N. the magnetic pole bearing N. N. E., distant ninety miles. The variation shown by both the azimuth compass and the horizontal bar needle, was 45 degrees east. The objects seen on this coast are easily enumerated. A low, uninteresting, limestone tract, abounding nevertheless in reindeer, muskoxen, and old native encampments. To the westward a good deal of ice appeared, and vast numbers of snow geese passed high overhead, in long triangular flight, bound for milder skies.

Whilst engaged in taking observations, our men constructed another durable memorial of our discoveries, which was saluted in the usual manner. Then recrossing the strait on the 25th, we resumed for sometime our outward route, only keeping more along the seaward verge of the islands so as to shape a straight course.

The weather, from being threatening and unsettled, soon became unequivocally severe.

On the 29th August a severe snow storm began, that lasted for seven days, during four of which we was fixed to a single spot by the violence of the north-west gales, while the frost was so keen that the pools among the rocks on which we lay became solid enough to bear up a man. A more moderate interval succeeded this fierce outbreak. Quitting the continent again, at the large river already mentioned, we struck N. N. W. for an extensive island twenty miles off, which we coasted (N. W.) for twenty miles; and shortly before sunset on the 6th of September, stood out from thence due north, for the nearest point of Victoria Land, which proved equally distant.

We have never seen anything more brilliant than the phosphoric gleaming of the waves when darkness set in. The boats seemed to dash a flood of molten silver, and the spray dashed from their bows, before the fresh breeze fell back, like showers of diamonds, into the deep. It was a cold night, and when we at last made the land, cliffs, faced with eternal ice, obliged us to run on for a couple of leagues before we could take the shore with safety. The coast of Victoria Land, which we explored for upwards of one hundred and fifty miles, is incomparably the boldest we have met in those seas. Often near the shore no bottom could be found with thirty five fathoms of line, and the Cornelian blue colour of the water every where indicated its profound depth. There are several noble bays, the largest of which north-west of Cape Alexander, is twenty miles wide, and equally deep, backed by snow clad mountains. It attains to 69 deg. 40 min. north, the highest latitude of this voyage. At length we reached the extreme point seen by Mr. Simpson from Cape Franklin in 1838, where the coast of this large country begins again to bend northward of west, Cape Beron Wing, by computation S. S. W. distant fifty miles. On the 10th of September we crossed this magnificent strait, with strong E. S. E. or side wind, and a rough sea, in which our gallant boats, old and worn out as they were, acquitted themselves beyond our most sanguine hopes.

Our return from Cape Barron was miserably retarded by furious north west winds and severe stress of weather. Winter permanently set in on the 15th September, and next day, to the undisguised joy of the whole party, we re-entered the Coppermine River, after by far the longest voyage ever performed by boats on the Polar sea. Leaving one of our little craft, together with remains of the pemican (which, through age and long exposure, was become quite mouldy), and various other articles, as a prize for the first Esquimaux who may visit the Bloody Fall, we assended the river with our double crew in four days, abandoned our tents, and every thing but absolute necessities; crossed the barren ground, up to the knees in snow, having unluckily left our snow shoes on the coast, and safely reached St. Confidence at dusk on the 24th. The fisheries had failed worse than ever, and we had good reason to congratulate ourselves on not being doomed to pass a third winter within the arctic circle.

After settling with the Indians, liberally rewarding the most deserving, and supplying all with ammunition gratuitously, we took our departure on the evening of the 26th, to go into island batteaux—one belonging to the expedition and the other came from Fort Simpson sixteen days previous to our arrival.

Our passage of Great Bear Lake was most boisterous and inclement. In crossing the body of the lake, and other considerable traverses, our boats, with every thing in them, and even the very clothes on our backs, became converted into shapeless masses and concretions of ice. It was high time for us to escape from Great Bear Lake, for the temperature, which was at four degrees below zero when we landed at the head of the river, on the evening of the 4th October fell ten degrees below it in the course of the night; and next day we descended the rapid stream in the very midst of the driving ice. On entering the Mackenzie, we experienced a temporary mitigation of this excessive cold; but we should most assuredly have stuck fast above Fort Norman, had not the northern gales again arose in their strength, and while they shattered and dispersed the rapidly forming ice, enabled us to stem the current under close reefed sails. At noon, on the 14th of October, after forcing our way with no small risk through the torrent of ice poured out by the river of the mountains,

we reached this place, and were cordially welcomed by our valuable friend, chief trader M'Pherson, who had for some time given up all hopes of our arrival.

Most of our people are still afflicted with acute pains and swellings in the limbs, caused by the cold and exposure; and are assured by Mr. M'Pherson that he has never known or heard of so early and rigorous a commencement of winter in Mackenzie's River. On the other hand, so fine a spring as 1839 seldom visits these frozen regions; and to this favouring circumstance, under Providence, ought our signal success to be partially ascribed.

Oct. 30.—The state of the ice at length enables us to despatch carriers to Great Slave Lake. In the meantime, Governor Simpson's highly valued letter of the 17th June, which unfortunately missed us on our way hither, has cast up overland.

We rejoice in having anticipated the Russian expedition, and secured to our country and the Company the indisputable honour of discovering the North West Passage, which has been an object of search to all maritime nations for three centuries.

When our expedition was planned at Norway House in 1836, it was confidently expected that Sir George Back would have achieved the survey of the Gulf of Boothia with the *Terror's* boats, and that our meeting at the mouth of Great Fish River would have left no blank in the geography of North America. That officer's failure, the exhaustion of our men and means, and the necessity of a new wintering ground, render a fresh expedition indispensable for the examination of the Gulf of Boothia, the circuit of which, to the strait of the Fury and Hecla, according to the Esquimaux accounts, cannot be less than four or five hundred miles.

It only remains for us to recommend to your honours' approbation the plan proposed by Mr. Simpson to perfect this interesting service, which, he has no wish to avail himself of the leave of absence granted by Governor Simpson, he is prepared to follow up whenever the limited means required are placed at his disposal. We have the honor to be, honourable Sirs, your most obedient humble servants,

PETER W. DEASE,
THOMAS SIMPSON.

FINAL CHARGE AT WATERLOO.

"Up Guards and at them!" is one of those memorable sentences, standing for the symbols and representatives of great events, which—like Caesar's report, "veni, vidi, vici," and Nelson's signal, "England expects every man to do his duty,"—have imprinted themselves, in capital letters, on the page of history, and been admitted amongst the mementoes of nations. At the sound, fancy sees the hill top, on which death has sat, like a crowned monarch, through all the dreadful day of Waterloo, swarming with the life of a sudden resurrection,—and hears the answering shout, when the hurricane of war swept down its slopes, that tore into shreds the banner of France and laid an Empire in the dust!

The last charge of the British Guards, on the 18th June, besides being, necessarily, rich in the Picturesque effect, is an incident of the most dramatic interest, as being the point of crisis in one of those great actions, by which the destiny of nations is conspicuously moulded. But, more than such incidents in general, it derives a peculiar interest of its own, from the circumstance by which it has been preceded. Perhaps of all the fields on which British valour has ever made its most conspicuous displays, there never was one so remarkable as Waterloo, for the peculiar characteristic of the national courage which distinguishes it from the courage of most other races of men, and singularly contrasts it with that of the nation which was its immediate opponent on the day in question:—We alluded to its constitutional quality of calm and patient endurance. A more gallant nation than France, the son does not rise on; but a Frenchman's valour is nourished upon its own action, and must be permitted to breathe itself, or it dies. It is better formed for brilliant achievement than silent resistance. With French troops or any other troops than British, it may well be doubted if Wellington could have won the field of Waterloo; and part of his great merit consists in his perfect knowledge of the materials with which he had to work, and the entire confidence with which, since a system of tactic so desperate and trying seemed necessary to the success of his operations, he reposed on the unyielding constancy of the British soldier. Twenty times during that dreary day, would his combinations have been thwarted by the irrepressible impatience of men so gallant, but more impetuous, under the irritations that goaded almost to madness, and sounded more startlingly than trumpets to the charge. The Battle of Waterloo was a continued succession of tremendous charges by the French columns on the British squares; and hour after hour did these gallant heroes, amid all the maddening excitements of the scene, stand to be mowed down on the spots where they had been placed, watering unflinchingly with their blood the ground on which a glorious harvest was about to be reaped, though well they knew that they should not be at that gathering. The duty of each exposed square was like the desperate one of forlorn hope. "When will we get at them?"—was the passionate cry of the Irish regiments, when death blew through their ranks, and their temper at times all but failed. "The loss of individual regiments, under circumstances so maddening," says an historian of the scene, "was prodigious. One had four hundred men mowed down in square without drawing a trigger; it lost almost all its officers, and a subaltern commanded it for half the day."—Another, "when annihilated, sent to require support; none could be given; and the Commanding Officer was told that 'he must stand or fall where he was.'" Knowing the tremendous sacrifice that was going on, Napoleon calculated on wearing the British into defeat. Ever and again the masses of the enemy came dashing against the British squares, and were rolled back as from stone walls—but not without making fearful breaches in the living masonry which were instantly and steadily filled up. Never was a state of inaction so dreadful and so dreary. Oh! for one blast of the bugle that should have broken that fearful paralysis of the limbs of war,

and sounded to the charge! And it came at length!—awakening the myriad energies that had slumbered through all that long and desolating day, into one tremendous and irresistible burst of action, and gathering the hoarded vengeance of its weary hours into one vast impulse, beneath whose discharge dynasty perished from the earth.

It was after the Prussians had begun to debouch from the woods of Saint Lambert, that Napoleon, seeing the day was lost, unless he could make an instant impression on the British front, led on his Old Imperial Guard to the front of the hill, behind whose crest the British Guards lay coiled like lions. Here he paused on the remonstrances of his Staff, and Ney headed this last great venture up the hill. The hour was come when the sleepy spell was to be broken, and the fearful nightmare which had, all day, sat amongst the British squares, at length shaken off. Gallantly amid showers of grape and canister shot, the Imperial Guard swept on, and gallantly they crossed the ridge of the hill. Then it was that the word of power went forth—"Up Guards and at them!" The tide of war, which had flowed on all day towards the British lines, was rolled back; the cavalry came pouring in the track of the gallant guards, and the Duke closed his telescope, and gave the final order for the whole of the British line to advance. When was ever order so exultingly obeyed?—Wounds, and fatigue, and hunger were all forgotten. With their customary steadiness they began to cross the ridge; but Nature had been strained to her extremest point of forbearance, and when they saw the French before them, a cry arose that seemed to rend the heavens. When silence again descended on that field, to sit there with his natural ally, Death, the stars to which Napoleon trusted had fought against him in their courses, as they did against Sisera of old,—the eagles were low on the plain, from whence they never soared again, and the flag of the silver lilies was waving to the breezes of France.

REVISED EDITION

OF THE

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JOHN FROWN.

Fredericton, December 5, 1839

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