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Leslie Dumas Flaubert Nietzsche Turgenev Balzac
Stockton Vatsyayana Crane
Burroughs Verne
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch
Homer Tolstoy Whittman Gogol Busch
Darwin Zola Lawrence Twain Plato Scott
Potter Freud Jowett Stevenson Dickens Harte
Kant Andersen London Descartes Cervantes Burton Hesse
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Hale James Hastings Shakespeare Chambers Irving
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The Journey to the Polar Sea

John Franklin

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THE JOURNEY TO THE POLAR SEA

BY SIR JOHN FRANKLIN

Everyman, I will go with thee, and be thy guide,
In thy most need to go by thy side.

(This is Number 447 of Everyman's Library)

INTRODUCTION BY CAPTAIN R.F. SCOTT.

JOHN FRANKLIN, born in 1786. Many naval experiences, including Trafalgar, before heading an expedition across northern Canada in 1819. Elected F.R.S. and knighted after a second expedition. Lieutenant-Governor of Van Diemen's Land, 1836 to 1843. Last expedition, 1845, was lost, and Franklin died in 1847 near the Arctic. Subsequent investigations have established him as the discoverer of the North-West Passage.

THE JOURNEY

TO THE POLAR SEA.

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

INTRODUCTION.

In days of hurried action I have been astonished at the depth of interest which a re-perusal of this wonderful old narrative has held for me. Wonderful it is in its simplicity and its revelation of the simplicity of character and faith of the man who wrote it. It is old only by comparison—scarcely ninety years have elapsed since the adventures it described were enacted—yet such a period has never held a fuller measure of change or more speedily passed current events into the limbo of the past.

Nothing could more vividly impress this change than the narrative itself. We are told that Mr. Beck missed his ship at Yarmouth but succeeded in rejoining her at Stromness, having travelled "nine successive days almost without rest." What a vision of post-chaises, sweating horses and heavy roads is suggested! And if the contrast with present-day conditions in our own Islands is great, how much greater is it in that vast Dominion through which Franklin directed his pioneer footsteps. As he followed the lonely trails to Fort Cumberland, or sailed along the solitary shores of Lake Winnipeg, how little could he guess that in less than a century a hundred thousand inhabitants would dwell by the shore of the great lake, or that its primeval regions would one day provide largely the bread of his countrymen.

There civilisation has followed fast indeed, and ever it presses forward on the tracks of the pioneer. But even today if we follow

Franklin we must come again to the wild—to the great Barren Lands and to the ice-bound limit of a Continent—regions where for ninety years season has succeeded season without change—where few have passed since his day and Nature alone holds sway. For those who would know what IS as well as for those who would know what HAS BEEN, this narrative still holds its original interest; all must appreciate that it records the work of a great traveller and a gallant man whose fame deserves to live.

R.F. SCOTT.

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INTRODUCTION.

His Majesty's Government having determined upon sending an Expedition from the Shores of Hudson's Bay by land to explore the Northern Coast of America from the Mouth of the Copper-Mine River to the eastward, I had the honour to be appointed to this service by Earl Bathurst, on the recommendation of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty; who at the same time nominated Doctor John Richardson, a Surgeon in the Royal Navy, Mr. George Back, and Mr. Robert Hood, two Admiralty Midshipmen, to be joined with me in the enterprise. My instructions in substance informed me that the main object of the Expedition was that of determining the latitudes and longitudes of the Northern Coast of North America, and the trending of that Coast from the Mouth of the Copper-Mine River to the eastern extremity of that Continent; that it was left for me to determine according to circumstances whether it might be most advisable to proceed at once directly to the northward till I arrived at the sea-coast, and thence westerly towards the Copper-Mine River; or advance in the first instance by the usual route to the mouth of the Copper-Mine River, and from thence easterly till I should arrive at the eastern extremity of that Continent; that in the adoption of either of these plans I was to be guided by the advice and information which I should receive from the wintering servants of the Hudson's Bay Company, who would be instructed by their employers to cooperate cordially in the prosecution of the objects of the Expedition, and who would provide me with the necessary escort of Indians to act as guides, interpreters, game-killers, etc.; and also with such articles of clothing, ammunition, snowshoes, presents, etc., as should be deemed expedient for me to take. That as another principal object of the Expedition was to amend the very defective geography of the northern part of North America I was to be very careful to ascertain correctly the latitude and longitude of every remarkable spot upon our route, and of all the bays, harbours, rivers, headlands, etc., that might occur along the Northern Shore of North America. That in proceeding along the coast I should erect conspicuous marks at places where ships might enter, or to which a

boat could be sent; and to deposit information as to the nature of the coast for the use of Lieutenant Parry. That in the journal of our route I should register the temperature of the air at least three times in every twenty-four hours; together with the state of the wind and weather and any other meteorological phenomena. That I should not neglect any opportunity of observing and noting down the dip and variation of the magnetic needle, and the intensity of the magnetic force; and should take particular notice whether any, and what kind or degree of, influence the Aurora Borealis might appear to exert on the magnetic needle; and to notice whether that phenomenon were attended with any noise; and to make any other observations that might be likely to tend to the further development of its cause and the laws by which it is governed.

Mr. Back and Mr. Hood were to assist me in all the observations above-mentioned, and to make drawings of the land, of the natives, and of the various objects of Natural History; and particularly of such as Dr. Richardson who, to his professional duties was to add that of naturalist, might consider to be most curious and interesting.

I was instructed, on my arrival at or near the Mouth of the Copper-Mine River, to make every inquiry as to the situation of the spot whence native copper had been brought down by the Indians to the Hudson's Bay establishment, and to visit and explore the place in question; in order that Dr. Richardson might be enabled to make such observations as might be useful in a commercial point of view, or interesting to the science of mineralogy.

From Joseph Berens, Esquire, the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the gentlemen of the Committee I received all kinds of assistance and information, communicated in the most friendly manner previous to my leaving England; and I had the gratification of perusing the orders to their agents and servants in North America, containing the fullest directions to promote by every means the progress of the Expedition. I most cheerfully avail myself of this opportunity of expressing my gratitude to these gentlemen for their personal kindness to myself and the other officers, as well as for the benefits rendered by them to the Expedition; and the same sentiment is due towards the Gentlemen of the North-West Company, both in England and America, more particularly to Simon McGilliv-

vray, Esquire, of London, from whom I received much useful information and cordial letters of recommendation to the partners and agents of that Company resident on our line of route.

A short time before I left London I had the pleasure and advantage of an interview with the late Sir Alexander Mackenzie who was one of the two persons who had visited the coast we were to explore. He afforded me, in the most open and kind manner, much valuable information and advice.

The provisions, instruments, and other articles, of which I had furnished a list by direction of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, were embarked on board the Hudson's Bay Company's ship Prince of Wales, appointed by the Committee to convey the Expedition to York Factory, their principal establishment in Hudson's Bay.

It will be seen in the course of the Narrative how much reason I had to be satisfied with, and how great my obligations are to, all the gentlemen who were associated with me in the Expedition, whose kindness, good conduct, and cordial cooperation have made an impression which can never be effaced from my mind. The unfortunate death of Mr. Hood is the only drawback which I feel from the otherwise unalloyed pleasure of reflecting on that cordial unanimity which at all times prevailed among us in the days of sunshine, and in those of sickness and sorrow.

To Dr. Richardson in particular the exclusive merit is due of whatever collections and observations have been made in the department of Natural History; and I am indebted to him in no small degree for his friendly advice and assistance in the preparation of the present narrative.

The charts and drawings were made by Lieutenant Back and the late Lieutenant Hood. Both these gentlemen cheerfully and ably assisted me in making the observations and in the daily conduct of the Expedition. The observations made by Mr. Hood on the various phenomena presented by the Aurora Borealis* will it is presumed present to the reader some new facts connected with this meteor. Mr. Back was mostly prevented from turning his attention to objects of science by the many severe duties which were required of him and which obliged him to travel almost constantly every winter that

we passed in America; to his personal exertions, indeed, our final safety is mainly to be attributed. And here I must be permitted to pay the tribute due to the fidelity, exertion and uniform good conduct in the most trying situations of John Hepburn, an English seaman and our only attendant, to whom in the latter part of our journey we owe, under Divine Providence, the preservation of the lives of some of the party.

(*Footnote. Given in the Appendix to the Quarto Edition.)

I ought perhaps to crave the reader's indulgence towards the defective style of this work, which I trust will not be refused when it is considered that mine has been a life of constant employment in my profession from a very early age. I have been prompted to venture upon the task solely by an imperious sense of duty when called upon to undertake it.

In the ensuing Narrative the notices of the moral condition of the Indians as influenced by the conduct of the traders towards them refer entirely to the state in which it existed during our progress through the country; but lest I should have been mistaken respecting the views of the Hudson's Bay Company on these points I gladly embrace the opportunity which a Second Edition affords me of stating that the junction of the two Companies has enabled the Directors to put in practice the improvements which I have reason to believe they had long contemplated. They have provided for religious instruction by the appointment of two Clergymen of the established church under whose direction schoolmasters and mistresses are to be placed at such stations as afford the means of support for the establishment of schools. The offspring of the voyagers and labourers are to be educated chiefly at the expense of the Company; and such of the Indian children as their parents may wish to send to these schools are to be instructed, clothed, and maintained at the expense of the Church Missionary Society which has already allotted a considerable sum for these purposes and has also sent out teachers who are to act under the superintendence of the Reverend Mr. West, the principal chaplain of the Company.

We had the pleasure of meeting this gentleman at York Factory, and witnessed with peculiar delight that great benefit which already marked his zealous and judicious conduct. Many of the trad-

ers and of the servants of the Company had been induced to marry the women with whom they had cohabited; a material step towards the improvement of the females in that country.

Mr. West, under the sanction of the Directors, has also promoted a subscription for the distribution of the Bible in every part of the country where the Company's Fur Trade has extended, and which has met with very general support from the resident chief factors, traders, and clerks. The Directors of the Company are continuing to reduce the distribution of spirits gradually among the Indians, as well as towards their own servants, with a view to the entire disuse of them as soon as this most desirable object can be accomplished. They have likewise issued orders for the cultivation of the ground at each of the posts, by which means the residents will be far less exposed to famine whenever, through the scarcity of animals, the sickness of the Indians, or any other cause, their supply of meat may fail.

It is to be hoped that intentions, so dear to every humane and pious mind, will, through the blessing of God, meet with the utmost success.

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