

Since 1810, when Sir John Ross, Sir John Franklin, and Sir John Parry resumed the exploration of a North-West Passage, Arctic expeditions have succeeded one another with great rapidity. In 1827, Parry sailed as far north as 82°. Sir John Franklin, who set out in 1841, with the ships *Erebus* and *Terror*, perished miserably with his crew, after having solved the long-vexed problem, and found the open channel which Captain Sir Roderick MacClure discovered, in his turn, in 1850, but in an opposite direction. In 1855, Doctor Kane's expedition sighted the navigable waters of the Arctic Pole.

For the Antarctic Pole we give a similar resumé of its geographical history.

In 1772, Kerguelen, a Dutch captain, discovered a large and ice-bound island, which he supposed to be a portion of the great Southern continent. In 1774, Captain Cook explored these regions up to the 71st parallel of south latitude. In 1831, Bristow discovered Enderby's Land; in 1838, the French navigator, Dumont d'Urville, *la Terre Adélie* (or Adelia Land). Finally, in 1841, Sir James Clark Ross, a nephew of the Arctic explorer, Sir John Ross, penetrated with the *Erebus* and the *Terror* to the 78th parallel of south latitude. There he saw two lofty and ever-burning volcanoes, which he named after his two ships, and surveyed a new extent of frozen coast, which he called *Victoria Land*.

We shall return hereafter to these various voyages; but it is first needful that we should cast a glance at the general phenomena of the frozen seas, both in the north and the south.

*General View of the Polar Seas.*—It may be asserted that the Polar regions form a transition between the sea and the continents, for water is always found there in a solid state: for its surface, during the greater part of the year, being always at a very low temperature, the snow which falls does not melt, and the sea is consequently covered either with a continuous expanse of ice, or with enormous floating icebergs, drifting along at the mercy of the currents.