Bibliographical Notices.

ART. I.—*An Arctic Voyage to Baffin's Bay and Lancaster Sound, in search of Friends with Sir John Franklin.* By ROBERT ANSTRUTHER GOODSIR, late President of the Royal Medical Society of Edinburgh.—*London*, 1850. 12mo, pp. 152.

MANY of our readers may be aware, that among the officers of Sir John Franklin's expedition,—the fate of which is now a source of such eager apprehension and lively sympathy,—Mr. Harry Goodsir, the brother of the distinguished Professor of Anatomy in the University of Edinburgh, held the post of Assistant Surgeon and Naturalist. Prompted by the natural desire of gaining intelligence of his lost relative, another brother Mr. Robert A. Goodsir made an arrangement, in March 1849, with Mr. Penney, master of the "Advice" of Dundee, to sail with him as Surgeon on the whaling voyage on which he was just starting; it being understood that Mr. Penney would do all he could in the work of exploration, consistently with the object of his voyage. The energy and talent shown by Mr. Penney on this and on a former occasion, have led to his being intrusted by the Government with the command of an expedition which sailed some weeks since in search of the missing ships, and in which, we believe, Mr. Robert A. Goodsir has also a place.

The little work before us does not announce itself with any pretensions to notice, either as to its subject, or to the manner in which it is treated; being a narrative of the ordinary events of a whaling voyage, written by one who is evidently unpractised in the craft of authorship. We are sure, however, that any one who may be led to take it up by a feeling of interest in the author's object, will be induced to continue his perusal by the interest which he will soon take in the narrative itself; so easy and natural is the mode in which the incidents of the voyage are described, and so much variety does it derive from the observing powers of the author. Of this we shall give our readers an opportunity of judging for themselves, by making a few short extracts.

The first of these relates to *night* on the arctic seas, which, as all our readers know, is not characterised, during the summer months, by the darkness which we mentally associate with that division of the twenty-four hours. Mr. Goodsir had taken his place at the oar of one of the whale-boats, which had given chase to a "run" of whales; and the whole party had been so absorbed in the eagerness of pursuit, that they did not duly note the lapse of time,—having a sort of idea that they had been a night and a day absent from the ship, but not feeling any certainty on that point.

"I suspected it was again night; but I could scarcely think it possible, the time seemed to have passed so rapidly. But there was a *stillness* about the air that

must have struck every one as peculiar to the dead hour of the night; and although I have noticed it in far different situations, it never struck me so forcibly as it did here. The light passing breezes and cats' paws, which had dimpled the water for some hours back, had died away. It was now so calm that a feather dropt from the hand fell plumb into the sea. But it was the dead stillness of the air which was so peculiar. No hum of insect, none of the other pleasant sounds which betoken it is day, and that Nature is awake, can be expected here even at midday in the height of summer, twenty miles from land, and that land far within the Arctic Circle, where, if one may say so, a third of the year is one long continuous day. Yet there is a most perceptible difference,—there is a stir in the air around,—a sort of *silent music* heard during day, which is dumb during night. Is it not strange that the deep stillness of the dead hour of night should be as peculiar to the solitude of the icy seas as to the centre of the vast city?" (p. 88.)

On a subsequent occasion, when a dead whale, far advanced in putrefaction, was being towed to the ship, a curious occurrence is chronicled by Mr. Goodsir, as follows:

"The approach of the sweet-smelling stranger was announced by the most unearthly music, though, perhaps, it would not have been thought so by a thoroughbred Highlander; it was the bagpipes to a note—to a tone. I almost thought I could recognise a long-remembered strathspey; but where could be the bagpipes? It was soon all explained, however; the thrusts of sundry lances into the swollen carcass had made small apertures into the abdomen, from whence issued the gas confined therein, each forward tug of the boats graduating the tension of the abdominal muscles, and at the same time graduating the emission of the gas, transformed the dead whale into a musical instrument." (p. 127.)

The following passage will convey an idea of the exuberance of some of the most beautiful forms of animal life, even in the midst of ice-bound waters:

"During the beautiful weather which we enjoyed at Pond's Bay, nothing could be more interesting than a walk on the floe; in every crack of the ice were to be seen *Acalephæ* of the most beautiful forms and brilliant colours,—crimson, purple, and azure; whilst their long tentacles floated gracefully beneath them, and their ever-moving cilia were brightly iridescent. The less gay but as graceful *Clio* would be seen floating amongst them, and the sombre-coloured *Limacina* moving quickly by fits and starts; but not nearly so quickly as the merry bounding hither and thither of the bright yellow little *Gammarus*. Fancy all these in a narrow split or crack of the floe not more than a foot and a half wide, bounded on either side by the deep blue of the submerged part of the ice, which appears as if it were suspended to the bright white of that portion which is above water." (p. 130.)

Mr. Goodsir did not find his expedition of as much value to him in a zoological point of view, as he seems to have anticipated:

"The naturalist, if he takes his chance in a whaling voyage, will find that he will be able to do little if the voyage is successful as a *whaling voyage*; but if, on the contrary, it is 'a bad year,' in whaler parlance, then there is little to prevent him from reaping a rich harvest. I had every assistance possible from Mr. Penny, but from my own inexperience I am afraid I lost not a few opportunities of observation. You may recollect the story of John Hunter's sending out a surgeon specially to Greenland to make a collection for him, and that at not a little expense—of his chagrin when the man returned with a collection consisting of a piece of whale's skin, to which were attached some of the whale louse (*Oniscus ceti*) and nought else. But I much suspect that the man need not be so much laughed at. Ten chances to one, he was with people who would laugh and sneer at his every effort, and throw difficulties in his way that he would not have it in his power to surmount. I was not thus situated myself; but I saw and heard

quite sufficient to show me that the position of surgeon of a whale-ship is no very enviable one, and too often, I am sorry to say, rendered worse from their own mismanagement." (p. 115.)

We shall only add a couple of passages, which notice, in an incidental way, an important change in the habits of whaling-sailors, whose ample experience must be regarded as affording unequivocal testimony to the superior value of the beverages they now prefer :

"Our men had been this year provided with an apparatus which greatly conduced to their comfort, in the shape of conjurors fitted up with large lamps by which means they could make for themselves hot tea or coffee as they required it, when they were away from the ship for any time. Each of the boats was supplied with one of these conjurors. . . . Then each and all betook themselves to the infusions and decoctions of their tea and coffee, the whaling sailor's greatest luxury and comfort. He has no objection to his grog, but I think he has, long ere this, found out, that hot strong tea or coffee, particularly the former, is by far the best beverage he can take in these climates." (pp. 135-8.)

We cannot conclude this notice without expressing the earnest hope, that either Mr. Goodsir's party, or some of the generous volunteers who have set forth on the same mission, may meet with the desired success ; and that none of those who are perilling their lives for the succour of their distressed countrymen, may become the objects of similar anxiety.

ART. II.—1. *Eleneo Sommario delle Operazioni di alta Chirurgia eseguite nel decorso anno 1847, nel venerabili Arcispedale di S. Spirito.*—Roma, 1848. 4to, pp. 56.

Account of the great Operations of Surgery, performed in the year 1847, in the Great Hospital of Rome.

2. *Prospetto di alcune Operazioni d'alta Chirurgia eseguite dal Dottore F. ARIETTI, di Vercelli.*—Vercelli, 1848. 8vo, pp. 31.

Account of some of the great Surgical Operations performed by Dr. ARIETTI, Professor of Anatomy in the University School of Vercelli.

3. *Delle Operazioni di Chirurgia Minore e della Vaccinazione, modo di eseguirle, loro Indicazioni ed Effetti.* Di G. B. MONTEGGIA.—8vo, pp. 60.

On the Minor Operations of Surgery, and on Vaccination ; the Manner of performing them, their Indications and Effects. By G. B. MONTEGGIA.

It is very rarely that we obtain Italian surgical works : in the first place because Italian surgeons prefer translating from French and English, adding a few notes of their own, to the labour of recording and arranging the results of their personal observation ; and in the second, because their original works, when published, are found with difficulty, owing to their peculiar manner of publication. When an Italian medical man writes a work, he almost invariably prints it himself, at his own risk and for his sole profit. He will neither trust a bookseller, nor allow him a share of gain. The consequence is, that even in the towns where a book is printed, the bookseller knows nothing of it, or pretends that he does not, and it is only by making the acquaintance of an author, that one hears that he has works for disposal. The last of the works just quoted is apparently a new one, and is part of a larger work on the 'Institutions of