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**“... where nothing moves and nothing changes”:
The Second Arctic Expedition of John Ross (1829-1833)**

John (later Sir John) Ross (1777-1856) undertook three voyages to the Canadian Arctic: in 1819 into Baffin Bay, in HMS *Isabella* with William Edward Parry (1790-1855) under him, in HMS *Alexander*; in 1829-1833 in the *Victory*, privately sponsored by the gin-distiller Felix Booth; and in 1850-1851, in the yacht *Felix*, as part of the massive expedition in search of Sir John Franklin's missing expedition of 1845. Ross had a particularly acute insight into the problems of employing conventional modes of landscape perception in the polar regions. Beyond the most obvious problem of refraction, which caused him the huge error of mistaking Lancaster Sound for a bay in 1819,¹ Ross notes the confusion experienced by the landscape viewer because of climate. Writing on June 1, 1819, in Baffin Bay, he makes the following observation:

Nothing can exceed the beauty of these summer evenings, while the length to which they are protracted is no less surprising to those to whom those regions are new. The contrast between the warm yellow tints of the sky, and the cold blue of the land and the floating ice, is equally striking; the whole presenting the appearance of summer with the reality of winter.²

In aesthetic interpretation of nature, Ross's forte lies in his appreciation of the disparity between nature as the Arctic traveller experiences it, and the pictures of it he communicates to his reader in Britain. This theme gains prominence in the record of his 1829-1833 voyage, entitled *Narrative of a Second Voyage in Search of a North-West Passage*.

On September 12, 1829, while negotiating the icebergs in a tidal current along the western side of Prince Regent's Inlet, Ross introduces the problem of the disparity between nature and art.

More than I among us had witnessed similar scenes, and, in some manner or other, we had been extricated; but, with all this, we could not but feel astonishment, as well as gratitude, at our having escaped here

without material damage. For readers, it is unfortunate that no description can convey an idea of a scene of this nature: and, as to the pencil, it cannot represent motion or noise. And to those who have not seen a northern ocean in winter — who have not seen it, I should say, in a winter's storm — the term ice, exciting but the recollection of what they only know at rest, in an inland lake or canal, conveys no ideas of what it is the fate of an arctic navigator to witness and to feel. But let them remember that ice is stone; a floating rock in the stream, a promontory or an island when aground, not less solid than if it were a land of granite. Then let them imagine, if they can, these mountains of crystal hurried through a narrow strait by a rapid tide; meeting, as mountains in motion would meet, with the noise of thunder, breaking from each other's precipices huge fragments, or rending each other asunder, till, losing their former equilibrium, they fall over headlong, lifting the sea around in breakers, and whirling it in eddies; while the flatter fields of ice, forced against these masses, or against the rocks, by the wind and the stream, rise out of the sea till they fall back on themselves, adding to the indescribable commotion and noise which attend these occurrences (pp. 151-52).

Ross does not adopt either the level-headed disciplined view, or the silent response to sublime scenes as did Franklin,³ nor does he complain simply of dreariness as did Parry;⁴ instead, perhaps because this voyage of five years was not sponsored by the Admiralty or British government, he expresses his response with a greater imaginative response than his peers—not attempting to bring everything he witnesses under the rational control expected in a naval commander's journal—as well as in a picturesque organization of nature. Indeed, he recognizes in the sublime moving icebergs a natural phenomenon for which conventional artistic perceptions have not prepared him. "A scene of this nature," as opposed to one of the nature of England, can not be articulated by taxonomies derived from relations between man and English nature. Ross chooses to document the bizarre sight of the movement of apparently secure physical entities the size of mountains, by employing one long sentence of clauses building upon clauses to a sublime climactic cacophony. That the scene is sublime is, of course, implicit: the "let them imagine" rhetorical device assumes an inadequate imaginative scope in those of his readers who know only the stationary ice in a picturesque canal or lake in England, or in the landscape painting of the seventeenth-century Dutch school. Viewing land as a series of landscape paintings, the habitual mode of perceiving nature practised by eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century Britons, cannot be successfully deployed, in Ross's opinion, without the viewer being made aware of the essential disparity between the artifice of the aesthetic and the character of the natural world in the Arctic regions. The aesthetic of the Sublime, which conventionally pertained to scenes of vastness, could be used but, as Ross would learn over the next four

winters, it too would prove inadequate to convey his relations with the Arctic world.

As winter approached on October 8, 1829, and the *Victory* reached Felix Harbour, on the east side of Boothia Peninsula in the Gulf of Boothia, Ross attempted to come to terms with the alienating character of the land:

there was now not an atom of clear water to be seen any where; and, excepting the occasional dark point of a protruding rock, nothing but one dazzling and monotonous, dull and wearisome extent of snow was visible, all round the horizon in the direction of the land. It was indeed a dull prospect. Amid all its brilliancy, this land — the land of ice and snow — has ever been, and ever will be, a dull, dreary, heart-sinking, monotonous waste, under the influence of which the very mind is paralyzed, ceasing to care or think, as it ceases to feel what might, did it occur but once, or last but one day, stimulate us by its novelty; for it is but the view of uniformity, and silence, and death. Even a poetical imagination would be troubled to extract matter of description from that which offers no variety; where nothing moves and nothing changes, but all is for ever the same, cheerless, cold, and still (pp. 190-91).

The paralysis of mind which Ross notes is what Parry felt and feared during each of his three voyages. The ship's paralysis, the paralysis in those men on board from October until April, even the apparent paralysis of the human tongue, induced by the extreme cold, are symptoms of a paralysis which also precludes the study, let alone the appreciation, of landscape. "Uniformity, and silence, and death," and "same, cheerless, cold, and still" — the groups of nouns and adjectives convey the unvaried monotony even as Ross disputes whether it could be conveyed. One matter is clear: the absence of "variety," and "novelty" — the mainstays of the Picturesque — precludes the composition of landscape as pictures, thus depriving the British explorer of the habitual opportunity to work out a relation to or relationship with the environment. And without that relation, he cannot understand nature in any conventional sense: he can perceive it only as existing beyond life as he knows it; as, in fact, "still" "death," the same image Parry used when he wintered in Prince Regent's Inlet in 1824.⁵

By January 4, 1830, Ross was confronting a white, eternal radiance. He introduces the dilemma again, this time in terms of pictorial representation:

all the landscape was one indiscriminate surface of white; presenting, together with the solid and craggy sea, all equally whitened by the new snow, the dreariest prospect that it is possible to conceive, while unaccompanied by a single circumstance of the picturesque, or any thing capable of exciting the smallest interest. Such it is, indeed, almost every where in this wretched country, and, above all, in winter. The voyager may be a painter, or he may be a poet; but his talents at description will

here be of no value to him; unless he has the hardihood to invent what there is not to see. Whatever may be the interest attached to the illustrations adopted in this work, it is easy at least to perceive that they owe nothing to the actual landscape; to a nature void of everything to which the face of a country owes its charms (pp. 240-41).⁶

Ever the picturesque seeker after views (although here a distinctly more Romantic than Neo-classical one), the British mariner is made wretched by what he perceives as nature's refusal to play the perceptual game by conventional rules. Not a question, as it was for Wordsworth, of a mutual reciprocity between landscape and the imagination, Ross's idea is that nature ought to prove amenable to the application of the perceptual framework which he and his readers have grown accustomed to identifying as reality. That he must invent charms of his own disturbs Ross who, like his colleagues, resists the Wordsworthian ideal of allowing nature to open his mind, and does not anticipate the Hopkinsian ideal of making nature up to suit himself,⁷ preferring anxiously to remain like the topographical poet, the captain of his own soul.⁸

The situation is nevertheless a curious one, for it was this very expedition which learned, of necessity, how to survive (for four winters) by living off the land as the Eskimaux did. A nineteenth-century precursor to the theory of Vilhjalmur Stefannson (1879-1962) which propounds the notion of a "friendly Arctic,"⁹ Ross's enforced experiment with foreign modes of physical survival succeeded, but nothing could have induced a nineteenth-century Briton to adopt the intellectual and aesthetic casts of mind of a people whom he considered contemptibly primitive in those regards.

On August 31, 1831, facing the prospect of a third winter beset in the ice, Ross gave vent simply and tellingly to his growing aesthetic annihilation:

there were not materials from which any thought, keeping clear of the equal hazards of falsity or romance, could have constructed an interesting narrative. On the land there was nothing of picturesque to admit of description: the hills displayed no character, the rocks were rarely possessed of any, and the lakes and rivers were without beauty. Vegetation there was hardly any, and trees there were none; while, had there even existed a beauty of scenery, every thing was suffocated and deformed by the endless, wearisome, heart-sinking, uniform, cold load of ice and snow. On the sea, there was no variety; for here, equally, all was ice during the far greater part of the year, and it was thus indifferent what was water and what was land. Rarely did the sky show aught to replace this dearth of beauty and variety below; all the means of picturesque display were wintry. . . (p. 598).

Denying himself an imaginative latitude, that is to say, conforming to the inherent conservatism of both the Picturesque mode of perception and the generical conventions of the naval officer's narrative, Ross attempts another tack, but with it can, finally, only submit to the landscape. He notes only what there is *not* in the view before him. Remaining abroad ship much of the time, while his nephew James Clark Ross (1800-1862) explored the peninsula and discovered the Magnetic North Pole on various sledging expeditions, Ross could only lament what he considered both a navigational and an aesthetic incarceration and prospective annihilation.

Fearing that his reader would misjudge the meagreness of his landscape description, Ross set out, on September 14, 1831, an aesthetic apologia which at once demonstrates his appreciation of the Picturesque and the Sublime in snowy landscapes and landscape paintings familiar to his reader, while it argues that snow in the polar regions precludes all qualities of the Picturesque, including animation and "keeping," the painter's concept of harmony of effect. The extended apologia deserves full inclusion here because its eloquence derives from Ross's prose mimesis of the endless tracts recollected by him.

The new ice was thick enough to skate on: but it was an amusement that we would gladly have dispensed with.

Hyde Park is doubtless a great regale to those who can exhibit their attitudes to the fair crowds who flock to see that which the sex is reputed to admire; and it is a regale, in a better sense, when the power of flying along the surface of the glassy ice, as the fishes glide through the water, and the birds float in the air, with a velocity that requires no exertion, is of an occurrence so rare, and is confined to so short a season. In another way, is this almost supernatural mode of motion delightful not less than useful, when the milk-maids of Holland can thus sail with their commodities to a market, the rivals, not of steam-boats and mail-coaches, but of the birds and the fishes. Yet more than delightful is it, to see the ice holidays of Sweden and Russian, when all the world is in motion, as well by land as by water, yet where land and water are but one element; when all the chivalry of each sex, all thoughtless of any thing beyond the present moment, is absorbed in the minutes that pass, as if the whole world had no other occupation than to fly from all care and thought, to leave every thing behind them, even as the lightning flashes through the regions of space, heedless of all that exists beneath its burning career.

But what had we to do with all this? To us, the sight of ice was a plague, a vexation, a torment, an evil, a matter of despair. Could we have skated the country over, it would not have been amusement; for there was no object to gain, no society to contend with in the race of fame, no one to admire us, no rivalry, no encouragement, no object. We had to exercise enough without this addition: and worst of all, the ice which bound us and our ship in fetters of worse than iron, which surrounded us, obstructed us, imprisoned us, annoyed us in every possible manner, and thus haunted and vexed us for ten months of the year, had long become so odious to our sight, that I doubt if all the

occupation which the skating on it could have afforded us, would not rather have been a grievance than an enjoyment. We hated its sight, because we hated its effects; and every thing that belonged to it, every idea associated with it was hateful.

Is there any one who loves the sight of ice and snow? I imagine, now, that I always doubted this: I am quite sure of it at present. The thought of ice may possibly suggest agreeable sensations in a hot July day; the sight of a Swiss glacier, in the same weather, is "refreshing" I doubt not. This also is picturesque, I admit, as are the frozen summits of the Alps, particularly under the rosy tints of a rising or a setting sun. These, and more, are beauties; and they are not the less beautiful that they are, to some, rarities, while they are also characteristic, and are portions of a general landscape, to which they give a new and peculiar interest, as they add to its varieties. In the present days, it is not also a little in praise of ice, that the traveller can say, I have visited Switzerland, I have scrambled across a glacier, I have seen the sun rise on Mont Blanc while the earth below was still in shade, I have ascended it, I, even I, the fearless and enterprising, have ascended the father of mountains, yea, even when the guides hung back in fear. Even thus is ice beautiful, regaling, acceptable.

Thus, too, is snow the delight of schoolboys: have we not all hailed the falling feathers, because we should now make snowballs and pelt each other, and erect a statue of heaven knows who, a colossus of snow, to melt away, like the palace of the great female autocrat, before the sun. Is it not, too, the emblem of virgin purity and innocence, and might not much more be said in praise and admiration of snow? It is an evil, however, to balance against all this, that it deforms all landscape, destroys all "keeping," by confounding distances, and with that, proportions, and with that, too, more and worse than all else, the harmony of colouring; giving us a motley patch work of black and white, in place of those sweet gradations and combinations of colour which nature produces, in her summer mood, even amid the most deformed and harsh of landscapes.

These are the objections to a snow landscape, which even the experience of a day may furnish: how much more, when, for more than half the year, all the element above head is snow, when the gale is a gale of snow, the fog a fog of snow, when the sun shines but to glitter on the snow which is, yet does not fall, when the breath of the mouth is snow, when snow falls around us and fills our chambers, our beds, our dishes, should we open a door, should the external air get access to our "penetralia;" where the "crystal stream" in which we must quench our thirst is a kettle of snow with a lamp of oil, where our sofas are of snow, and our houses of snow; when snow was our decks, snow our awnings, snow our observatories, snow our larders, snow our salt; and, when all the other uses of snow should be at last of no more avail, our coffins and our graves were to be graves and coffins of snow.

Is this not more than enough of snow than suffices for admiration? is it not worse, that during ten of the months in a year, the ground is snow, and ice, and "slush;" that during the whole year its tormenting, chilling, odious presence is ever before the eye? Who more than I has admired the glaciers of the extreme north; who more has loved to contemplate the icebergs sailing from the Pole before the tide and the gale, floating along the ocean, through calm and through storm, like

castles and towers and mountains, gorgeous in colouring, and magnificent, if often capricious, in form; and have I too not sought amid the crashing and the splitting and the thundering roarings of a sea of moving mountains, for the sublime, and felt that nature could do no more? In all this there has been beauty, horror, danger, every thing that could excite; they would have excited a poet even to the verge of madness. But to see, to have seen, ice and snow, to have felt snow and ice for ever, and nothing for ever but snow and ice, during all the months of a year, to have seen and felt but uninterrupted and unceasing ice and snow during all the months of four years, this it is that has made the sight of those most chilling and wearisome objects an evil which is still one in recollection, as if the remembrance would never cease (pp. 600-03).

The snow-encrusted desolation in which the all but victorious *Victory* sits is thrown into relief by Ross's recollections of artful scenes of ice and snow, both picturesque and sublime: the milk-maids of Holland in picturesque Dutch landscapes, and the sublime summit of Mont Blanc perceived either literarily, in, by 1835, countless guide books, or actually while the tourist was on what for him was art in motion — a landscape tour. For Ross, the falling snow offers the only natural animation but, by falling, confounds his perception of distances, precludes "keeping," destroys the harmony of natural colours, and, all in all, tyrannizes the natural world and the percipient mind of the traveller with a palpable horror. The one-sentence paragraph, beginning "These are the objections. . .," bears an eloquently tortured testimony to the aesthetic demise of the landscape connoisseur.

Deprived of animation, perspective, variety, or even the normal occurrence of unforeseen events, Ross feels the external world closing in on him. The snow on his eyelashes symbolizes his inability to keep nature at bay, in focus, and distinct from himself. Without such a needful distance between man and nature, man cannot order the phenomena beyond himself. The me and the not-me begin to melt in a horrifying evolution of the self into a product not of civilization but of nature. As the force of nature has physically seized Ross's ship, and has begun the relentless process of absorbing the vessel into itself, so it has aesthetically seized the traveller's mind, and has begun to alter and to distort it. Instead of a landscape traveller, applying an *a priori* ukase to nature in order to take its aesthetic measure, Ross is a prisoner of the external world whose measure risks being overwhelmed by nature. That Ross's rescuers found him and his crew unrecognizable, suggests the outward manifestation of the inner metamorphosis that has occurred over four winters.

Abandoning their ship in the early summer of 1832, the Ross expedition trekked north, up the coasts of Boothia Peninsula and Somerset Island. They did not reach Lancaster Sound, and so returned south as

far as Fury Point, where the men could supply themselves from some of the foodstuffs still remaining from the cargo of HMS *Fury*, abandoned by Parry eight years before. In the winter of 1832-1833, faced with the very real prospect of death now, Ross prepared his men for the final attempt to reach the whaling ships in Baffin Bay the next summer. Ross delays the conclusion of his apologia for a chapter-ending, a four-years-imprisonment-ending paragraph that reiterates the features of the aesthetic hell he hoped to leave behind. "He and his comrades," observes George Malcolm Thomson, in *The North-West Passage*, "had endured all they could of the sublime beauties of the Arctic."¹⁰

Let him who reads to condemn what is so meagre, have some compassion on the writer who had nothing better than this meagreness, this repetition, this reiteration of the ever resembling, every day dulness to record, and what was infinitely worse, to endure. I might have seen more, it has been said: it may be; but I saw only ice and snow, cloud and drift and storm. Still I might have seen what I did not; seen as a painter, and felt as a poet; and then, like painter and poet, have written. That also may be, but let painter and poet come hither and try: try how far cold and hunger, misery and depression, aid those faculties which seem always best developed under the comforts of life, and under that tranquility at least, of mind, if not much more, which the poet and the writer require to bring their faculties into action. Our "facundi calices" were cold snow-water; and though, according to Persius, it is hunger which makes poets write as it makes parrots speak, I suspect that neither poet nor parrot would have gained much in eloquence under a fox diet, and that an insufficient one, in the blessed regions of Boothia Felix (p. 696).¹¹

Where nothing moves and nothing changes, but all is reiteration the mind can only turn back on itself. The profusion of the first-person singular in this paragraph indicates how, no longer surrounded by a nature he knows how to identify, Ross can only explore the interior landscapes of his own being: without visual correlatives to confirm his identity, he begins to question the very soul of that identity.

That Ross and his crew survived physically (but for three men) to tell the tale, remains to this day an immense feat of fortitude. The coincidence of hailing the *Isabella*, the very ship Ross had captained to Lancaster Sound on his first polar voyage, in 1819, marked a staggering coincidence, and a fitting restoration to civilization after a miraculous five years spent on the shores of Prince Regent's Inlet. Ross's narrative delineated the aesthetic crisis that a British traveller to the North could expect to encounter better than any journal before it. But as his credibility as a mariner had been discounted, so, presumably were his insights into the aesthetic/psychological hazards of polar exploration: sooner or later a British expedition, relying completely on

British supplies and British modes of perception of the external world, was bound to embark on a suicidal endeavour. Ten years after the appearance of Ross's narrative, John Franklin and his one hundred and thirty-eight sailors sailed down the Thames, through Lancaster Sound, and into their "graves and coffins of snow."

NOTES

1. On July 4, 1818, in Baffin Bay, at 72° N 56° W, Ross noted the following phenomenon: "A remarkable appearance of unequal refraction was observed here in the ships near us, and also in those at a distance [i.e. the ships of the whaling fleet off Greenland]. Those within two or three miles seemed to be extended to a monstrous height; while those at double the distance appeared to be drawn out in a horizontal direction, even to flatness upon the water." Captain John Ross, *A Voyage of Discovery, made under the Orders of the Admiralty, in His Majesty's Ships Isabella and Alexander, for the Purpose of Exploring Baffin's Bay, and Enquiring into the Probability of a North-West Passage*, 2 vols. (London: Longman, 1819), I, 71. The problem of refraction accounts, in all likelihood, for Ross's mistaken conclusion that Lancaster Sound was a bay (I, 241), a conclusion which doomed his career as an explorer for the Admiralty. That Lancaster Sound never shrinks to less than a fifty-kilometre width, suggests how powerfully refraction hinders accurate perception in high latitudes.

The landscape viewer and explorer are influenced to an indefinite degree by refraction: whereas the knowledge of the shape of a ship permits the mariner to correct his perception of a vessel whose appearance is altered by refractory forces, the ignorance of the terrain in remote regions renders landscape perception in refracted situations problematical. Moreover, refraction all but precludes the possibility of the elevated offskip or background, which closes the conventional picturesque view, because, as Ross mentions, objects or landforms at a distance are protracted horizontally to an acute degree, robbed, as it were, of their vertical stature. Thus, the closed view becomes almost an impossibility, while the vastness imposes itself as the salient feature of the land. See, as well, Sir John Ross, "Terrestrial Refraction," in *Appendix to the Narrative of a Second Voyage in search of a North-West Passage . . .* (London: A. W. Webster, 1835), pp. cix-cx, wherein Ross states that, in the North, "it is quite impossible to take correct sketches" (p. cix).

2. John Ross, *A Voyage of Discovery*, I, 28. While on his second voyage, Ross made a similar observation: "[August 21, 1829] . . . as Sunday rose on us, it proved a beautiful day, with a sky of the utmost serenity; the atmosphere transparent and the sea so smooth, as almost to leave us without motion. But for one iceberg that was in sight, we might have imagined ourselves in the summer seas in England, though the air was only at 45° as the water was at 43°." *Narrative of a Second Voyage in Search of a North-West Passage, and of a Residence in the Arctic Regions, during the Years 1829, 1830, 1831, 1832, 1833*. By Sir John Ross, C.B., K.S.A., K.C.S., &c. &c. *Captain in the Royal Navy. Including the Reports of Commander, now Captain, James Clark Ross, R.N., F.R.S., F.L.S., &c. and the Discovery of the Northern Magnetic Pole* (1834), 2 vols. in one (London: A. W. Webster, 1835), p. 84. Subsequent references will depend on the authoritative 1835 edition, and will appear in parentheses in the text.
3. See Captain John Franklin, *Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea in the Years 1819, 20, 21, and 22* (London: John Murray, 1823; facs. rpt. Edmonton: Hurtig, 1969); and *Narrative of a second Expedition to the Shores of the Polar Sea in the Years 1825, 1826, and 1827 by John Franklin, Captain, R.N., F.R.S. and commander of the Expedition; including an Account of the Progress of a Detachment to the Eastward by John Richardson, M.D., F.R.S., F.L.S. surgeon and naturalist to the Expedition* (London: John Murray, 1828; facs. rpt. Edmonton: Hurtig, 1971).
4. See William Edward Parry, *Journals of the First, Second and Third Voyages for the Discovery of a North-West Passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific in 1819-20-21-22-23-24-25, in His Majesty's Ships Hecla, Griper, and Fury*, 5 vols. (London: John Murray, 1828).
5. Parry, *Journals*, V, 33-5.

6. The self-deprecation of Ross's remark masks his very serious artistic efforts to represent the landscapes of the Boothia Peninsula. Three pictures are of particular note: "Christian's Monument, Hamilton's Bay and Island" (facing p. 155); "Felix Harbour" (facing p. 194); and "Victoria Harbour" (frontispiece). In each there is, to a greater or lesser degree, a foreground enlivened by sailors in motion, and a background including skies filled with animated cloud formations. As well, a flag pole assists in connecting the foreground and offskip in each. Yet, the pictures do not impart to the landscape any idea beyond that of barely contained natural chaos. The profusion of mountains in the first and third pictures overwhelms the perspective, while the openness of the second renders the ship vulnerable in anything but a secure winter quarters. Whether because these views were made of events early in the expedition (all prior to 1831) or for another reason, the note almost of resignation to the natural world, which pervades the latter half of the narrative has not yet clouded Ross's pictorial perspective. Still, a lack of definition characterizes these views, confirming, as it were, Ross's stated concern over the relation between his pictures and the character of the terrain, which, also, brings to mind his comment, in the appended essay on refraction, that correct views are an impossibility in the North.
7. This distinction is offered by Marshall McLuhan in "Tennyson and Picturesque Poetry," *Essays in Criticism*, I (1951), 277.
8. This phrase describing the mind's relation to topography was coined by R. A. Aubin in his study of topographical poetry, entitled *Topographical Poetry in XVIII-Century England* (1936) (New York: Modern Languages Association of America, 1966), p. 67.
9. See *The Friendly Arctic: the Story of Five Years in Polar Regions* (New York: MacMillan, 1921, 1943).
10. *The North-West Passage* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1975), p. 228.
11. It appears that at least one enterprising individual, Robert Burford, felt he could transpose the natural beauties of the Boothia Peninsula to canvas. Though not taking up Ross's challenge to respond artistically to nature while resident in such alien, remote lands, Burford saw the possibilities for lionizing Ross's achievement and miraculous return from what all had supposed to be his grave. Burford articulates with no taxonomical difficulty or unease the panorama he painted and exhibited at Leicester Square in 1834. Himself a firm believer in the Picturesque and the Sublime, he ran roughshod over the aesthetic and epistemological dilemmas delineated by Ross in his narrative, rendering the explorer's description merely in the fashion of his age. See *Descriptions of a View of the Continent of Boothia, discovered by Captain Ross, in his late Expedition to the Polar Regions, now exhibiting at the Panorama, Leicester Square, Painted by the Proprietor Robert Burford, from Drawings by Captain Ross, in 1830* (London: J. and G. Nichols, 1834), pp. 4-6.