

We found the coast to trend off to the southeast, and I judged we could see it trending from twenty-five to thirty miles. We had now ascertained, beyond a doubt, that there was no open space next to the land, as I had been led to believe would be found, so late in the season. The whole area was studded with icebergs, which it now became necessary to get clear of, if possible, before night set in.

It was a day of great excitement to all, for we had ice of all kinds and descriptions to encounter, from the iceberg of huge quadrangular shape, with its stratified appearance, to the sunken and deceptive mass, that it was difficult to perceive before it was under the bow. Our situation was critical, but the weather favoured us for a few hours. On clearing these dangers, we kept off to the southward and westward, under all sail, and at 8 P. M. we counted eighty large ice-islands in sight. Afterwards it became so thick with mist and fog, as to render it necessary to lay-to till daylight, before which time we had a heavy snow-storm. The temperature of the water had fallen to 29°; air 28°. At one hundred fathoms depth we found the former 29°. A strong gale now set in from the southward and westward. The brig's deck was covered with ice and snow, and the weather became excessively damp and cold. The men were suffering, not only from want of sufficient room to accommodate the numbers in the vessel, but from the inadequacy of the clothing with which they had been supplied. Although purchased by the government at great expense, it was found to be entirely unworthy the service, and inferior in every way to the samples exhibited. This was the case with all the articles of this description that were provided for the Expedition. Not having been able to satisfy myself to whom the blame is to be attributed, contractors or inspectors, I hesitate to give their names publicity. The deception is in my opinion to be attributed to both.

On the 5th of March the gale had increased. The tender *Sea-Gull* being in close company, both vessels were in imminent danger. At 3 A. M. we narrowly escaped several icebergs. At 4 A. M., it blew a very heavy gale from the southwest; the temperature of the air fell to 27°, and that of the water was 29°; the ice formed rapidly on the deck, and covered the rigging, so much as to render it difficult to work either the brig or schooner; dangers beset us in every direction, and it required all the watchfulness we were possessed of to avoid them.

From the state of the weather, the lateness of the season, and the difficulty of seeing around us, not only during the several hours of the night, but even in the daytime, the constant fogs and mist in which we had been for several hours every day enveloped, rendered our exertions abortive, and precluded the possibility of doing any thing