

March 22d, from midnight to four o'clock, a fresh gale, with rain. The weather lighting up at intervals, made them aware that they were in the midst of innumerable ice-islands, so closely packed as scarcely to afford a passage between them. At four, the wind still continuing fresh and the weather misty, they stood to the northward and eastward. The weather grew thicker and became colder. Shortly after the fog lifted, and they found themselves surrounded by narrow fields of ice, with contracted passages between them, extending in a direction perpendicular to that of the wind. As far as the eye could reach were icebergs, packed and floating, in all directions. After a short examination, some places appeared where the ice was not so compact. At one of these, they succeeded in passing through. Fresh gales and thick weather followed, and they still passed numbers of icebergs, of from eighty to one hundred feet in height, with the sea breaking on them.

On the morning of the 23d, their latitude was 70° S., longitude $100^{\circ} 16'$ W. The weather proved clear. In the afternoon they again stood to the southward and eastward for three hours, when they observed the appearance of land, and discovered large masses of ice and numerous icebergs. At midnight the southern horizon was beautifully illuminated with the aurora australis.

On the 24th of March, they had a heavy fall of snow; passed many icebergs, and large quantities of floating ice; got suddenly into large fields of packed and broken ice, extending as far as the eye could reach, in all directions, which, with the accumulation of snow, appeared to be rapidly becoming solid. They lost no time in forcing their way out. All on board were of opinion, that within a short time after they cleared it, it became a firm field of ice. The latitude observed was $69^{\circ} 06'$ S., longitude $96^{\circ} 50'$ W.

Having on two occasions narrowly escaped being closed in by the ice, Lieutenant Walker had determined to return, and was making his way to the north when he fell in with the Peacock.

The nights having become long, with the interruptions occasioned by fogs and snow-storms, afforded but little time for running the vessels among the icebergs, whose numbers rendered the navigation extremely hazardous. The condition of the Peacock for a winter's campaign, was miserable, and on board the Flying-Fish there was no protection in the event of being frozen in. The positive nature of his instructions, combined with the report of Lieutenant Walker, convinced Captain Hudson of the necessity of turning the vessels' heads towards a more temperate climate. On holding a council with his officers, he found them all of the opinion that the season for active operations in