

Captain James Ross. They inquired, whether we had compartments in our ships to prevent us from sinking? How we intended to keep ourselves warm? What kind of antiscorbutic we were to use? and where were our great ice-saws? To all of these questions I was obliged to answer, to their great apparent surprise, that we had none, and to agree with them that we were unwise to attempt such service in ordinary cruising vessels; but we had been ordered to go, and that was enough! and go we should. This want of preparation certainly did not add to the character for wisdom of our government, with this community; but they saw us all cheerful, young, and healthy, and gave us the character, that I found our countrymen generally bear, of recklessness of life and limb. The tender *Flying-Fish* excited their astonishment more than the ships, from her smallness and peculiar rig; and, altogether, as a gentleman told me, most of our visitors considered us doomed to be frozen to death. I did not anticipate such a fate, although I must confess I felt the chances were much against us, in case we were compelled to winter within the Antarctic. From every calculation, we could not stow quite twelve months' provision, even upon short allowance; our fuel was inadequate to last us more than seven months, and the means of protecting ourselves in the ships for winter quarters, were any thing but sufficient. My mind naturally suffered a great deal of anxiety on all these points, and I felt myself not a little depressed by it, particularly when I considered the state of the *Peacock*. The carpenter of that ship, shortly after our arrival at Sydney, had reported to her commander, Captain Hudson, that the whole of her upper-works were rotten, and required a survey. The vessel was quietly examined into without holding one, and her state was found even worse than represented. I had many long consultations with Captain Hudson, and found it was impossible to put upon her the necessary repairs, without her giving up the southern cruise. We made up our minds that it was absolutely necessary for the credit of the Expedition and the country for her to perform it; for we were well satisfied that improper imputations and motives, would be ascribed to us, if she did not, and was detained undergoing repairs, in a state of inactivity, during the season for operations in the high southern latitudes. The necessity I felt of subjecting so many lives in so unworthy a ship, caused me great anxiety during the whole cruise. The official papers forwarded to the Secretary of the Navy, upon this subject, will be found in Appendix XXI.

All the vessels underwent the necessary repairs of calking, &c., and the *Flying-Fish* was furnished with two new masts of the Kaurie pine of New Zealand, some feet shorter and larger in diameter than her former ones.