

wind at this time to tack; I therefore had recourse to luffing the vessel up in the wind, and wore her short round on her heel. At the same time we sounded, and found a hard bottom at the depth of no more than thirty fathoms. I made a rough sketch of this bay, which I have called Piner's Bay, after the signal quarter-master of that name. It was impossible to lower a boat, or to remain longer; indeed, I felt it imperative on me to clear its confined space before the floating ice might close it up.

At 10^h 30^m we had gone round, and in an hour more we cleared the bay. At noon the wind had increased to a gale, and by one o'clock, P. M., we were reduced to storm-sails, with our top-gallant yards on deck. The barometer had again declined rapidly, proving a true indicator, but giving little or no warning. To run the gauntlet again among the icebergs was out of the question, for a large quantity of field-ice would have to be passed through, which must have done us considerable damage, if it did not entirely disable us. The clear space we occupied was retained until five or six o'clock, when I found the floe-ice was coming down upon us; I then determined to lay the ship for a fair drift through the channel I had observed in the morning, and which I had every reason to believe, from the wind (southeast) blowing directly through it, would not be obstructed until the floe-ice came down. It was a consolation to know that if we were compelled to drift, we should do so faster than the ice; I therefore thought it as well to avoid it as long as possible. Another reason determined me to delay the drifting to the latest moment: I did not believe that the extent of the channel we had seen in the morning was more than ten miles in extent, and at the rate we drifted, the end of it would be reached long before the gale was over. This, like the former gale, was an old-fashioned snow-storm. All the canvass we could show to it at one time was a close-reefed main-topsail and fore-storm-staysail. It blew tremendously, and the sea we experienced was a short disagreeable one, but nothing to be compared to that which accompanied the first gale. From the shortness of the sea, I inferred that we had some current. This state of things continued for several hours, during which we every moment expected to reach the end of our channel. Since the last gale, the whole crew, officers and men, had been put in watch and watch, ready for an instantaneous call, and prepared for rapid movements. The snow was of the same sleety or cutting character as that of the previous day, and seemed as if armed with sharp icicles or needles.

The 31st brought no moderation of the weather. At 1 A. M., a group of ice-islands was reported, and shortly afterwards field-ice close