

other islands are in great part composed of a compact blue flinty ice. This difference is occasioned by the latter becoming saturated with water, which afterwards freezes.

On the ice there was usually a covering of about two feet of snow, which in places had upon it a crust of ice not strong enough to bear the weight of a man. Those ice-islands, which after having been once seen were again passed through immediately after a gale, were observed to be changed in appearance; but though for forty-eight hours a severe storm had been experienced, they had not undergone so great a transformation as not to be recognised. They also appeared to have shifted their position with regard to one another, their former bias and trendings being broken up.

During our stay on the icy coast, I saw nothing of what is termed pack-ice,—that is, pieces forced one upon the other by the action of the sea or currents.

On the 21st, the weather became unsettled, with light westerly winds, and we made but little progress to the westward. The barrier, at 6 p. m., was seen trending to the westward. In consequence of indications that threatened bad weather, I deemed it useless risk to remain in the proximity of so many ice-islands; and a strong breeze, with squally weather, having already set in, I took advantage of it, feeling satisfied that our farther continuance in this icy region would not only be attended with peril to the ship, but would cause a waste of the time which was demanded by my other duties; and having nearly three thousand miles to sail to our next port (Bay of Islands), I made up my mind to turn the head of the vessel northward.

I therefore had the officers and crew called aft, thanked them all for their exertions and good conduct during the trying scenes they had gone through, congratulated them on the success that had attended us, and informed them that I had determined to bear up and return north.

Having only twenty-five days' full allowance of water, I ordered its issue to be reduced to half allowance.

I have seldom seen so many happy faces, or such rejoicings, as the announcement of my intention to return produced. But although the crew were delighted at the termination of this dangerous cruise, not a word of impatience or discontent had been heard during its continuance. Neither had there been occasion for punishment; and I could not but be thankful to have been enabled to conduct the ship through so difficult, and dangerous a navigation without a single accident, with a crew in as good, if not in a better condition than when we first