

CHAPTER XI.

ANTARCTIC CRUISE—CONTINUED.

1840.

ON the 22d January, the Porpoise lost sight of the Peacock, and continued beating to the southwest. The weather was extremely cold; sea-water froze on being a few minutes in the bucket on deck. Some shrimps were caught. The water at 3 P. M. was much discoloured; got a cast of the lead with two hundred fathoms: no bottom; found the current south-by-east three-fourths of a mile per hour. At 4^h 30^m, passed large icebergs, one of which had several dark horizontal veins, apparently of earth, through it; large quantities of floe and drift-ice to the southward; the sea very smooth. A report of high land was made this morning; indeed every thing indicated the proximity of land. The number of seals, whales, penguins, shrimps, &c., had very much increased. The pure white pigeons were also seen in numbers.

23d. Countless icebergs in sight; the sea quite smooth; not the slightest motion perceptible. At meridian, they were in latitude 66° 44' S., longitude 151° 24' E., and close to the barrier, which appeared quite impenetrable, as far as the eye could reach from aloft, to the north-northwest and north-northeast, with numberless immense ice-islands entangled and enclosed in it in all directions. The position they occupied seemed an inlet of elliptical shape, with an opening to the north. It was needless to count the many scattering islands of ice distinct from the vast chain; intermingled with field-ice, they studded the gulf like so many islands, of various shapes and dimensions. At 2^h 25^m, a sail was discovered on the lee bow; kept off to communicate, supposing it to be the Vincennes or Peacock. At 2^h 30^m, the