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### **A Voyage To The Pacific Ocean**

Undertaken, By The Command Of His Majesty, For Making Discoveries in the Northern Hemisphere. To Determine The Position and Extent of the West Side of North America; its Distance from Asia; and the Practicability of a Northern Passage to Europe. Performed Under The Direction Of Captians Cook, ...

**Cook, James**

**London, 1784**

Chap. IX.

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## C H A P. IX.

*Behaviour of the Natives, the Tschutski, on seeing the Ships.*

*—Interview with some of them.—Their Weapons.—Persons.—Ornaments.—Clothing.—Winter and Summer Habitations.—The Ships cross the Strait, to the Coast of America.—Progress Northward.—Cape Mulgrave.—Appearance of Fields of Ice.—Situation of Icy Cape.—The Sea blocked up with Ice.—Sea-horses killed, and used as Provisions.—These Animals described.—Dimensions of one of them.—Cape Lisburne.—Fruitless Attempts to get through the Ice, at a Distance from the Coast.—Observations on the Formation of this Ice.—Arrival on the Coast of Asia.—Cape North.—The Prosecution of the Voyage deferred to the ensuing Year.*

AS we were standing into this bay, we perceived on the North shore a village, and some people, whom the sight of the ships seemed to have thrown into confusion, or fear. We could plainly see persons running up the country with burdens upon their backs. At these habitations I proposed to land; and, accordingly, went with three armed boats, accompanied by some of the officers. About thirty or forty men, each armed with a spoutoon, a bow, and arrows, stood drawn up on a rising ground close by the village. As we drew near, three of them came down toward the shore, and were so polite as to take off their caps, and to make us low bows. We returned the civility; but this did not

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inspire them with sufficient confidence to wait for our landing; for the moment we put the boats ashore, they retired. I followed them alone, without any thing in my hand; and by signs and gestures prevailed on them to stop, and to receive some trifling presents. In return for these, they gave me two fox-skins, and a couple of sea-horse teeth. I cannot say whether they or I made the first present; for it appeared to me, that they had brought down with them these things for this very purpose; and that they would have given them to me, even though I had made no return.

They seemed very fearful and cautious; expressing their desire, by signs, that no more of our people should be permitted to come up. On my laying my hand on the shoulder of one of them, he started back several paces. In proportion as I advanced, they retreated backward; always in the attitude of being ready to make use of their spears; while those on the rising ground stood ready to support them with their arrows. Insensibly, myself, and two or three of my companions, got in amongst them. A few beads distributed to those about us, soon created a kind of confidence; so that they were not alarmed when a few more of our people joined us; and, by degrees, a sort of traffic between us commenced. In exchange for knives, beads, tobacco, and other articles, they gave us some of their clothing, and a few arrows. But nothing that we had to offer could induce them to part with a spear, or a bow. These they held in constant readiness, never once quitting them, except at one time, when four or five persons laid theirs down, while they gave us a song and a dance. And even then, they placed them in such a manner, that they could lay hold of them in an instant; and, for their security, they desired us to sit down.

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The arrows were pointed either with bone or stone; but very few of them had barbs; and some had a round blunt point. What use these may be applied to, I cannot say; unless it be to kill small animals, without damaging the skin. The bows were such as we had seen on the American coast, and like those used by the Esquimaux. The spears, or spontoons, were of iron or steel, and of European or Asiatic workmanship; in which no little pains had been taken to ornament them with carving, and inlayings of brass, and of a white metal. Those who stood ready with bows and arrows in their hands, had the spear slung over their right shoulder by a leathern strap. A leathern quiver, slung over their left shoulder, contained arrows; and some of these quivers were extremely beautiful; being made of red leather, on which was very neat embroidery, and other ornaments.

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Several other things, and, in particular, their clothing, shewed that they were possessed of a degree of ingenuity, far surpassing what one could expect to find amongst so Northern a people. All the Americans we had seen, since our arrival on that coast, were rather low of stature, with round chubby faces, and high cheek-bones. The people we now were amongst, far from resembling them, had long visages, and were stout and well made. In short, they appeared to be a quite different nation. We saw neither women, nor children, of either sex; nor any aged, except one man, who was bald-headed; and he was the only one who carried no arms. The others seemed to be picked men, and rather under than above the middle age. The old man had a black mark across his face, which I did not see in any others. All of them had their ears bored; and some had glass beads hanging to them. These were the only fixed ornaments we





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saw about them; for they wear none to the lips. This is another thing in which they differ from the Americans we had lately seen.

Their clothing consisted of a cap, a frock, a pair of breeches, a pair of boots, and a pair of gloves, all made of leather, or of the skins of deer, dogs, seals, &c. and extremely well dressed; some with the hair or fur on; but others without it. The caps were made to fit the head very close; and besides these caps, which most of them wore, we got from them some hoods, made of skins of dogs, that were large enough to cover both head and shoulders. Their hair seemed to be black; but their heads were either shaved, or the hair cut close off; and none of them wore any beard. Of the few articles which they got from us, knives and tobacco were what they valued most.

We found the village composed both of their summer and their winter habitations. The latter are exactly like a vault, the floor of which is sunk a little below the surface of the earth. One of them, which I examined, was of an oval form, about twenty feet long, and twelve or more high. The framing was composed of wood, and the ribs of whales, disposed in a judicious manner, and bound together with smaller materials of the same sort. Over this framing is laid a covering of strong coarse grass; and that again is covered with earth; so that, on the outside, the house looks like a little hillock, supported by a wall of stone, three or four feet high, which is built round the two sides, and one end. At the other end, the earth is raised sloping, to walk up to the entrance, which is by a hole in the top of the roof over that end. The floor was boarded, and under it a kind of cellar, in which I saw nothing but water. And at the end of each  
house





house was a vaulted room, which I took to be a store-room. These store-rooms communicated with the house, by a dark passage; and with the open air, by a hole in the roof, which was even with the ground one walked upon; but they cannot be said to be wholly under ground; for one end reached to the edge of the hill, along which they were made, and which was built up with stone. Over it stood a kind of sentry-box, or tower, composed of the large bones of large fish.

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The summer huts were pretty large and circular, being brought to a point at the top. The framing was of slight poles, and bones, covered with the skins of sea-animals. I examined the inside of one. There was a fire-place, just within the door, where lay a few wooden vessels, all very dirty. Their bed-places were close to the side, and took up about half the circuit. Some privacy seemed to be observed; for there were several partitions made with skins. The bed and bedding were of deer-skins; and most of them were dry and clean.

About the habitations were erected several stages, ten or twelve feet high; such as we had observed on some parts of the American coast. They were wholly composed of bones; and seemed intended for drying their fish and skins, which were thus placed beyond the reach of their dogs, of which they had a great many. These dogs are of the fox kind, rather large, and of different colours, with long soft hair like wool. They are, probably, used in drawing their sledges in winter. For sledges they have, as I saw a good many laid up in one of the winter huts. It is also not improbable, that dogs may constitute a part of their food. Several lay dead, that had been killed that morning.

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The canoes of these people are of the same sort with those of the Northern Americans; some, both of the large and of the small ones, being seen lying in a creek under the village.

By the large fish-bones, and of other sea-animals, it appeared that the sea supplied them with the greatest part of their subsistence. The country appeared to be exceedingly barren; yielding neither tree nor shrub, that we could see. At some distance Westward, we observed a ridge of mountains covered with snow, that had lately fallen.

At first, we supposed this land to be a part of the island of Alaschka, laid down in Mr. Stæhlin's map, before mentioned. But from the figure of the coast, the situation of the opposite shore of America, and from the longitude, we soon began to think that it was, more probably, the country of the Tschutski, or the Eastern extremity of Asia, explored by Beering in 1728. But to have admitted this, without farther examination, I must have pronounced Mr. Stæhlin's map, and his account of the new Northern Archipelago, to be either exceedingly erroneous, even in latitude, or else to be a mere fiction; a judgment which I had no right to pass upon a publication so respectably vouched, without producing the clearest proofs.

Tuesday 11.

After a stay of between two and three hours, with these people, we returned to our ships; and, soon after, the wind veering to the South, we weighed anchor, stood out of the bay, and steered to the North East, between the coast and the two islands. The next day, at noon, the former extended from South 80° West, to North 84° West; the latter bore South 40° West; and the peaked mountain, over Cape Prince of Wales, bore South 36° East; with land extending from it

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as far as South  $75^{\circ}$  East. The latitude of the ship was  $66^{\circ} 5\frac{1}{4}'$ ; the longitude  $191^{\circ} 19'$ ; our depth of water twenty-eight fathoms; and our position nearly in the middle of the channel between the two coasts, each being seven leagues distant.

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From this station we steered East, in order to get nearer the American coast. In this course the water shoaled gradually, and there being little wind, and all our endeavours to increase our depth failing, I was obliged at last to drop anchor in six fathoms; the only remedy we had left to prevent the ships driving into reefs. The nearest part of the Western land bore West, twelve leagues distant; the peaked hill over Cape Prince of Wales, South  $16^{\circ}$  West; and the Northernmost part of the American continent in sight, East South East, the nearest part about four leagues distant. After we had anchored, I sent a boat to sound, and the water was found to shoal gradually toward the land. While we lay at anchor, which was from six to nine in the evening, we found little or no current; nor could we perceive that the water either rose or fell.

A breeze of wind springing up at North, we weighed, and stood to the Westward, which course soon brought us into deep water; and, during the 12th, we plied to the North, Wednes. 12. both coasts being in sight; but we kept nearest to that of America.

At four in the afternoon of the 13th, a breeze springing Thursday 13. up at South, I steered North East by North, till four o'clock next morning, when, seeing no land, we directed our course East by North; and between nine and ten, land, Friday 14. supposed to be a continuation of the continent, appeared. It extended from East by South to East by North; and, soon after, we saw





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saw more land, bearing North by East. Coming pretty suddenly into thirteen fathoms water, at two in the afternoon, we made a trip off till four, when we stood in again for the land; which was seen, soon after, extending from North to South East; the nearest part three or four leagues distant. The coast here forms a point, named *Point Mulgrave*, which lies in the latitude of  $67^{\circ} 45'$ ; and in the longitude of  $194^{\circ} 51'$ . The land appeared very low next the sea; but, a little back, it rises into hills of a moderate height. The whole was free from snow; and, to appearance, destitute of wood. I now tacked, and bore away North West by West; but, soon after, thick weather with rain coming on, and the wind increasing, I hauled more to the West.

Saturday 15. Next morning, at two o'clock, the wind veered to South West by South, and blew a strong gale, which abated at noon; and the sun shining out, we found ourselves, by observation, in the latitude of  $68^{\circ} 18'$ . I now steered North

Sunday 16. East, till six o'clock the next morning, when I steered two points more Easterly. In this run we met with several sea-horses, and flights of birds; some like sand-larks, and others no bigger than hedge-sparrows. Some shags were also seen; so that we judged ourselves to be not far from land. But as we had a thick fog, we could not expect to see any; and, as the wind blew strong, it was not prudent to continue a course which was most likely to bring us to it. From the noon of this day, to six o'clock in the morning of the

Monday 17. following, I steered East by North; which course brought us into sixteen fathoms water. I now steered North East by East, thinking, by this course, to deepen our water. But, in the space of six leagues, it shoaled to eleven fathoms; which made me think it proper to haul close to the wind, that now blew at West. Toward noon, both sun and moon





were seen clearly at intervals, and we got some flying observations for the longitude; which, reduced to noon, when the latitude was  $70^{\circ} 33'$ , gave  $197^{\circ} 41'$ . The time-keeper, for the same time, gave  $198^{\circ}$ ; and the variation was  $35^{\circ} 1' 22''$  East. We had, afterward, reason to believe, that the observed longitude was within a very few miles of the truth.

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Some time before noon, we perceived a brightness in the Northern horizon, like that reflected from ice, commonly called the blink. It was little noticed, from a supposition that it was improbable we should meet with ice so soon. And yet, the sharpness of the air, and gloominess of the weather, for two or three days past, seemed to indicate some sudden change. About an hour after, the sight of a large field of ice, left us no longer in doubt about the cause of the brightness of the horizon. At half past two, we tacked, close to the edge of the ice, in twenty-two fathoms water, being then in the latitude of  $70^{\circ} 41'$ ; not being able to stand on any farther. For the ice was quite impenetrable, and extended from West by South, to East by North, as far as the eye could reach. Here were abundance of sea-horses; some in the water; but far more upon the ice. I had thoughts of hoisting out the boats to kill some; but the wind freshening, I gave up the design; and continued to ply to the Southward, or rather to the Westward; for the wind came from that quarter.

We gained nothing; for, on the 18th at noon, our latitude was  $70^{\circ} 44'$ ; and we were near five leagues farther to the Eastward. We were, at this time, close to the edge of the ice, which was as compact as a wall; and seemed to be ten or twelve feet high at least. But, farther North, it appeared much.

Tuesday 18.





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much higher. Its surface was extremely rugged; and, here and there, we saw upon it pools of water.

We now stood to the Southward; and, after running six leagues, shoaled the water to seven fathoms; but it soon deepened to nine fathoms. At this time, the weather, which had been hazy, clearing up a little, we saw land extending from South to South East by East, about three or four miles distant. The Eastern extreme forms a point, which was much incumbered with ice; for which reason it obtained the name of *Icy Cape*. Its latitude is  $70^{\circ} 29'$ , and its longitude  $198^{\circ} 20'$ . The other extreme of the land was lost in the horizon; so that there can be no doubt of its being a continuation of the American continent. The Discovery being about a mile astern, and to leeward, found less water than we did; and tacking on that account, I was obliged to tack also, to prevent separation.

Our situation was now more and more critical. We were in shoal water, upon a lee shore; and the main body of the ice to windward, driving down upon us. It was evident, that, if we remained much longer between it and the land, it would force us ashore; unless it should happen to take the ground before us. It seemed nearly to join the land to leeward; and the only direction that was open, was to the South West. After making a short board to the Northward, I made the signal for the Discovery to tack, and tacked myself at the same time. The wind proved rather favourable; so that we lay up South West, and South West by West.

Wednes. 19.

At eight in the morning of the 19th, the wind veering back to West, I tacked to the Northward; and, at noon, the latitude was  $70^{\circ} 6'$ , and the longitude  $196^{\circ} 42'$ . In this situation, we had a good deal of drift-ice about us; and the  
main



main ice was about two leagues to the North. At half past one, we got in with the edge of it. It was not so compact as that which we had seen to the Northward; but it was too close, and in too large pieces, to attempt forcing the ships through it. On the ice lay a prodigious number of sea-horses; and, as we were in want of fresh provisions, the boats from each ship were sent to get some.

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By seven o'clock in the evening, we had received, on board the Resolution, nine of these animals; which, till now, we had supposed to be sea-cows; so that we were not a little disappointed, especially some of the seamen, who, for the novelty of the thing, had been feasting their eyes for some days past. Nor would they have been disappointed now, nor have known the difference, if we had not happened to have one or two on board, who had been in Greenland, and declared what animals these were, and that no one ever eat of them. But, notwithstanding this, we lived upon them as long as they lasted; and there were few on board who did not prefer them to our salt meat.

The fat, at first, is as sweet as marrow; but in a few days it grows rancid, unless it be salted; in which state, it will keep much longer. The lean flesh is coarse, black, and has rather a strong taste; and the heart is nearly as well tasted as that of a bullock. The fat, when melted, yields a good deal of oil, which burns very well in lamps; and their hides, which are very thick, were very useful about our rigging. The teeth, or tusks, of most of them were, at this time, very small; even some of the largest and oldest of these animals, had them not exceeding six inches in length. From this we concluded, that they had lately shed their old teeth.





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They lie, in herds of many hundreds, upon the ice; huddling one over the other like swine; and roar or bray very loud; so that, in the night, or in foggy weather, they gave us notice of the vicinity of the ice, before we could see it. We never found the whole herd asleep; some being always upon the watch. These, on the approach of the boat, would wake those next to them; and the alarm being thus gradually communicated, the whole herd would be awake presently. But they were seldom in a hurry to get away, till after they had been once fired at. Then they would tumble one over the other, into the sea, in the utmost confusion. And, if we did not, at the first discharge, kill those we fired at, we generally lost them, though mortally wounded. They did not appear to us to be that dangerous animal some authors have described; not even when attacked. They are rather more so, to appearance, than in reality. Vast numbers of them would follow, and come close up to the boats. But the flash of a musquet in the pan, or even the bare pointing of one at them, would send them down in an instant. The female will defend the young one to the very last, and at the expence of her own life, whether in the water, or upon the ice. Nor will the young one quit the dam, though she be dead; so that, if you kill one, you are sure of the other. The dam, when in the water, holds the young one between her fore-fins.

Mr. Pennant, in his *Synopsis Quadr.* p. 335\*, has given a very good description of this animal under the name of *Arctic Walrus*; but I have no where seen a good drawing

\* Mr. Pennant, since Captain Cook wrote this, has described this animal in a new work, which he calls *Arctic Zoology*, now ready for publication. We have been favoured with his obliging communications on this, and other particulars; and, therefore, refer the reader to the *Arctic Zoology*, N<sup>o</sup> 72.

of



of one. Why they should be called sea-horses, is hard to say; unless the word be a corruption of the Russian name *Morse*; for they have not the least resemblance of a horse. This is, without doubt, the same animal that is found in the Gulph of St. Lawrence, and there called Sea-cow. It is certainly more like a cow than a horse; but this likeness consists in nothing but the snout. In short, it is an animal like a seal; but incomparably larger. The dimensions and weight of one, which was none of the largest, were as follows:

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|  |           |   | Fect. | Inches.          |
|--|-----------|---|-------|------------------|
| Length from the snout to the tail                          | -         | - | 9     | 4                |
| Length of the neck, from the snout to the shoulder-bone    | -         | - | 2     | 6                |
| Height of the shoulder                                     | -         | - | 5     | 0                |
| Length of the fins   | { Fore    | - | 2     | 4                |
|  | { Hind    | - | 2     | 6                |
| Breadth of the fins  | { Fore    | - | 1     | 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  |
|  | { Hind    | - | 2     | 0                |
| Snout  | { Breadth | - | 0     | 5 $\frac{1}{2}$  |
|  | { Depth   | - | 1     | 3                |
| Circumference of the neck close to the ears                | -         | - | 2     | 7                |
| Circumference of the body at the shoulder                  | -         | - | 7     | 10               |
| Circumference near the hind-fins                           | -         | - | 5     | 6                |
| From the snout to the eyes                                 | -         | - | 0     | 7                |
| Weight of the carcase, without the head, skin, or entrails | -         | - |       | lb. 854          |
| Head   | -         | - |       | 41 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| Skin   | -         | - |       | 205              |

I could not find out what these animals feed upon. There was nothing in the maws of those we killed.

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It is worth observing, that for some days before this date, we had frequently seen flocks of ducks flying to the Southward. They were of two sorts, the one much larger than the other. The largest were of a brown colour; and, of the small sort, either the duck or drake was black and white, and the other brown. Some said they saw geese also. Does not this indicate that there must be land to the North; where these birds find shelter, in the proper season, to breed, and from whence they were now returning to a warmer climate?

Thursday 20.

By the time that we had got our sea-horses on board, we were, in a manner, surrounded with the ice; and had no way left to clear it, but by standing to the Southward; which was done till three o'clock next morning, with a gentle breeze westerly; and, for the most part, thick, foggy weather. The soundings were from twelve to fifteen fathoms. We then tacked, and stood to the North till ten o'clock; when the wind veering to the Northward, we directed our course to the West South West and West. At two in the afternoon, we fell in with the main ice; along the edge of which we kept; being partly directed by the roaring of the sea-horses; for we had a very thick fog. Thus we continued sailing till near midnight, when we got in amongst the loose ice, and heard the surge of the sea upon the main ice.

Friday 21.

The fog being very thick, and the wind Easterly, I now hauled to the Southward; and, at ten o'clock the next morning, the fog clearing away, we saw the continent of America, extending from South by East, to East by South; and at noon, from South West half South, to East; the nearest part five leagues distant. At this time we were in the latitude  
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of  $69^{\circ} 32'$ , and in the longitude of  $195^{\circ} 48'$ ; and as the main ice was at no great distance from us, it is evident, that it now covered a part of the sea, which, but a few days before, had been clear; and that it extended farther to the South, than where we first fell in with it. It must not be understood, that I supposed any part of this ice which we had seen, to be fixed; on the contrary, I am well assured, that the whole was a moveable mass.

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Having but little wind, in the afternoon, I sent the Master in a boat, to try if there was any current; but he found none. I continued to steer in for the American land, until eight o'clock, in order to get a nearer view of it, and to look for a harbour; but seeing nothing like one, I stood again to the North, with a light breeze Westerly. At this time, the coast extended from South West to East; the nearest part four or five leagues distant. The Southern extreme seemed to form a point, which was named *Cape Lisburne*. It lies in the latitude of  $69^{\circ} 5'$ , and in the longitude of  $194^{\circ} 42'$ , and appeared to be pretty high land, even down to the sea. But there may be low land under it, which we might not see, being not less than ten leagues from it. Every where else, as we advanced Northward, we had found a low coast, from which the land rises to a middle height. The coast now before us was without snow, except in one or two places; and had a greenish hue. But we could not perceive any wood upon it.

On the 22d, the wind was Southerly, and the weather Saturday 22.  
mostly foggy, with some intervals of sunshine. At eight in the evening it fell calm, which continued till midnight, when we heard the surge of the sea against the ice, and had several





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several loose pieces about us. A light breeze now sprung up at North East; and, as the fog was very thick, I steered to the Southward, to clear the ice. At eight o'clock next morning, the fog dispersed, and I hauled to the Westward. For finding that I could not get to the North near the coast, on account of the ice, I resolved to try what could be done at a distance from it; and as the wind seemed to be settled at North, I thought it a good opportunity.

Sunday 23.

Monday 24.  
Tuesday 25.

As we advanced to the West, the water deepened gradually to twenty-eight fathoms, which was the most we had. With the Northerly wind the air was raw, sharp, and cold; and we had fogs, sunshine, showers of snow and sleet, by turns.

Wednes. 26.

At ten in the morning of the 26th, we fell in with the ice. At noon, it extended from North West to East by North, and appeared to be thick and compact. At this time, we were, by observation, in the latitude  $69^{\circ} 36'$ , and in the longitude of  $184^{\circ}$ ; so that it now appeared we had no better prospect of getting to the North here, than nearer the shore.

I continued to stand to the Westward, till five in the afternoon, when we were in a manner embayed by the ice, which appeared high, and very close in the North West and North East quarters, with a great deal of loose ice about the edge of the main field. At this time, we had baffling light winds; but it soon fixed at South, and increased to a fresh gale, with showers of rain. We got the tack aboard, and stretched to the Eastward; this being the only direction in which the sea was clear of ice.

Thursday 27.

At four in the morning of the 27th, we tacked and stood to the West, and at seven in the evening we were close in with the edge of the ice, which lay East North East, and West





West South West, as far each way as the eye could reach. Having but little wind, I went with the boats, to examine the state of the ice. I found it consisting of loose pieces, of various extent, and so close together, that I could hardly enter the outer edge with a boat; and it was as impossible for the ships to enter it, as if it had been so many rocks. I took particular notice, that it was all pure transparent ice, except the upper surface, which was a little porous. It appeared to be entirely composed of frozen snow, and to have been all formed at sea. For, setting aside the improbability, or rather impossibility, of such huge masses floating out of rivers, in which there is hardly water for a boat, none of the productions of the land were found incorporated, or fixed in it; which must have unavoidably been the case, had it been formed in rivers, either great or small. The pieces of ice that formed the outer edge of the field, were from forty or fifty yards in extent, to four or five; and I judged, that the larger pieces reached thirty feet, or more, under the surface of the water. It also appeared to me very improbable; that this ice could have been the production of the preceding winter alone. I should suppose it rather to have been the production of a great many winters. Nor was it less improbable, according to my judgment, that the little that remained of the summer, could destroy the tenth part of what now subsisted of this mass; for the sun had already exerted upon it the full influence of his rays. Indeed I am of opinion, that the sun contributes very little toward reducing these great masses. For although that luminary is a considerable while above the horizon, it seldom shines out for more than a few hours at a time; and often is not seen for several days in succession. It is the wind, or rather the

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waves raised by the wind, that brings down the bulk of these enormous masses, by grinding one piece against another, and by undermining and washing away those parts that lie exposed to the surge of the sea. This was evident, from our observing, that the upper surface of many pieces had been partly washed away, while the base or under part remained firm for several fathoms round that which appeared above water, exactly like a shoal round an elevated rock. We measured the depth of water upon one, and found it to be fifteen feet; so that the ships might have sailed over it. If I had not measured this depth, I would not have believed, that there was a sufficient weight of ice above the surface, to have sunk the other so much below it. Thus it may happen, that more ice is destroyed in one stormy season, than is formed in several winters, and an endless accumulation is prevented. But that there is always a remaining store, every one who has been upon the spot will conclude, and none but closet-studying philosophers will dispute.

Friday 29.

A thick fog, which came on while I was thus employed with the boats, hastened me aboard, rather sooner than I could have wished, with one sea-horse to each ship. We had killed more, but could not wait to bring them with us. The number of these animals, on all the ice that we had seen, is almost incredible. We spent the night standing off and on, amongst the drift ice; and at nine o'clock the next morning, the fog having partly dispersed, boats from each ship were sent for sea-horses. For, by this time, our people began to relish them, and those we had procured before were all consumed. At noon, our latitude was  $69^{\circ} 17'$ , our longitude  $183^{\circ}$ ; the variation, by the morning azimuths,

$25^{\circ}$





25° 56' East; and the depth of water twenty-five fathoms. At two o'clock, having got on board as much marine beef as was thought necessary, and the wind freshening at South South East, we took on board the boats, and stretched to the South West. But not being able to weather the ice upon this tack, or to go through it, we made a board to the East, till eight o'clock, then resumed our course to the South West, and before midnight were obliged to tack again, on account of the ice. Soon after, the wind shifted to the North West, blowing a stiff gale, and we stretched to the South West, close hauled.

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In the morning of the 29th, we saw the main ice to the Northward, and not long after, land bearing South West by West. Presently after this, more land shewed itself, bearing West. It shewed itself in two hills like islands, but afterward the whole appeared connected. As we approached the land, the depth of water decreased very fast; so that at noon, when we tacked, we had only eight fathoms; being three miles from the coast, which extended from South, 30° East, to North, 60° West. This last extreme terminated in a bluff point, being one of the hills above mentioned.

Saturday 29.

The weather at this time was very hazy, with drizzling rain; but soon after, it cleared; especially to the Southward, Westward, and Northward. This enabled us to have a pretty good view of the coast; which, in every respect, is like the opposite one of America; that is, low land next the sea, with elevated land farther back. It was perfectly destitute of wood, and even snow; but was, probably, covered with a mossy substance, that gave it a brownish cast. In the low ground lying between the high land and the sea, was a lake, extending to the South East, farther than we could





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see. As we stood off, the Westernmost of the two hills before mentioned came open off the bluff point, in the direction of North West. It had the appearance of being an island; but it might be joined to the other by low land, though we did not see it. And if so, there is a two-fold point, with a bay between them. This point, which is steep and rocky, was named *Cape North*. Its situation is nearly in the latitude of  $68^{\circ} 56'$ , and in the longitude of  $180^{\circ} 51'$ . The coast beyond it must take a very Westerly direction; for we could see no land to the Northward of it, though the horizon was there pretty clear. Being desirous of seeing more of the coast to the Westward, we tacked again, at two o'clock in the afternoon, thinking we could weather Cape North. But finding we could not, the wind freshening, a thick fog coming on, with much snow, and being fearful of the ice coming down upon us, I gave up the design I had formed of plying to the Westward, and stood off shore again.

The season was now so far advanced, and the time when the frost is expected to set in so near at hand, that I did not think it consistent with prudence, to make any farther attempts to find a passage into the Atlantic this year, in any direction; so little was the prospect of succeeding. My attention was now directed toward finding out some place where we might supply ourselves with wood and water; and the object uppermost in my thoughts was, how I should spend the winter, so as to make some improvements in geography and navigation, and, at the same time, be in a condition to return to the North, in farther search of a passage, the ensuing summer.

C H A P.

