

Sir William Edward Parry

Three Voyages For The Discovery Of A Northwest Passage (Illustrated)
From The Atlantic To The Pacific, And Narrative Of An
Attempt To Reach The North Pole, Volume II



History

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The North Pole, Volume II**

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SECOND VOYAGE FOR THE DISCOVERY OF A NORTHWEST PASSAGE. CONTINUED. CHAPTER X.

Departure from Winter Island.--Meet with some
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performed in Sledges up an Inlet to the westward.



The gale, which had for some time been blowing from the northward, veered to the N.W.b.W., and increased in strength on the 1st of July, which soon began to produce the effect of drifting the ice off the land. At six o'clock on the 2d, the report from the hill being favourable, and the wind and weather now also sufficiently so, we moved out of our winter's dock, which was, indeed, in part broken to pieces by the swell that had lately set into the bay. At seven we made sail, with a fresh breeze from W.N.W., and having cleared the rocks at the entrance of the bay, ran quickly to the northward and eastward. The ice in the offing was of the "hummocky" kind, and drifting rapidly about with the tides, leaving us a navigable channel varying in width from two miles to three or four hundred yards.

The closeness of the ice again obliging us to make fast on the 3d, we soon after perceived a party of people with a sledge upon the land-floe. I therefore sent Mr. Bushnan, with some of our men, to meet them and to bring them on board, being desirous of ascertaining whereabouts, according to their geography, we now were. We found the party to consist, as we expected, of those who had taken leave of us

forty days before on their departure to the northward, and who now readily accompanied our people to the ships; leaving only Togolat's idiot-boy by the sledge, tying him to a dog and the dog to the ice. As soon as they came under the bows, they halted in a line, and, according to their former promise, gave three cheers, which salutation a few of us on the fore-castle did not fail to return. As soon as they got on board they expressed extreme joy at seeing us again, repeated each of our names with great earnestness, and were, indeed, much gratified by this unexpected encounter. Ewerat being now mounted on the plank which goes across the gunwales of our ships for conning them conveniently among the ice, explained, in a very clear and pilot-like manner, that the island which we observed to lie off Cape Wilson was that marked by Iligliuk in one of her charts, and there called Awlikteewik, pronounced by Ewerat Ow-l=itt~ee-week. On asking how many days' journey it was still to Amitioke, they all agreed in saying ten; and back to Winter Island oon=o=oktoot (a great many), so that we had good reason to hope we were not far from the former place. I may at once remark, however, that great caution is requisite in judging of the information these people give of the distances from one place to another, as expressed by the number of se=eniks (sleeps) or days' journeys, to which, in other countries, a definite value is affixed. No two Esquimaux will give the same account in this respect, though each is equally desirous of furnishing correct information; for, besides their deficiency as arithmeticians, which renders the enumeration of ten a labour, and of fifteen almost an impossibility to many of them, each individual forms his idea of the distance according to the season of the year, and, consequently, the mode of travelling in which his own journey has been performed. Instances of this kind will be observed in the charts of the Esquimaux, in which they not only differ from each other in this respect, but the same individual differs from himself at

different times. It is only, therefore, by a careful comparison of the various accounts, and by making allowances for the different circumstances under which the journeys have been made, that these apparent inconsistencies can be reconciled, and an approximation to the truth obtained.

Many of our officers and men cordially greeted these poor people as old acquaintances they were glad to see again, and they were loaded, as usual, with numerous presents, of which the only danger to be apprehended was lest they should go mad on account of them. The women screamed in a convulsive manner at everything they received, and cried for five minutes together with the excess of their joy; and to the honour of "John Bull" be it recorded, he sent by one of the men as he left the ship a piece of sealskin, as a present to Parree, being the first offering of real gratitude, and without any expectation of return, that I had ever received from any of them. I never saw them express more surprise than on being assured that we had left Winter Island only a single day; a circumstance which might well excite their wonder, considering that they had themselves been above forty in reaching our present station. They had obtained one reindeer, and had now a large seal on their sledge, to which we added a quantity of bread-dust, that seemed acceptable enough to them. As our way lay in the same direction as theirs, I would gladly have taken their whole establishment on board the ships to convey them to Amitioke, but for the uncertain nature of this navigation, which might eventually have put it out of my power to land them at the precise place of their destination. The ice again opening, we were now obliged to dismiss them, after half an hour's visit, when, having run to the Hecla's bows to see Captain Lyon and his people, they returned to their sledge as fast as their loads of presents would allow them.

We continued our progress northward, contending with the flood-tide and the drifting masses of ice; and the difficulties of such a navigation may be conceived from the following description of what happened to us on the 9th.

At half past eight on the morning of the 9th, a considerable space of open water being left to the northward of us by the ice that had broken off the preceding night, I left the Fury in a boat for the purpose of sounding along the shore in that direction, in readiness for moving whenever the Hecla should be enabled to rejoin us. I found the soundings regular in almost every part, and had just landed to obtain a view from an eminence, when I was recalled by a signal from the Fury, appointed to inform me of the approach of any ice. On my return, I found the external body once more in rapid motion to the southward with the flood-tide, and assuming its usual threatening appearance. For an hour or two the Fury was continually grazed, and sometimes heeled over by a degree of pressure which, under any other circumstances, would not have been considered a moderate one, but which the last two or three days' navigation had taught us to disregard, when compared with what we had reason almost every moment to expect. A little before noon a heavy floe, some miles in length, being probably a part of that lately detached from the shore, came driving down fast towards us, giving us serious reason to apprehend some more fatal catastrophe than any we had yet encountered. In a few minutes it came in contact, at the rate of a mile and a half an hour, with a point of the land-ice left the preceding night by its own separation, breaking it up with a tremendous crash, and forcing numberless immense masses, perhaps many tons in weight, to the height of fifty or sixty feet, from whence they again rolled down on the inner or land side, and were quickly succeeded by a fresh supply. While we were obliged to be quiet spectators of this grand but terrific sight, being

within five or six hundred yards of the point, the danger to ourselves was twofold; first, lest the floe should now swing in, and serve us much in the same manner; and, secondly, lest its pressure should detach the land-ice to which we were secured, and thus set us adrift and at the mercy of the tides. Happily, however, neither of these occurred, the floe remaining stationary for the rest of the tide, and setting off with the ebb which made soon after. In the mean while the Hecla had been enabled to get under sail, and was making considerable progress towards us, which determined me to move the Fury as soon as possible from her present situation into the bight I had sounded in the morning, where we made fast in five and a half fathoms alongside some very heavy grounded ice, one third of a mile from a point of land lying next to the northward of Cape Wilson, and which is low for a short distance next the sea. At nine o'clock a large mass of ice fell off the land-floe and struck our stern; and a "calf" lying under it, having lost its superincumbent weight, rose to the surface with considerable force, lifting our rudder violently in its passage, but doing no material injury.

On the 12th, observing an opening in the land like a river, I left the ship in a boat to examine the soundings of the coast. On approaching the opening, we found so strong a current setting out of it as to induce me to taste the water, which proved scarcely brackish; and a little closer in, perfectly fresh, though the depth was from fourteen to fifteen fathoms. As this stream was a sufficient security against any ice coming in, I determined to anchor the ships somewhere in its neighbourhood; and, having laid down a buoy in twelve fathoms, off the north point of the entrance, returned on board, when I found all the boats ahead endeavouring to tow the ships in-shore. This could be effected, however, only by getting them across the stream of the inlet to the northern shore; and here, finding some

land-ice, the ships were secured late at night, after several hours of extreme labour to the people in the boats.

On the morning of the 13th, the ice being still close in with the land just to the northward of us, I determined on examining the supposed river in the boats, and, at the same time, to try our luck with the seines, as the place appeared a likely one for salmon. Immediately on opening the inlet we encountered a rapid current setting outward, and, after rowing a mile and a half to the N.W.b.W., the breadth of the stream varying from one third of a mile to four or five hundred yards, came to some shoal water extending quite across. Landing on the south shore and hauling the boats up above high-water mark, we rambled up the banks of the stream, which are low next the water, but rise almost immediately to the height of about two hundred feet. As we proceeded we gradually heard the noise of a fall of water; and being presently obliged to strike more inland, as the bank became more precipitous, soon obtained a fresh view of the stream running on a much higher level than before, and dashing with great impetuosity down two small cataracts. Just below this, however, where the river turns almost at a right angle, we perceived a much greater spray, as well as a louder sound; and, having walked a short distance down the bank, suddenly came upon the principal fall, of whose magnificence I am at a loss to give any adequate description. At the head of the fall, or where it commences its principal descent, the river is contracted to about one hundred and fifty feet in breadth, the channel being hollowed out through a solid rock of gneiss.

After falling about fifteen feet at angle of 30° with a vertical line, the width of the stream is still narrowed to about forty yards, and then, as if mustering its whole force previous to its final descent, is precipitated, in one vast, continuous sheet of water, almost perpendicular for ninety

feet more. The dashing of the water from such a height produced the usual accompaniment of a cloud of spray broad columns of which were constantly forced up like the successive rushes of smoke from a vast furnace, and on this, near the top, a vivid iris or rainbow was occasionally formed by the bright rays of an unclouded sun. The basin that receives the water at the foot of the fall is nearly of a circular form, and about four hundred yards in diameter, being rather wider than the river immediately below it.

After remaining nearly an hour, fixed, as it were, to the spot by the novelty and magnificence of the scene before us, we continued our walk upward along the banks; and after passing the two smaller cataracts, found the river again increased in width to above two hundred yards, winding in the most romantic manner imaginable among the hills, and preserving, a smooth and unruffled surface for a distance of three or four miles that we traced it to the southwest above the fall. What added extremely to the beauty of this picturesque river, which Captain Lyon and myself named after our friend Mr. BARROW, Secretary to the Admiralty, was the richness of the vegetation on its banks, the enlivening brilliancy of a cloudless sky, and the animation given to the scene by several reindeer that were grazing beside the stream. Our sportsmen were fortunate in obtaining four of these animals; but we had no success with the seines, the ground proving altogether too rocky to use them with advantage or safety. We returned on board at thirty minutes past two P.M., after the most gratifying visit we had ever paid to the shore in these regions.

We found on our return that a fresh, southerly breeze, which had been blowing for several hours, had driven the ice to some distance from the land; so that at four P.M., as soon as the flood-tide had slackened, we cast off and made all possible sail to the northward, steering for a headland,

remarkable for having a patch of land towards the sea, that appeared insular in sailing along shore. As we approached this headland, which I named after my friend Mr. PENRHYN, the prospect became more and more enlivening; for the sea was found to be navigable in a degree very seldom experienced in these regions, and, the land trending two or three points to the westward of north, gave us reason to hope we should now be enabled to take a decided and final turn in that anxiously desired direction. As we rounded Cape Penrhyn at seven P.M., we began gradually to lose sight of the external body of ice, sailing close along that which was still attached in very heavy floes to this part of the coast. Both wind and tide being favourable, our progress was rapid, and unobstructed, and nothing could exceed the interest and delight with which so unusual an event was hailed by us. Before midnight the wind came more off the land, and then became light and variable, after which it settled in the northwest, with thick weather for several hours.

In the course of this day the walruses became more and more numerous every hour, lying in large herds upon the loose pieces of drift-ice; and it having fallen calm at one P.M., we despatched our boats to kill some for the sake of the oil which they afford. On approaching the ice, our people found them huddled close to, and even lying upon, one another, in separate droves of from twelve to thirty, the whole number near the boats being perhaps about two hundred..Most of them waited quietly to be fired at: and even after one or two discharges did not seem to be greatly disturbed, but allowed the people to land on the ice near them, and, when approached, showed an evident disposition to give battle. After they had got into the water, three were struck with harpoons and killed from the boats. When first wounded they became quite furious, and one, which had been struck from Captain Lyon's boat, made a

resolute attack upon her and injured several of the planks with its enormous tusks. A number of the others came round them, also repeatedly striking the wounded animals with their tusks, with the intention either of getting them away, or else of joining in the attack upon them. Many of these animals had young ones, which, when assaulted, they either took between their fore-flippers to carry off, or bore away on their backs. Both of those killed by the Fury's boats were females, and the weight of the largest was fifteen hundred and two quarters nearly; but it was by no means remarkable for the largeness of its dimensions. The peculiar barking noise made by the walrus when irritated, may be heard, on a calm day, with great distinctness at the distance of two miles at least. We found musket-balls the most certain and expeditious way of despatching them after they had been once struck with the harpoon, the thickness of their skin being such that whale-lances generally bend without penetrating it. One of these creatures being accidentally touched by one of the oars in Lieutenant Nias's boat, took hold of it between its flippers, and, forcibly twisting it out of the man's hand, snapped it in two. They produced us very little oil, the blubber being thin and poor at this season, but were welcomed in a way that had not been anticipated; for some quarters of this "marine beef," as Captain Cook has called it, being hung up for steaks, the meat was not only eaten, but eagerly sought after on this and every other occasion throughout the voyage, by all those among us who could overcome the prejudice arising chiefly from the dark colour of the flesh. In no other respect that I could ever discover, is the meat of the walrus, when fresh-killed, in the slightest degree unpalatable. The heart and liver are indeed excellent.

After an unobstructed night's run, during which we met with no ice except in some loose "streams," the water became so much shoaler as to make it necessary to proceed

with greater caution. About this time, also, a great deal of high land came in sight to the northward and eastward, which, on the first inspection of the Esquimaux charts, we took to be the large portion of land called Ke=iyuk-tar-ruoke, [001] between which and the continent the promised strait lay that was to lead us to the westward. So far all was satisfactory; but, after sailing a few miles farther, it is impossible to describe our disappointment and mortification in perceiving an unbroken sheet of ice extending completely across the supposed passage from one land to the other. This consisted of a floe so level and continuous, that a single glance was sufficient to assure us of the disagreeable fact, that it was the ice formed in its present situation during the winter, and still firmly attached to the land on every side. It was certain, from its continuous appearance for some miles that we ran along its edge, that it had suffered no disruption this season, which circumstance involved the necessity of our awaiting that operation, which nature seemed scarcely yet to have commenced in this neighbourhood, before we could hope to sail round the northeastern point of the American continent.

At thirty minutes past nine A.M. we observed several tents on the low shore immediately abreast of us, and presently afterward five canoes made their appearance at the edge of the land-ice intervening between us and the beach. We soon found, by the cautious manner in which the canoes approached us, that our Winter Island friends had not yet reached this neighbourhood. In a few minutes after we had joined them, however, a few presents served to dissipate all their apprehensions, if, indeed, people could be said to entertain any who thus fearlessly met us half way; and we immediately persuaded them to turn back with us to the shore. Being under sail in the boat, with a fresh breeze, we took two of the canoes in tow, and dragged them along at a great rate, much to the satisfaction of the Esquimaux,

who were very assiduous in piloting us to the best landing-place upon the ice, where we were met by several of their companions and conducted to the tents. Before we had reached the shore, however, we had obtained one very interesting piece of information, namely, that it was Igloolik on which we were now about to land, and that we must therefore have made a very near approach to the strait which, as we hoped, was to conduct us once more into the Polar Sea.

We found here two divisions of tents, there being eleven where we landed, and five more about half a mile to the northward. By the time we reached the tents we were surrounded by a crowd of men, women, and children, all carrying some trifling article, which they offered in barter, a business they seemed to understand as well, and to need much more than their countrymen to the southward. We were, of course, not backward in promoting a good understanding by means of such presents as we had brought with us, but they seemed to have no idea of our giving them anything gratis, always offering some trifle in exchange, and expressing hesitation and surprise when we declined accepting it. This was not to be wondered at among people who scarcely know what a free gift is among themselves; but they were not long in getting rid of all delicacy or hesitation on this score.

The tents, which varied in size according to the number of occupants, consisted of several seal and walrus skins, the former dressed without the hair, and the latter with the thick outer coat taken off, and the rest shaved thin, so as to allow of the transmission of light through it. These were put together in a clumsy and irregular patchwork, forming a sort of bag of a shape rather oval than round, and supported near the middle by a rude tent-pole composed of several deer's horns or the bones of other animals lashed together.

At the upper end of this is attached another short piece of bone at right angles, for the purpose of extending the skins a little at the top, which is generally from six to seven feet from the ground. The lower part of the tent-pole rests on a large stone, to keep it from sinking into the ground, and, being no way secured, is frequently knocked down by persons accidentally coming against it, and again replaced upon the stone. The lower borders of the skins are held down by stones laid on them outside; and, to keep the whole fabric in an erect position, a line of thong is extended from the top, on the side where the door is, to a larger stone placed at some distance. The door consists merely of two flaps, contrived so as to overlap one another, and to be secured by a stone laid upon them at the bottom. This entrance faces the south or southeast; and as the wind was now blowing fresh from that quarter, and thick snow beginning to fall, these habitations did not impress us at first sight with a very favourable idea of the comfort and accommodation afforded by them. The interior of the tents may be described in few words. On one side of the end next the door is the usual stone lamp, resting on rough stones, with the ootkooseek, or cooking pot, suspended over it; and round this are huddled together, in great confusion, the rest of the women's utensils, together with great lumps of raw seahorse flesh and blubber, which at this season they enjoyed in most disgusting abundance. At the inner end of the tent, which is also the broadest, and occupying about one third of the whole apartment, their skins are laid as a bed, having under them some of the andromeda tetragona when the ground is hard, but in this case placed on the bare dry shingle. Comfortless as these simple habitations appeared to us in a snowstorm, they are, in general, not deficient in warmth as summer residences; and, being easily removed from place to place, they are certainly well suited to the wants and habits of this wandering people. When a larger habitation than usual is required, they contrive, by

putting two of these together, to form a sort of double tent somewhat resembling a marquee, and supported by two poles. The difference between these tents and the one I had seen in Lyon Inlet the preceding autumn, struck me as remarkable, these having no wall of stones around them, as is usual in many that we have before met with, nor do I know their reason for adopting this different mode of construction.

Even if it were not the natural and happy disposition of these people to be pleased, and to place implicit confidence wherever kind treatment is experienced, that confidence would soon have been ensured by our knowledge of their friends and relations to the southward, and the information which we were enabled to give respecting their late and intended movements. This, while it excited in them extreme surprise, served also at once to remove all distrust or apprehension, so that we soon found ourselves on the best terms imaginable. In return for all this interesting information, they gave us the names of the different portions of land in sight, many of which being recognised in their countrymen's charts, we no longer entertained a doubt of our being near the entrance of the strait to which all our hopes were directed. We now found also that a point of land in sight, a few miles to the southward of the tents, was near that marked Ping-it-k~a-l~ik on Ewerat's chart, and that, therefore, the low shore along which we had been constantly sailing the preceding night was certainly a part of the continent.

By the time we had distributed most of our presents, and told some long stories about Winter Island, to all which they listened with eager delight and interest, we found the weather becoming so inclement as to determine us to make the best of our way on board, and to take a more favourable opportunity of renewing our visit to the Esquimaux. After

pulling out for an hour and a half, Captain Lyon, who had a boat's crew composed of officers, and had, unfortunately, broken one of his oars, was under the necessity of returning to the shore. My anxiety lest the ships should be ventured too near the shore, from a desire to pick up the boats, induced me to persevere an hour longer, when the wind having increased to a gale, which prevented our hearing any of the guns, I reluctantly bore up for our former landing-place. Captain Lyon and his party having quartered themselves at the southern tents, we took up our lodgings at the others, to which we were welcomed in the kindest and most hospitable manner. That we might incommode the Esquimaux as little as possible, we divided into parties of two in each tent, though they would willingly have accommodated twice that number. Immediately on our arrival they offered us dry boots, and it was not long before we were entirely "rigged out" in their dresses, which, thoroughly drenched as we were by the sea, proved no small comfort to us. With these, and a sealskin or two as a blanket, we kept ourselves tolerably warm during a most inclement night; and the tents, which but a few hours before we had looked upon as the most comfortless habitations imaginable, now afforded us a sufficient and most acceptable shelter.

The evening was passed in dealing out our information from the southward, and never did any arrival excite more anxious inquiries than those we were now obliged to answer. So intimate was the knowledge we possessed respecting many of their relationships, that, by the help of a memorandum-book in which these had been inserted, I believe we almost at times excited a degree of superstitious alarm in their minds. This sort of gossip, and incessant chattering and laughing, continued till near midnight, when the numerous visitors in our tents began to retire to their own and to leave us to our repose. Awaking at four A.M. on

the 17th, I found that the weather had moderated and cleared up, and the ships soon after appearing in sight, we called our boat's crew up, and sent one of the Esquimaux round to the other tents to inform Captain Lyon of our setting out. Several of the natives accompanied us to our boat, which they cheerfully helped us to launch, and then went round to another part of the beach for their own canoes. A thick fog had come on before this time, notwithstanding which, however, we managed to find the ships, and got on board by seven o'clock. Five canoes arrived soon after, and the wind being now light and variable, we lay-to for an hour to repay our kind friends for the hospitable reception they had given us. After supplying them abundantly with tin canisters, knives, and pieces of iron hoop, we hauled to the northeastward to continue our examination of the state of the ice, in hopes of finding that the late gale had in this respect done us some service.

Finding that a farther examination of the eastern lands could not at present be carried on, without incurring the risk of hampering the ships at a time when, for aught that we knew, the ice might be breaking up at the entrance of the strait, we stood back to the westward, and, having fetched near the middle of Igloolik, were gratified in observing that a large "patch" of the fixed ice[002] had broken off and drifted out of sight during our absence. At nine A.M. we saw eleven canoes coming off from the shore, our distance from the tents being about four miles. We now hoisted two of them on board, their owners K=a-k~ee and N~u-y=ak-k~a being very well pleased with the expedient, to avoid damaging them alongside. Above an hour was occupied in endeavouring to gain additional information respecting the land to the westward, and the time when we might expect the ice to break up in the strait, after which we dismissed them with various useful presents, the atmosphere becoming extremely thick with snow, and threatening a

repetition of the same inclement weather as we had lately experienced.

On the 23d we went on shore to pay another visit to the Esquimaux, who came down on the ice in great numbers to receive us, repeatedly stroking down the front of their jackets with the palm of the hand as they advanced, a custom not before mentioned, as we had some doubt about it at Winter Island, and which they soon discontinued here. They also frequently called out *tima*, a word which, according to Hearne, signifies in the Esquimaux language, "What cheer!" and which Captain Franklin heard frequently used on first accosting the natives at the mouth of the Coppermine River. It seems to be among these people a salutation equivalent to that understood by these travellers, or at least some equally civil and friendly one, for nothing could exceed the attention which they paid us on landing. Some individual always attached himself to each of us immediately on our leaving the boat, pointing out the best road, and taking us by the hand or arm to help us over the streams of water or fissures in the ice, and attending us wherever we went during our stay on shore. The day proving extremely fine and pleasant, everything assumed a different appearance from that at our former visit, and we passed some hours on shore very agreeably. About half a mile inland of the tents, and situated upon the rising ground beyond the swamps and ponds before mentioned, we found the ruins of several winter habitations, which, upon land so low as Igloolik, formed very conspicuous objects at the distance of several miles to seaward. These were of the same circular and dome-like form as the snow-huts, but built with much more durable materials, the lower part or foundation being of stones, and the rest of the various bones of the whale and walrus, gradually inclining inward and meeting at the top. The crevices, as well as the whole of the outside, were then covered with turf, which, with the

additional coating of snow in the winter, serves to exclude the cold air very effectually. The entrance is towards the south, and consists of a passage ten feet long, and not more than two in height and breadth, built of flat slabs of stone, having the same external covering as that of the huts. The beds are raised by stones two feet from the ground, and occupy about one third of the apartment at the inner end; and the windows and a part of the roofs had been taken away for the convenience of removing their furniture in the spring. It was a natural inference, from the nature of these habitations, that these people, or at least a portion of them, were constant residents on this spot, which, indeed, seemed admirably calculated to afford in luxurious profusion all that constitutes Esquimaux felicity. This, however, did not afterward prove to be absolutely the case; for though Igloolik (as perhaps the name may imply) is certainly one of their principal and favourite rendezvous, yet we subsequently found the inland entirely deserted by them at the same season.

In every direction around the huts were lying innumerable bones of walruses and seals, together with skulls of dogs, bears, and foxes, on many of which a part of the putrid flesh still remaining sent forth the most offensive effluvia. We were not a little surprised to find also a number of human skulls lying about among the rest, within a few yards of the huts; and were somewhat inclined to be out of humour on this account with our new friends, who not only treated the matter with the utmost indifference, but, on observing that we were inclined to add some of them to our collections, went eagerly about to look for them, and tumbled, perhaps, the craniums of some of their own relations into our bag, without delicacy or remorse. In various other parts of the island we soon after met with similar relics no better disposed of; but we had yet to learn

how little pains these people take to place their dead out of the reach of hungry bears or anatomical collectors.

The account we gave of our visit to the shore naturally exciting the curiosity and interest of those who had not yet landed, and the ice remaining unchanged on the 24th, a couple of boats were despatched from each ship, with a large party of the officers and men, while the ships stood off and on. On the return of the boats in the evening, I found from Lieutenant Reid that a new family of the natives had arrived to-day from the main land, bringing with them a quantity of fine salmon and venison, of which some very acceptable samples were procured for both ships. Being desirous of following up so agreeable a kind of barter, I went on shore the next morning for that purpose, but could only procure a very small quantity of fish from the tent of the new-comer, a middle-aged, noisy, but remarkably intelligent and energetic man named T=0=ol~em~ak. After some conversation, we found from this man that, in order to obtain a fresh supply of fish, three days would be required; this prevented my putting in execution a plan of going out to the place where the fish were caught, which we at first understood to be near at hand. We therefore employed all our eloquence in endeavouring to procure a supply of this kind by means of the Esquimaux themselves, in which we at length so far succeeded, that Toolemak promised, for certain valuable considerations of wood and iron, to set out on this errand the following day.

Shortly, after I returned on board Captain Lyon made the signal "to communicate with me," for the purpose of offering his services to accompany our fisherman on his proposed journey, attended by one of the Hecla's men; to which, in the present unfavourable state of the ice, I gladly consented, as the most likely means of procuring information of interest during this our unavoidable

detention. Being equipped with a small tent, blankets, and four days' provision, Captain Lyon left us at ten P.M., when I made sail to re-examine the margin of the ice.

It blew fresh from the eastward during the night of the 28th, with continued rain, all which we considered favourable for dissolving and dislodging the ice, though very comfortless for Captain Lyon on his excursion. The weather at length clearing up in the afternoon, I determined on beating to the eastward, to see if any more of the land in that direction could be made out than the unfavourable position of the ice would permit at our last visit. The Fury then made sail and stood to the eastward, encountering the usual strength of tide off the southwest point of Tangle Island, and soon after a great quantity of heavy drift-ice, apparently not long detached from some land.

I determined to avoid, if possible, the entanglement of the Fury among the ice, which now surrounded her on every side, and to stand back to Igloolik, to hear what information Captain Lyon's journey might have procured for us.

At the distance of one third of a mile from Tangle Island, where we immediately gained the open sea beyond, we observed the Hecla standing towards us, and rejoined her at a quarter before eleven, when Captain Lyon came on board to communicate the result of his late journey, of which he furnished me with the following account, accompanied by a sketch of the lands he had seen, as far as the extremely unfavourable state of the weather would permit.

"Accompanied by George Dunn, I found Toolemak on landing, who

welcomed us to his tent, in which for two hours it was scarcely

possible to move, in consequence of the crowd who came to gaze at

us. A new deerskin was spread for me, and Dunn having found a corner

for himself, we all lay down to sleep, not, however, until our host,

his wife, their little son, and a dog, had turned in beside me,

under cover of a fine warm skin, all naked except the lady, who,

with the decorum natural to her sex, kept on a part of her clothes.

At ten A.M. we started, and found the sledge on a beach near the

southern ice. Four men were to accompany us on this vehicle, and the

good-natured fellows volunteered to carry our luggage. A second

sledge was under the charge of three boys who had eight dogs, while

our team consisted of eleven. The weather was so thick that at times

we could not see a quarter of a mile before us, but yet went rapidly

forward to the W.N.W., when, after about six hours, we came to a

high, bold land, and a great number of islands of reddish granite,

wild and barren in the extreme. We here found the ice in a very

decayed state, and in many places the holes and fissures were

difficult if not dangerous to pass. At the expiration of eight

hours, our impediments in this respect had increased to such a

degree as to stop our farther progress. Dunn, the old man, and myself therefore walked over a small island, beyond which we saw a sheet of water, which precluded any farther advance otherwise than by boats.

"In the hope that the morning would prove more favourable for our seeing the land, the only advantage now to be derived from our visit, since the fishing place was not attainable, it was decided to pass the night on one of the rocky islands. The Esquimaux having brought no provisions with them, I distributed our four days' allowance of meat in equal proportions to the whole party, who afterward lay down to sleep on the rocks, having merely a piece of skin to keep the rain from their faces. In this comfortless state they remained very quietly for eight hours. Our little hunting-tent just held Dunn and myself, although not in a very convenient manner; but it answered the purpose of keeping us dry, except from a stream of water that ran under us all night.

"The morning of the 27th was rather fine for a short time, and we saw above thirty islands, which I named COXE'S GROUP, varying in

size from one hundred yards to a mile or more in length.
Two deer
were observed on the northern land, which was called
Khead-Laghioo
by the Esquimaux, and Toolemak accompanied Dunn in
chase of them. On
crossing to bring over our game, we found the old
Esquimaux had
skinned and broken up the deer after his own manner,
and my
companions being without food, I divided it into shares.

"Arriving on the ice, a skin was taken from the sledge as
a seat,
and we all squatted down to a repast which was quite
new to me. In
ten minutes the natives had picked the deer's bones so
clean that
even the hungry dogs disdained to gnaw them a second
time. Dunn and
myself made our breakfast on a choice slice cut from the
spine, and
found it so good, the windpipe in particular, that at
dinner-time we
preferred the same food to our share of the preserved
meat which we
had saved from the preceding night.

"As we sat I observed the moschetoos to be very
numerous, but they
were lying in a half torpid state on the ice, and incapable
of
molesting us. Soon after noon we set forward on our
return, and,
without seeing any object but the flat and decaying ice,
passed from

land to land with our former celerity, dashing through large pools of water much oftener than was altogether agreeable to men who had not been dry for above thirty hours, or warm for a still longer period. Our eleven dogs were large, fine-looking animals, and an old one of peculiar sagacity was placed at their head by having a longer trace, so as to lead them over the safest and driest places, for these animals have a great dread of water. The leader was instant in obeying the voice of the driver, who did not beat, but repeatedly talked and called it by name. It was beautiful to observe the sledges racing to the same object, the dogs and men in full cry, and the vehicles splashing through the water with the velocity of rival stage-coaches.

"We were joyfully welcomed to the dwelling of Ooyarra, whose guest I was now to become, and the place of honour, the deerskin seat, was cleared for my reception. His two wives, K~ai-m=o=o-khi~ak and Aw~a-r=un-n~i occupied one end, for it was a double tent; while at the opposite extremity the parents of the senior wife were established. The old mother N=ow-k~it-y~oo assisted the

young woman in pulling off our wet clothes and boots,
which latter

being of native manufacture, she new-soled and mended
without any

request on our side, considering us as a part of the
family. Dunn

slept in the little tent to watch our goods, and I had a
small

portion of Ooyarra's screened off for me by a seal's skin.
My host

and his wives having retired to another tent, and my
visitors taking

compassion on me, I went comfortably to sleep; but at
midnight was

awakened by a feeling of great warmth, and, to my
surprise, found

myself covered by a large deerskin, under which lay my
friend, his

two wives, and their favourite puppy, all fast asleep and
stark

naked. Supposing this was all according to rule, I left
them to

repose in peace, and resigned myself to sleep.

"On rising, Dunn and I washed with soap in a pond, which
caused

great speculations among the by-standers, on some of
whom we

afterward performed miracles in the cleansing way. A
large

assemblage being collected to hear me talk of Ney-
uning-Eitua, or

Winter Island, and to see us eat, the women volunteered
to cook for

us; and, as we preferred a fire in the open air to their
lamps, the

good-natured creatures sat an hour in the rain to stew some venison which we had saved from our shares of the deer. The fires in summer, when in the open air, are generally made of bones previously well rubbed with blubber, and the female who attends the cooking chews a large piece, from which, as she extracts the oil, she spirts it on the flame.

"After noon, as I lay half asleep, a man came, and, taking me by the hand, desired Dunn to follow. He led to a tent, which, from the stillness within, I conjectured was untenanted. Several men stood near the door, and, on entering, I found eighteen women assembled and seated in regular order, with the seniors in front. In the centre, near the tent-pole, stood two men, who, when I was seated on a large stone, walked slowly round, and one began dancing in the usual manner, to the favourite tune of 'Amna aya.' The second person, as I soon found, was the dancer's assistant; and, when the principal had pretty well exhausted himself, he walked gravely up to him, and, taking his head between his hands, performed a ceremony called K=o=on~ik, which is rubbing noses, to the great

amusement and amid the plaudits of the whole company. After this, as if much refreshed, he resumed his performance, occasionally, however, taking a koonik to enliven himself and the spectators. The rub-bee, if I may be excused the expression, was at length brought forward and put in the place of the first dancer, who rushed out of the tent to cool himself. In this manner five or six couples exhibited alternately, obtaining more or less applause, according to the oddity of their grimaces. At length a witty fellow, in consequence of some whispering and tittering among the ladies, advanced and gave me the koonik, which challenge I was obliged to answer by standing up to dance, and my nose was in its turn most severely rubbed, to the great delight of all present.

"Having been as patient as could be wished for above an hour, and being quite overpowered by the heat of the crowded tent, I made a hasty retreat, after having distributed needles to all the females, and exacting kooniks from all the prettiest in return. A general outcry was now made for Dunn, a most quiet North countryman, to exhibit also; but he, having seen the liberties which had been taken with my nose, very prudently made his retreat, anticipating what