

delayed to seek relief till too late, and by apprehension of the anger of her husband, who was doatingly attached to the child. The Indians evinced their participation in her affliction by silence, and a strong expression of pity in their countenances. At the dawn of day the poor creature, though almost exhausted by her ceaseless lamentation, carried the body across the lake for interment.

1825.  
December.

The 20th being a very stormy day, we were surprised at the arrival of two voyagers from Fort Good Hope, bearers of letters from Mr. C. Dease, conveying the gratifying intelligence that the Loucheux had seen the Esquimaux since the autumn, and that the latter had found the presents which had been left at their huts, and would be delighted to welcome the return of the white people to the Esquimaux lands next spring.

Tuesday,  
20th.

Our constant occupations had made the time pass so swiftly, that the shortest day came almost unexpectedly upon us. The sun rose this morning, (the 22d,) at 10<sup>h</sup> 24<sup>m</sup>, thirteen minutes earlier than its appearance was expected from calculation, owing to the great refraction. Mr. Kendall and I measured its meridional altitude from the lake with two instruments, the one bringing its upper limb to the top of the land four miles distant, the elevation of which had been ascertained to be eight minutes, and the other to its base, the depression of which was two minutes. The mean of both these observations, corrected for refraction by the tables in the Nautical Almanack, gave a result of 65° 11' 56" N., which latitude exactly corresponds with the best observations made in the preceding autumn. At 8<sup>h</sup> 30<sup>m</sup> P.M. a halo was observed, whose radius measured 28° 40' from the moon; and at an equal altitude with the latter body there were two paraselenæ, which, as well as the moon, were intersected by a luminous circle, having the

Thursday,  
22nd.

1825.  
December.

zenith for its centre, and a diameter of  $94^{\circ} 15'$ . The length of our shortest day did not exceed five hours, but the long nights were enlivened by most brilliant moon-light, and we had frequent and very fine appearances of the Aurora Borealis. The latter phenomenon made some of its grandest displays on the 26th of October, the 2nd of November, and the 7th of December. On all these occasions the disturbed motions of the magnetic needle were very remarkable, and a most careful series of observations convinced the party that they had a close connexion with the direction of the beams of light of which the aurora was composed. My observations also led me to conclude that the deviations of the needle were, in a certain degree, connected with changes in the weather; for, previous to a gale or a snow-storm, the deviations were always considerable; but during the continuance of the gale, the needle almost invariably remained stationary. ✓

Preparations were made for the celebration of Christmas. The house was replastered with mud, all the rooms white-washed and repainted, and Matthews displayed his taste by ornamenting a chandelier with cut paper, and trinkets. On the evening of the 24th the Indian hunters' women and children were invited to share in a game of snap-dragon, to them an entire novelty. It would be as difficult to describe the delight which the sport afforded them after they recovered their first surprise, as to convey the full effect of the scene. When the candles were extinguished, the blue flame of the burning spirits shone on the rude features of our native companions, in whose countenances were portrayed the eager desire of possessing the fruit, and the fear of the penalty. Christmas Day falling on a Sunday, the party were regaled with the best fare our stores could supply; and on the following evening a dance was given, at which were present sixty persons, including the Indians, who sat as specta-

tors of the merry scene. Seldom, perhaps, in such a confined space as our hall, or in the same number of persons, was there greater variety of character, or greater confusion of tongues. The party consisted of Englishmen, Highlanders, (who mostly conversed with each other in Gaelic,) Canadians, Esquimaux, Chipewyans, Dog-Ribs, Hare Indians, Cree women and children, mingled together in perfect harmony. The amusements were varied by English, Gaelic, and French songs. After these holidays were over, the Dog-Ribs at length yielded to the repeated solicitations of Mr. Dease, and removed in a body to a distant part of the lake, where they now confessed the fishery was more abundant. As the hunters were drawing rations from our store, he despatched them in quest of deer, furnishing them also with nets. After which there remained at the establishment, only one infirm Indian, and his wife.

1825.  
December.

January 1st, 1826. This morning the men called in the hall to offer the congratulations of the season to the officers, and we afterwards assembled to read divine service. On the evening of the 2nd, similar festivities were held to those at Christmas, to welcome the new year. The temperature was at  $-49^{\circ}$  on the 1st, which was its lowest state during this winter. This severe weather was of short continuance, for on the 3rd there was a storm of snow, and the thermometer rose to  $-9^{\circ}$ .

1826.  
January.  
Sunday,  
1st.

Accompanied by Mr. Dease, and Fuller, the carpenter, I walked several miles in search of birch-trees fit for the keel and timbers of the new boat. We found some that would answer for the latter purpose, but none for the keel; we, therefore, substituted pine. The general depth of snow in the woody and sheltered parts was two feet. On the 16th, by the return of the two men who had been sent to Slave Lake, we had the happiness of receiving a packet of letters, which left England in the preceding June. Beside the more interesting private

4th.

Monday  
16th.

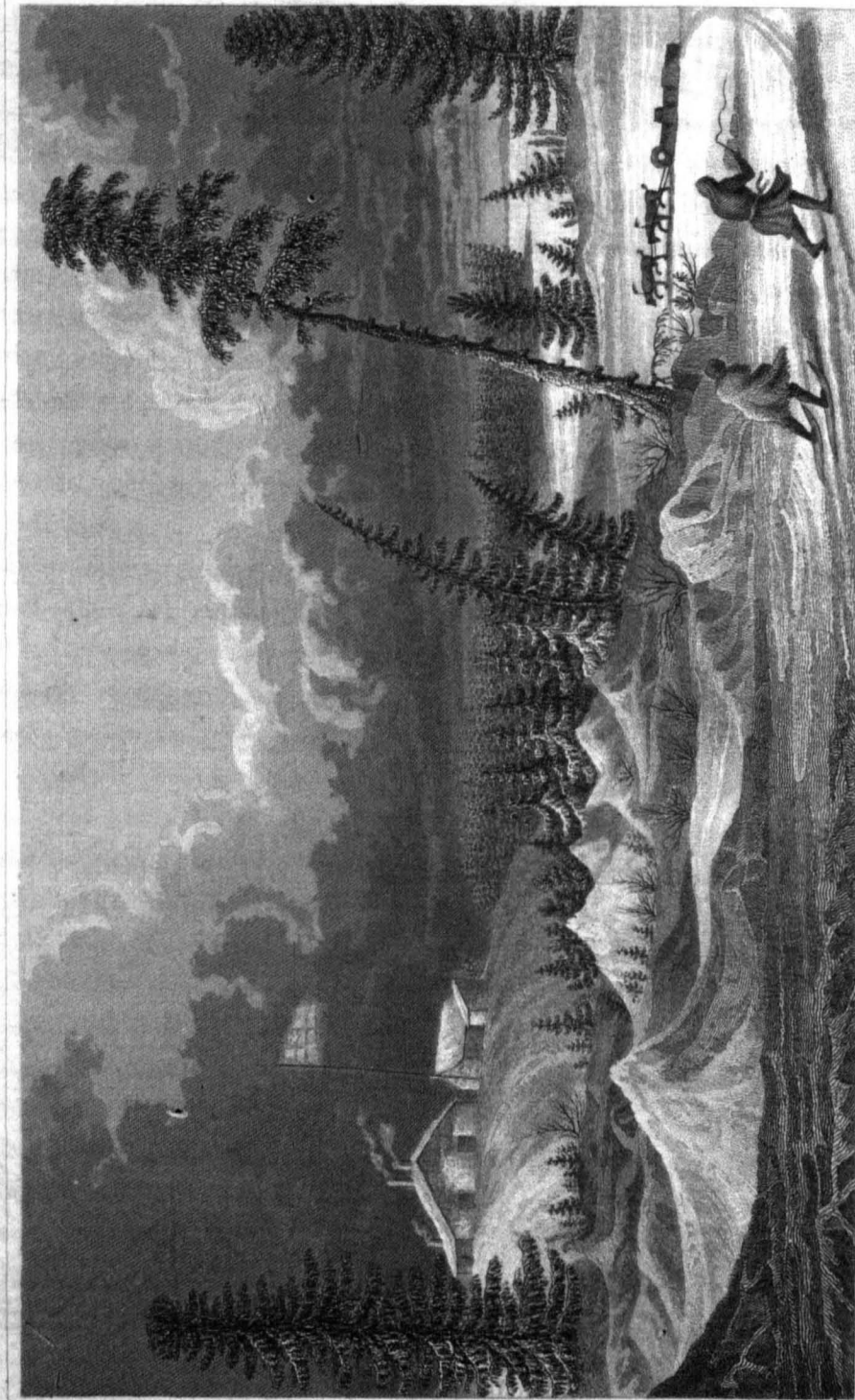
1826.  
January.

communications, our friends had been kind enough to forward piles of newspapers, and several periodical publications. The 'Quarterly Review,' the 'Edinburgh Philosophical Journal,' and a series of the 'Literary Gazette,' and the 'Mechanics Magazine,' were spread upon the table, and afforded us the most agreeable amusement, as well as never-failing topics for conversation. Could any of our friends have dropped in upon us, in the evening, they would have found us discussing the events of the by-gone year, with all the earnestness and interest which we could have shewn had they been the occurrences of the day, and depended upon our decision. This valuable packet had nigh been lost on its way through the interior, owing to the treachery of an Indian. The fellow had undertaken to guide the Canadian servants of the Hudson-Bay Company, who had it in charge, from York Factory to Cumberland House; but supposing, from its being unusual to forward packets at that season, that it must contain something of value, he seized an opportunity, when the two men had gone a little way from the river side, to steal the canoe, with its contents, and cross the river. There were no means of pursuit, and the poor men, destitute of food, without a gun, or even the means of making a fire, were obliged to march to the nearest establishment, through a very rugged and thickly-wooded country. They reached it after many days travelling, and much suffering, and as soon as they arrived, Mr. Mackintosh, the chief of the department, immediately sent off different parties in search of the culprit. They did not find him, though they got possession of the packet, which was torn open, and the letters scattered upon the ground. I need hardly mention that I afterwards remunerated the Canadians for their sufferings and good conduct on this occasion.

Sunday,  
22nd.

On the morning of the 22nd we perceived a gray wolf crossing the lake, and Augustus and Ooligbuck went in pursuit.





Drawn by Capt. B. A. N.

Engraved by E. P. H. N.

WINTER VIEW OF THE ADIRONDACKS.

Published Nov. 1850 by J. W. M. H. N. N. N.

The speed of the animal, however, so much outstripped theirs, that it coolly halted to snap up an unfortunate fox which happened to cross its path, and bore it off in triumph. The visits of this animal were repeated for three successive days, and it at last became so bold as to steal fish, on two occasions, from a sledge which the dogs were accustomed to draw home from the nets, without a driver. The dogs were not touched, but this was accounted for when the wolf was killed, and found to be a female, as Mr. Dease informed us that at this season of the year the female wolves never attack the dog.

1826.  
January.

The month of February was a very anxious period of our winter's residence. The produce of the nets and fishing lines had been gradually diminishing during January, until the supply did not afford more than three or four of the small herrings per man; and none could be furnished to the dogs. The stock of dried meat was expended, and serious apprehensions were entertained of the party's suffering from want of food. The fish too, from being out of season, afforded very little nourishment, and frequent indisposition was the consequence with us all. Three of the stoutest men with whom this diet particularly disagreed, suffered very much from diarrhoea. It became, therefore, necessary to draw upon the stores of provisions which had been set apart for the voyage along the sea-coast, and, on the 6th, we despatched three sledges to Fort Norman, for some pemmican, arrow root, and portable soup: they were likewise to bring any iron that could be procured from that establishment fit for being converted into nails or fastenings for the intended boat. This being the last opportunity of the season for forwarding letters to the southern department, I wrote to Governor Simpson and the Council at York Factory, requesting that supplies of provisions might be stored for the Expedition, on the route to Canada and York Factory, and that the necessary means of con-

February.

1826.  
February.

veyance might be provided for its return in 1827. All these arrangements requiring to be made a year in advance, I included the whole party in the estimate of the numbers to be provided for, that there might be no want of provision, if the western part of the Expedition should, from any cause, be obliged to retrace its steps. By the same conveyance I sent an account of our proceedings, with maps and drawings, to be forwarded to the Colonial Office.

Saturday,  
4th.

On the 4th of this month, when all were heartily tired of short allowance, a report was brought of the traces of a moose deer having been seen about twelve miles from the fort. Had the days been longer, and a crust formed upon the snow, the hunters would have found no great difficulty in running down the animal, but our principal hope lay in their getting within shot without "raising it,"—the expression used when a deer is scared. Beaulieu being the most expert moose-hunter, went out on this occasion, accompanied by two others, Landré a Chipewyan lad, and a Dog-Rib hunter. When they arrived on the deer's track, they found that it had been raised, probably, by the Indians who first discovered it; but anxious to procure meat for the fort, they commenced the pursuit. From their knowledge of the habits of the animal, and of the winding course it takes, they were enabled to shorten the distance; but after running four successive days without coming in sight, Beaulieu had the misfortune to fall over the stump of a tree, and sprain his ankle; the other two hunters being previously tired out. When this accident happened, they knew they were near the deer, and that it would soon give in, because its footsteps were stained with blood. Beaulieu, however, on account of his lameness, returned to the house, and his companions came with him. During the chase they bivouacked on the snow, and subsisted on a few ptarmigan which they killed. Landré, after a night's rest, again set out, and was suc-

cessful after two more day's running; not, however, without having nearly lost his life, for the moose, on receiving a shot, made a rush at him, striking furiously with its fore feet. He had but just time to shelter himself behind a tree, upon which the animal spent its efforts, until his gun was again ready.

1826.  
February.

Landré's arrival with the joyful intelligence of his success, was hailed as the commencement of a season of plenty. When the moose meat was brought in, we had not an ounce of provision in store, and it was, therefore, most acceptable; although, from the manner in which it was hunted down, it proved exceedingly tough. In the evening, to increase our satisfaction, an Indian arrived with the information that the fish were plentiful at the station to which the Dog-Ribs had removed, and likewise that the hunters belonging to the fort had killed some rein-deer near their lodges. We immediately equipped four men with nets and lines, and sent them back with the Indian, giving them directions to report whether more persons could gain subsistence there. Their report, a few days afterwards, being favourable, four more men were despatched thither. They sent us some tittameg, weighing from six to eight pounds, which were the more acceptable, because none of that kind had been taken in our nets since the lake had been frozen over. By the time the moose was finished, the men came back from Fort Norman, with three bags of pemmican, which enabled us to continue the daily issue of rations, though the fare was still scanty.

Friday,  
10th.

On the 25th, Beaulieu, accompanied by two men, went off in one direction, and the Dog-Rib hunters in another, in search of deer. Both parties were successful. From the former we received a summons, after four days' absence, to send sledges for meat, but not so from the Dog-Ribs, for they, to compensate for their long abstinence, consumed almost all the meat, and gorged themselves to such a degree, that they were unable to move, and

Saturday,  
25th.

1826.  
February.

became quite ill. From this period we had a sufficient supply of provision, because the fisheries improved, and we received deer from time to time. The men who had been indisposed gained strength, from the increased quantity, and amended quality, of their food; and we had also the gratification of seeing the dogs daily fatten, amidst the general plenty. The conduct of the men during the season of scarcity was beyond all praise; and the following anecdote is worthy of record, as displaying the excellent feeling of a British seaman, and as speaking the sentiments of the whole party. Talking with Robert Spinks as to the difference of his present food from that to which he had been accustomed on board ship, I said I was glad the necessity was over of keeping them on short allowance. "Why, Sir," said he, "we never minded about the short allowance, but were fearful of having to use the pemmican intended for next summer; we only care about the next voyage, and shall all be glad when the spring comes, that we may set off; besides, at the worst time, we could always spare a fish for each of our dogs." During the period of short allowance, the three dogs under the charge of this man were kept in better condition than any of the others.

We now called the men home from the nearest fishery, and set their nets near the Bear Lake River, but the men at the distant station with the Indians were kept there, and occasionally supplied the fort with fine tittameg and trout. The otters did considerable mischief to our nets at this time; six of these animals were seen in one day.

Many parhelia were observed this month. On the 14th, at forty-five minutes after nine A.M., the arched form of the clouds, and the appearance of a collection of rays projected from the sun's disk in the shape of a fan, strongly resembled the coruscations of the aurora. The atmosphere was misty; temperature



in the shade  $+ 8^{\circ} 5'$ ; and when the thermometer with a blackened bulb was exposed to the sun's rays, it rose to  $+ 43^{\circ}$ . The magnetic needle, at nine A.M., was perceived to have made a greater deviation to the westward than usual at that hour, and I imagine that the cause of this increase probably arose from the atmosphere being then in a state of electricity, similar to that in which it is when the aurora appears in hazy weather; on which occasions we have observed that its coruscations have the strongest effect in causing aberrations of the needle. A violent gale from the north-west commenced on the 26th, and lasted, without intermission, for thirty-six hours.

1826.  
February.

The early part of this month was marked by a succession of gales from the N.W., with a few intervals of moderate weather, in which the wind came from the east, and was attended by a clearer atmosphere than usually accompanies easterly winds in the colder months. We observed, with pleasure, on the 7th, that the sun had sufficient power to soften the snow in exposed places, and to form icicles from the roofs which had a southern aspect, but the return of strong winds from the W.N.W. brought back severe weather. On the 11th there was a violent gust of wind, which, in its passage over the lake, gathered up the snow in a column, similar to that of a waterspout.

March.  
Wednesday,  
1st.

Saturday,  
11th.

Dr. Richardson made an excursion for the purpose of examining the rocks to the north of the establishment. He returned after two days, the snow being too deep for him to obtain specimens. The description he gave of a view from an eminence nine miles behind the fort, induced Lieutenant Back and me to visit the spot, and we were amply repaid for the walk. The view embraced the mountains on the borders of the Mackenzie to the west, a considerable portion of Bear Lake River, with the mountains near its rapids, Clark's Hill to the south, and the range of elevated land stretching to the east till they were lost

1826.  
March.

Tuesday,  
21st.

in the distance. To the N.E. there appeared several small lakes, and the view was terminated by a portion of Bear Lake.

The Chipewyan hunters who had been absent since Christmas, returned to us with their families, and brought with them a Dog-Rib girl, about twelve years old, who had been deserted by her tribe. When they found her, she was in the last stage of weakness, from famine, sitting by the expiring embers of a fire, and but for their timely appearance, death must soon have ended her sufferings. They fed and clothed her, and waited until she gained strength to accompany them. The wretches who had abandoned the poor creature, were on their way to a fishing station, which they knew to be very productive, and not above a day's march distant. She was unable to keep the pace at which they chose to proceed, and having no near relation but an aged aunt, who could not assist her, they left her at an encampment without any food. The hunters met this party of Indians about a month afterwards, when they were living in abundance. The girl, by that time, had perfectly recovered her strength, and they desired that she should be restored to them, but the hunters firmly resisted their importunity, and one of them adopted her as his own child. It is singular that she was the only female of the tribe that could be called good-looking. Her Indian name was Aton-larree, which the interpreter translated, Burnt-weed. Lieutenant Back made a sketch of her, in the dress which the hunter's wife gave to her on their first meeting. When the Indians came to the fort, I took the first opportunity of their being assembled in the hall, to send for the hunters and their wives, and to reward them by a substantial present of clothing and ammunition. I also gave to them some neat steel instruments, consisting of gimblets, and other useful articles, which they were desired to preserve, and shew to other Indians, as a testimony of our approbation of their

humanity. A present was also bestowed upon the girl, and then the Dog-Ribs were addressed as to their unfeeling conduct towards her. They listened quietly, and merely stated her weakness as the cause. There is little doubt but that the transactions of this day were canvassed afterwards, and it is to be hoped that the knowledge of our sentiments gaining circulation, may induce a discontinuance of their inhuman practices.

1826.  
March.

By the men who had conveyed our last packet to Fort Simpson, we received intelligence that some Chipewyans had brought information to the Athabasca and Slave Lakes, of their having seen many indications of a party of white people on the sea-coast eastward of the Coppermine River. The report stated, that they had found, in the preceding autumn, on the borders of a river near the sea-coast, a sawpit, some saws, and axes, and a store of deer's meat. There was snow on the ground, and the footsteps of the party appeared recent. We concluded from these statements, that Captain Parry had laid up his ships in the vicinity of Bathurst's Inlet, and sent hunting-parties up the river to augment his stock of provision. I therefore despatched two men with letters to Mr. M'Vicar, at Slave Lake, containing a series of questions, that the matter might be thoroughly investigated, and requested him to transmit the answers to the Admiralty. I likewise begged of him immediately to procure a party of Indians to go to the spot, and convey a letter from me to Captain Parry, in order that they might either be employed as hunters for the ships, or carry their letters to the nearest establishment for conveyance to England. Had the information reached us sooner, so that a party could have gone from Bear Lake to the point at which the ships were, and returned before the men were wanted, I should have sent to ascertain the fact. The idea of the ships being on the northern coast, the prospect of their success, and the expectation of the

Wednesday.  
22nd.

1826.  
March.

eastern detachment meeting them in the summer, afforded enlivening topics of conversation for several days, and on the day the intelligence came, we celebrated its arrival with a bowl of punch. The health of Captain Parry, and his party, as well as that of Captain Beechey, was drank with enthusiasm.

Thursday,  
23rd.

We obtained observations for the time, from which it appeared that the chronometer, No. 1733, generously lent to the Expedition by my friend the late Mr. Moore, had only varied its rate two hundredths of a second, since the 3rd of November. I had worn it next my skin, suspended round my neck, the whole time; and, consequently, it was not exposed to much variation of temperature.

After the middle of this month the N.W. winds gave place to a succession of easterly breezes; whenever these prevailed, we observed the terrestrial refraction was much increased: double refraction of the land was not unfrequent, and twice the mist, arising from the open water, appeared like a wall of ice. When the moon shone, halos, and occasionally paraselenæ, were visible; and towards the close of the month the coruscations of the aurora were often very brilliant.

During this month I noticed that on several occasions the magnetic needle oscillated when I approached it in a dress of water-proof cloth, although it remained stationary when others of the party examined it in their ordinary garments. The water-proof dress probably acted by exciting electricity in the body, although this opinion is rather contradicted by the fact of a fur cap, which had been rubbed by the hand until it affected the gold-leaf electrometer, producing no change in the needle, and my approach to the electrometer not causing the gold-leaf to expand.

Having failed in an attempt to make charcoal for the blacksmith's use at this place, we despatched William Duncan, and the blacksmith, to make some at Fort Norman, where birch

trees are plentiful; and on the 6th of April we were glad to see them return with the first load. The carpenters had already prepared the timbers and the keel for the new boat, and we were waiting for the coals to get the iron-work forward.

1820.  
April.  
6th.

On the 10th Dr. Richardson and Mr. Kendall left the fort on snow-shoes, accompanied by an Indian guide, and a man driving a dog-sledge with provisions, for the purpose of completing the survey of Great Bear Lake, which Dr. Richardson had commenced the preceding autumn. The day was remarkably warm; the blackened thermometer, exposed to the sun, rose to + 90; and we hailed with delight a complete thaw. Cheered by the prospect, a spot was cleared of snow, the keel of the boat laid down, and that there might be no delay, all the sledges we could spare were despatched to fetch the remainder of the charcoal from Fort Norman. On the following day water was dripping from the roofs, and the flies were active within the rooms. The continuance of mild weather for six days caused a rapid decay of the snow, but no spots of land became visible. The men returned with the charcoal, and from them we learned that the season was more backward here than in the vicinity of Fort Norman. In the evening of the 17th, a telescope was put up in the meridian for finding the rates of the chronometers by the transit of Arcturus. On the 19th, thirty Hare-Indians arrived with sledges, bringing their winter's collection of furs for the Hudson Bay Company, and a large supply of dried meat for us, which, with the stock already in store, put us quite at ease respecting food until the season for our departure. The party consisted mostly of young lads, who, very good-naturedly, sang and danced for our amusement all the evening. They likewise gave us specimens of the dances in use among the Loucheux, which were more graceful than their own. The tune they sung to the Medicine-dance of the Loucheux, struck

Monday,  
10th.

Tuesday,  
11th.

Wednesday,  
19th.



1826.  
April.

me as being soft and pretty. The ludicrous attitudes and grotesque figures of the dancers, as they wheeled in a circle, shaking the knives and feathers which they held between their fingers, were happily sketched by Lieutenant Back.

As the fish had withdrawn from the open water at the commencement of the fine weather, the nets were brought nearer to the house; but we did not obtain more than thirty fish daily. This diminution, however, gave us no concern, as we had plenty of meat. Shortly afterwards the trout began again to take bait, and we caught several of large size. Easterly winds prevailed this month, and they blew uninterruptedly from the 21st to the last day. A storm, on the 28th and 29th, delayed the carpenters working at the boat: the patches of ground which had for the last few days been visible, were again covered with snow, and the general aspect was bleak and wintry.

Dr. Richardson and Mr. Kendall returned on the 1st of May, and we were furnished with the following particulars of their journey. Their course, on leaving us, was first directed to the fishery in Mac Vicar's Bay, which they reached on the fourth day, and from whence, taking with them another sledge-load of provisions and an additional attendant, they continued their journey to the bottom of Mac Tavish Bay, the most easterly part of the Lake. The reduction in their stock of provisions now caused them to commence their return, and they reached the fort after an absence of three weeks, during which, in very unfavourable weather, they travelled about three hundred and eighty miles. Dr. Richardson had sailed four hundred and eighty miles through the lake in the autumn, and in the two excursions, five hundred miles of its shores were delineated, and the positions of many points established by astronomical observations. About twenty miles of the north shore of Mac Tavish Bay are the only parts of Bear Lake remaining unsurveyed. The following brief descrip-

tion of Bear Lake is extracted from Dr. Richardson's Journal:—

1826.  
May.  
Monday,  
1st.

“Great Bear Lake is formed by the union of five arms or bays, which were named after Messrs. Keith, Smith, Dease, Mac Tavish, and Mac Vicar, of the Hudson's Bay Company. The principal feeding-stream, named Dease River, rises in the Copper Mountains, and falls into the upper end of Dease Bay, which is the most northern part of the lake, and Bear Lake River, which conveys the waters of the lake to the Mackenzie, issues from Keith Bay, the most southerly arm. Mac Tavish Bay is the most easterly portion of the lake, and Smith Bay, which lies opposite to it, runs to the westward. Mac Vicar Bay has a southerly direction nearly parallel to Keith Bay. The length of the lake, from Dease River to Bear Lake River, is about one hundred and seventy-five miles; and its breadth, from the bottom of Smith Bay to the bottom of Mac Tavish Bay, is one hundred and fifty miles. A range of granite hills skirts the bottom of Mac Tavish Bay. The Great Bear Mountain, at whose base some bituminous shale cliffs are exposed, is about nine hundred feet high, and separates Mac Vicar and Keith Bays; a similar mountain lies betwixt Keith and Smith Bays. In Dease Bay, limestone and sandstone are the prevailing rocks. The waters of the lake are very clear, and of unknown depth; forty-five fathoms of line were let down near the shore, in Mac Tavish Bay, without reaching the bottom. There is a considerable quantity of good wood, principally white spruce, in the vicinity of the lake; but there is reason to believe that, before many years elapse, it will become scarce, for it is very slow of growth, and the natives every year set fire to it in various quarters, and thus destroy it for many miles. The finest timber was observed on the west side of Great Bear Lake Mountain. There are good fisheries in Dease Bay, and in

1826.  
May.

various other quarters of the lake; but the fish taken in Mac Vicar Bay are remarkably fine and abundant at all seasons of the year. The principal advantage of the site chosen for Fort Franklin, is its vicinity to the Bear Lake River, and the great quantity of fish that can be procured at certain seasons, although they are small and of inferior quality."

On the 5th of this month, the men being called in from the fishery in Mac Vicar Bay, the whole party was once more assembled at the house, anxiously looking forward to the arrival of spring. We hailed the appearance of swans, on the following day, as a sure sign of its approach. A goose was seen on the 7th, two ducks on the 8th, and on the 9th several gulls were observed in the open water near the Bear Lake River. The snow, at this time, was rapidly diminishing from the surface of the lake, and there were many spots of ground visible. We, therefore, commenced the preparations for the summer's voyage. The seamen were employed in repairing the coverings and sails of the boats, as well as in refitting their rigging, and occupation was allotted to every person in the establishment. These operations requiring the constant superintendence of the officers, the observations on the magnetic-needle were discontinued. After the middle of the month, we were visited by occasional showers of rain, which removed the snow and produced a perceptible decay of the ice.

On the 23rd, the ice broke away from the shore of the small lake, and also of Bear Lake, in front of the house. Swans and geese were now daily passing to the northward; many shots were fired at them, both by the Indians and our own party, but only a few were killed. The geese were principally of the kind known to naturalists by the name of Canada geese, and denominated bustards by the voyagers. Numbers of white geese also passed; we saw only two flocks of laughing-geese. The

first swallow came on the 16th, and, on the following day, many others arrived. A variety of ducks, gulls, and many of the small aquatic birds, now frequented the marshy borders of the little lake, which afforded constant amusement to the sportsmen, and full occupation to Dr. Richardson in preparing the skins for specimens.

1826.  
May.

On the 24th, the musquitoes appeared, feeble at first, but, after a few days, they became vigorous and tormenting. The first flower, a tussilago, was gathered on the 27th. Before the close of the month, several others were in bloom, of which the most abundant was the white anemone (*anemone tenella*). The leaf-buds had not yet burst, though just ready to open.

Wednesday,  
24th.

The carpenters had now finished the new boat, which received the name of the Reliance. It was constructed of fir, with birch timbers, after the model of our largest boat, the Lion, but with a more full bow, and a finer run abaft. Its length was twenty-six feet, and breadth five feet eight inches. It was fastened in the same manner as the other boats, but with iron instead of copper, and to procure sufficient nails we were obliged to cut up all the spare axes, trenches\*, and ice-chisels. Being without tar, we substituted strips of water-proof canvass, soaked in some caoutchouc varnish, which we had brought out, to lay between the seams of the planks; and for paint, we made use of resin, procured from the pine-trees, boiled and mixed with grease. The other boats were afterwards put in complete repair. The Lion required the most, in consequence of the accident in Bear Lake River. The defects in the other two principally arose from their having been repaired at Cumberland House with the elm that grows in its vicinity, and is very spongy. We now substituted white spruce fir, which, when grown in these

\*Used by the Indians to break up the beaver lodges.

1826.  
May.

high latitudes, is an excellent wood for boat-building. We were surprised to find, that, notwithstanding the many heavy blows these boats had received in their passage to this place, there was not a timber that required to be changed.

In our bustle, we would gladly have dispensed with the presence of the Dog-Ribs, who now visited us in great numbers, without bringing any supplies. They continued hanging about the fort, and their daily drumming and singing over the sick, the squalling of the children, and bawling of the men and women, proved no small annoyance. We were pleased, however, at perceiving that the ammunition we had given to them in return for meat, had enabled them to provide themselves with leathern tents. Their only shelter from wind, snow, or rain, before this season, had been a rude barricade of pine branches. Fortunately, for our comfort, they were obliged to remove before the expiration of the month to a distant fishery to procure provision.

June,  
Thursday,  
1st.

The preparations for the voyage along the coast being now in a state of forwardness, my attention was directed to the providing for the return of Dr. Richardson's party to this establishment in the following autumn, and to the securing means of support for all the members of the Expedition at this place, in the event of the western party being likewise compelled to return to it. Respecting the first point, it was arranged that Beaulieu the interpreter, and four Canadians, should quit Fort Franklin on the 6th of August, and proceed direct to Dease River with a bateau, and wait there until the 20th of September, when, if Dr. Richardson did not appear, they were to come back to the fort in canoes, and to leave the boat, with provision and other necessaries, for the use of the eastern detachment. All these points were explained to Beaulieu, and he not only understood every part of the arrangement, but seemed very desirous to



perform the important duty entrusted to him. I next drew up written instructions for the guidance of Mr. Dease, during the absence of the Expedition, directing his attention first to the equipment and despatch of Beaulieu on the 6th of August, and then to the keeping the establishment well-stored with provision. He was aware of the probability that the western party would meet his Majesty's ship Blossom, and go to Canton in her. But as unforeseen circumstances might compel us to winter on the coast, I considered it necessary to warn him against inferring, from our not returning in the following autumn, that we had reached the Blossom. He was, therefore, directed to keep Fort Franklin complete, as to provision, until the spring of 1828. Dr. Richardson was likewise instructed, before he left the fort in 1827, on his return to England, to see that Mr. Dease fully understood my motives for giving these orders, and that he was provided with the means of purchasing the necessary provision from the Indians.

1826.  
June.  
Thursday,  
1st.

The long reign of the east wind was at length terminated by a fresh N.W. breeze, and the ice yet remaining on the small lake soon disappeared, under the softening effects of this wind. This lake had been frozen eight months, wanting three days. A narrow channel being opened along the western border of Bear Lake, on the 14th Dr. Richardson took advantage of it, and went in a small canoe with two men to examine the mountains on the borders of Bear Lake River, and to collect specimens of the plants that were now in flower, intending to rejoin the party at Fort Norman. On the same day, in 1821, the former Expedition left Fort Enterprize for the sea.

Wednesday,  
7th.

The equipments of the boats being now complete, they were launched on the small lake, and tried under oars and sails. In the afternoon the men were appointed to their respective stations, and furnished with the sky-blue waterproof uniforms, and

Thursday,  
15th.

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June.

feathers, as well as with the warm clothing which had been provided for the voyage. I acquainted them fully with the object of the Expedition, and pointed out their various duties. They received these communications with satisfaction, were delighted with the prospect of the voyage, and expressed their readiness to commence it immediately. Fourteen men, including Augustus, were appointed to accompany myself and Lieutenant Back, in the *Lion* and *Reliance*, the two larger boats; and ten, including Ooligbuck, to go with Dr. Richardson and Mr. Kendall, in the *Dolphin* and *Union*. In order to make up the complement of fourteen for the western party, I proposed to receive two volunteers from the Canadian voyagers; and to the credit of Canadian enterprise, every man came forward. I chose François Felix and Alexis Vivier, because they were the first who offered their services, and this too without any stipulation as to increase of wages.

Spare blankets, and every thing that could be useful for the voyage, or as presents to the Esquimaux, which our stores could furnish, were divided between the eastern and western parties, and put up into bales of a size convenient for stowage. This interesting day was closed by the consumption of a small quantity of rum, reserved for the occasion, followed by a merry dance, in which all joined with great glee, in their working dresses. On the following Sunday the officers and men assembled at Divine service, dressed in their new uniforms; and in addition to the ordinary service of the day, the special protection of Providence was implored on the enterprise we were about to commence. The guns were cleaned the next day, and stowed in the arm chests, which had been made to fit the boats. Tuesday and Wednesday were set apart for the officers and men to pack their own things. A strong western breeze occurred on the 21st, which removed the ice from the front of the house.

and opened a passage to the Bear Lake River. The men were sent with the boats and stores to the river in the evening, and were heartily cheered on quitting the beach. The officers remained to pack up the charts, drawings, and other documents, which were to be left at the fort; and, in the event of none of the officers returning, Mr. Dease was directed to forward them to England. We quitted the house at half past ten, on Tuesday morning, leaving Cotè, the fisherman, in charge, until Mr. Dease should return from Fort Norman. This worthy old man, sharing the enthusiasm that animated the whole party, would not allow us to depart without giving his hearty, though solitary cheer, which we returned in full chorus.

The position of Fort Franklin was determined to be in latitude  $65^{\circ} 11' 56''$  N., longitude  $123^{\circ} 12' 44''$  W.; variation of the compass  $39^{\circ} 9'$  E.; dip of the needle  $82^{\circ} 58' 15''$ .

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1826.  
June.

## CHAPTER III.

Voyage to the Sea—Part from the Eastern Detachment at Point Separation—Reach the Mouth of the Mackenzie—Interview and Contest with the Esquimaux—Detained by Ice—Meet friendly Esquimaux—Point Sabine.

1826.  
June.  
Thursday,  
22nd.

ON our arrival at the Bear Lake River, we were mortified to find the ice drifting down in large masses, with such rapidity as to render embarkation unsafe. The same cause detained us the whole of the following day; and as we had brought no more provision from the house than sufficient for an uninterrupted passage to Fort Norman, we sent for a supply of fish. This was a very sultry day, the thermometer in the shade being  $71^{\circ}$  at noon, and  $74^{\circ}$  at three p.m.

The descent of the ice having ceased at eight in the morning of the 24th, we embarked. The heavy stores were put into a bateau, manned by Canadians, who were experienced in the passage through rapids, and the rest of the boats were ordered to follow in its wake, keeping at such a distance from each other as to allow of any evolution that might be necessary to avoid the stones. The boats struck several times, but received no injury. At the foot of the rapid we met a canoe, manned by four of our Canadian voyagers, whom Dr. Richardson had sent with some letters that had arrived at Fort Norman from the Athabasca Lake; and as the services of the men were wanted, they

were embarked in the boats, and the canoe was left. Shortly afterwards we overtook Beaulieu, who had just killed a young moose deer, which afforded the party two substantial meals. At this spot, and generally along the river, we found abundance of wild onions.

1826  
June.

We entered the Mackenzie River at eight in the evening, and the current being too strong for us to advance against the stream with oars, we had recourse to the tracking line, and travelled all night. It was fatiguing, owing to large portions of the banks having been overthrown by the disruption of the ice, and from the ground being so soft that the men dragging the rope sank up to the knees at every step; but these impediments were less regarded than the ceaseless torment of the mosquitoes. We halted to sup at the spot where Sir A. Mackenzie saw the flame rising from the bank in 1789. The precipice was still on fire, the smoke issuing through several apertures. Specimens of the coal were procured.

We reached Fort Norman at noon on the 25th. On the following morning the provision and stores which had been left at this place were examined, and found to be in excellent order, except the powder in one of the magazines, which had become caked from damp. I had ordered a supply of iron-work, knives, and beads, for the sea voyage from Fort Simpson; they had arrived some days before us, and with our stock thus augmented, we were well furnished with presents for the natives. The packages being finished on the 27th, the boats received their respective loadings, and we were rejoiced to find that each stowed her cargo well, and with her crew embarked floated as buoyantly as our most sanguine wishes had anticipated. The heavy stores, however, were afterwards removed into a bateau that was to be taken to the mouth of the river, to prevent the smaller boats from receiving injury in passing over the shoals.

Sunday,  
25th.



1826.  
June.

We waited one day to make some pounded meat we had brought into pemmican. In the meantime the seamen enlarged the foresail of the *Reliance*.

The letters which I received from the Athabasca department informed me that the things I had required from the Company in February last, would be duly forwarded; they likewise contained a very different version of the story which had led us to suppose that Captain Parry was passing the winter on the northern coast. We now learned that the Indians had only seen some pieces of wood recently cut, and a deer that had been killed by an arrow; these things we concluded were done by the Esquimaux. Three men from Slave Lake, whom I had sent for to supply the place of our Chipewyan hunters, who were very inactive last winter, joined us at this place. They were to accompany Mr. Dease and the Canadians to Fort Franklin; and that they, as well as the Indians, might have every encouragement to exert themselves in procuring provision during the summer, I directed a supply of the goods they were likely to require, to be sent from Fort Simpson, as soon as possible. The longitude of Fort Norman was observed to be  $124^{\circ} 44' 47''$  W., its latitude  $64^{\circ} 40' 38''$  N.; variation  $39^{\circ} 57' 52''$  E.

Wednesday,  
28th.

Early this morning the boats were laden and decorated with their ensigns and pendants, and after breakfast we quitted the fort, amidst the hearty cheers of our friends Mr. Dease, Mr. Brisbois, and the Canadians, and I am sure carried their best wishes for our success. We halted at noon to obtain the latitude, which placed the entrance of Bear Lake River in  $64^{\circ} 55' 37''$  N.; and Dr. Richardson took advantage of this delay to visit the mountain at that point, but his stay was short, in consequence of a favourable breeze springing up. We perceived that the four boats sailed at nearly an equal rate in light breezes, but that in strong winds the two larger ones had the advantage. When we

landed to sup the mosquitoes beset us so furiously that we hastily despatched the meal and re-embarked, to drive under easy sail before the current. They continued, however, to pursue us, and deprived us of all rest. On our arrival, next morning, at the place of the first rapids, there was scarcely any appearance of broken water, and the sand-bank on which Augustus had been so perilously situated in the preceding autumn, was entirely covered. This was, of course, to be ascribed to the spring floods; the increase of water to produce such a change, must have exceeded six feet. In the afternoon we were overtaken by a violent thunder-storm, with heavy rain, which made us apprehensive for the pemmican, that spoils on being wet. It unfortunately happened that a convenient place for spreading out the bags that were injured could not be found, until we reached the Hare-Skin River, below the Rampart Defile, which was at nine o'clock. They were spread out the next morning, with the other perishable parts of the cargo, and we remained until they were dry. We embarked at ten, and, aided by a favourable breeze, made good progress until six P.M., when the threatening appearance of the clouds induced us to put on shore, and we had but just covered the baggage before heavy rain fell, that continued throughout the night. Four Hare Indians came to the encampment, to whom dried meat and ammunition were given, as they were in want of food from being unable to set their nets in the present high state of the water. These were the only natives seen since our departure from Fort Norman; they informed us, that, in consequence of not being able to procure a sufficiency of fish in the Mackenzie at this season, their companions had withdrawn to gain their subsistence from the small lakes in the interior.

We embarked at half past one on the morning of the 1st of July. The sultry weather of the preceding day made us now

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June.

Friday,  
30th.

July 1st.

1826.  
July.

feel more keenly the chill of a strong western breeze, and the mist which it brought on, about four hours after our departure. This wind, being contrary to the current, soon raised such high waves that the boats took in a great deal of water; and as we made but little progress, and were very cold, we landed to kindle a fire, and prepare breakfast; after which we continued the voyage to Fort Good Hope, without any of the interruptions from sand-banks that we had experienced in the autumn.

On our arrival we were saluted with a discharge of musketry by a large party of Loucheux, who had been some time waiting at the fort, with their wives and families, for the purpose of seeing us. After a short conference with Mr. Bell, the master of the post, we were informed that these Indians had lately met a numerous party of Esquimaux at the Red River, by appointment, to purchase their furs; and that in consequence of a misunderstanding respecting some bargain, a quarrel had ensued between them, which fortunately terminated without bloodshed. We could not, however, gain any satisfactory account of the movements of the Esquimaux. The only answers to our repeated questions on these points were, that the Esquimaux came in sixty canoes to Red River, and that they supposed them to have gone down the eastern channel, for the purpose of fishing near its mouth. The chief, however, informed us that he had mentioned our coming to their lands this spring, and that they had received the intelligence without comment; but from his not having alluded to this communication until the question was pressed upon him, and from the manner of his answering our inquiries, I thought it doubtful whether such a communication had really been made.

We had been led to expect much information from the Loucheux respecting the channels of the river, and the coast on the east and west side near its mouth, but we were greatly dis-

appointed. They were ignorant of the channel we ought to follow in order to arrive at the western mouth of the river; and the only intelligence they gave us respecting the coast on that side was, that the Esquimaux represented it to be almost constantly beset by ice. They said also that they were unacquainted with the tribes who reside to the westward. Several of the party had been down the eastern channel, of which they made a rude sketch; and their account of the coast on that side was, that, as far as they were acquainted with it, it was free from ice during the summer.

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Mr. C. Dease, the former master of Fort Good Hope, had retained two of the Loucheux to accompany the Expedition until we should meet the Esquimaux: they spoke a few words of the language, which they had learned during an occasional residence with the tribe that resides on the eastern border of the river. But the knowledge of the recent transactions at Red River had convinced us that their presence would be more likely to irritate than pacify the Esquimaux. We also discovered that their sole motive for accompanying us was the desire of trading with that people; and further, that they expected we should take their families and baggage in the boats. Their services were therefore declined; and a compensation was offered to them for their loss of time in waiting for us; but having fixed their minds on the gain to be derived from us and from the trade with the Esquimaux, they expressed great disappointment, and were very intemperate in their language. As I was anxious, for the sake of the trade at the post, to leave them no room to complain either of us, or of Mr. Dease who had acted for us, I spent several hours in debate with them to very little purpose, and at last discovered that the whole scene was got up for the purpose of obtaining a few more goods. My compliance with their wish rendered them quite contented. I afterwards

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July.

added a present to the principal chief of the party, who still expressed a wish to accompany us, but he frankly said that if he went, all his young men must go also. They came in the evening in great good humour to exhibit their dances in front of our tent, a compliment we could well have dispensed with, as we were busy.

Having ascertained that the Esquimaux were likely to be seen in greater numbers than had been at first imagined, I increased the stock of presents from the store at this place, and exchanged two of our guns, which were defective, that the party might have entire confidence in their arms. And to provide against the casualty of either or both branches of the Expedition having to return this way, I requested Mr. Bell to store up as much meat as he could during the summer. We learned from this gentleman that the supply of meat at this post was very precarious, and that had we not left the five bags of pemmican in the autumn, the residents would have been reduced to great distress for food during the winter. These bags were now replaced. The arrangements being concluded, we spent the greater part of the night in writing to England. I addressed to the Colonial Secretary an account of our proceedings up to this time, and I felt happy to be able to state that we were equipped with every requisite for the Expedition.

Sunday,  
2nd.

We quitted Fort Good Hope at five on the 2nd. In the passage down the river we were visited by several Loucheux, who, the instant we appeared, launched their canoes, and came off to welcome us. We landed, at their request, to purchase fish; yet, after the bargain had been completed, an old woman stepped forward, and would only allow of our receiving two fish: she maintained her point, and carried off the rest in spite of all remonstrance. The natives were all clothed in new leathern dresses, and looked much neater, and in better health, than last autumn.

Being anxious to reach the Red River, we continued rowing against the wind until after midnight. On reaching that place, the ground proved too wet for us to encamp; we, therefore, proceeded a short distance lower down, and put up under some sandstone cliffs, where there was but just room for the tents. As we were now on the borders of the Esquimaux territory, we devoted the following morning to cleaning the arms; and a gun, dagger, and ammunition, were issued to each person. We had no reason, indeed, to apprehend hostility from the Esquimaux, after the messages they had sent to Fort Franklin, but vigilance and precaution are never to be omitted in intercourse with strange tribes.

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July.

Embarking at two in the afternoon of the 3rd, we soon entered the expansion of the river whence the different channels branch off, and steering along the western shore, we came to the head of a branch that flowed towards the Rocky Mountain range. Being anxious not to take the eastern detachment out of their course, I immediately encamped to make the necessary arrangements for the separation of the parties. The warm clothing, shoes, and articles for presents, had been previously put up in separate packages, but the provisions remained to be divided, which was done in due proportion. Twenty-six bags of pemmican, and two of grease, were set apart for the Dolphin and Union, with a supply of arrow-root, macaroni, flour, and portable soup, making in all eighty days' provision, with an allowance for waste. The Lion and Reliance received thirty-two bags of pemmican, and two of grease, with sufficient arrow-root, &c., to make their supply proportionate to that of the eastern party. Provided no accident occurred, neither party could be in absolute want for the whole summer, because at two-thirds allowance the pemmican could be made to last one hundred days; and we had reason to expect to meet with deer occasionally.

Monday,  
3rd.



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July.

In the evening I delivered my instructions to Dr. Richardson; they were in substance as follows:—He was to take under his charge Mr. E. N. Kendall, and ten men, and proceed in the Dolphin and Union to survey the coast between the Mackenzie and Copper-Mine Rivers. On reaching the latter river, he was to travel by land to the northeast arm of Great Bear Lake, where Beaulieu was under orders to meet him with a boat for the conveyance of his party to Fort Franklin. But if he should be so much delayed on the coast as to have no prospect of reaching the Copper-Mine River by the close of August, or the Bear Lake Portage by the 20th of September, he was not to expose himself or his party to risk by persevering beyond the 15th or 20th of August, but was to return to Fort Franklin by the way of the Mackenzie, or by any other route he might discover. The only cause of regret I had respecting the equipment of the eastern party was my being unable to provide Dr. Richardson with a chronometer, the main-springs of two out of the three chronometers furnished to us having been broken. I borrowed, however, from Mr. Dease, a watch, made by Barraud, to enable Mr. Kendall to obtain the longitude by lunar distances. They were likewise provided with that excellent instrument Massey's Log; and knowing Mr. Kendall's intimate acquaintance with marine surveying, I had no doubt of his being able to make a correct survey of the coast. The spot where the above arrangements were made, bears the name of Point Separation, and lies in latitude  $67^{\circ} 38' N.$ , longitude  $133^{\circ} 53' W.$

As the parties entertained for each other sentiments of true friendship and regard, it will easily be imagined that the evening preceding our separation was spent in the most cordial and cheerful manner. We felt that we were only separating to be employed on services of equal interest; and we looked forward with delight to our next meeting, when, after a successful

termination, we might recount the incidents of our respective voyages. The best supper our means afforded was provided, and a bowl of punch crowned the parting feast.

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We were joined by an elderly Loucheux, who gave us a better account of the eastern and western channels than we had hitherto obtained. "The west branch," he said, "would take us to the sea, and flowed the whole way at no great distance from the mountains." "The eastern was a good channel, and passed close to the hills on that side." He further informed us that the Esquimaux were generally to be found on an island in the eastern channel, but were seldom seen in the western branch. He was, however, unacquainted with the coast, and we found afterwards that he knew little about the movements of the Esquimaux.

By six in the morning of the 4th the boats were all laden, and ready for departure. It was impossible not to be struck with the difference between our present complete state of equipment and that on which we had embarked on our former disastrous voyage. Instead of a frail bark canoe, and a scanty supply of food, we were now about to commence the sea voyage in excellent boats, stored with three months' provision. At Dr. Richardson's desire the western party embarked first. He and his companions saluted us with three hearty cheers, which were warmly returned; and as we were passing round the point that was to hide them from our view, we perceived them also embarking. Augustus was rather melancholy, as might have been expected, on his parting from Ooligbuck, to proceed he knew not whither; but he recovered his wonted flow of spirits by the evening.

Tuesday,  
4th.

The western party were distributed as follows:—

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## LION.

John Franklin, *Captain R. N.*  
William Duncan, *Cocksain.*  
Thomas Matthews, *Carpenter.*  
Gustavus Aird, *Bowman.*  
George Wilson, *Marine.*  
Archibald Stewart, *Soldier.*  
Neil Mac Donald, *Voyager.*  
Augustus, *Esquimaux.*

## RELIANCE.

George Back, *Lieutenant R. N.*  
Robert Spinks, *Cocksain.*  
Robert Hallom, *Corpl. of Marines.*  
Charles Mackenzie, *Bowman.*  
Alexander Currie, *Middle Man.*  
Robert Spence, *Ditto*  
Alexis Vivier, *Canadian.*  
François Felix, *Ditto.*

Our course was directly towards the Rocky Mountain range, till we came near the low land that skirts its base; where, following the deepest channel, we turned to the northward. I was desirous of coasting the main shore, but finding some of the westernmost branches too shallow, we kept on the outside of three islands for about twelve miles, when we entered the channel that washes the west side of Simpson's Island. It was winding, and its breadth seldom exceeded a quarter of a mile. During our progress we occasionally caught a glimpse of the Rocky Mountains, which was an agreeable relief to the very dull picture that the muddy islands in our neighbourhood afforded. We halted to breakfast just before noon, and observed the latitude  $67^{\circ} 51' N.$

In the afternoon one deer was seen, and many swans and geese; we did not fire at them, for fear of alarming any Esquimaux that might be near. Encamped at eight P.M., opposite Simpson's Island, in latitude  $68^{\circ} 13' N.$ , longitude  $134^{\circ} 27' W.$  The boats were secured without discharging the cargoes, and two men were placed on guard, to be relieved every two hours.

Wednesday,  
5th.

We set forward at four A.M., with a favourable breeze, and made good progress, though the river was very winding. At eight we entered a branch that turned to the westward round the point of Halkett Island into the channel washing the main

shore. We soon afterwards arrived at a spot where a large body of Esquimaux had been encamped in the spring, and supposing that they might revisit this place, a present of an ice-chisel, kettle, and knife, was hung up in a conspicuous situation. Soon after we had entered the channel that flows by the main shore, we first perceived lop-sticks, or pine trees, divested of their lower branches, for the purpose of land-marks, and therefore concluded it was much frequented by the Esquimaux. Our course was then altered to N.W., and we soon passed the last of the well-wooded islands. The spruce fir-trees terminated in latitude  $68^{\circ} 36' N.$ ; and dwarf willows only grew below this part. A very picturesque view was obtained of the Rocky Mountains, and we saw the entire outline of their peaked hills, table-land, and quoin-shaped terminations. Two lofty ranges were fronted by a lower line of round-backed hills, in which we perceived the strata to be horizontal, and the stone of a yellow colour. A few miles lower down we found hills of sand close to the west border of the river. We passed several deserted huts, and in one spot saw many chips and pieces of split drift-wood, that appeared to have been recently cut. The channel varied in breadth from a half to three-quarters of a mile, but, except in the stream of the current, the water was so shallow as scarcely to float the boats, and its greatest depth did not exceed five feet. We landed at eight P.M., on Halkett Island, intending to encamp, but owing to the swampiness of the ground the tent could not be pitched. Having made a fire and cooked our supper, we retired to sleep under the coverings of the boats, which afforded us good shelter from a gale and heavy rain that came on before midnight. Latitude  $68^{\circ} 39' N.$ , longitude  $135^{\circ} 35' W.$

The continuance of stormy weather detained us until two P.M. of the 6th, when, the rain ceasing, we embarked. After passing through the expansion of the river near the west extreme of Hal-

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July.

Thursday,  
6th.

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kett Island, we turned into the narrower and more winding channel, between Colvill Island and the main. A fog coming on at eight P.M. we encamped, in latitude  $68^{\circ} 48' N.$ , longitude  $136^{\circ} 4' W.$ ; temperature of the air  $42^{\circ}$ , that of the water being  $47^{\circ}$  in the middle of the stream. Several of the glaucous gulls were seen, and this circumstance, as well as a line of bright cloud to the N.W. resembling the ice-blink, convinced us that the sea was not far off. A rein-deer appearing near the encampment, two men were sent after it, who returned unsuccessful. Augustus obtained a goose for supper. Many geese, swans, and ducks, had been seen on the marshy shores of the island in the course of the day.

Friday,  
7th.

The night was cold, and at day-light on the 7th the thermometer indicated  $36^{\circ}$ . Embarking at four A.M. we sailed down the river for two hours, when our progress was arrested by the shallowness of the water. Having endeavoured, without effect, to drag the boats over the flat, we remounted the stream to examine an opening to the westward, which we had passed. On reaching the opening we found the current setting through it into the Mackenzie, by which we knew that it could not afford a passage to the sea, but we pulled up it a little way, in the hope of obtaining a view over the surrounding low grounds from the top of an Esquimaux house which we saw before us. A low fog, which had prevailed all the morning, cleared away, and we discovered that the stream we had now ascended issued from a chain of lakes lying betwixt us and the western hills, which were about six miles distant, the whole intervening country between the hills and the Mackenzie being flat.

After obtaining an observation for longitude in  $136^{\circ} 19' W.$ , and taking the bearing of several remarkable points of the Rocky Mountain range, we returned to the Mackenzie, and passing the shallows which had before impeded us, by taking only half the

boats' cargoes over at a time, we came in sight of the mouth of the river. Whilst the crews were stowing the boats, I obtained an observation for latitude in  $68^{\circ} 53' N.$ , and having walked towards the mouth of the river, discovered on an island, which formed the east side of the bay into which the river opened, a crowd of tents, with many Esquimaux strolling amongst them. I instantly hastened to the boats, to make preparations for opening a communication with them, agreeably to my instructions. A selection of articles for presents and trade being made, the rest of the lading was closely covered up; the arms were inspected, and every man was directed to keep his gun ready for immediate use. I had previously informed Lieutenant Back of my intention of opening the communication with the Esquimaux by landing amongst them, accompanied only by Augustus; and I now instructed him to keep the boats afloat, and the crews with their arms ready to support us in the event of the natives proving hostile; but on no account to fire until he was convinced that our safety could be secured in no other way. Having received an impression from the narratives of different navigators that the sacrifices of life which had occurred in their interviews with savages, had been generally occasioned by the crews mistaking noise and violent gestures for decided hostility, I thought it necessary to explain my sentiments on this point to all the men, and peremptorily forbade their firing till I set the example, or till they were ordered to do so by Lieutenant Back. They were also forbidden to trade with the natives on any pretence, and were ordered to leave every thing of that kind to the officers.

On quitting the channel of the river we entered into the bay, which was about six miles wide, with an unbounded prospect to seaward, and steered towards the tents under easy sail, with the ensigns flying. The water became shallow as we drew towards the

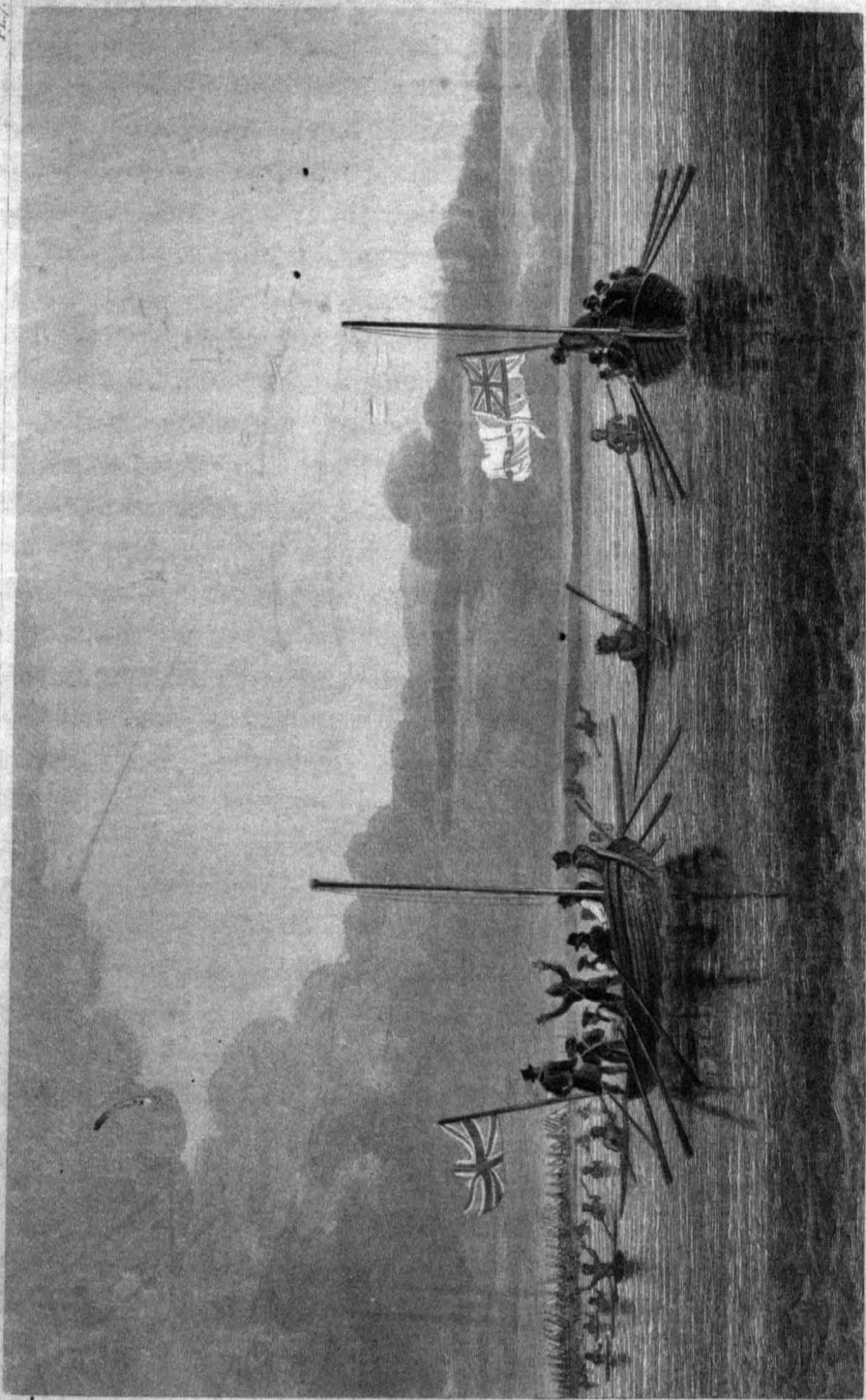
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island, and the boats touched the ground when about a mile from the beach; we shouted, and made signs to the Esquimaux to come off, and then pulled a short way back to await their arrival in deeper water. Three canoes instantly put off from the shore, and before they could reach us others were launched in such quick succession, that the whole space between the island and the boats was covered by them. The Esquimaux canoes contain only one person, and are named *kaiyacks*; but they have a kind of open boat capable of holding six or eight people, which is named *oomiak*. The men alone use the *kaiyacks*, and the *oomiaks* are allotted to the women and children. We endeavoured to count their numbers as they approached, and had proceeded as far as seventy-three canoes, and five *oomiaks*, when the sea became so crowded by fresh arrivals, that we could advance no farther in our reckoning. The three headmost canoes were paddled by elderly men, who, most probably, had been selected to open the communication. They advanced towards us with much caution, halting when just within speaking distance, until they had been assured of our friendship, and repeatedly invited by Augustus to approach and receive the present which I offered to them. Augustus next explained to them in detail the purport of our visit, and told them that if we succeeded in finding a navigable channel for large ships, a trade highly beneficial to them would be opened. They were delighted with this intelligence, and repeated it to their countrymen, who testified their joy by tossing their hands aloft, and raising the most deafening shout of applause I ever heard.

After the first present, I resolved to bestow no more gratuitously, but always to exact something, however small, in return; the three elderly men readily offered the ornaments they wore in their cheeks, their arms, and knives, in exchange for the



Drawn by Capt. Bache, July 7, 1856.

Engraved by E. H. Wilson.

ESQUIMAUX COMING TOWARDS THE BOATS.  
IN SHOALWATER BAY, 2 P.M.

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articles I gave them. Up to this time the first three were the only kaiyacks that had ventured near the boats, but the natives around us had now increased to two hundred and fifty or three hundred persons, and they all became anxious to share in the lucrative trade which they saw established, and pressed eagerly upon us, offering for sale their bows, arrows, and spears, which they had hitherto kept concealed within their canoes. I endeavoured in vain, amidst the clamour and bustle of trade, to obtain some information respecting the coast, but finding the natives becoming more and more importunate and troublesome, I determined to leave them, and, therefore, directed the boats' heads to be put to seaward. Notwithstanding the forwardness of the Esquimaux, which we attributed solely to the desire of a rude people to obtain the novel articles they saw in our possession, they had hitherto shown no unfriendly disposition; and when we told them of our intention of going to sea, they expressed no desire to detain us, but, on the contrary, when the *Lion* grounded in the act of turning, they assisted us in the kindest manner by dragging her round. This manœuvre was not of much advantage to us, for, from the rapid ebbing of the tide, both boats lay aground; and the Esquimaux told us, through the medium of Augustus, that the whole bay was alike flat, which we afterwards found to be correct.

An accident happened at this time, which was productive of unforeseen and very annoying consequences. A kaiyack being upset by one of the *Lion's* oars, its owner was plunged into the water with his head in the mud, and apparently in danger of being drowned. We instantly extricated him from his unpleasant situation, and took him into the boat until the water could be thrown out of his kaiyack, and Augustus, seeing him shivering with cold, wrapped him up in his own great coat. At first he was exceedingly angry, but soon became reconciled to his situa-

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tion, and looking about, discovered that we had many bales, and other articles, in the boat, which had been concealed from the people in the kaiyacks, by the coverings being carefully spread over all. He soon began to ask for every thing he saw, and expressed much displeasure on our refusing to comply with his demands; he also, as we afterwards learned, excited the cupidity of others by his account of the inexhaustible riches in the Lion, and several of the younger men endeavoured to get into both our boats, but we resisted all their attempts. Though we had not hitherto observed any of them stealing, yet they showed so much desire to obtain my flag, that I had it furled and put out of sight, as well as every thing else that I thought could prove a temptation to them. They continued, however, to press upon us so closely, and made so many efforts to get into the boats, that I accepted the offer of two chiefs, who said that if they were allowed to come in, they would keep the others out. For a time they kept their word, and the crews took advantage of the respite thus afforded, to endeavour to force the boats towards the river into deeper water. The Reliance floated, but the Lion was immovable, and Lieutenant Back dropping astern again made his boat fast to the Lion by a rope. At this time one of the Lion's crew perceived that the man whose kaiyack had been upset had a pistol under his shirt, and was about to take it from him, but I ordered him to desist, as I thought it might have been purchased from the Loucheux. It had been, in fact, stolen from Lieutenant Back, and the thief, perceiving our attention directed to it, leaped out of the boat, and joined his countrymen, carrying with him the great coat which Augustus had lent him.

The water had now ebbed so far, that it was not knee deep at the boats, and the younger men wading in crowds around us, tried to steal every thing within their reach; slyly, however,



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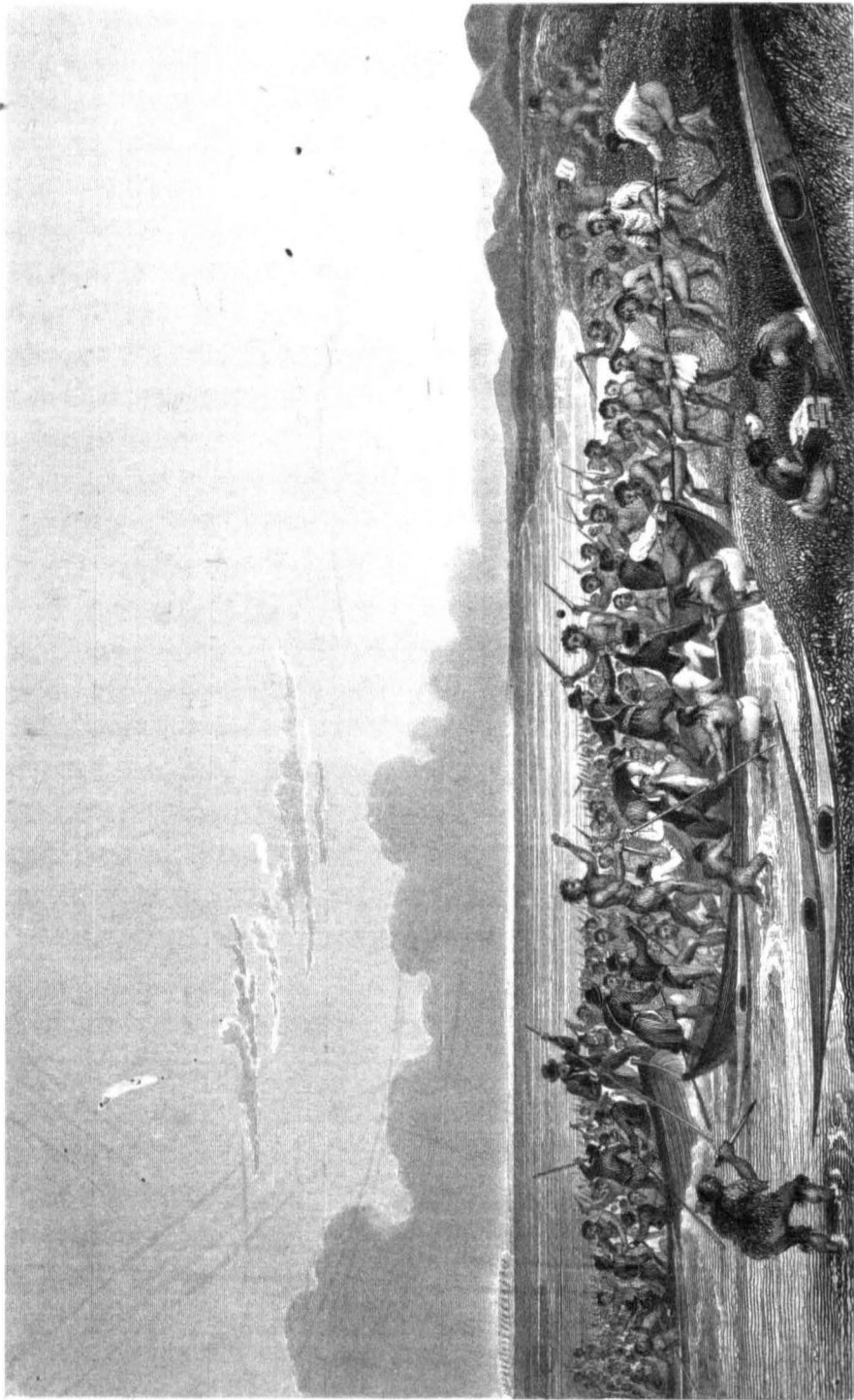
and with so much dexterity, as almost to escape detection. The moment this disposition was manifested, I directed the crews not to suffer any one to come alongside, and desired Augustus to tell the two chiefs, who still remained seated in the *Lion*, that the noise and confusion occasioned by the crowd around the boats greatly impeded our exertions; and that if they would go on shore and leave us for the present, we would hereafter return from the ship which we expected to meet near this part of the coast, with a more abundant supply of goods. They received this communication with much apparent satisfaction, and jumping out of the boats repeated the speech aloud to their companions. From the general exclamation of "*teyma*," which followed, and from perceiving many of the elderly men retire to a distance, I conceived that they acquiesced in the propriety of the suggestion, and that they were going away, but I was much deceived. They only retired to concert a plan of attack, and returned in a short time shouting some words which Augustus could not make out. We soon, however, discovered their purport, by two of the three chiefs who were on board the *Reliance*, jumping out, and, with the others who hurried to their assistance, dragging her towards the south shore of the river. Lieutenant Back desired the chief who remained with him to tell them to desist, but he replied by pointing to the beach, and repeating the word *teyma*, *teyma*, with a good-natured smile. He said, however, something to those who were seated in the canoes that were alongside, on which they threw their long knives and arrows into the boat, taking care, in so doing, that the handles and feathered ends were turned towards the crew, as an indication of pacific intentions.

As soon as I perceived the *Reliance* moving under the efforts of the natives, I directed the *Lion's* crew to endeavour to follow her, but our boat remained fast until the Esquimaux lent their

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aid and dragged her after the Reliance. Two of the most powerful men, jumping on board at the same time, seized me by the wrists and forced me to sit between them; and as I shook them loose two or three times, a third Esquimaux took his station in front to catch my arm whenever I attempted to lift my gun, or the broad dagger which hung by my side. The whole way to the shore they kept repeating the word "*teyma*," beating gently on my left breast with their hands, and pressing mine against their breasts. As we neared the beach, two oomiaks, full of women, arrived, and the "*teymas*" and vociferation were redoubled. The Reliance was first brought to the shore, and the Lion close to her a few seconds afterwards. The three men who held me now leaped ashore, and those who had remained in their canoes taking them out of the water, carried them to a little distance. A numerous party then drawing their knives, and stripping themselves to the waist, ran to the Reliance, and having first hauled her as far up as they could, began a regular pillage, handing the articles to the women, who, ranged in a row behind, quickly conveyed them out of sight. Lieutenant Back and his crew strenuously, but good-humouredly, resisted the attack, and rescued many things from their grasp, but they were overpowered by numbers, and had even some difficulty in preserving their arms. One fellow had the audacity to snatch Vivier's knife from his breast, and to cut the buttons from his coat, whilst three stout Esquimaux surrounded Lieutenant Back with up-lifted daggers, and were incessant in their demands for whatever attracted their attention, especially for the anchor buttons which he wore on his waistcoat. In this juncture a young chief coming to his aid, drove the assailants away. In their retreat they carried off a writing desk and cloak, which the chief rescued, and then seating himself on Lieutenant Back's knee, he endeavoured to persuade his countrymen to desist by vociferating "*teyma teyma*,"





Drawn by Capt. F. B. F. N.

Engraved by G. H. Fisher.

THE GREAT SOUTHERN RAILROAD

Published May 1855 by J. H. Moore, London

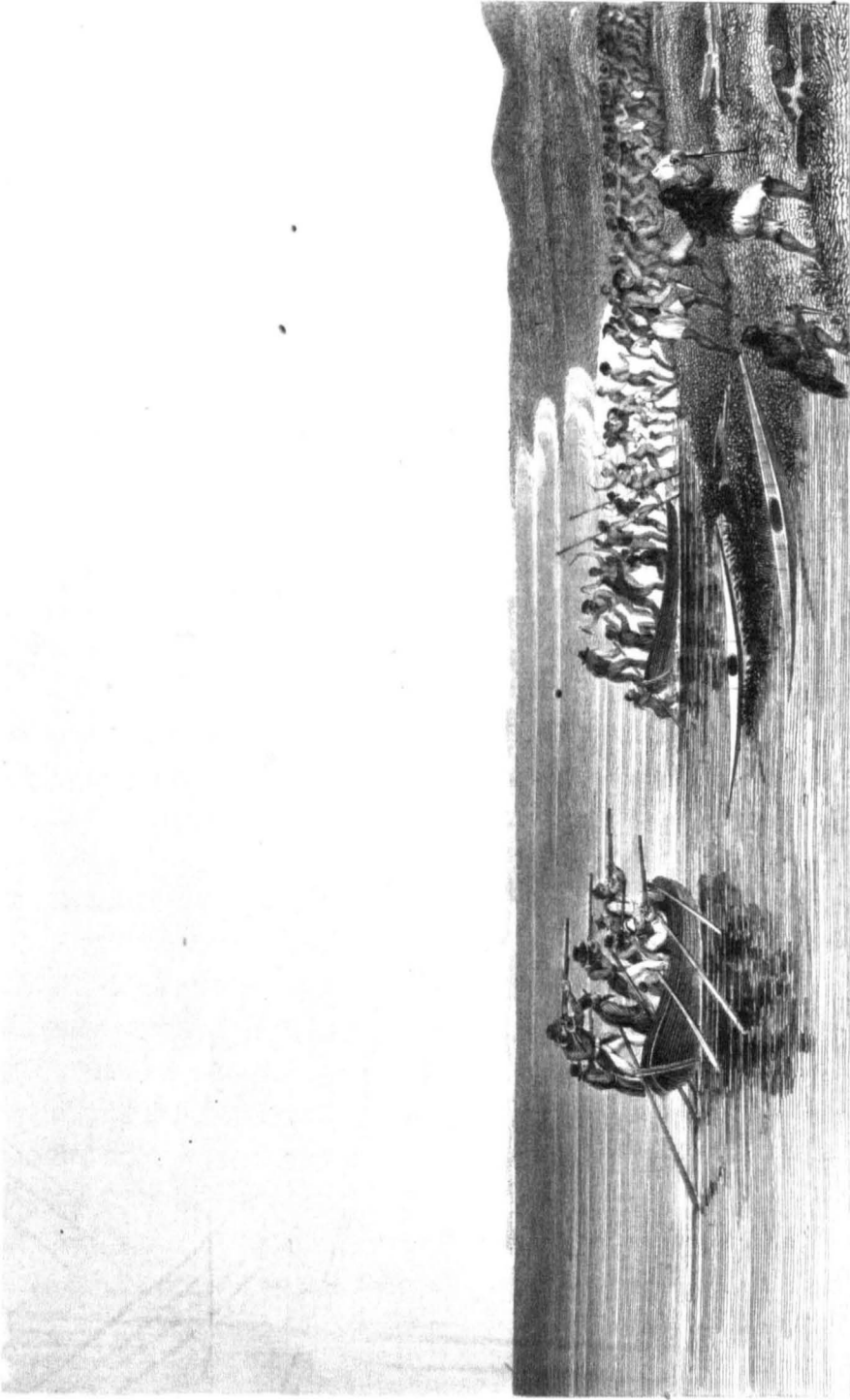
and was, indeed, very active in saving whatever he could from their depredations. The *Lion* had hitherto been beset by smaller numbers, and her crew, by firmly keeping their seats on the cover spread over the cargo, and by beating the natives off with the butt-ends of their muskets, had been able to prevent any article of importance from being carried away. But as soon as I perceived that the work of plunder was going on so actively in the *Reliance*, I went with Augustus to assist in repressing the tumult; and our bold and active little interpreter rushed among the crowd on shore, and harangued them on their treacherous conduct, until he was actually hoarse. In a short time, however, I was summoned back by Duncan, who called out to me that the Esquimaux had now commenced in earnest to plunder the *Lion*, and, on my return, I found the sides of the boat lined with men as thick as they could stand, brandishing their knives in the most furious manner, and attempting to seize every thing that was movable; whilst another party was ranged on the outside ready to bear away the stolen goods. The *Lion's* crew still kept their seats, but as it was impossible for so small a number to keep off such a formidable and determined body, several articles were carried off. Our principal object was to prevent the loss of the arms, oars, or masts, or any thing on which the continuance of the voyage, or our personal safety, depended. Many attempts were made to purloin the box containing the astronomical instruments, and Duncan, after thrice rescuing it from their hands, made it fast to his leg with a cord, determined that they should drag him away also if they took it.

In the whole of this unequal contest, the self-possession of our men was not more conspicuous than the coolness with which the Esquimaux received the heavy blows dealt to them with the

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butts of the muskets. But at length, irritated at being so often foiled in their attempts, several of them jumped on board and forcibly endeavoured to take the daggers and shot-belts that were about the men's persons; and I myself was engaged with three of them who were trying to disarm me. Lieutenant Back perceiving our situation, and fully appreciating my motives in not coming to extremities, had the kindness to send to my assistance the young chief who had protected him, and who, on his arrival, drove my antagonists out of the boat. I then saw that my crew were nearly overpowered in the fore part of the boat, and hastening to their aid, I fortunately arrived in time to prevent George Wilson from discharging the contents of his musket into the body of an Esquimaux. He had received a provocation of which I was ignorant until the next day, for the fellow had struck at him with a knife, and cut through his coat and waistcoat; and it was only after the affray was over that I learned that Gustavus Aird, the bowman of the *Lion*, and three of the *Reliance's* crew, had also narrowly escaped from being wounded, their clothes being cut by the blows made at them with knives. No sooner was the bow cleared of one set of marauders than another party commenced their operations at the stern. My gun was now the object of the struggle, which was beginning to assume a more serious complexion, when the whole of the Esquimaux suddenly fled, and hid themselves behind the drift timber and canoes on the beach. It appears that by the exertions of the crew, the *Reliance* was again afloat, and Lieutenant Back wisely judging that this was the proper moment for more active interference, directed his men to level their muskets, which had produced that sudden panic. The *Lion* happily floated soon after, and both were retiring from the beach, when the Esquimaux having recovered from their consternation, put their kayacks in



Engraved by T. Fisher

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the water, and were preparing to follow us; but I desired Augustus to say that I would shoot the first man who came within range of our muskets, which prevented them.

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It was now about eight o'clock in the evening, and we had been engaged in this harassing contest for several hours, yet the only things of importance which they had carried off were the mess canteen and kettles, a tent, a bale containing blankets and shoes, one of the men's bags, and the jib-sails. The other articles they took could well be spared, and they would, in fact, have been distributed amongst them, had they remained quiet. The place to which the boats were dragged is designated by the name of Pillage Point. I cannot sufficiently praise the fortitude and obedience of both the boats' crews in abstaining from the use of their arms. In the first instance I had been influenced by the desire of preventing unnecessary bloodshed, and afterwards, when the critical situation of my party might have well warranted me in employing more decided means for their defence, I still endeavoured to temporize, being convinced that as long as the boats lay aground, and we were beset by such numbers, armed with long knives, bows, arrows, and spears, we could not use fire-arms to advantage. The howling of the women, and the clamour of the men, proved the high excitement to which they had wrought themselves; and I am still of opinion that, mingled as we were with them, the first blood we had shed would have been instantly revenged by the sacrifice of all our lives.

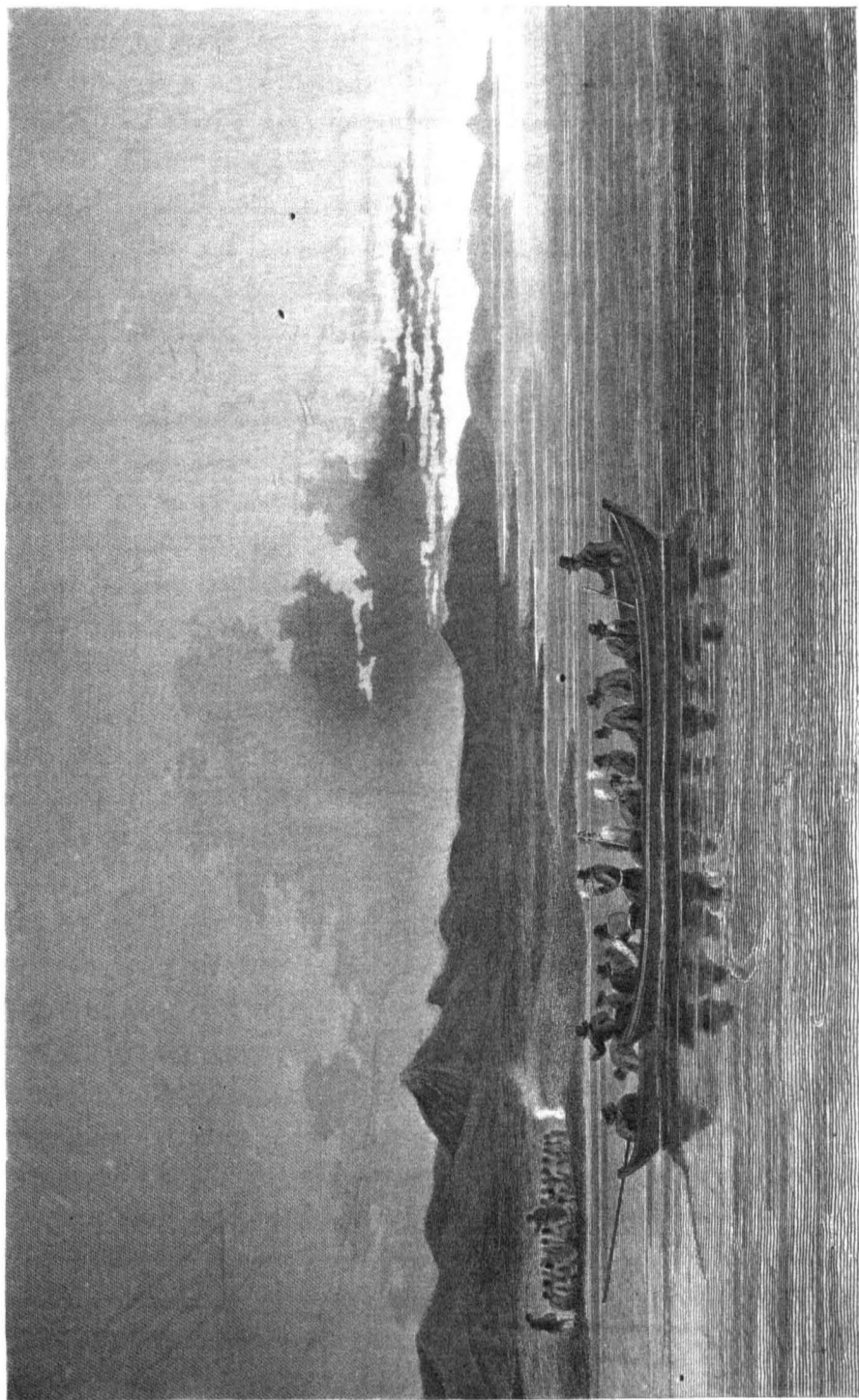
The preceding narrative shows that, bad as the general conduct of the Esquimaux was, we had some active friends amongst them; and I was particularly desirous of cultivating a good understanding with them, for we were as yet ignorant of the state of the ice at sea, and did not know how long we should have to remain in their neighbourhood. I was determined, however, now to keep

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them at bay, and to convince them, if they made any further attempts to annoy us, that our forbearance had proceeded from good-will, and not from the want of the power to punish them. We had not gone above a quarter of a mile from Pillage Point before the boats again took the ground at the distance of one hundred and fifty yards from the shore; and having ascertained by the men wading in every direction, that there was no deeper water, we made the boats fast side by side, and remained in that situation five hours.

Shortly after the boats had been secured, seven or eight of the natives walked along the beach, and carrying on a conversation with Augustus, invited him to a conference on shore. I was at first very unwilling to permit him to go, but the brave little fellow entreated so earnestly that I would suffer him to land and reprove the Esquimaux for their conduct, that I at length consented, and the more readily, on seeing that the young chief who had acted in so friendly a manner was amongst the number on the beach. By the time that Augustus reached the shore, the number of Esquimaux amounted to forty, and we watched with great anxiety the animated conversation he carried on with them. On his return he told us that its purport was as follows:—"Your conduct," said he, "has been very bad, and unlike that of all other Esquimaux. Some of you even stole from me, your countryman, but that I do not mind; I only regret that you should have treated in this violent manner the white people who came solely to do you kindness. My tribe were in the same unhappy state in which you now are, before the white people came to Churchill, but at present they are supplied with every thing they need, and you see that I am well clothed; I get all that I want, and am very comfortable. You cannot expect, after the transactions of this day, that these people will ever bring goods to





your country again, unless you show your contrition by returning the stolen goods. The white people love the Esquimaux, and wish to shew them the same kindness that they bestow upon the Indians: do not deceive yourselves, and suppose that they are afraid of you; I tell you they are not, and that it is entirely owing to their humanity that many of you were not killed to-day; for they have all guns, with which they can destroy you either when near or at a distance. I also have a gun, and can assure you that if a white man had fallen, I would have been the first to have revenged his death."

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The veracity of Augustus was beyond all question with us; such a speech delivered in a circle of forty armed men, was a remarkable instance of personal courage. We could perceive, by the shouts of applause with which they filled the pauses in his harangue, that they assented to his arguments, and he told us that they had expressed great sorrow for having given us so much cause of offence, and pleaded, in mitigation of their conduct, that they had never seen white people before, that every thing in our possession was so new to them, and so desirable, that they could not resist the temptation of stealing, and begged him to assure us that they never would do the like again, for they were anxious to be on terms of friendship with us, that they might partake of the benefits which his tribe derived from their intercourse with the white people. I told Augustus to put their sincerity to the test by desiring them to bring back a large kettle and the tent, which they did, together with some shoes, having sent for them to the island whither they had been conveyed. After this act of restitution, Augustus requested to be permitted to join a dance to which they had invited him, and he was, for upwards of an hour, engaged in dancing and singing with all his might in the midst of a company who were all armed

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with knives, or bows and arrows. He afterwards told us that he was much delighted on finding that the words of the song, and the different attitudes of the dances, were precisely similar to those used in his own country when a friendly meeting took place with strangers. Augustus now learned from them that there was a regular ebb and flow of the tide in this bay, and that when the sun came round to a particular point there would be water enough to float the boats, if we kept along the western shore. This communication relieved me from much anxiety, for the water was perfectly fresh, and from the flood-tide having passed unperceived whilst we were engaged with the Esquimaux, it appeared to us to have been subsiding for the preceding twelve hours, which naturally excited doubts of our being able to effect a passage to the sea in this direction.

Saturday,  
8th.

The Esquimaux gradually retired as the night advanced; and when there were only a few remaining, two of our men were sent to a fire which they had made, to prepare chocolate for the refreshment of the party. Up to this period we remained seated in the boats, with our muskets in our hands, and keeping a vigilant look out on Augustus, and the natives around him. As they had foretold, the water began to flow about midnight, and by half past one in the morning of the 8th it was sufficiently deep to allow of our dragging the boats forward to a part where they floated. We pulled along the western shore about six miles, till the appearance of the sky bespoke the immediate approach of a gale; and we had scarcely landed before it came on with violence, and attended with so much swell as to compel us to unload the boats and drag them up on the beach.

The whole party having been exhausted by the labour and anxiety of the preceding twenty-four hours, two men were appointed to keep watch, and the rest slept until eleven

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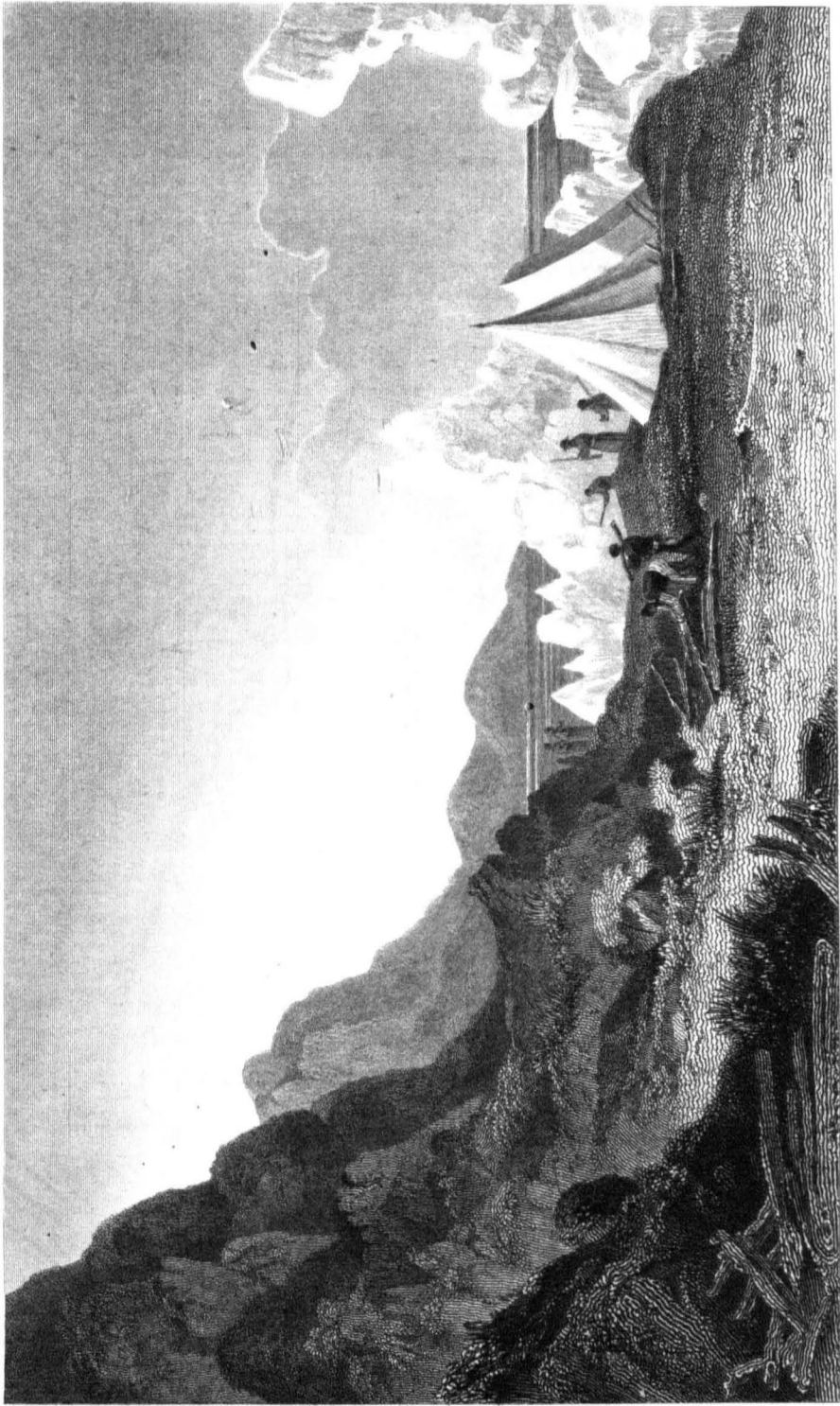
o'clock in the morning, when we began to repair the damage which the sails and rigging had sustained from the attempts made by the Esquimaux to cut away the copper thimbles. We were thus employed when Lieutenant Back espied, through the haze, the whole body of the Esquimaux paddling towards us. Uncertain of the purport of their visit, and not choosing to open a conference with so large a body in a situation so disadvantageous as our present one, we hastened to launch the boats through the surf, and load them with our utmost speed; conceiving that when once fairly afloat, we could keep any number at bay. We had scarcely pulled into deep water before some of the kaiyacks had arrived within speaking distance, and the man in the headmost one, holding out a kettle, called aloud that he wished to return it, and that the oomiak which was some distance behind, contained the things that had been stolen from us, which they were desirous of restoring, and receiving in return any present that we might be disposed to give. I did not deem it prudent, however, for the sake of the few things in their possession which we required, to hazard their whole party collecting around us, and, therefore, desired Augustus to tell them to go back; but they continued to advance until I fired a ball ahead of the leading canoe, which had the desired effect—the whole party veering round, except four, who followed us for a little way, and then went back to join their companions.

I have been minute in my details of our proceedings with these Esquimaux, for the purpose of elucidating the character of the people we had to deal with; and I feel that the account would be incomplete without the mention, in this place, of some communications made to us in the month of August following, which fully explained the motives of their conduct. We learned that up to the time that the kaiyack was upset, the

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Esquimaux were actuated by the most friendly feelings towards us, but that the fellow whom we had treated so kindly after the accident, discovering what the boats contained, proposed to the younger men to pillage them. This suggestion was buzzed about, and led to the conference which the old men held together when I desired them to go away, in which the robbery was decided upon, and a pretty general wish was expressed that it should be attended with the total massacre of our party. Providentially a few suggested the impropriety of including Augustus; and for a reason which could scarcely have been imagined. "If we kill him," said they, "no more white people will visit our lands, and we shall lose the opportunity of getting another supply of their valuable goods; but if we spare him, he can be sent back with a story which we shall invent to induce another party of white people to come among us." This argument prevailed at the time; but after the interviews with Augustus at the dance, they retired to their island, where they were so much inflamed by the sight of the valuable articles which they had obtained, that they all, without exception, regretted that they had allowed us to escape. While in this frame of mind the smoke of our fire being discovered, a consultation was immediately held, and a very artful plan laid for the destruction of the party, including Augustus, whom they conceived to be so firmly attached to us that it was in vain to attempt to win him to their cause. They expected to find us on shore; but to provide against the boats getting away if we should have embarked, they caused some kettles to be fastened conspicuously to the leading kaiyack, in order to induce us to stop. The kaiyacks were then to be placed in such a position as to hamper the boats, and their owners were to keep us in play until the whole party had come up, when the attack was to commence. Through the blessing of Providence, their scheme was frustrated.





But to resume the narrative of the voyage. The breeze became moderate and fair; the sails were set, and we passed along the coast in a W.N.W. direction, until eleven in the evening, when we halted on a low island, covered with drift wood, to repair the sails, and to put the boats in proper order for a sea voyage. The continuance and increase of the favourable wind urged us to make all possible despatch, and at three in the morning of the 9th again embarking, we kept in three fathoms water at the distance of two miles from the land. After sailing twelve miles, our progress was completely stopped by the ice adhering to the shore, and stretching beyond the limits of our view to seaward. We could not effect a landing until we had gone back some miles, as we had passed a sheet of ice which was fast to the shore; but at length a convenient spot being found, the boats were hauled up on the beach. We quickly ascended to the top of the bank to look around, and from thence had the mortification to perceive that we had just arrived in time to witness the first rupture of the ice. The only lane of water in the direction of our course was that from which we had been forced to retreat: in every other part the sea appeared as firmly frozen as in winter; and even close to our encampment the masses of ice were piled up to the height of thirty feet. Discouraging as was this prospect, we had the consolation to know that our store of provision was sufficiently ample to allow of a few days' detention.

The coast in this part consists of black earth, unmixed with stones of any kind, and its general elevation is from sixty to eighty feet, though in some places it swells into hills of two hundred and fifty feet. A level plain, abounding in small lakes, extends from the top of these banks to the base of a line of hills which lie in front of the Rocky Mountains. The plain was clothed with grass and plants, then in flower, specimens of which

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Sunday,  
9th.