

At day-break on the 6th a breeze sprung up from the N. W., and in the course of the day we forced the ship as far down as to within three or four miles of Winter Island. It then fell calm. At three P. M. Mr. George Fife, Greenland master, departed this life. He had long been affected by the scurvy, and the remedies which were necessarily administered reduced him so low that he expired from mere exhaustion. We had for several days been in suspense as to what turn his complaint might take, and, though we had some hopes of him, his death was not wholly unexpected. He was himself perfectly aware of his approaching end, and after settling all his worldly affairs, resigned himself to his fate with greater composure than I had ever before witnessed. In him perished the father of a large family, who depended entirely on his exertions for support; and all his shipmates felt the most sincere regret at his loss. He was an old and experienced seaman, a most valuable and useful officer, as well as a steady and highly respectable man.

There were circumstances attending the illness of Mr. Fife, which should act as an example and warning to all persons employed on such expeditions as ours. He was a very large man, of a full habit of body, and when in health weighed about 240 pounds; his age about forty. From his boyhood he had been constantly accustomed to hard work at sea; but having no duty during our long winters, he ceased taking any exercise, rarely went on deck, and was very averse to such antiscorbutics as were served to us all. He did not at the time feel any ill effects from his sedentary life, but every one warned him of continuing it, foreseeing what would be the consequences. Having thus passed two long winters with impunity, in this last spring his limbs became hard and swollen, and his gums greatly inflamed. These circumstances he concealed, from a feeling of shame, for the space of a fortnight, at the end of which time he became very ill, and took in a great measure to his bed. The necessary antiscorbutics were constantly administered, but his aversion to acids did